



Campaign toolkit

Respect Women: Call it Out

**Coinciding with the
United Nations initiative:**

**16 Days
of Activism
against Gender-
Based Violence**

This toolkit has been created to assist councils and other organisations to participate in Respect Victoria's Respect Women: Call it Out Campaign coinciding with the United Nations (UN) initiative 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, 25 November - 10 December 2019.

If you or someone you know is experiencing family violence, help is available.

If you believe someone is in immediate danger call Triple Zero (000) and ask for the police.

1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)
1800respect.org.au

The national sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service. Phone and online services available 24/7.

For a more comprehensive list of services view page 27 of this toolkit.



Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and we pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging. We acknowledge that sovereignty of this land was never ceded and we are committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our work.

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) has been funded by Respect Victoria to assist councils and other organisations across Victoria to participate in the Respect Women: Call it Out Campaign coinciding with the UN initiative 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. This toolkit has been developed by the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria in partnership with the MAV and Respect Victoria.



Contents

Acknowledgements	3
About this toolkit	5
About the Respect Women: Call it Out Campaign	8
About the 16 Days of Activism	11
Get involved in the campaign	14
Key facts and statistics about gender equality	20
Problematic attitudes that need to be called out	21
Tools to help 'Call It Out'	22
Conversation starters	25
Dealing with campaign backlash and resistance	26
Responding to disclosures	30
Beyond the 16 days campaign	32
Support services	33

About this toolkit

This toolkit provides information about the Respect Women: Call it Out Campaign coinciding with the UN initiative 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence.

The toolkit features information and resources for organisations to promote during the campaign period and beyond as well as 'conversation starters' to stimulate community discussion about the prevention of gender-based violence.

Many sections within this toolkit can be used on their own, as posters or pull-out resources.

A note on gender-based violence

Gender-based violence includes all forms of violence against people based on their gender, however it is most frequently used in reference to men's violence against women.

Throughout this toolkit, the term gender-based violence refers to men's violence against women. Violence in this domain is where the strongest evidence base exists, and is consistent with the historic and current focus of the UN global initiative and campaign themes.

This does not diminish our determination to prevent all forms of gender-based violence. Members of LGBTIQ+ communities face discrimination and violence on the basis of sex, sexuality and/or gender.

Additionally, data collected regarding LGBTIQ+ communities suggests that rates of family violence against or within the community are either equal to, or higher than, those of family violence for non-LGBTIQ+ people.

We encourage you to also learn about, and address, all forms of gender-based violence. Readers of this toolkit are encouraged to utilise the tips on bystander actions to call out all forms of gender-based discrimination, such as transphobia, and other forms of discrimination including racism and ableism.

To find out more visit the [Research & Resources page](#) on Rainbow Health Victoria's website.

Gender-based violence needs to stop, and everyone has a role to play.

Respect Victoria is an independent Statutory Authority dedicated to the primary prevention of all forms of family violence and violence against women.

Respect Victoria's Respect Women: Call it Out Campaign encourages people to intervene when they witness sexual harassment and gender inequality – drivers that can lead to family violence and violence against women.

The UN's 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is a global campaign that takes place annually between 25 November and 10 December.

In Australia, on average, 1 woman is murdered by a current or former partner each week, and 1 in 4 women have experience sexual harassment. Violence against women and their children costs Australia \$22 billion each year.

Gender-based violence needs to stop, and everyone has a role to play.

Key terms

These terms are used throughout this toolkit, with definitions listed below.

Active bystanding

Refers to ‘calling out’ sexist and disrespectful language or behaviour. Examples include changing the topic, giving a disapproving look, reporting the behaviour, enlisting support, referring to organisational policies, or changing discriminatory workplace policies and practices.

Backlash

Describes extreme, aggressive or organised forms of resistance to preventing violence against women. Resistance can range from denial to passive attempts to maintain the status quo.

Bystander

Describes a person who is present or witnesses an event or incident but is not actively involved in it.

Bystander action

Refers to ‘how’ a bystander identifies, speaks out, or engages others in responding to incidences of violence, sexism, harassment or discrimination and/or attitudes, behaviours, norms, policies and structures that contribute to or perpetuate violence against women. Examples include calling out disrespectful language or behaviour, changing the topic, eye rolling, enlisting support, referring to organisational policies, or changing discriminatory workplace policies and practices. These actions can be taken in the moment or following an event.

Disclosure

Occurs when someone tells another person about violence they have experienced, perpetrated or witnessed. Undertaking prevention of violence against women activities can lead to an increase in disclosures because of the awareness being raised about harmful attitudes and behaviours that creates a safe space for people to discuss their experiences.

Family violence

Involves patterns of coercive, controlling and abusive behaviours inflicted on victims and victim survivors resulting in fear for their own or someone else’s safety and wellbeing. Family violence can take many forms including physical, sexual, psychological, emotional and spiritual violence. It also includes financial/economic abuse and control. Family violence can occur within a diverse range of family units including:

- > Intimate partners (current or former): married or de facto couples with or without children
- > Other family members; including siblings, step-parents, extended kinship connections
- > Adolescent or adult children and their parents
- > Older people and their adult children, relatives or carers
- > People with disabilities and their and their relatives or carers.

Family violence

Is sometimes interchanged with domestic violence. Victorian legislation and policy documentation uses the term family violence as it is more inclusive of diverse family units and kinship networks. Family violence encompasses both domestic violence and intimate partner violence, as well as other forms of violence within a family.

Gender-based violence

Describes violence rooted in gender-based power inequality and discrimination. People of all genders can experience gender-based violence, including transgender and/or non-binary people. The term is most often used to describe violence against women and girls. Gender-based violence is sometimes used interchangeably with ‘violence against women’ to acknowledge the disproportionate number of women and girls who experience violence ([UN Women](#)).

Gender equality

Is the outcome reached through addressing gender inequities. It is the equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of all people regardless of their gender or sex. Gender equality does not result from erasing gender difference, it occurs when people’s rights, responsibilities, and opportunities are upheld and not dependent on their genderⁱ.

Perpetrator

Is the term most commonly used in Victoria to describe people – mainly men – who use family violence, or commit sexual violence against women. ‘Offender’ or ‘sexual violence offender’ are used to describe perpetrators of violence in clinical or legal contexts.

Primary prevention

Is a public health approach that addresses the drivers of a problem to prevent it from occurring in the first place.

Prevention/Prevention of violence against women/PVAW

These terms are often used interchangeably. While they each have slightly different definitions, it is generally understood to mean the primary prevention of violence against women. While there is an established evidence base around the drivers of violence against women, our understanding of what drives other forms of family violence is still emerging.

Sexism

Refers to the language, attitudes, behaviours and conditions that create, support or reinforce gender inequality. Sexism can take many forms including inappropriate jokes or comments, sexual harassment or sex discrimination. Sexism can occur in a range of settings either at the hands of an individual perpetrator or embedded within organisations that reinforce sexist behaviour through organisation structure and hierarchy.

Sexual harassment

Is a form of sex discrimination that is illegal under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010. It refers to any unwelcome sexual behaviour that occurs in public life, which makes a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment can be physical, verbal or written.

Victim survivor

Describes people, including children and young people, who have experienced family violence or gender-based violence. The term acknowledges the strength and resilience shown by people who have experienced, or are currently living with, violenceⁱⁱ. People who have experienced violence have different preferences about how they would like to be identified and may choose to use victim or survivor separately, or another term altogether.

Violence Against Women

Violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women. This includes threats of harm or coercion and can occur in public or in private life. While violence against women often occurs in a family or relationship context, violence against women is broader than what is covered by the term family violence as it includes, for example, harassment at work or sexual assault by a stranger, neighbour, colleague or acquaintance.

i: State of Victoria, (2017), Free from Violence: Victoria’s strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women.

ii: ibid.



About the **Respect Women: Call it Out** campaign

The focus of this year's campaign is bystander action through Respect Victoria's Respect Women: Call It Out campaign, which encourages Victorians to call out sexism, sexual harassment and disrespect towards women.

The Respect Women: Call it Out campaign is set on public transport, but sexual harassment can happen anywhere. Councils and organisations can get involved by encouraging staff and community members to [#callitout](#) on the street, in the workplace, and on their commute.

There's a big difference between eye contact and leering

'Sexual harassment' is any form of unwelcome sexual behaviour that can be offensive, humiliating or intimidating. It can be obvious or indirect, physical or verbal, repeated or one-off.

Sexual harassment may include:

- > staring or leering
- > deliberately brushing up against you or unwelcome touching
- > suggestive comments or jokes
- > insults or taunts of a sexual nature
- > intrusive questions or statements about your private life
- > behaviour that may also be considered to be an offence under criminal law, such as physical assault, indecent exposure, sexual assault, stalking or obscene communications.

Safety in public spaces is everyone's business.

Sexual harassment happens all too often

A lot of people are surprised to learn how common sexual harassment is. Research shows that one in four Australian women have experienced sexual harassment, with a lot of this happening in public places. Despite this, many of these instances remain unreported, with victims feeling ashamed or helpless. Sometimes, victims are not aware that sexual harassment has even occurred.

Between 2015-16 and 2017-18, the number of sexual offences at train stations jumped by 70 per cent, with the number of reported sexual offences - which include groping, molesting and rape - rising from 82 to 141 across all train stations.

How to call out sexual harassment

As the Respect Women: Call it Out campaign shows, even the smallest of acts can potentially stop sexual harassment, sexism, abuse and disrespect from occurring. Learning to recognise the signs when someone is in danger and stepping in to help prevent the situation from escalating is important. This is called being an active bystander. Active bystanders learn how to recognise and safely intervene in potentially dangerous situations.

Some simple steps to becoming an active bystander include:

- > noticing the situation (being aware of your surroundings – that means looking up from your phone and making a conscious decision to be present)
- > interpreting the problem (do I recognise someone needs help?)
- > feeling compelled to act (seeing yourself as being part of the solution to help – considering the difference that your actions could make by being an active bystander)
- > knowing what to do (consider what you would do and when you would do it)
- > intervening safely (taking action but being sure to keep yourself and those around you safe).

Key messages of the campaign

- > The overall message for this campaign and for councils to frame their activities/events around continues to be Respect Women: Call It Out.
- > This message focuses on prevention, reflecting both the role of Respect Victoria (i.e. preventing all forms of family violence and violence against women before it starts) as well as the current phase of the campaign (i.e. prompting members of the public to act and become a part of the solution).
- > Broadly the campaign seeks to encourage members of the public to call out behaviours that may be deemed as sexist, sexual harassment, disrespectful and abusive, when it is safe to do so.
- > The campaign also aims to increase awareness and conversation in the community about all forms of family violence and violence against women.

About the UN initiative:

16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence originated from a petition that was circulated during the 1991 United Nations World Conference on Human Rights.

This petition called on the conference committee to comprehensively address women's human rights, and recognise gender-based violence as a human rights issue.

Almost three decades on, the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is a widely recognised global initiative that signifies action towards ending violence against women and girls around the world.

The 16 Days Campaign begins on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (25 November) and ends on International Human Rights Day (10 December). During this time, organisations and individuals from around the world raise awareness that women's rights are human rights, and that violence against women is a fundamental violation of those human rights.

The timeframe of the Respect Women: Call It Out Campaign was chosen to align with the timing of 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence as recognition of an important period of the year to be actively focusing on gender-based violence against women.

More details on the activist origins of the 16 Days of Activism initiative [here](#).

**The 16 Days of Activism
against Gender-Based
Violence is a widely
recognised global initiative
that signifies action
towards ending violence
against women and girls
around the world.**

Campaign collateral

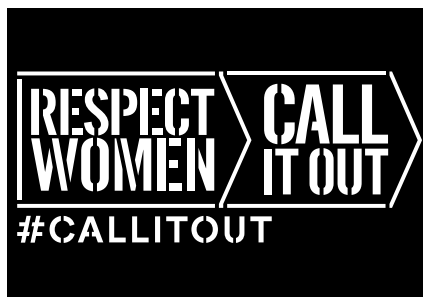
A suite of collateral and materials have been developed for councils and other organisations to use during the 16 Days Campaign and beyond.

Below is a list of collateral ready to print from the Respect Victoria and [MAV](#) website.

Respect Victoria: Call It Out logos



Stencil Design



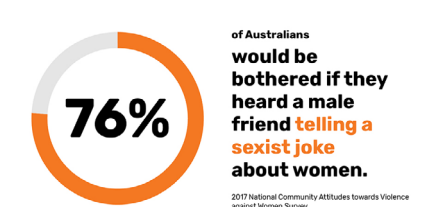
Stickers



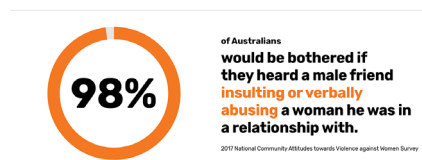
Respect Women: Call It Out campaign video (available 15th November)



Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn Tiles



The train might be delayed, but your good judgement doesn't have to stall. Call it out.



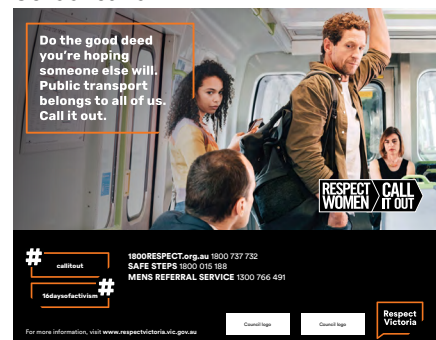
Things will never change if we ignore sexual harassment. Call it out.



Facebook Cover Photo



Screensaver



Postcard



Posters (sizes: A4, A3, A2, real estate board)



Selfie Frame



Bookmarks



Tshirt Design



Get involved in the respect women: call it out campaign

We can all do something to prevent gender-based violence, and promote gender equality.

These are just a few ideas. If you search for 16 Days of Activism online you will find more examples of ways to support Respect Victoria's Respect Women: Call It Out campaign. Many of these ideas can also be used beyond the 16 Days of Activism timeframe to encourage year-round action for gender equality.

Ways for organisations to take action

1. Host an event: start conversations about preventing gender-based violence

Organise a morning tea, movie screening or exhibition. Use the conversation starter kit on page 25 of the toolkit to support a conversation about gender-based violence, everyday sexism and calling it out.

2. Add your council event to Respect Victoria's event calendar by Friday 15th November.

3. Wear orange, and get your colleagues to wear orange too!

Orange symbolises a brighter future and a world free from violence against women and girls. Consider printing orange t-shirts using the templates provided on page 13.

4. Display posters in your workspace and around your community

Print and display posters provided in this toolkit in your workplace, libraries, neighbourhood houses, schools, community halls, sporting clubs and other settings within your municipality encouraging people to 'call out' disrespectful behaviour.

5. Attend the Walk Against Family Violence, or organise one in your municipality

It's a great way to engage members of your local community on the issue of gender-based violence. Print t-shirts and stickers using the templates provided on page 13.

6. Get active on social media

Social media is a platform that can be used to reach many people and drive behaviour change. Share the social media tiles in this toolkit to promote bystander action. Use the problematic attitudes fact sheet on page 21 to support your messages. See page 28 for tips on dealing with online resistance and backlash.

7. Ask community leaders like your Mayor, Councillors, Presidents, Chairs to support the campaign through social media

Use the selfie frame and social media tiles provided in this campaign toolkit and TicToc.

8. Add the Respect Victoria: Call it Out logo to your email signature with a link to the Respect Victoria website

9. Display the campaign ad in recreational and community facilities (available Friday 15th November).

Play the campaign ad provided in the toolkit in public spaces like customer service and community centres, libraries, or sport and recreation facilities.

10. Ensure your events are accessible to people with disabilities

Research shows that women with disabilities are twice as likely as women without disabilities to experience violence throughout their lives. Find out more.

11. Invite faith and community leaders to actively participate in the campaign

Faith based and multicultural community leaders can play a vital role in bringing about change. Invite them to support and promote the Respect Women: Call It Out Campaign.

12. Read and share books that challenge traditional gender stereotypes

Use the booklists provided on page 16-18 to create library displays, promote to book clubs and distribute among colleagues, family and friends. Print the bookmark template included in this toolkit and distribute to local libraries.

13. Learn about gender diversity

You can learn about what gender diversity means, and how to support transgender and non-binary people. The Trans101 gender diversity crash course is a great place to start.

14. Colour the streets orange

Use the 'Respect Women: Call it Out' stencils provided in the campaign toolkit to spread the message on footpaths, sporting ovals, and prominent public spaces.

15. Partner with local businesses

Ask local cafes to put stickers, provided in this campaign toolkit, on their coffee cups during the 16 Days and/or ask local businesses to display posters in their shopfronts.

16. Learn more about gender-based violence and bystander action

Explore the supporting resources section of the campaign [website](#) for additional resources such as DVRCV's A-Z of preventing violence against women posters.

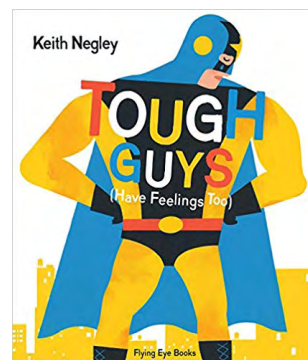
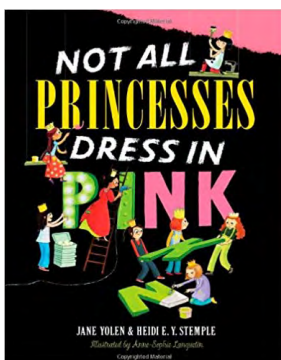


Read and share books

Children's books

Help parents to choose books with their children that promote boys and girls as equals. Here are some great examples.

- > *Ada Twist* by Andrea Beaty
- > *Amazing Babes* by Eliza Sarlos and Grace Lee
- > *Axle Annie* by Robin Pulver
- > *Be Who You Are* by Todd Parr
- > *Bold Australian Girl* by Jess Black
- > *Cactus Annie* by Melanie Williamson
- > *Crusher is Coming* by Bob Graham
- > *Easy as Pie* by Cari Best
- > *Fly* by Jess McGeachin
- > *Every-day Dress-up* by Selina Alko
- > *Giraffes Can't Dance* by Giles Andreae and Guy Parker-Rees
- > *Hunting for Dragons* by Bruce Whatley
- > *I am Enough* by Grace Byers
- > *I Could Be, You Could Be* by Karen Owen
- > *Jacob's New Dress* by Sarah and Ian Hoffman
- > *Made by Raffi* by Craig Pomranz
- > *Introducing Teddy* by Jessica Walton
- > *My Princess Boy* by Cheryl Kilodavis
- > *The Night Pirates* by Peter Harris
- > *No Difference Between Us* by Jayneen Saunders
- > *Not All Princesses Dress in Pink* by Jane Yolen and Heidi Stemple
- > *One Busy Day* by Lola Schaefer
- > *Pearl Fairweather Pirate Captain* by Jayneen Sanders
- > *Piggybook* by Anthony Browne
- > *Princess Smartypants* by Babette Cole
- > *Roadworks & Demolition (series)* by Sally Sutton
- > *Rosie Revere, Engineer* by Andrea Beaty
- > *Squishy Taylor (series)* by Ailsa Wild
- > *Ruby's Wish* by Shirin Yim Bridges
- > *Some Boys* by Nelly Thomas
- > *Some Girls* by Nelly Thomas
- > *The Different Dragon* by Jennifer Bryan
- > *The Underwater Fancy-Dress Parade* by Davina Bell
- > *The Paper Bag Princess* by Robert Munsch
- > *Tough Guys (Have Feelings Too)* by Keith Negley
- > *Two Mates* by Melanie Prewett
- > *Who Am I? I Am Me!* by Jayneen Sanders
- > *Zephyr Takes Flight* by Steve Light

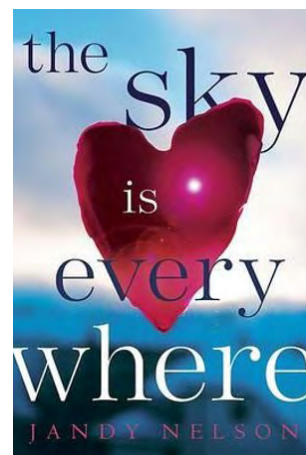
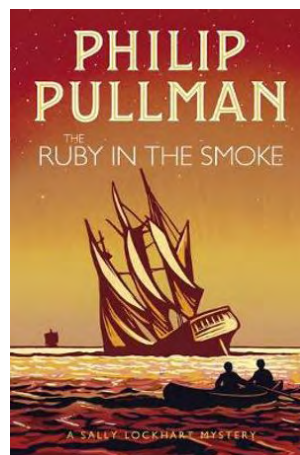
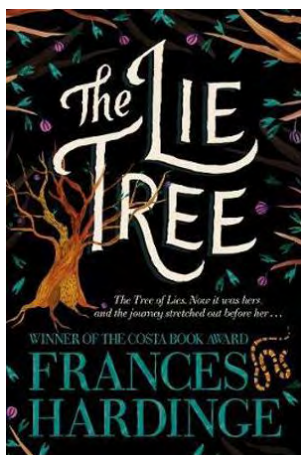
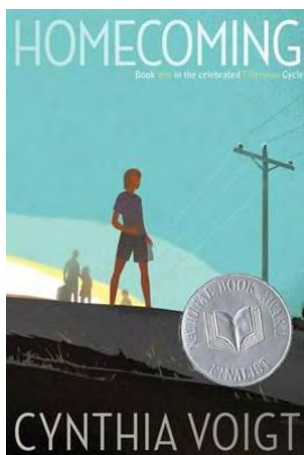


Read and share books

Young adult

What we read has a strong influence on what we think. Provide young adults with guidance towards literature that challenges stereotypes and gives characters non-traditional roles. Here are some great examples.

- > *A Court of Thorns and Roses* by Sarah J. Mass
- > *A Great and Terrible Beauty* by Libba Bray
- > *A Thousand Nights* by E.K. Johnston
- > *I Am J* by Cris Beam
- > *And I Darken* by Kiersten White
- > *Code Name Verity* by Elizabeth Wein
- > *Gabi, a Girl in Pieces* by Isabel Quintero
- > *Harry Potter (series)* by J.K. Rowling
- > *Homecoming* by Cynthia Voigt
- > *How to Make Friends with the Dark* by Kathleen Glasgow
- > *I'll give you the sun* by Jandy Nelson
- > *Ink and Ashes* by Valynne E. Maetani
- > *Luna* by Julie Anne Peters
- > *Lydia* by Natasha Farrant
- > *Not That Kind of Girl* by Siobhan Vivian
- > *Only Ever Yours* by Louise O'Neill
- > *Out of Darkness* by Ashley Hope Pérez
- > *Rebel of the Sands* by Alwyn Hamilton
- > *Remix* by Non Pratt
- > *The Boy in the Dress* by David Walliams
- > *The Curious Tale of the Lady of Caraboo* by Catherine Johnson
- > *The Hunger Games Trilogy* by Suzanne Collins
- > *The Lie Tree* by Frances Hardinge
- > *The Love and Lies of Rukhsana Ali* by Sabina Khan
- > *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky
- > *The Ruby in the Smoke* by Phillip Pullman
- > *The Servant* by Fatima Sharafeddine
- > *The Sky Is Everywhere* by Jandy Nelson
- > *The Tracey Fragments* by Maureen Medved
- > *Unbecoming* by Jenny Downham
- > *Wandering Son (series)* by Shimura Takako

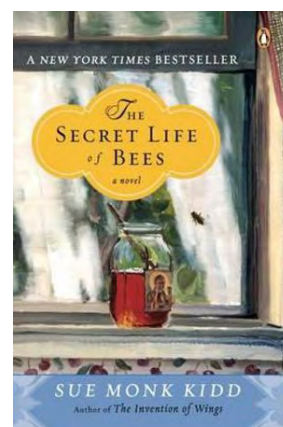
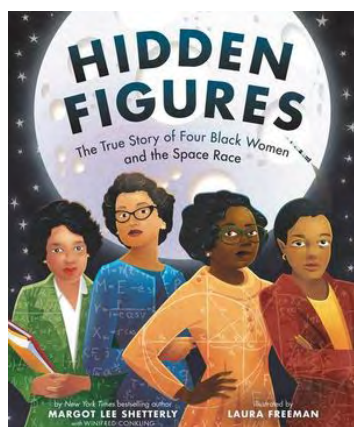
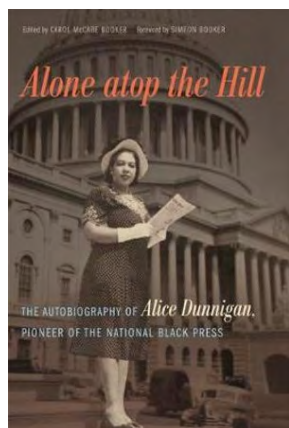


Read and share books

Adult fiction and non-fiction

Help visitors and borrowers to choose books that will help them think about gender and gender equality differently. Here are some great examples.

- > *Alone atop the Hill* by Alice Dunnigan
- > *Attack of the 50 Ft. Women: How Gender Equality Can Save The World!* by Catherine Mayer (2017)
- > *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Wolfe (1929)
- > *Bad Feminist* by Roxane Gay (2014)
- > *Bossypants* by Tina Fey (2011)
- > *Brotopia: Breaking up the Boys' Club of Silicon Valley* by Emily Chang (2018)
- > *Carrie Pilby* by Caren Lissner (2003)
- > *Dead Beckoning* by Christina Engela (2016)
- > *Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics* by Bell Hooks (2000)
- > *Girl Up* by Lauren Bates (2016)
- > *Here Lies Arthur* by Philip Reeve (2007)
- > *Hidden Figures* by Margot Lee Shetterly (2016)
- > *I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban* by Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb (2013)
- > *Juliet Takes a Breath* by Gabby Rivera (2016)
- > *Kindred* by Octavia E. Butler (1979)
- > *Men Explain Things to Me* by Rebecca Solnit (2015)
- > *Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides (2002)
- > *Milk and Honey* by Rupi Kaur (2014)
- > *My Life on the Road* by Gloria Steinem (2015)
- > *Not That Bad* by Roxane Gay (2018)
- > *Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men* by Caroline Criado Perez (2019)
- > *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee (2017)
- > *Stealing the Show: How Women Are Revolutionizing Television* by Joy Press (2018)
- > *The Argonauts* by Maggie Nelson (2015)
- > *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison (1970)
- > *The Great Believers* by Rebecca Makkai (2018)
- > *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood (1985)
- > *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett (2009)
- > *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd (2003)
- > *The Surface Breaks* by Louise O'Neill (2018)
- > *The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood (2019)
- > *The Time Has Come: Why Men Must Join the Gender Equality Revolution* by Michael Kaufman (2019)
- > *We: A Manifesto for Women Everywhere* by Gillian Anderson and Jennifer Nadel (2017)





Key facts and statistics about gender equality



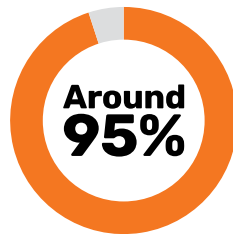
is murdered by her current or former partner.

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, (2017), Homicide in Australia 2012–13 to 2013–14



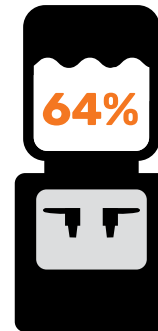
women have experienced sexual harassment.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2017), Personal safety, Australia, 2016. ABS cat no.4906.0



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2017), Personal safety, Australia, 2016. ABS cat no.4906.0

of all victims of violence, whether women or men, experience violence from a male perpetrator.



of Victorian women have experienced bullying, harassment or violence in their workplace.

Source: Victorian Trades Hall Council, (2017), Stop Gendered Violence at Work



49%
of trans women



55%
of trans men

reported harassment or abuse in the previous 12 months.

Source: The Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society, La Trobe University, (2015), A Closer Look at Private Lives 2.

WOMEN REPRESENT

17.1%
OF CEOS

30.5%
OF KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

35.2% of boards and governing bodies in Australia have no female directors. By contrast, only **0.9%** had no male directors.

Source: Workplace Gender Equality Agency, (2018), WGEA Data Explorer

In 2017/18, about

72,500 **41,600** **6,900**
WOMEN **CHILDREN** **MEN**

sought specialist homelessness services due to family or domestic violence.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, (2019), Specialist homelessness services annual report 2017–18.



It is estimated that violence against women and their children cost the Australian economy

\$22 BILLION



in 2015–16

Source: KPMG, (2016), The Cost of Violence Against Women and their Children in Australia

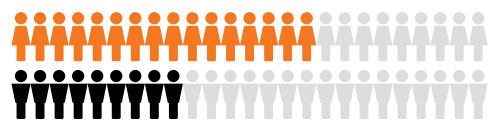
The full-time average weekly wage for women is

14% LESS
than for men.

On average, women need to work **AN ADDITIONAL 59 DAYS** to earn the same annual income as men

Source: Workplace Gender Equality Agency, (2019), Australia's Gender Pay Gap statistics

Women spend almost twice as many hours each day performing unpaid care work compared to men



(**64.4%** of the total work day for women vs. **36.1%** of the total work day for men)

Source: Workplace Gender Equality Agency, (2016), Unpaid care work and the labour market

1 IN 3
LGBTQIA+ people

have experienced violence from a partner, ex-partner or family member. These numbers are even higher for intersex, transgender and gender diverse people.

Source: The Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society, La Trobe University, (2015), A Closer Look at Private Lives 2

Problematic attitudes that need to be called out

It is everyone's job to address language, attitudes and behaviours that endorse violence and disrespect towards women and promote gender inequality.

Below are examples of problematic attitudes and ways councils and organisations can respond to these views. These have been taken from findings from the [2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey](#).



(24%) Australians see no harm in telling sexist jokes

Sexist jokes reflect and reinforce sexist attitudes, and are harmful. They excuse and perpetuate the gender stereotyping and discrimination against women that underpins violence.

1 IN 3 (34%)

Australians think it's natural for a man to want to appear in control of his partner in front of his male friends

Controlling behaviour is a key factor in abusive relationships. By deeming women as less equal than men, disrespect and violence against women will continue.



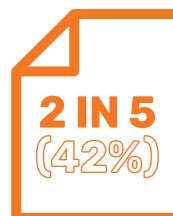
Australians believe that women prefer a man to be in charge of the relationship

This belief reflects and maintains the broader harmful social expectation that men should always be in charge. It undermines women's independence and ability to make decisions in both public and private life.

1 IN 5 (20%)

Australians believe violence is a normal reaction to daily stress and frustration

There are many healthy ways to respond to stress and frustration – using violence is not one. Do not excuse people who choose to use violence.



Australians believe that women make up false reports of sexual assaults in order to punish men

This unfounded belief is the very reason that victim survivors are afraid to seek help, and the majority either delay or never report sexual assault. Evidence shows that only 5% of sexual assault allegations are false.

2 in 5 (40%)

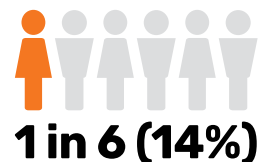
Australians believe many women exaggerate how unequally women are treated in Australia

Unfortunately, we are still working towards gender equality in Australia. We have a gender pay gap, men hold the majority of leadership positions and women still undertake the vast majority of unpaid caring work.

32%

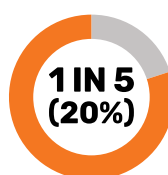
of Australians believe a female victim is partly responsible for the abuse if she does not leave

Leaving an abusive relationship is hard and can be dangerous. Common barriers include: concerns for the safety and wellbeing of children; lack of housing and income; social isolation and lack of knowledge of support options. Instead of asking 'why doesn't she leave', ask 'why does he use violence'.



Australians believe that women who flirt all the time are somewhat to blame if their partner gets jealous and hits them

Jealousy, control and abuse are not a normal part of romantic relationships, and in no way excuse violence against women. Don't excuse people who choose to use violence.



Australians believe that women can often make a man so angry that he hits her when he didn't mean to

Using violence against women is a choice, not an instinct. Don't excuse people who choose to use violence.

Tools to help 'Call it Out'

This section provides councils and other organisations with pointers to stimulate conversations among their workforce and communities.

This information will help build capacity among all Victorians in understanding the issues and how to respond to them.

How to "Call it Out"

'Call it out' is a broad term for responding in some way to behaviours that may be deemed as sexist, sexual harassment, disrespectful and abusive.

Inappropriate behaviour can be 'called out' by saying something or using body language to indicate disapproval in the moment. Bystanders can also say or do something later, after the incident (see 'Ways to #callitout'). You should use your judgement about the best way to respond, to show that the comment or behaviour is not okay. If the behaviour is directed at a particular person, your response may be primarily to support them (see number 8 and 10 on the following page).

'Calling it out' does not mean physically intervening when you witness violence and does not include hostile or aggressive responses.

If you believe someone is in immediate danger call 000 and ask for the police.

It is important that when you react to behaviours that may be deemed as sexist, sexual harassment, disrespectful and abusive towards women, you do not put yourself or the person that the inappropriate behaviour is directed towards at risk. Before responding, you should assess safety and risk of escalation. It is also important to stay within your comfort zone and be pragmatic about your level of skill or confidence. As with any bystander intervention, your safety is paramount.

Different types of bystander action

There are a range of ways you can respond to sexism, harassment and disrespect towards women, depending on the context and your level of confidence. These can be grouped into four key categories:

- > **Diffuse** Make light-hearted comments or give disapproving looks
- > **Check in** See if the target is okay
- > **Call it out** Declare the statement or behaviour offensive and explain why it is harmful
- > **Report** Access incident reporting systems or report to management where applicable.

See VicHealth's [Take action: Empowering bystanders to act on sexist and sexually harassing behaviours](#) for more information.

**“come on,
you’re better
than that”**

Ways to #callitout

What to do when you hear or see sexist, disrespectful or sexually harassing behaviour

1. Don't laugh along to sexist jokes.
2. Give a disapproving look to show a behaviour or statement is not okay. Shake your head or roll your eyes.
3. Leave a pointed and uncomfortable silence.
4. Make a light-hearted comment: “What century are you living in?”
5. Check in with the person affected: “I heard what he just said – are you okay?”
6. Privately let them know the behaviour is not okay: “The joke you made in yesterday’s meeting was not funny, and actually not okay.”
7. Calmly disagree and state that the comment is wrong or unacceptable: “I know you probably didn’t mean it but I found what you said to be offensive.”
8. Speak up and educate by explaining why you disagree: “Actually evidence shows the vast majority of women do not make up false claims of sexual assault” (you could use the Key Facts on page 20/12 of the campaign toolkit to back you up).
9. Challenge the logic: “That’s not my experience.” or “What makes you think that?”
10. Stand up for the person affected: “Michelle was saying something and you cut her off again.”
11. Make eye contact with the person affected - let them know you’re an ally.
12. Show your emotion: “It actually makes me sad/uncomfortable when you say that.”
13. Support others when they call it out: “I agree, that’s not funny.”
14. Appeal to their greater self: “Come on, you’re better than that.”
15. Report the behaviour to management, or via incident reporting systems if available.
16. Disrupt or distract the situation to redirect focus from the incident to something else.

For more examples of how to #callitout visit:

- > Respect Victoria [Respect Women: Call it Out campaigns](#)
- > Our Watch [Doing Nothing Does Harm campaign](#)
- > For resources to engage young people in conversations about calling out disrespectful and sexist behaviour, visit [The Line](#) (Our Watch).
- > Michael Flood [Challenging Everyday Sexism Workshop Notes](#)

stop whingeing, you sound like a girl

What should be called out?

In order to call out sexism and disrespect towards women, people must first be able to recognise it. Here are a few everyday examples of sexism, disrespect and harassment that should be 'called out':

- > Using 'like a girl' as an insult: "Stop whingeing, you sound like a girl!"
- > Sexist jokes at the pub
- > The stereotype that men and boys don't cry
- > Fathers being congratulated for doing basic parenting tasks: "Great job babysitting the kids!"
- > Sexism and racism disguised as a compliment: "She's pretty... for an Aboriginal girl"
- > When your mate puts his partner down
- > Cat-calling / wolf-whistling
- > Comments about women being "too emotional"
- > The stereotype that Asian women are "better wives" and "know how to look after men"
- > Comments that transgender women are "not real women"
- > Letting female colleagues be the only ones to clean the work kitchen
- > Stereotypes about skills: "I need a bloke's brain for this"
- > Belittling women: "Given what your husband does, do you really need to work?"
- > Comments made about a person's suitability for a role based on their gender: "I think it's weird for a guy to be a child care worker"
- > Leering or staring
- > Sexually suggestive comments or jokes

Think about:

- > What's wrong with each of these examples?
- > Some are less obvious forms of sexism, harassment or disrespect towards women. What challenges does this pose?
- > What other forms of disrespect are happening in some of these examples?

For more examples of sexism and discrimination, take a look at [these video resources](#) developed by VicHealth. Visit the [Everyday Sexism Project](#) for more examples of sexism experienced by women on a day-to-day basis.

Conversation starters

Gender-based violence, sexism, harassment and disrespect towards women can be difficult topics to bring up in conversation, especially in relationships, communities and settings where attitudes and beliefs about traditional gender roles may be strongly held.

It is, however, important that we do start talking about these issues, or we will never be able to solve them.

Below are some questions to help you start an informal conversation with colleagues, family, friends and community members about gender-based violence, sexism and disrespect towards women. These conversations can be challenging and may bring up a range of difficult issues and emotions for people. Consider this before you start a conversation and make sure you feel safe, supported and prepared.

- > “Why are women overwhelmingly the victims of family violence?”
- > “How do men and women experience violence differently?”
- > “Have you thought about who does the chores in your house? Why do you think labour is divided this way?”
- > “Who are your female role models? Do you think they experienced discrimination because of their gender?”
- > “Do you think the media treats women fairly? Does the media blame victims of sexual harassment?”
- > “Do you think there is a problem with sexism in our community?”
- > “Have you thought about what you could do when you hear sexist comments? I know it can feel hard, but there are lots of ways to respond.” For ideas on ways to respond look at page 23.

Conversations about gender inequality can lead to resistance or backlash from some people. See page 26 of the campaign toolkit for tips on how to manage this.

do you think there is a problem with sexism in our community?

Dealing with campaign backlash and resistance

When you bring up gender equality messages, it is likely that you will face backlash and resistance. It is an uncomfortable experience for most people when their long held beliefs are being challenged – and, naturally they want to resist.

Preparing for potential resistance and coming up with responses in advance will help you communicate better on the spot, and may help you open up more conversations with the community. One way to do this is to develop a response register that can be used to guide responses in person, over the phone or online.

Some sample responses to get your register started

You're just cherry-picking data to say that women are the victims

We acknowledge that both women and men can experience violence, but the nature of this violence differs in terms of its severity and impacts. Data comes from sources such as the Crime Statistics Agency and the Personal Safety Survey undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. As uncomfortable as it may be, the data consistently shows that women disproportionately experience intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual assault, and are more likely to be hospitalised, injured, express fear or be killed by a current or former partner. To address the violence experienced by women, we must recognise its gendered nature. We look forward to a future with very different data that shows all forms and rates of violence being eliminated!

Jokes are harmless - speaking disrespectfully does not mean the man is abusive

Speaking disrespectfully does not necessarily mean someone is abusive, but people who are abusive very often speak disrespectfully. The evidence tells us that the most consistent predictor for support of violence against women by men is their agreement with sexist and disrespectful attitudes towards women. Sexist jokes reflect and reinforce sexist attitudes.

There are many jokes we can make that aren't sexist and disrespectful – why not challenge ourselves to be creative with our humour and not fall back on old stereotypes!

Sexism and disrespect do not cause violence against women. It is caused by poverty, unemployment and stress

Poverty, unemployment, or stress alone do not drive violence against women. Women experience poverty, stress and unemployment at equal or often higher rates than men. However approximately 95% of violence is committed by men, not women. Violence against women happens regardless of income, class or unemployment status. While we recognise those factors may increase the likelihood or severity of violence against women, they only play a role when people affected already hold beliefs and attitudes that are sexist and disrespectful.

Violence is really only an issue within some community groups like migrant communities or Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities

Family violence occurs among all types of families, regardless of income, profession, religion, ethnicity, or educational level.

**Why must one gender be more respected than the others?
Respect everyone regardless of gender, not just women!**

We agree – everyone should be respected regardless of their gender. Unfortunately though, women experience casual and structural sexism on a daily basis and are not respected in the same way as many men are. To create a society where there is no disrespect and no violence we need to look at how this is currently happening to solve it.

Consider using the key facts and statistics provided on page 20 to strengthen your response. Or take a look at the [Our Watch guide](#) about dealing with backlash.

Sexism only seems to work one way these days

We need to take an approach of fairness – if some people are being treated unfairly, focusing for a while on addressing this isn't unfairness, it is equity. Women don't only experience casual and structural sexism, the ways they are affected by it are also severe – including the murder of, on average, one woman a week by their former or current intimate partner. We believe a community that is free from sexism and violence will benefit us all.

Why is gender equality and family violence/gender-based violence a council issue? Shouldn't you just stick to roads, rates and rubbish?

Family violence and violence against women is a serious and prevalent issue affecting the health and wellbeing of many people living within our municipality. The role of council is to work across and address issues that are relevant to our community. The reach of local government across the community is unrivalled and we are in a unique position where we can embed gender equality across multiple community settings and services. We believe that we can lead the societal change needed to achieve gender equality and subsequently prevent violence against women through the services we deliver, our organisational structure and operations, and most importantly through leadership in the community.

What happens inside a family is their business, no one else's

Family violence is no longer considered a private matter and is being addressed as a serious public health and criminal justice issue. If you know of someone who is being abused, express your concern and encourage them to seek help.

1800 RESPECT national sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service is open 24 hours to support people impacted by sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse (1800 737 732).

Continue to build your response register

Use the Women's Health West, [Speaking publicly about preventing men's violence against women: Curly questions and language considerations](#) tool and Our Watch's [Practice Guidance: Dealing with backlash tool](#).

For more information on how to prepare for and respond to backlash and resistance to gender equality initiatives view VicHealth's [\(En\)countering resistance: Strategies to respond to resistance to gender equality initiatives](#).

Dealing with backlash and resistance online

To respond to destructive comments or trolling on social media in particular, here are some ideas on how you can start your response:

- > Hi (insert name), we hear you; you're not on board with this campaign and that's OK ...
- > Hi (insert name), we're sorry to hear you say this. From our research we know that ...
- > Hi (insert name), we do appreciate other viewpoints, however, if you continue to be disrespectful to others we will remove you from the page.
- > Hi (insert name), please be clear any further de-railing of the conversation with disrespect or hatred will not be tolerated.
- > Hi (insert name), thanks for sharing your feedback, we do appreciate other viewpoints however, this is a space for ... and will continue to serve that function.

It is important for social media moderators to strike a balance between allowing audiences to self-moderate and intervening when comments are offensive and de-rail constructive conversation. Having clear moderation guidelines will support you to effectively manage resistance on online forums. For an example of moderation guidelines, view [Our Watch's approach to PVAW and social media: Navigating moderation and community management](#).

“We’re sorry to hear you say this. From our research we know that ...”



Remember to look after yourself.

**Seek support
and allow
yourself space
when you
need it.**

Constantly managing and responding to resistance and backlash can be really difficult and disheartening!

The “Responding to disclosures” section on page 30 of the campaign toolkit contains further information about self-care.

Responding to disclosures

When you open up conversations about gender equality, respectful relationships and violence against women, there's a good chance that someone may disclose that they have experienced or witnessed violence.

For this reason, it is important you know how to respond. This section provides information to support you to respond to disclosures effectively.

Do

- > Listen, without interruption or judgement, giving the victim survivor time to share their experience
- > Believe what the victim/survivor is saying to you
- > Affirm the victim/survivor has done the right thing in disclosing their experience
- > Affirm the victim/survivor is brave in being able to come forward
- > Emphasise that they are not to blame for their experience
- > Respect the victim/survivor's decision – even if you don't necessarily agree with it
- > Be honest and open about your skills and knowledge and the types of support you can provide
- > Provide information about referral pathways which are listed on the next page. Encourage them to seek out additional personal and professional support.
- > Keep the conversation confidential. The only exception is if you believe the person's safety is at immediate risk (call 000), or you become aware that a child's safety is at risk. In some cases, for example if you are a professional such as a teacher or doctor, it may be mandatory for you to report this to relevant authorities.

Don't

- > Try to find out details
- > Try to fix the situation for them
- > Suggest the situation is somewhat their fault – don't ask questions like 'why do you put up with it?' or 'how can you still stay with him?'
- > Give advice or tell them what to do – it will reduce their confidence to make their own decisions
- > Judge or criticise their choice – even if you don't necessarily agree with it Criticise the perpetrator – it may only make the victim/survivor want to defend the perpetrator. Focus on criticising the abusive behaviour and let them know that no one should abuse them
- > Provide counselling – if you are not a counsellor or do not have specialist training in responding to family violence, be honest and open about that. Instead you can provide information about referral pathways which are listed at the back of this toolkit.

Examples of things you could say

These are some ideas. It is important you only say what you believe and use your own words like:

- > *What has happened is not okay and is not your fault*
- > *I'm glad you have told me*
- > *No one should have to experience what you have been through*
- > *Do you feel safe at the moment?*
- > *I don't have specialist knowledge in helping people with experiences like yours but I can give you the contact details of people who do.*
- > *It's up to you to choose what to do with this information, but I can give you the contact details of a specialist whom you can talk to if you need.*

Self Care

Self care is a priority and necessity – not a luxury. If you find yourself feeling down, depleted or irritable you may need to take some time out. There are lots of ways you can do this.

- > **Reach out to someone.** This could be a family member, trusted friend or colleague, your manager, a counsellor or another support person. You could also speak to your GP about seeing a counsellor or, if available to you, access your employee assistance program (EAP). For after-hours support, the 1800 RESPECT national sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling services are available 24 hours a day for professionals to discuss the personal impact of working with people who have experienced violence.
- > **Find a way to escape physically and/or mentally** e.g. reading, days off, holidays, walks, seeing friends
- > **Rest** – have some time with no goals e.g. taking naps, watching clouds, lying on the beach
- > **Play** – have fun and do things that make you laugh e.g. playing with children and pets, creative activities, watching a favourite comedy

The three most important things you can do when responding to disclosure:

- 1. Listen without interruption or judgement**
- 2. Believe and validate their experience**
- 3. Provide information about referral pathways**

Beyond the 16 Days Campaign

Initiatives to prevent violence against women, such as this year's campaign across 16 Days, are more likely to be effective and to achieve lasting change when they are part of a broader suite of activities to promote gender equality and prevent violence against women.

To increase the likelihood that you will achieve positive and lasting change, consider the following:

Get leadership on board

Leadership involvement and support is essential for getting traction on gender equality initiatives. When leadership is on board, bystander action can more easily be embedded into organisational policies, position descriptions and performance planning. Having strong leadership on preventing violence against women helps to create an authoritative environment in which bystander action is encouraged and supported. Here is some advice on how to secure support from [leadership](#).

Make sure your organisation has an effective reporting and resolution process. If not, develop one!

Having an effective reporting and resolution process supports people to easily and safely take action against sexism, disrespect and sexual harassment. For details on what a good reporting and resolution process looks like, take a look at VicHealth's [Take action: Empowering bystanders to act on sexist and sexually harassing behaviours](#) toolkit, as well as [these examples, advice and templates](#) to

support your workplace to respond appropriately to violence against women and sexual harassment.

Ensure your organisation has an equal opportunity, sexual harassment, or gender equity policy

Policies provide a blueprint for the kind of workplace culture you want to achieve. To encourage bystander action, you will need policies that let staff and other stakeholders know what behaviours are inappropriate, what action can be taken, and how privacy will be protected. This information does not have to be contained in a standalone bystander action policy, but can be included in other policies aimed at building a safe and respectful workplace, such as an equal opportunity or sexual harassment policy. Policies should be accessible, accompanied by complaint and grievance procedures, and communicated to all staff. Take a look at the [promising practice portal](#) and [council produced resources](#) on the MAV website.

Attend, deliver or organise gender equality or bystander action trainings/workshops.

For information on a range of gender equality training and professional development workshops for individuals and workplaces visit:

- > [The Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria](#)
- > [Subscribe](#) to receive the MAV gender equality and prevention of violence against women fortnightly e-news update
- > Sign up to the [Partners in Prevention Network](#)
- > [Women's Health Victoria](#)
- > [No To Violence](#)
- > Your local Women's Health Service.

Roll out light touch messaging about bystander action throughout the year

Consider doing this through a series of simple emails. These emails should:

- > Be clear about what constitutes sexism, harassment and disrespect
- > Provide suggestions on how bystanders should respond.

For more information on how to do this view VicHealth's, [Take action: Empowering bystanders to act on sexist and sexually harassing behaviours in universities](#).

Develop a code of conduct

A code of conduct is an important guide for employees when thinking about how they are expected to behave in the workplace.

Use of campaign tools and resources beyond the campaign

The tools and resources provided in this toolkit have been deliberately designed to be useful beyond the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence 2019. We encourage councils, organisations, and community members to continue to use these resources to support bystander action, prevent violence against women and promote gender equality.

During the campaign

Ensure support services are visible

Ensure the following support services are visible when running the Respect Women: Call it Out campaign.

At a minimum, the 1800 RESPECT phone number should be included, and where possible add the following sentence *“If you believe someone is in immediate danger call 000 and ask for the police. If you or someone you know is experiencing family violence, help is available.”*

1800 RESPECT

1800 737 732

The national sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service. Phone and online services available 24/7. 1800respect.org.au

SAFE STEPS

1800 015 188

A confidential and supportive family violence response line for Victoria. Phone services available 24/7. safesteps.org.au

ORANGE DOOR

Family violence support and safety hubs. To find your nearest location, visit the website: orangedoor.vic.gov.au

MEN'S REFERRAL SERVICE (MRS)

1300 766 491

MRS provides anonymous and confidential telephone counselling, information and referrals to men, to help them take action to stop using violent and controlling behaviour. ntv.org.au

KIDS HELPLINE

1800 55 1800

Kids Helpline is a counselling service for Australian children and young people aged between 5 and 25 years. Phone and online services available 24/7. kidshelpline.com.au

MENS LINE

1300 78 99 78

Professional support and information service for Australian men. Phone and online services available 24/7. mensline.org.au