

## Step 5:

# Evaluating and monitoring



### Step 5 includes:

- understanding the essential elements of evaluation
- understanding the ethics of conducting evaluation
- understanding evaluation tools and further information

If you or someone you know needs support or information, call the National Sexual Assault Domestic Family Violence Counselling Line on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) or visit <http://www.1800respect.org.au>



Education  
and Training

# Step 5:

## Evaluating and monitoring

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### Introduction

Evaluation is a vital part of Respectful Relationships Education that should be considered at all times in your planning, implementation and research.

The right evaluation data informs planning and your implementation, giving you a sense of where your school is starting from, and where you might be heading. An effective whole school approach relies on building your action plan and messages in a deeper understanding of the different perceptions, experiences, history and levels of support of students, staff and families. As such, every school begins this work from a different starting point.

In time, evaluation data can provide valuable information on how your approach is benefitting different members of your school community, inform decisions on how to improve your approach and identify your successes. Any school based primary prevention strategy, including Respectful Relationships Education, should be continually reviewed and updated to ensure it reflects the needs and practices of young people, staff and the wider school community.

Cultural change in any organisation or setting takes time and you should expect that changes in culture, attitudes and behaviour will be gradual. It is also useful to view evaluation as a key component of learning and continual improvement, not as a burdensome activity solely conducted to identify weakness and deliver critique.

The essential elements for evaluation below will help you and your team in evaluating Respectful Relationships Education. Some evaluation tools are also introduced.

This is *not* a guide to developing a comprehensive impact evaluation, but aims to provide schools with practical tools to inform the planning and ongoing improvement of respectful relationships in your school community.

## Essential elements for evaluation

There are a number of essential elements to consider in evaluating your approach to Respectful Relationships Education. Within your school there are already a range of tools that can support you to evaluate your actions, this includes looking at changing data trends such as student attendance, feedback through surveys, interviews and focus groups. When you're considering what to do it's always good to ask the following questions –

- What do you want to know?
- What's the best method to find that out?
- Who do you need to ask?
- What will you do with the information once you have it?

## Measure violence-related variables

Respectful Relationships Education aims to address the underlying drivers of gender-based violence. At an individual level, this means shifting underlying attitudes, knowledge and skills, with the ultimate aim of eventually changing behaviour. Often we look at changes in knowledge of a topic, however Respectful Relationships Education is seeking bigger change. It is therefore important to consider each of the following elements:

- *Knowledge*: For many people, the first step in challenging gender-based violence is recognising what it looks like. Staff and students can be asked to identify what constitutes gender-based violence (including domestic violence and sexual assault), including a range of controlling behaviours and threats as well as physical and sexual violence.
- *Attitudes*: Individual attitudes, including attitudes on gender equality and gender-based violence, inform social norms and, ultimately, our behaviour. Social norms are the rules of conduct and models of behaviour expected by a society or social group. There are a range of questions that can measure student and staff attitudes to masculinity, femininity and gender roles as well as attitudes that condone, tolerate or excuse gender-based violence.
- *Skills*: Changing long term behaviour involves equipping students and staff with the practical skills to build their own safe and equal relationships and to recognise and respond to behaviour that is sexist or unhealthy. Students' skills and confidence in a number of areas can be assessed well before students have entered intimate relationships themselves.

For more information on the drivers of gender-based violence please refer to *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and children in Australia*.

## Include behaviour change measures

Measuring reductions in the perpetration of gender-based violence is a complex and long term task – and likely to fall outside the ability of most schools. There is, however, strong evidence that Respectful Relationships Education can improve student behaviour generally, in terms of class

attendance, communication with other students and engagement with their teachers. Classroom teachers can track these changes by documenting their observations about shifts in student behaviour and interactions between staff and students.

### **Use standardised measures where possible**

You don't need to reinvent the wheel! Researchers and evaluators have developed and tested a number of measures of individual level knowledge, attitudes and skills as well as the broader school culture. Using standardised questions allows schools to compare trends across different groups from year to year. For example, the student survey developed by Our Watch as part of the Respectful Relationships Education in Schools pilot was based on a number of standardised tools and has the potential to allow schools to compare their results to the broader Australian population. However it's best to use this school survey with external support.

### **Use pre-test and post-test design**

Using the same data collection tool at the beginning and end of each annual cycle allows you to compare results over time. By using the same question and/ or data gathering method, you can track your progress which is important for monitoring both student outcomes and shifts in staff perceptions and experiences in their workplace.

### **Use findings and share feedback with your school community**

Evaluation data can be a great way of confirming what you know, but can also uncover strengths and issues you may not be aware of. To maintain confidence in the process, it is essential that you communicate to your school community the findings and actions that are changed or developed as a result of your evaluation. Evaluation is at its best when it's a participatory process, and sharing findings can be a useful tool for engaging everyone, making them feel heard and included in the process. This is particularly important for staff, students, families or other community members who are asked to take part in surveys. Sharing findings with them builds awareness of the whole school approach and also assures participants that their contribution is taken seriously and school leaders are committed to action.

## **Ethics of conducting evaluation**

There are a number of important standards for conducting evaluations including ethical requirements. Any school staff member undertaking or commissioning evaluation should be familiar with appropriate guidelines and allow time for ethical approval in project plans. Relevant guidelines include:

- Australian Evaluation Society (2013) *Guidelines for the ethical conduct of evaluations*
- National Health and Medical Research Council (2014) *Ethical considerations in quality assurance and evaluation activities*.

*What will you do with your findings?*

Before commencing any form of evaluation or research, the school needs to have a plan for sharing findings. This Toolkit supports schools to undertake their own internal evaluation and plan for the ongoing improvement of respectful relationships in their school community. Any research communicated externally, outside the school, may require additional approvals.

*Whose approval is required to conduct the evaluation?*

Contact the education department relevant to your school for advice. You may need their approval to communicate the evaluation findings outside the school.

*Who will have access to the data?*

It is strongly advised that schools ensure all information collected is de-identified to remove any information that could identify participants and is stored securely.

*How will you ensure anonymity?*

All evaluation activities that you conduct, particularly on sensitive topics such as gender-based violence and school culture, should maintain participant anonymity. This is for ethical reasons and to ensure that the responses from the school community are recorded honestly, without concern that participants will be identifiable. In practical terms, you should:

- conduct surveys online, anonymously distributed via a secure provider such as Survey Monkey
- ensure internet protocol (IP) and email addresses of online participants are not recorded
- ensure participants' names are not recorded
- remove identifiable information (for example, if a participant mentioned the names of other individuals or their role at the school) prior to data storage.

*How will you ensure participants have voluntarily consented?*

Participation in any form of data collection should be voluntary and all staff and students must be given the opportunity to opt-out of an evaluation activity if they do not wish to participate. It is important that participants receive a written, plain language explanation of the purpose(s) of the evaluation activity and how the findings from the evaluation will be used.

## Evaluation tools

The Respectful Relationships Education in Schools pilot used a number of evaluation tools, which are introduced below. Tools with an asterisk are not included in this Toolkit. If you're interested in learning more about these tools, please email [enquiries@ourwatch.org.au](mailto:enquiries@ourwatch.org.au).

### School culture survey\*

#### WHAT?

The survey measures shifts in school culture, including staff perception of commitment to gender equality in school policies, programs, procedures and structures. It also measures staff awareness of the approach to Respectful Relationships Education taken in your school, including the understanding of the link between this work and the prevention of gender-based violence.

#### WHY?

This is an opportunity for staff to give honest, anonymous feedback on how they perceive the school culture, across all areas of the school from the classroom to the staff room. You may find that there are areas of strength and areas of difficulty for some staff that you were not aware of. Regular assessment of school culture helps track progress and informs your planning for further improvements.

#### WHO?

All school staff.

#### HOW OFTEN?

Annual – it's best if you can align it with your annual planning cycle.

### School gender equality assessment

#### WHAT?

School leaders use this tool to conduct an audit to inform the action plan they undertake to build an equitable and inclusive school culture.

#### WHY?

This tool provides practical and systematic checklists for the school leadership team to audit current activity, identifying gaps in the school's approach to gender equality and respectful relationships. For more detail, please see Step 4: Understanding where you are at, in particular Template B: school gender equality assessment.

#### WHO?

School leadership and school wellbeing leaders.

#### HOW OFTEN?

Every 1-2 years.

## Student knowledge, skills and attitudes survey (Year 8 and 9)\*

### WHAT?

The survey measures Year 8 and 9 students’:

- attitudes towards violence, gender and equality
- skills to engage in equal and respectful relationships (self-reported)
- knowledge on violence against women
- feedback on curriculum and activities.

### WHY?

Using this survey before and after classes are delivered to students provides data to demonstrate the impacts of the Respectful Relationships curriculum in the whole school approach. This is essential data for demonstrating the benefit of these classes to students in addressing the underlying drivers of violence against women.

### WHO?

The survey has only been tested for Year 8 and 9 students taking part in Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence. If you are working with other years using different Respectful Relationships curriculum and are interested in adapting this measure for your specific year, please contact [enquiries@ourwatch.org.au](mailto:enquiries@ourwatch.org.au).

### HOW OFTEN?

Use with students before starting classes and immediately afterwards.

## Staff curriculum reflection tool\*

### WHAT?

The tool collects feedback from staff delivering the curriculum on what worked, what didn’t work, and areas for improvement.

### WHY?

This is valuable information for demonstrating the broader impact on classroom behaviour and relationships with students. This tool also provides more practical information about how classes were delivered and points to areas for improvement in future delivery.

### WHO?

Staff delivering Respectful Relationships curriculum.

### HOW OFTEN?

Throughout implementation of classes.

## Suggested actions

- Build you and your school’s understanding of the essential elements of evaluation and the ethics of conducting evaluations.
- Ensure that the [Respectful Relationships Education](#) leadership team recognises the importance of integrating evaluation and monitoring throughout the annual cycle of [Respectful Relationships Education](#), including, planning, implementation and research.
- Ensure familiarity with the evaluation tools outlined above and consider their implementation within your school’s approach to evaluation.

## Support resources

- [VicHealth: A concise guide to evaluating primary prevention projects.](#)
- [Workplace Gender Equality Agency: About gender equality for small business](#) – includes information to support you to undertake a simple gender analysis of your staff by reviewing your organisational chart or staff structure and identifying the ratio of male to female staff in total and in particular roles or departments.
- [Workplace Gender Equality Agency: Three step guide to fairer pay in your organisation](#) – includes information to undertake a simple gender pay equity audit by comparing the average salary earned by male staff and female staff.

## Step 5 Checklist

You have completed Step 5 and are ready for [Step 6](#) if you have:

- ✓ Developed a strong shared understanding among key staff and leaders of the essential elements and ethical implications of evaluation.
- ✓ Ensured key staff and leaders are committed to integrating and responding to evaluation data throughout the annual cycle of [Respectful Relationships Education](#).

## Step 6:

Reviewing and Repeating  
the Annual Cycle



# Glossary

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**A bystander** is someone who sees or hears about an act of sexism, harassment, discrimination or any other form of inappropriate behaviour. People who witness inappropriate behaviour, but aren't involved in an incident (either as an instigator or a target), are increasingly recognised as having the potential to be powerful allies in challenging sexist or discriminatory behaviours and attitudes.

**Drivers** are the underlying causes that are required to create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality in public and private life, but which must always be considered in the context of other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage.

**Domestic violence** refers to acts of violence that occur in domestic settings between two people who are, or were, in an intimate relationship. It includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and financial abuse.<sup>1</sup> See also family violence.

**Emotional/psychological violence** can include a range of controlling behaviours such as control of finances, isolation from family and friends, continual humiliation, threats against children or being threatened with injury or death.<sup>2</sup>

**Family violence** is a broader term than domestic violence, as it refers not only to violence between intimate partners but also to violence between family members.<sup>3</sup> This includes for example, elder abuse and adolescent violence against parents. Family violence includes violent or threatening behaviour, or any other form of behaviour that coerces or controls a family member or causes that family member to be fearful.<sup>4</sup> In Indigenous communities, family violence is often the preferred term as it encapsulates the broader issue of violence within extended families, kinship networks and community relationships, as well as intergenerational issues.<sup>5</sup>

**Gender** refers to the socially learnt roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for men and women; gender defines masculinity and femininity.<sup>6</sup> Gender expectations vary between cultures and can change over time.<sup>7</sup>

**Gender-based violence** is usually used to explain violence against women, referring to violence that is specifically 'directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately'. However it is also useful to explain other forms of violence, in recognition that rigid, binary and hierarchical constructions of gender, sex and sexuality are also a driver of violence against people whose experience and/or identity does not conform to such binary definitions, including members of the lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer and intersex communities.<sup>8</sup> In Respectful Relationships Education, the term gender-based violence is often used as it is considered to better encompass the experiences of girls and young women than 'domestic violence' or 'violence against women'. The term encompasses the various forms of violence that girls and young women experience, such as dating violence, sexting and revenge porn, and is also inclusive and extends to violence experienced by the lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer and intersex communities.

**Gender equality**<sup>9</sup> involves equality of opportunity and equality of results. It includes the redistribution of resources and responsibilities between women and men and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures of gender inequality to achieve substantive equality. It is about recognising diversity and disadvantage to ensure equal outcomes for all<sup>10</sup> and therefore often requires women-specific programs and policies to end existing inequalities.

**Gender equity** refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of rights, responsibilities and resources between women and men according to their respective needs.

**Gender identity** is a person's deeply held internal and individual sense of their gender<sup>11</sup> in how they define themselves in relation to masculine and feminine characteristics.

**Gender inequality** is the unequal distribution of power, resources, opportunity and value afforded to women and men in a society due to prevailing gendered norms and structures.

**Gender roles** are the functions and responsibilities<sup>12</sup> expected to be fulfilled by women and men, girls and boys within a given society.

**Gender stereotyping** is a form of sexism. Gender stereotypes are simplistic assumptions about the behaviours, attributes, skills, differences and roles of women and men. These attributes are often perceived as natural or innate but are more often the result of women and men being socialised in different ways. Gender stereotypes can be positive, for example 'women are naturally caring and nurturing' or negative, for example 'men can't communicate their emotions very well', but they are usually incorrect and based on generalised assumptions about how we believe people will act, what people are good at or what people will like and dislike, simply because of their gender.

**Gender transformative approaches** move beyond 'gender blind' or 'gender specific' approaches to encourage critical awareness of, and explicitly challenge, harmful gender roles, practices and norms, and shift the unequal distribution of power and resources between women and men.

**Gendered drivers** are the specific elements or expressions of gender inequality that are most strongly linked to violence against women. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality in public and private life. The gendered drivers are the underlying causes required to create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They must always be considered in the context of other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage.

**Gendered norms** consist of a set of dominant beliefs and rules of conduct which are determined by a society or social group in relation to the types of roles, interests, behaviours and contributions expected from girls and boys, women and men.

**Gendered practices** are the everyday practices, processes and behaviours undertaken at an individual/relationship level, organisational/institutional and societal level that reinforce and perpetuate gendered norms and structures.

**Gendered structures** are the laws and systemic mechanisms that organise and reinforce an unequal distribution of economic, social and political power and resources between women and men.

**Intimate partner violence** is any behaviour by a man or a woman within an intimate relationship (including current or past marriages, domestic partnerships, familial relations, or people who share accommodation) that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm to those in the relationship. This is the most common form of violence against women.<sup>13</sup>

**Respectful relationships** refer to relationships among intimate, romantic or dating partners characterised by non-violence, equality, mutual respect and consideration and trust.

**Respectful Relationships Education** is the holistic approach to school based, primary prevention of gender based violence. It uses the education system as a catalyst for generational and cultural change by engaging schools as both education institutions and as workplaces, to comprehensively address the drivers of gender based violence and to create a future free from such violence.

**Settings** are environments in which people live, work, learn, socialise and play.

**Sex** refers to the biological and physical characteristics used to define humans as female or male.

**Sex discrimination** occurs when a person is treated less favourably than a person of the opposite sex would be treated in the same or similar circumstances. Direct discrimination (for example women and men doing the same job but receiving different pay) and indirect discrimination (for example a policy requirement that all managers must work full time) are both illegal in Australia.

**Sexism** is discrimination based on gender, and the attitudes, stereotypes and cultural elements that promote this discrimination.<sup>14</sup>

**Sexual harassment** is unwelcome or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, which could be expected to make a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment can be obvious or subtle, direct or indirect, physical or verbal, repeated or one off, and can be perpetrated by both women and men against people of the same or opposite sex. Men are most likely to perpetrate sexual harassment against both women and other men, and women are most likely to be the victims of sexual harassment.

**Sexual violence** is sexual activity that happens where consent is not obtained or freely given. It occurs any time a person is forced, coerced or manipulated into any unwanted sexual activity, such as touching, sexual harassment and intimidation, forced marriage, trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual assault and rape.

**Social norms** are rules of conduct and models of behaviour expected by a society or social group. They are grounded in the customs, traditions and value systems that develop over time in a society or social group.<sup>15</sup>

**Socio-ecological model** is a feature of public health and is used to demonstrate how violence is a product of multiple, interacting components and social factors.<sup>16</sup> The model conceptualises how the

drivers of violence manifest across the personal, community and social level and illustrates the value of implementing multiple mutually-reinforcing strategies across these levels.

**Violence against women** is any act of gender-based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or in private life.<sup>17</sup> This definition encompasses all forms of violence that women experience, including physical, sexual, emotional, cultural/spiritual, financial and others, that are gender-based. See also gender-based violence.

**Violence prevention** refers in Respectful Relationships Education to the primary prevention of gender-based violence. Primary prevention focuses on stopping gender-based violence before it occurs, rather than intervening once an incident has already happened. Primary prevention involves working with whole communities to address the attitudes, behaviours, norms and practices that drive gender-based violence.

**Whole School approach** refers in Respectful Relationships Education to providing students with multiple exposure to key messages across the curriculum and in different areas of the school and community. It involves engaging not just students, but school staff and the wider school community in the process of cultural change. For example, school staff, including non-teaching staff, might undergo professional learning and development around the drivers of gender-based violence and their role in prevention.

- <sup>1</sup> Morgan, A. and Chadwick, H. (2009) *Key issues in domestic violence*, Summary paper, no. 7, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/rip/1-10/07.html>.
- <sup>2</sup> Council of Australian Governments (2011) *National plan to reduce violence against women and their children 2010-2022*, p. 1, <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children-2010-2022>.
- <sup>3</sup> Morgan, A. and Chadwick, H. (2009). See note 1
- <sup>4</sup> Australian Law Reform Commission [ALRC] and New South Wales Law Reform Commission [NSWLRC] (2010) *Family violence: a national legal response: Final report, volume 1*, ALRC Report 114/NSWLRC Report 128, ALRC and NSWLRC, Sydney, p. 17, [http://dpl/Books/2010/ALRC114-NSWLRC128\\_FamilyViolence.pdf](http://dpl/Books/2010/ALRC114-NSWLRC128_FamilyViolence.pdf).
- <sup>5</sup> Stanley, J., Tomison, A.M. and Pocock, J. (2003) *Child abuse and neglect in Indigenous Australian communities*, Child abuse prevention issues no. 19, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, <http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/issues/issues19/issues19.pdf>.
- <sup>6</sup> Australian Women's Health Network (2014) *Health and the primary prevention of violence against women position paper 2014*, [http://www.gasgasgas.com.au/AWHN/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/172\\_AWHNHealthandThePrimaryPreventionofViolenceAgainstWomen2014.pdf](http://www.gasgasgas.com.au/AWHN/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/172_AWHNHealthandThePrimaryPreventionofViolenceAgainstWomen2014.pdf).
- <sup>7</sup> World Health Organization (2015) *Gender*, Factsheet No. 403, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs403/en/>.
- <sup>8</sup> Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth (2015). See note 2.

- <sup>9</sup> Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, opened for signature 1 March 1980, 1249 UNTS 13 (entered into force 3 September 1981) <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No 25, on Article 4, Paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, on Temporary Special Measures [3]-[14] [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/General%20recommendation%2025%20\(English\).pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/General%20recommendation%2025%20(English).pdf), Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No 28 on the Core Obligations of States Parties under Article 2 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 47<sup>th</sup> session, UN Doc CEDAW/C/GC/28 (16 December 2010) ('General Recommendation 28'); Report on the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Thirtieth Session <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CEDAW/Pages/Recommendations.aspx>.
- <sup>10</sup> Australian Women's Health Network (2014). See note 6.
- <sup>11</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission (2015) *Resilient individuals: Sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex rights*, National Consultation Report, [https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/SOGII%20Rights%20Report%202015\\_Web\\_Version.pdf](https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/SOGII%20Rights%20Report%202015_Web_Version.pdf).
- <sup>12</sup> World Health Organization (2015). See note 7
- <sup>13</sup> World Health Organization and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2010) *Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women: Taking action and generating evidence*, World Health Organization, Geneva, <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241564007/en/>.
- <sup>14</sup> Australian Women's Health Network (2014). See note 6.
- <sup>15</sup> VicHealth (2007) *Preventing violence before it occurs: A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria*, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne, <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/preventing-violence-before-it-occurs>.
- <sup>16</sup> Wall, L. (2013) *Issues in evaluation of complex social change programs for sexual assault prevention*, Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault, <http://www3.aifs.gov.au/acssa/pubs/issue/i14/i14.pdf>.
- <sup>17</sup> This definition derives from United Nations (1993) *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*, <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>, and in turn is used in Council of Australian Governments (2011) *National plan to reduce violence against women and their children 2010-2022*, <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children-2010-2022>.

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