

## DRIVING CHANGE



**Taking action against the drivers of family and gender-based violence**

# **PREVENTION IS ABOUT STOPPING VIOLENCE** **BEFORE IT HAPPENS IN THE FIRST PLACE**

We all deserve a world where we can live and love freely and fully – where families and relationships are safe and respectful, and everyone has what they need to thrive.

**But men's violence against women remains a serious social issue that causes profound harm.** It's driven by social conditions – like gender inequality, rigid gender roles, and the condoning of violence – that exist across our society.

**Prevention is about changing the underlying social norms, systems, and power imbalances that allow violence to happen.** And to do this well, we need to understand what's driving family and gender-based violence in the first place – and how those drivers show up in different communities and settings.



# **TAKING ACTION AGAINST THE GENDERED DRIVERS**

*Change the Story* identifies four key drivers of men's violence against women – the social conditions that most strongly predict and fuel gendered violence. Addressing these drivers is central to primary prevention, and should shape our primary prevention policies, programs, and actions.

## **GENDERED DRIVERS:**

**1** **Condoning of violence against women**

**2** **Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life**

**3** **Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity**

**4** **Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control**

*Change the Story, Our Watch, page 36*

# UNDERSTANDING OVERLAPPING DRIVERS

Everyone has the right to live safe, equal and fulfilling lives. But in reality, experiences of family and gender-based violence are shaped by overlapping forms of oppression.

**We need to take action against these overlapping drivers if we want to end family and gender-based violence.**

## ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER WOMEN

➔ To stop this violence, we must address the ongoing impacts of colonialism and racism, alongside gender inequality.

Our Watch (2018) [Changing the Picture](#)

## MIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN

➔ To stop this violence, we must address racism and discrimination based on myths and misconceptions about cultural differences, to create an inclusive and gender equal society.

Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (2017) [Intersectionality Matters](#)

## WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

➔ To stop this violence, we need to challenge ableism, and how this overlaps and interacts with gender inequality.

Our Watch (2022) [Changing the Landscape](#)

## LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITIES

➔ To stop this violence, we must work together to challenge rigid gender norms, alongside heteronormativity and cisnormativity.

Rainbow Health Australia (2020) [Pride in Prevention](#)

# **MESSAGING FOR CHANGE**



**To create real change, we need to start with a positive vision for the future and end with practical solutions that people can act on.**

**The next slides will show some examples of what taking action on each of the gendered drivers can look like in practice.**

# DRIVER 1



## Challenge the condoning of violence against women

*Imagine what daily life could be like if we addressed violence directly so our communities were based on accountability, respect, and love.*

### WHAT CHANGE LOOKS LIKE:

- ✓ Believe victim-survivors and publicly support their stories, shifting the blame squarely onto those who use violence
- ✓ Create policies that put the onus on organisations and institutions to prevent and respond to harassment and abuse, rather than relying on individuals to report
- ✓ Ensure women who are refugees or on temporary visas are protected and supported when reporting violence or leaving a violent partner



## **DRIVER 2**



## **Promote women's independence and decision-making in public life and relationships**

*Imagine what daily life could be like in a society where decision making is shared, and people of all genders participate fully and collaboratively in public and private life.*

### **WHAT CHANGE LOOKS LIKE:**

- ✓ Promote collaborative and respectful relationships, including equal access and control of finances and decision-making around money – where partners contribute equally to decisions and share the load
- ✓ Proactively address the representation of women in leadership positions and male-dominated industries
- ✓ Offer flexible working arrangements to allow everyone to take up roles as parents and carers, should they wish to do so



## DRIVER 3



**Build new social norms that foster personal identities not constrained by rigid gender stereotypes**

*Imagine what daily life could be like if we were all able to be ourselves, regardless of gender.*

### **WHAT CHANGE LOOKS LIKE:**

- ✓ Teach children about the harms of gender stereotypes and encourage them to just be themselves
- ✓ Encourage young men and boys to explore a range of positive and individual expressions of masculinity, or whatever sort of gender definition and identity suits them
- ✓ Celebrate trans and gender diverse people as a fabulous and vital part of our communities and our society





## DRIVER 4



Support men and boys in developing healthy masculinities and positive, supportive male peer relationships

*Imagine daily life when male peer professional and personal relationships support gender equality, and we all share similar values and beliefs based on respect.*

### WHAT CHANGE LOOKS LIKE:

- ✓ Ensure workplace programs promote awareness of power differentials and build cultures that break down 'boys clubs' by actively welcoming and encouraging equal contributions for staff of all genders
- ✓ Help young people question and distance themselves from hard-core and violent pornography, and explore positive sexualities that are fun for everyone involved and chosen freely
- ✓ Challenge homophobia in male sporting environments, and value gay role models who are living life positively and proudly



# TAKING ACTION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Driving change means addressing the gendered drivers of violence – but it also means challenging the broader systems of inequality that allow violence to happen. We all have a role to play in driving change.

## SMALL THINGS CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE:

- ➔ We can build our own understanding, and change how we relate to our friends, families, partners, kids, coworkers and out in the community
- ➔ We can advocate for our workplaces, schools, universities and sporting clubs to be part of the change underway
- ➔ We can support organisations leading this work, and delivering programs for change
- ➔ We can join and follow movements for change online
- ➔ We can stand up for change in the moment – as an active bystander – when it is safe to do so

