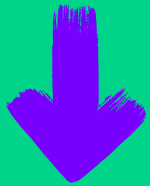


WHAT IS PRIMARY PREVENTION?



Connecting across the continuum from prevention to response

THE PREVENTION CONTINUUM

Ending family and gender-based violence is long-term work that must occur at all levels and all settings across the community. This continuum of interconnected and concurrent activities is often grouped into three broad categories:



When these approaches are linked, they create a stronger, more effective system to promote safety, equality, and respect across all parts of society.

WHAT IS PRIMARY PREVENTION?

Primary prevention aims to stop violence before it starts. It describes work done across the whole population in settings where people live, learn, work, socialise and play. It is about changing the underlying social conditions that produce and perpetuate violence.

Change the Story has established that men's violence against women is driven by:

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

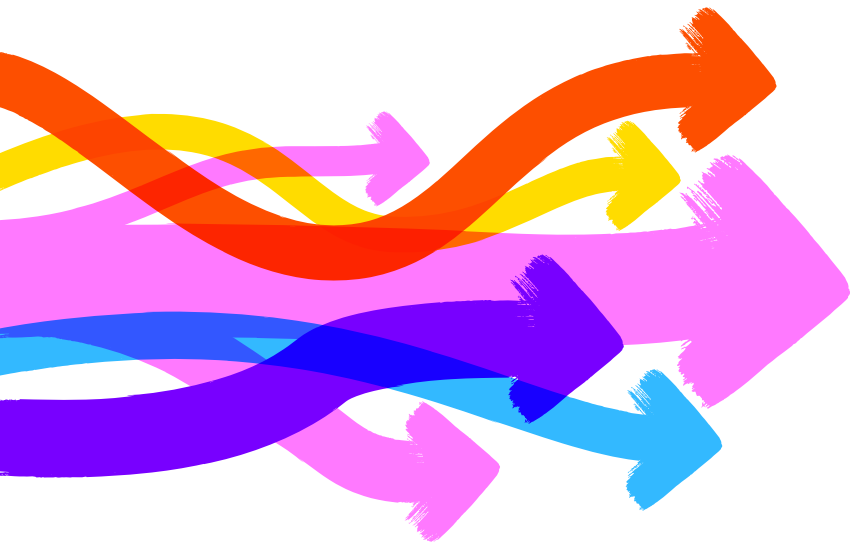
Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control

Change the Story, Our Watch, page 36

Primary prevention aims to create long-term social and structural change.

SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL MODEL AND INTERSECTING DRIVERS OF VIOLENCE

The socio-ecological model in Change the Story is used widely to show how the **gendered drivers of violence operate at different levels** – individual and relationship, community and organisational, system and institutional, societal.



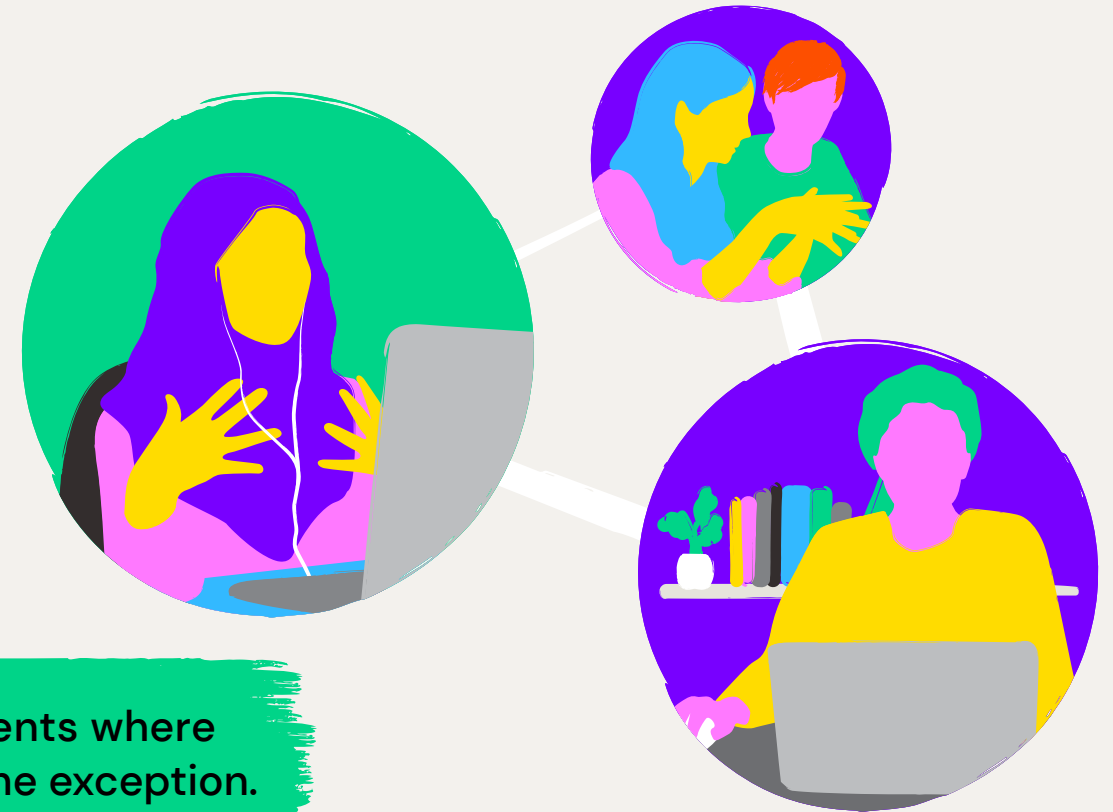
Preventing all family and gender-based violence means also looking at **overlapping and intersecting drivers of violence**. These include inequality, stigma, discrimination and marginalisation experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from migrant and refugee communities, people of colour, LGBTIQ+ communities, and people with disability, amongst others.

WHAT PRIMARY PREVENTION LOOKS LIKE

Primary prevention work happens in many sectors, locations and settings—schools, workplaces, communities, and media—and focuses on shifting the norms, structures, and practices that drive violence.

Some examples include:

- + Implementing whole-of-school initiatives and curricula that promote respectful relationships
- + Supporting sports clubs to develop policies and procedures that ensure women have equal access to resources and appropriate facilities
- + Working with media outlets to challenge discriminatory depictions of women, and promote content that creates positive change



Together, these initiatives help create environments where equality, respect, and safety are the norm—not the exception.

WHAT IS EARLY INTERVENTION?

Early intervention describes initiatives designed to stop early signs of abuse from escalating, and targeted interventions to shift attitudes and behaviours in ways that minimise immediate and long-term risk.

This can involve working with groups or individuals who may be at higher risk of perpetrating or experiencing violence, focusing efforts where there are signs that violence is more likely to occur, and working more broadly across communities and society to improve approaches to recognising and responding to signs of violence.

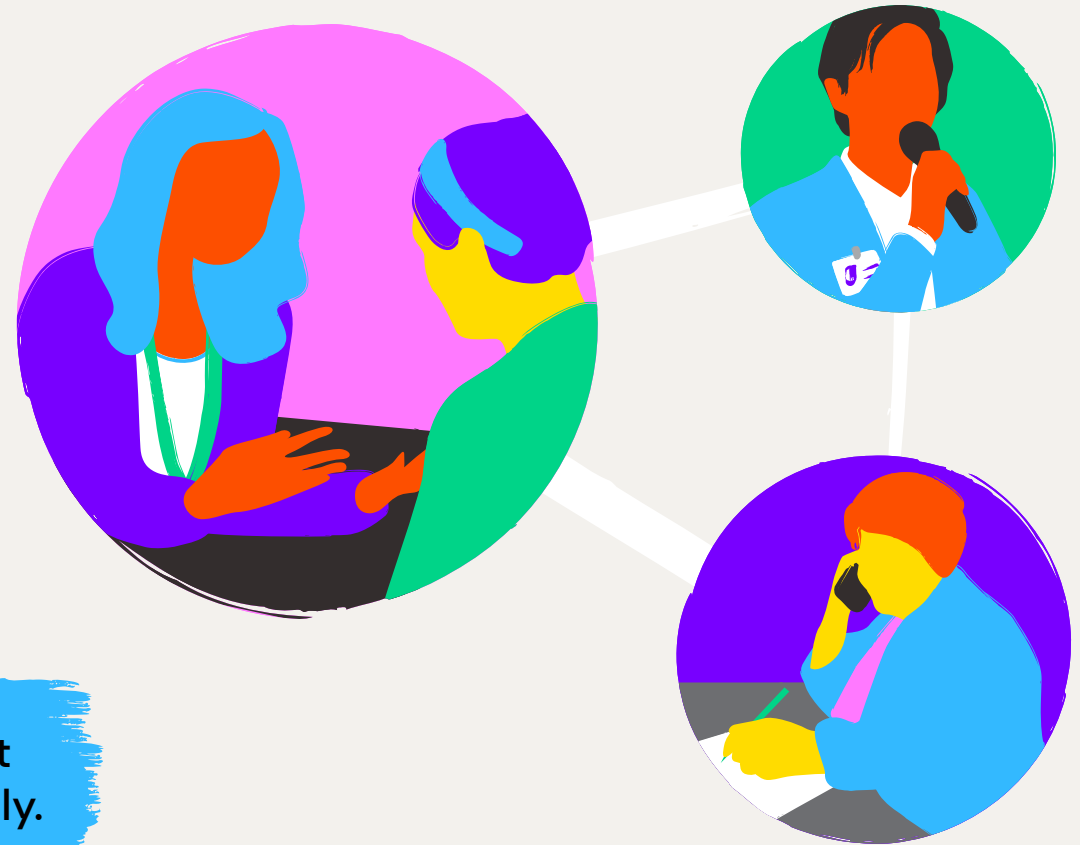


WHAT EARLY INTERVENTION LOOKS LIKE

This work focuses on **initiatives to stop early signs of abuse from escalating**. This can involve working with groups or individuals who may be at higher risk of perpetrating or experiencing violence.

Some examples include:

- + Providing information and training about family violence, legal rights, and support services to people at higher risk
- + Working with boys who show early signs of using violence to stop long-term patterns of harm
- + Developing resources to help people understand family violence and recognise if they or someone they know is affected



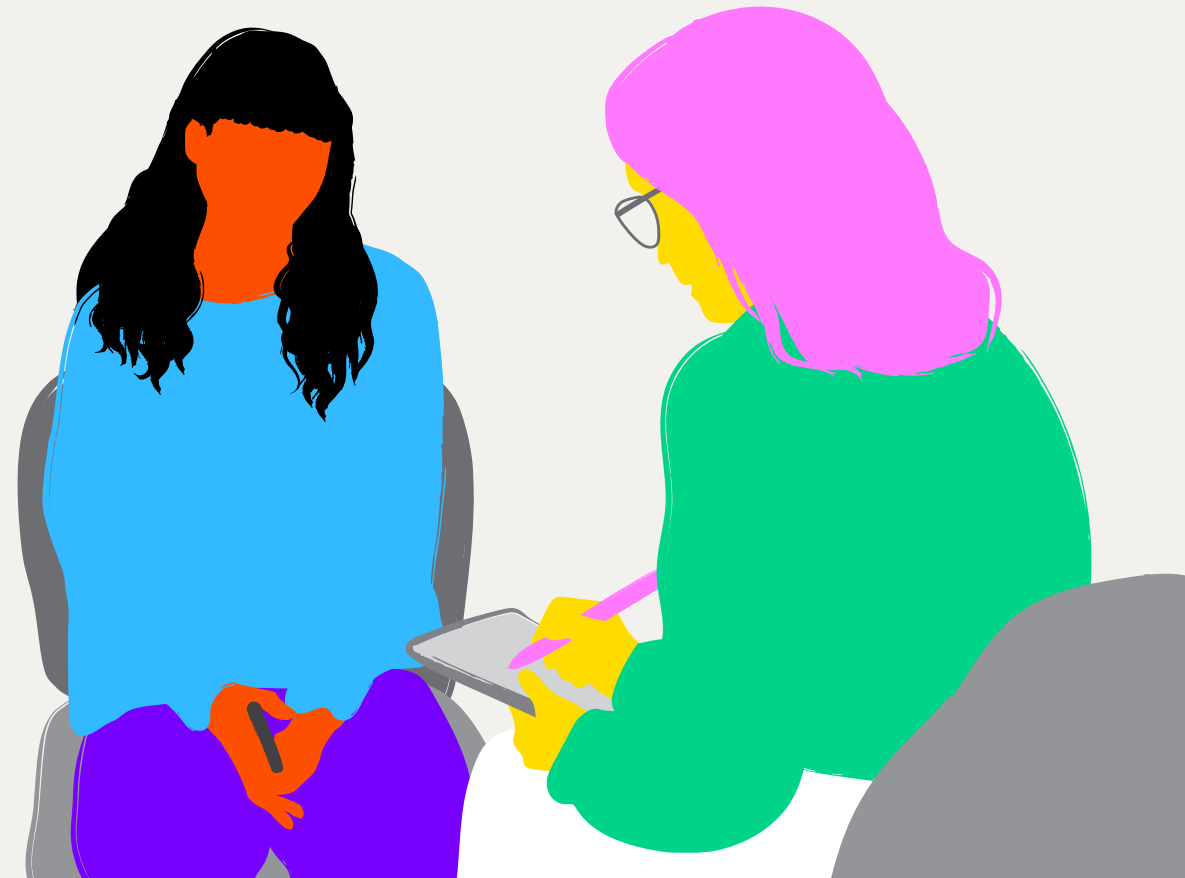
Together, these actions reduce harm, prevent it from recurring, and connect people to help early.

WHAT IS RESPONSE AND RECOVERY?

Response and recovery describe initiatives that involve supporting victim survivors during and after their experiences of violence and intervening to stop violence from reoccurring.

This may include supporting victim survivors when they are still experiencing abuse, planning to leave or have already left. This work can take a variety of forms including crisis response, case management and specialist counselling. Recovery from violence can take a long time, and there is a need to focus on ongoing holistic support for victim survivors to sustainably regain their health and wellbeing.

Importantly, this area of work also includes holding perpetrators accountable in ways that aim to stop violence from happening in future.



WHAT RESPONSE AND RECOVERY LOOKS LIKE

This work **supports recovery and stops violence from continuing**. It focuses on safety, accountability, and long-term recovery for people affected by violence.

Some examples include:

- + Delivering men's behaviour change programs that reduce repeated perpetration
- + Providing crisis accommodation, legal support, and referrals to victim survivors
- + Responding to incidents through police presence and supporting intervention orders



These actions are critical for protecting people from further harm and helping them rebuild their lives.

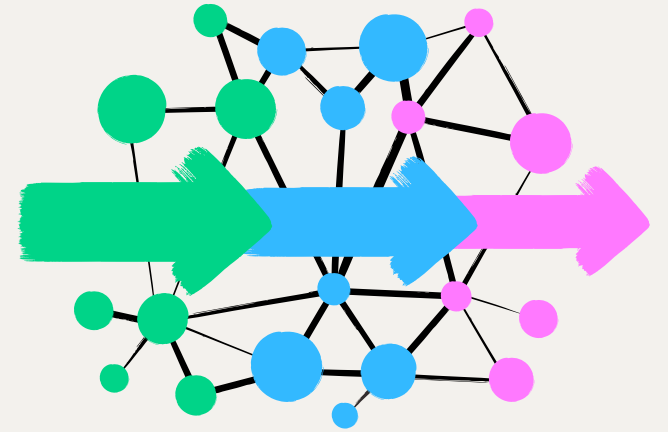
CONNECTING ACROSS THE CONTINUUM

While prevention can focus on different points in the timeline of violence, this is all **connected** and in practice, activities related to each often **overlap**.

Some ways we can see connection and overlap include:

- ➔ Prevention practitioners being aware of their obligations to respond to individual disclosures of family violence encountered in their work and seek training and advice to meet these obligations.
- ➔ Response practitioners and services work closely with individuals, families and communities to raise awareness about family violence. This is an important precondition for primary prevention, which then seeks to directly shift social norms, structures and practices.
- ➔ Messaging and campaigns also play a role in raising awareness of family violence. Appropriate links directing people to services must be included in public-facing materials, and pre-briefings should be organised for services that could see increased demand as a result.

When these efforts align, they reinforce each other – creating a stronger, more effective system for everyone.





For more information about primary prevention,
please see the full resource 'What is Primary Prevention'
on our website at **safeandequal.org.au/resources**