

Changing the Game

Western Bulldogs Community Foundation Gender Equity



BARRIERS

In Australia, more than one in three women have experienced men's violence. This violence is rooted in gender inequality and rigid gender stereotypes.



We have spent the last 100 years progressing gender equity with women leading the charge - but 48% of the population are men, and while many men are allies in this space, it is time to bring them along to be impactful agents of change and equip everyone with the toolkit to drive impact

91% of people in Australia think family violence is a problem, but only **47%** think family violence happens in their community

Men and boys experience high rates of violence mostly from other men, often not known to them

On average, **one woman every nine days** and **one man every month** is **killed** by a current or former partner.

VISION



In response, the Western Bulldogs Community Foundation, in partnership with service delivery partners, began delivering the *Changing the Game* program in local sporting clubs and community organisations to address the root causes of violence — gender inequality and rigid masculinity norms.

- The WBCF is a nation leading sporting organisation providing everybody the opportunity to thrive and enabling our community to be a safe, equal and healthy place for all.
- We use the power of footy and the WB brand to positively impact peoples lives, and bring men into the conversation and open the dialogue.
- By recognising that we will not be able to reach a gender equal society without men, it is a journey we need to take with men in the room, however we often hear that established organisations working in the gender equity space struggle to get men to talk about gendered based violence.
- What sets us apart is our ability to get men in the door through our trusted brand and our ability to create and foster safe, relaxed and trusted spaces.

There is a significant appetite for deeper investment in prevention efforts to meet the scale of the challenge.

ACTION

With communities like Ballarat experiencing violence rates 51% higher than the Victorian average, local sporting clubs are uniquely positioned as key influencers in driving cultural change. The Changing the Game program aims to reduce violence against women in the West by addressing the root causes—gender inequality and rigid masculinity norms.

Changing the Game employs a multi-step, interactive approach designed to create long-term cultural change. Key program components include:

- Gender Equity Club Audits – to identify club-specific challenges.
- Gender Equity Awareness & Healthy Masculinity Sessions – including workshops for junior and senior players.
- Taking Action & Club Commitment –sessions to develop Gender Equity Action Plans (GEAPs).

OUTCOMES

The program will engage young men, coaches, committee members and volunteers in workshops designed to:

- Increased Awareness of gender-based violence and embed gender equity in club policies and practices.
- Positive Attitude Shifts reducing tolerance for harmful behaviours.
- Stronger Leadership empowering clubs to implement equity initiatives.
- Long-Term Change fostering safer, more inclusive clubs.

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