

# Respect Victoria: Maintain the Momentum: three yearly report to Parliament on the progress of the prevention of gender-based violence, 2022-2024 - MAV case study

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MAV would be pleased to provide clarification on any information in this document.  
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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we live. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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# Case Study: The Role of Local Government in Prevention of Family Violence

This case study has been extracted from page 116-117 of Respect Victoria's [Maintain the Momentum](#), its three yearly report to Parliament on the progress of prevention of gender- based violence in Victoria, 2022-2024. The full report was provided to Parliament in November 2025.

## Program Description

The Municipal Association of Victoria is the legislated peak body for local government in the state. It supports councils with governance and legislative advice, sector development, policy and advocacy, insurance and procurement. It was funded to build council capacity to implement *The local government guide for preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women*, support collaboration across councils and build the profile of local government in the prevention space. The Municipal Association of Victoria partners with the Victorian Government's Free from Violence program to strengthen council initiatives in family violence prevention and gender equality.

## Key Activities

The Municipal Association of Victoria supports Victoria's 79 councils' leadership and progress in activities that contribute to gender equality and family violence prevention efforts through:

- supporting the delivery of the Free from Violence Local Government Program, which supports councils to embed prevention practices into their work.
- hosting the Gender Equality and Preventing Family Violence and all forms of Violence Against Women Network meetings with 75 of 79 councils involved.
- developing a monthly gender equality newsletter with over 700 council subscribers.
- collaborating with specialists to host webinars including a session held for urban and town planning on applying a gender lens (which attracted 320 people from 74 councils) and one on pornography and young people (which attracted 143 people from 47 councils).
- hosting forums for local government health and social planners, equipping councils with access to timely contemporary advice to meet their legislative requirement under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic) and the Gender Equality Act 2020.
- convening and facilitating the statewide Positive Ageing Network.
- supporting councils to embed gender equity and Respectful Relationships.
- being local government's voice at the table in statewide early years reforms.

- supporting the convening of the Victorian Local Government Disability Planners. Network, a network for liaising with and supporting local government officers developing community inclusion programs and strategies
- coordinating the Local Government Gambling, Alcohol and Other Drugs Issues Forum, which involves the intersecting issues of alcohol, gambling and family violence.
- promoting maternal and child health services as a platform for trauma-informed and culturally safe practice in early intervention and family violence risk identification
- managing the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Kindergarten Participation Project.
- strengthening collaboration across sectors by facilitating relationships between councils and services and programs, including MABELS, Baby Makes 3, The Orange Door, Child Protection, and specialist family violence services.
- working with the Department of Education to build workforce capability in using the Child Information Sharing Scheme.
- continuing to play an active role in encouraging women to stand for council elections and providing professional development opportunities once elected — since development of the Victorian Local Governments’ Women’s Charter in 2002, the Municipal Association of Victoria has further identified actions to prevent violence against women outlined in Change the story, namely promoting gender equality and women’s independence and decision-making in public life.

### Key Takeaways

Each day, local governments deliver services that touch the lives of a broad cross-section of all Victorians. Councils are also large workforces with connections to local business and community groups. As such, they have a critical role to play in influencing community attitudes and behaviours to prevent violence against women.

Local governments vary in experience and expertise of primary prevention; however, there are some recognised enablers of successful implementation. Staff buy-in — particularly at a leadership level — is a crucial success factor, although it can be a significant challenge where it is difficult to attain. Partnerships are also a key enabler of implementation. Where funded councils have experience in primary prevention, they can build on existing partnerships, including with women’s health services and primary prevention networks.

Collaboration and connection between councils, and the support provided by the Municipal Association of Victoria, has been important for progressing work, particularly for councils without this established foundation. These factors, bolstered by appropriate resourcing, are important to strengthen progress made and enhance consistency across local governments. Sufficient resourcing is also a consideration for enabling consistent engagement with the local government guide for preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women.

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