



FREE FROM VIOLENCE

Victoria's strategy
to prevent family
violence and all
forms of violence
against women

First action plan
2018–2021



Acknowledgements

The Victorian Government would like to thank the Ministerial Taskforce on the Prevention of Family Violence and other forms of Violence Against Women and its four working groups for advice and direction in the development of this *First action plan 2018–2021* to support delivery of *Free from violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women*.

The taskforce was assembled as an expert reference group for the delivery of *Free from violence* and comprises victim survivors and leading specialists and experts in primary prevention, violence against women and family violence.

The *First action plan* was developed in consultation with other advisory bodies, including the Indigenous Family Violence Partnership Forum Working Group and the Diverse Communities and Intersectionality Working Group, as well as key individual experts in the prevention of family violence and violence against women sector. The Victorian Government would like to thank everyone who contributed to the discussions and consultations to identify, prioritise and develop the actions outlined in this plan.

Aboriginal acknowledgement

The Victorian Government proudly acknowledges Victorian Aboriginal people as the First Peoples, Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we rely. We acknowledge and respect that Aboriginal communities are steeped in traditions and customs built on an incredibly disciplined social and cultural order. This social and cultural order has sustained up to 50,000 years of existence. We acknowledge the ongoing leadership role of the Aboriginal community in addressing and preventing family violence, and join with our First Peoples to eliminate family violence from all communities.

Family violence services and support

If you have experienced violence or sexual assault and require immediate or ongoing assistance, **contact 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)** to talk to a counsellor from the National Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence hotline. For confidential support and information, contact Safe Steps' 24/7 family violence response line on **1800 015 188**. If you are concerned for your safety or that of someone else, please contact the police in your state or territory, or **call 000** for emergency assistance.

MINISTER'S FOREWORD



Family violence and all other forms of violence against women affects everyone – not just victim survivors, but their families, their communities and society as a whole.

The Victorian Government's vision is to create a Victoria free from violence, where Victorians experience equality and respect in all of their relationships and are empowered to speak out against violence knowing they will be supported.

In March 2016, the Royal Commission into Family Violence in Victoria handed down its findings on the scale and impact of this critical statewide issue, making 227 recommendations in total. Every one of these recommendations was accepted by the Victorian Government, and our 10-year plan, *Ending family violence: Victoria's plan for change* sets out our approach to delivering on these outcomes.

Family violence is preventable, and we must work together to change the attitudes, behaviours and social norms that drive family violence and all forms of violence against women.

In May 2017, we released our first statewide primary prevention strategy, *Free from Violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women*. This strategy focuses on changing the social norms, structures and practices that condone family violence and all forms of violence against women.

The Free from Violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women – First action plan 2018–2021 puts this strategy into practice, outlining a series of short- and long-term initiatives to build the infrastructure and systems to prevent family violence. A key part of this action plan is the recognition that family violence – the most common form of violence against women – is closely linked to gender inequality. The initiatives in this action plan will therefore focus on working with individuals and communities to support sustained, positive change in gender relations.

The Victorian Government is committed to building knowledge around preventing family violence, fostering innovation in the design and delivery of prevention programs and scaling up projects that are already delivering real benefit to Victorian communities.

Our initiatives and programs will reach all Victorians in the places they live, work, learn and play.

Ending violence is a long-term endeavour requiring enduring focus and effort. While we still have a long way to go to realise our goal of achieving a Victoria free from violence, we are confident that the initiatives in this plan will set a solid foundation that we can build on in our mission to end family violence once and for all.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Natalie Hutchins".

The Hon. Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence
Minister for Women



OUR VISION: A VICTORIA FREE FROM FAMILY VIOLENCE

Free from violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women (Free from violence) was launched in May 2017. It sets out the Victorian Government's ambitious plan to achieve our long-term vision – a Victoria free from violence and where all Victorians:

- ... experience equality and respect in all of their relationships, particularly within their families and with intimate partners
- ... are empowered and respected at home and everywhere
- ... are supported in their relationships to reach their full potential.

In this Victoria, communities and organisations – including workplaces, schools, sporting clubs, faith communities, public spaces and places of care such as nursing homes and assisted living facilities – will foster equality, inclusion and respect.

Our systems, structures and institutions will ensure accountability for violence and discrimination, and address social inequalities that lead to these injustices. All Victorians will understand that family violence and all forms of violence against women are abuses of power and control, driven by gender inequality and exacerbated by other forms of discrimination. Victorians will have the knowledge and skills to recognise and speak out against controlling behaviours, victim-blaming, sexism and justifications for violence, with the support of our political leaders, public institutions, employers, the media and peers. Everyone will be active in challenging these inequalities and in creating a better, more equal society for all.

Violence against women is one of the most widespread violations of human rights in the State of Victoria, however, violence against women is preventable.

This document outlines the Victorian Government's *First action plan* as a part of a three-staged approach to achieving these ends, and in implementing *Free from violence*.

This is also an integral element of the government's 10-year plan, *Ending family violence: Victoria's plan for change*.

.....
Delivery of *Free from violence* responds to recommendation 187 of the Royal Commission into Family Violence.
.....



THE *FIRST ACTION PLAN OF FREE FROM VIOLENCE*

The *First action plan of Free from violence* (the *First action plan*) outlines how the Victorian Government will progress phase one of *Free from violence* over the next three years.

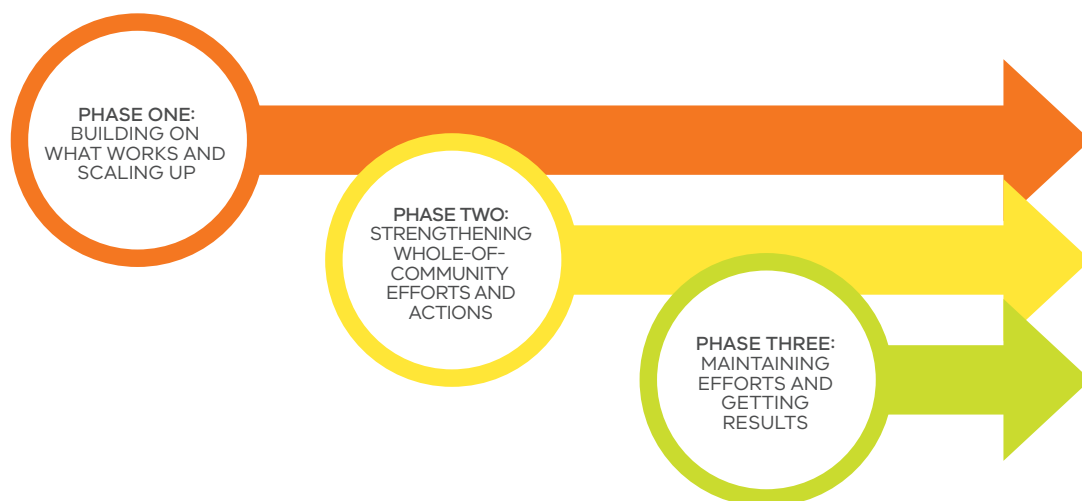
The level of investment and the breadth and depth of prevention action in this plan is a game changer for Victoria, and builds on the long-term advocacy and innovation of the family violence support and prevention sectors and the critical leadership of victim survivors.

This action plan will make significant headway in challenging the long-held and false notion that violence is inevitable. It will provide an opportunity for the entire Victorian community to work together and take action to create a Victoria free from violence.

DELIVERING ON PHASE ONE OF *FREE FROM VIOLENCE*

Free from violence identifies three phases of activity. This first phase of implementation in *Free from violence* focuses on building the infrastructure, systems and support for a much larger primary prevention platform in Victoria, which is the focus of this action plan.

The Victorian Government will take immediate action to establish the key structures needed to support what is an unprecedented investment in the prevention of family violence. We will continue to build knowledge where there are gaps; foster innovation in the design and delivery of prevention programs and policies; and ensure that gains are maximised by scaling up and expanding proven and promising projects. In doing so we will ensure that our investment is strategic, learning is shared and progress is accelerated. Short- and longer-term gains will be made for all Victorians as we work toward the ultimate goal of a Victoria free from violence.





HOW WE WILL MEASURE PROGRESS

We will monitor

All actions in this plan are underpinned by the Family Violence Outcomes Framework. This framework ensures we are accountable and stay on the right track to achieving these goals.

The Outcomes Framework measures:

- ... vision (what we are working towards)
- ... domains (cultural, attitudinal, behavioural and structural change)
- ... outcomes (the changes we are working towards)
- ... indicators (how we know whether we are progressing toward the outcomes).

The following five priority areas in this action plan have been mapped against the Outcomes Framework:

1. Build prevention structures and systems
2. Research and evaluate
3. Innovate and inform
4. Scale up and build on what we know works
5. Engage and communicate with the community

An immediate activity of this action plan is to expand the existing measures, indicators and outcomes of the framework and develop short- and medium-term measures.

We will report

A monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework based on the Outcomes Framework will be developed to provide clear and transparent information about progress. All actions will be measured against the framework, providing a clear overview of implementation progress.

A public-facing annual report will detail progress against *Free from violence* and outline future priorities.

The annual report will include status updates for each action, a snapshot of emerging evaluation findings and any new actions to be included in the *First action plan*.

We will review

The action plan will be refreshed every three years, with the second action plan due for release in 2021. A formal evaluation of the *Free from violence* strategy's progress will be undertaken after five years, providing a deep review of individual actions and overall progress.



We will be accountable

A number of governance structures are in place to inform, monitor and coordinate whole-of-government reform efforts in family violence prevention. The Ministerial Taskforce on the Prevention of Family Violence and other forms of Violence Against Women is the key advisory body for *Free from violence*. The taskforce will continue to play a key role in the implementation of the Strategy and we will continue to engage other key experts including victim survivors, Aboriginal people and communities and diverse communities.

We will take immediate action to:

- ... establish a Family Violence Prevention Agency to embed, coordinate and drive primary prevention of family violence across Victoria
- ... build knowledge on what works to prevent family violence for communities affected by multiple forms of disadvantage and discrimination
- ... scale up successful and promising prevention activities in metropolitan, regional and rural areas of Victoria, including tertiary education, workplaces and local government

- ... deliver the second stage of a major Family Violence Behaviour Change campaign including a specific focus on preventing family violence for Aboriginal people, people from lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) communities, and older people
- ... test a tailored approach to prevention for culturally diverse communities
- ... support the expansion of a skilled, capable, supported and diverse prevention workforce
- ... trial new and innovative approaches to preventing violence, including in key settings such as the media and sporting clubs and associations
- ... support Aboriginal communities across Victoria to take the lead in innovating and trialling new approaches to prevention
- ... undertake research and support evaluation to build knowledge and inform future practice.

FAMILY VIOLENCE OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

(extract from *Free from violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women*)

FAMILY VIOLENCE AND GENDER INEQUALITY ARE NOT TOLERATED

All Victorians experience respectful relationships underpinned by human rights and gender equality – healthy relationship behaviours are celebrated and promoted.

Victorians do not tolerate family violence – family violence reporting rates reflect increased confidence in the system and intolerance of family violence, and eventually reflect sustained effort in prevention.

Victorians hold beliefs and attitudes that reject gender inequality and family violence – people recognise and reject all forms of family violence and gender inequality, and know how to challenge it when they see it. Individuals and systems do not minimise or deny family violence or blame victims, and stigma and discrimination are addressed.

Women and men, and girls and boys, are equal – gender inequalities where people live, work, learn and play are diminished.

PREVENTION FRAMEWORK

VISION

A Victoria free from violence

DOMAIN

Violence is prevented from happening

OUTCOME

1. **Victorians hold attitudes and beliefs that reject gender inequality and family violence** – Victorians understand the causes and forms of family violence, who is affected by violence, and the impact on victims
2. **Victorians actively challenge attitudes and behaviours that enable violence** – Victorians discuss and condemn violence through challenging rigid gender roles, gender inequality, sexism and discrimination, to break the cycle of violence

OUTCOME 1

OUTCOME

Victorians hold attitudes and beliefs that reject gender inequality and family violence – Victorians understand the causes and forms of violence, who is affected by violence, and the impact on victims

Indicators

- ... Increased awareness of what constitutes violence
- ... Increased recognition of the significant impact of violence on victim survivors
- ... Increased awareness and understanding of the extent and impact of gender inequality **
- ... Increased culture of challenging gender inequalities, across all settings and across all life stages **
- ... Decrease in attitudes that justify, excuse, minimise, hide or shift blame for violence
- ... Increased visible rejection of violence by public and community leaders and in media

OUTCOME 2

OUTCOME

Victorians actively challenge attitudes and behaviours that enable violence – Victorians discuss and condemn violence through challenging rigid gender roles, gender inequality, sexism and discrimination, to break the cycle of violence

Indicators

- ... Decrease in sexist and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours
- ... Increase in organisations and institutions with systems to support people who challenge sexism and discrimination
- ... Reduced reports of everyday stereotypes and sexism **
- ... Increase in bystanders feeling supported to challenge sexism and discrimination
- ... Increase in positive bystander behaviour in the face of sexism and discrimination
- ... Increased confidence among men and boys to challenge their peer group when faced with disrespectful or hostile attitudes towards women

3. **Victorian homes, organisations and communities are safe and inclusive** – the prevalence of violence is significantly reduced for all Victorians equally, and people live free of fear
4. **All Victorians live and practise confident and respectful relationships** – Victorians are equipped with the knowledge and skills that inform and shape healthy, safe, equal and respectful relationships

OUTCOME 3

OUTCOME

Victorian homes, organisations and communities are safe and inclusive – the prevalence of violence is significantly reduced for all Victorians equally, and people live free of fear

Indicators

- ... Increased feelings of safety for people where they live, work, learn and play
- ... Increase in people feeling able, safe and willing to report violence
- ... Increase in the number of people who feel safe reporting discrimination and bullying **
- ... Reduction in people subject to family violence
- ... Reduction in women subject to violence
- ... Reduction in the over-representation from particular groups experiencing violence
- ... Increased confidence in the systems and structures dedicated to preventing violence
- ... Increased number of organisations and institutions who model and promote inclusive behaviour

OUTCOME 4

OUTCOME

All Victorians live and practise confident and respectful relationships – Victorians are equipped with the knowledge and skills that inform and shape healthy, safe, equal and respectful relationships

Indicators

- ... Increased understanding of what constitutes healthy, supportive and safe relationships
- ... Reduced exposure of young people to violence
- ... Decrease in prevalence of reported sexism, sexual harassment and gendered bullying **
- ... Decrease in acceptance of bullying or controlling behaviour
- ... Increased competence in interpersonal conflict resolution
- ... Reduction in experiences of discrimination

****Safe and strong: A Victorian gender equality strategy indicator**



LINKAGES TO SAFE AND STRONG: VICTORIA'S GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY

Gender equality is a precondition for the prevention of violence against women, with women representing the vast majority of family violence victims. In 2016 the Victorian Government released *Safe and strong: A Victorian gender equality strategy*. *Safe and strong* seeks to ensure that Victoria is a place where everyone is equally valued in all aspects of life. It sets out a framework for enduring and sustained action over time to end gender inequality in Victoria, including:

- ... evidence-based reforms led by the Victorian Government
- ... action with key partners across six settings: education and training; work and economic security; health, safety and wellbeing; leadership and representation; sport and recreation; and media, arts and culture.

This action plan builds on the efforts of *Safe and strong* and focuses on the drivers of the most extreme form of gender inequality – violence against women.

Simultaneous implementation of *Safe and strong* and *Free from violence* will accelerate progress toward the visions of both strategies: all Victorians living in a society free from violence; having access to equal power, resources and opportunities; and being treated with dignity, respect and fairness.







BUILDING ON EXISTING EFFORTS

The Victorian Government has committed to addressing family violence as a whole-of-government priority and is reaching out to a broad audience across the state. *Ending family violence: Victoria's plan for change* was released in November 2016 and sets out a long-term plan toward a future where Victorians are safe, thriving and living free from family violence.

Ending family violence was followed by the *Family violence rolling action plan 2017–2020* in May 2017, accompanied by an unprecedented \$1.9 billion commitment in the 2017–2018 State Budget. This world-leading investment included \$50.8 million over four years for prevention activities.

The investment in prevention, early intervention and response is being implemented across government portfolios, including justice, health, social services and education. The whole Victorian Government is working together under a single policy framework to address family violence.

Successes to date include:

- ... Respectful Relationships aims to improve student and staff knowledge of family violence, equality, inclusion and respectful relationships, and positively influence attitudes to promote gender equality among young Victorians. Respectful Relationships education is now part of the Victorian curriculum and is being taught in classrooms. In addition, schools are taking a whole-of-school approach to embedding Respectful Relationships in their school culture. In accordance with the Royal Commission's recommendation, all government schools – over 1,500 and covering over 600,000 students – will have adopted the whole-of-school approach by 2021. Catholic and independent schools can also choose to adopt the whole-of-school approach. As of December 2017, 1,000 government, Catholic and independent schools have signed up to the whole-of-school approach.
- ... Innovative prevention programs led by Aboriginal community-controlled organisations for Aboriginal women including the Sisters Day Out and Dilly Bag programs and Young Luv workshops led by the Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service. For many Aboriginal women, Sisters Day Out is the first time they recognised and labelled their experiences as family violence. Many women who took part in these programs reported that hearing about family violence in a safe setting surrounded by family and community members helped them confront the trauma and impact of family violence on their lives.
- ... Funding from the Multicultural Capacity Building and Participation grants program to local service providers and communities to deliver programs aimed at preventing and responding to family violence in culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse communities. This investment recognises that family violence intersects with other forms of discrimination and requires a specialist response.
- ... The rollout of a statewide mass behaviour change communications campaign, focused on raising awareness of the drivers of family violence and all forms of violence against women. Since the launch of the campaign in December 2016, the television commercials have been viewed by over 1.5 million Victorians and close to 7,700 visitors per month have viewed the family violence website.
- ... The 2017 Victoria Against Violence campaign was viewed over 5.4 million times on social media.
- ... In 2017, evaluations indicate that 62 per cent of respondents now possess the knowledge to recognise the drivers and factors that lead to and constitute family violence.

... The Victorian Government is also working closely with the Commonwealth and other state and territory governments to address family violence under the 12-year *National plan to reduce violence against women and their children 2010–2022*. Work is being coordinated at the national level to ensure that women and their children are able to live free from violence in safe communities.

There are also many programs and initiatives being led by the prevention of family violence and violence against women sector in Victoria. The prevention sector in Victoria has been instrumental in their innovation and advocacy to eliminate family violence and all forms of violence against women and their children. This action plan builds on their long-term work. We will continue to work in partnership with the prevention sector to design and deliver prevention initiatives.

ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES LEADING THE WAY

Free from violence recognises the strength of Aboriginal people and communities in leading the way to prevent family violence against all Aboriginal people.

Colonisation has had a profound impact on Aboriginal people and continues to have significant repercussions. Multiple and intersecting complexities such as racism, socio-economic disadvantage and systemic discrimination mean that Aboriginal people, especially Aboriginal women and children, experience higher levels of family violence than non-Aboriginal people. The definition of family violence for Aboriginal people is broader than that for non-Aboriginal people and includes 'a wide range of physical, emotional, sexual, social, spiritual, cultural, psychological and economic abuses that occur within families, intimate relationships, extended families, kinship networks and communities'. The *Free from violence* strategy acknowledges that family violence is not a part of Aboriginal culture and that violence is often perpetrated against Aboriginal people by non-Aboriginal people.



Aboriginal communities and organisations in Victoria have consistently led the way in the development of strategic priorities and actions to prevent family violence, advocating that strengthening connection to culture is key to preventing violence. Aboriginal community leadership is demonstrated through both strong, whole-of-community engagement initiatives that bring together women, men, children and Elders to collectively break the cycles of violence, as well as targeted programs that build resilience and strength through men's and women's business and amplify Aboriginal women's voices, agency and leadership.

Victorian Aboriginal communities are designing and delivering a range of prevention programs aimed at strengthening the factors that protect against family violence. Initiatives include:

- ... respectful relationship programs focused on young Aboriginal people
- ... targeted and local campaigns to build strong families and communities
- ... reducing barriers to discussing and disclosing violence and seeking support
- ... initiatives to strengthen the connection of Aboriginal children, young people, women and men to community and culture
- ... self-determination models in individual and institutional contexts.



As such, the actions within this plan to support Aboriginal people and their communities will be developed by Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and communities, for their communities. The following principles will guide decision making for such initiatives across the priority areas:

- ... taking a community-led approach, with funding provided to Aboriginal-led services, including Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and Indigenous family violence regional action groups
- ... ensuring transparency in decision making
- ... harnessing local knowledge
- ... supporting self-determination
- ... ensuring cultural overlay
- ... taking a strengths-based approach.

Capacity development is a key foundational activity for all organisations and communities undertaking prevention activity under the *Free from violence* strategy, including in design, monitoring and evaluation. Funding for prevention activities in this context will include a capacity- and capability-building component to ensure that the skills of the Aboriginal workforce can be strengthened and shared over time. This will allow broader prevention efforts to continue to be informed by the innovation and impact of prevention initiatives supporting Aboriginal communities.

DIVERSITY AND INTERSECTIONALITY

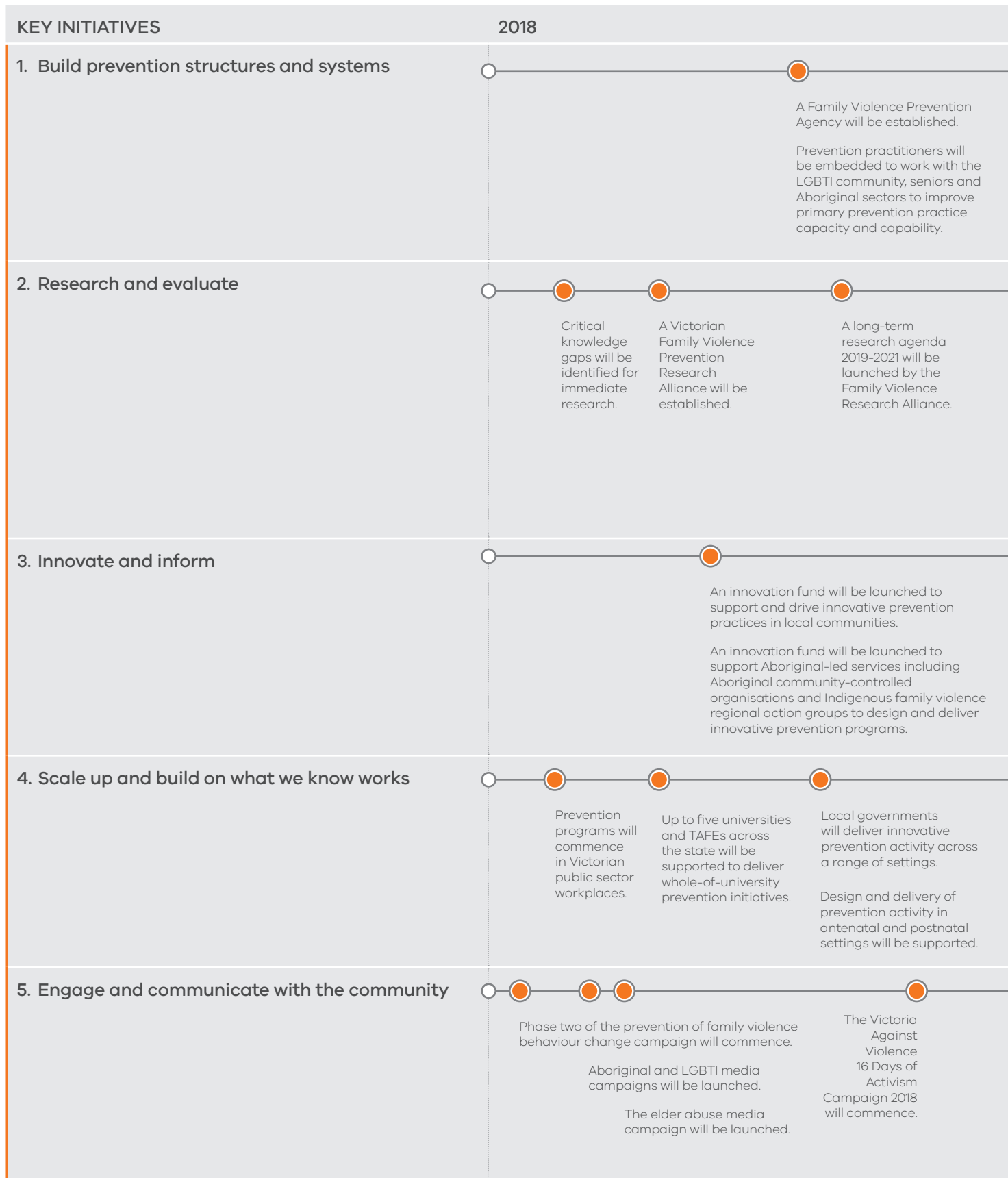
Free from violence recognises that the Victorian population is diverse and that people's lives are complex and not defined by any one factor. Gender, class, ethnicity, ability, sexuality, gender identity, religion and age influence and impact on the lived experience of individuals and communities. Social structures and systems, and the way they intersect, play a large role in creating social conditions that shape the ways in which people experience inequality, disadvantage and violence.

Implementation of *Free from violence* will incorporate an intersectional lens at all stages of the process, including in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities. Prevention activities will be developed with community members and sector partners to ensure that initiatives are relevant, practical and valid, and that they meet the diverse needs of individuals and communities. Approaches to prevention will reflect diversity, and be tailored to respond to diverse and intersectional experiences of family violence. Strategies will strengthen community capacity to build and maintain healthy and respectful relationships.¹ Initiatives will be flexible, inclusive, responsive and strengths-based.

Knowing how different social conditions intersect to drive violence against different individuals or groups is critical to ensuring that the prevention strategies are effective for all people across our diverse Victorian community. The research agenda will include targeted activities to identify and address gaps in existing evidence and knowledge, especially for diverse groups.

¹ See the Diversity and Intersectionality Framework.

KEY INITIATIVES BY PRIORITY AREA TIMELINE





Specific communications activities will be targeted at different communities, including LGBTI communities, people with a disability, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and older people.

Innovation will focus on developing new approaches for diverse communities, to be applied in new settings so we can better understand what works to prevent violence. The development of a robust monitoring and evaluation framework for all prevention activities will include indicators and measures that are relevant and meaningful for people from diverse communities.

PRIORITY AREA ONE: BUILD PREVENTION STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS

Establishing a Family Violence Prevention Agency

As recommended by the Royal Commission into Family Violence, the Victorian Government will establish a new Family Violence Prevention Agency to coordinate and drive primary prevention efforts in Victoria to, over the long-term, reduce and ultimately prevent family violence and violence against women.

The Agency will work with prevention partners, including Victorian statewide agencies, the women's and community health sectors, peak bodies, specialist organisations, national peers, local government, prevention workforce development partners and the Victorian community.



Establishing the Family Violence Prevention Agency will harness the growing momentum in the community to prevent family violence by enabling community action, supporting Aboriginal self-determination and ensuring a broad reach of initiatives to support all Victorians.

Indicators from the Outcomes Framework that will be progressed by the long-term action in priority area one include:

- ... increased awareness of what constitutes violence
- ... increased recognition of the significant impact of violence on victim survivors
- ... increased awareness and understanding of the extent and impact of gender inequality**
- ... decrease in attitudes that justify, excuse, minimise, hide or shift blame for violence
- ... increased visible rejection of violence by public and community leaders and in media
- ... decrease in sexist and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours
- ... increase in organisations and institutions with systems to support people who challenge sexism and discrimination
- ... increased confidence in the systems and structures dedicated to preventing violence
- ... increased number of organisations and institutions who model and promote inclusive behaviour
- ... increased understanding of what constitutes healthy, supportive and safe relationships.

** *Safe and strong: A Victorian gender equality strategy* indicator

Work already underway

Funding secured for a Family Violence Prevention Agency

Dedicated and ongoing funding of \$3 million per annum was secured as part of the 2016–2017 State Budget to establish a Family Violence Prevention Agency. The Office of Prevention and Women's Equality has been undertaking consultations with government and non-government organisations progressing long-term social change to identify key success factors for agency establishment. The Office has received expert advice and analysis, including from the Ministerial Taskforce on the Prevention of Family Violence and other forms of Violence against Women, on proposed roles and functions for the Agency. This is being used to inform the development of the Agency.

Next steps

We will:

1.1 Establish a Family Violence Prevention Agency

We will establish a Family Violence Prevention Agency to embed, coordinate and drive primary prevention of family violence efforts in Victoria over the long term.

Responds to recommendation 188 of the Royal Commission into Family Violence

We will:

1.2 Continue the Victorian Government's funding contribution to key national prevention architecture

We will continue to support Our Watch, a national foundation to prevent violence against women and their children, and ANROWS, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety.

STRENGTHENING THE PRIMARY PREVENTION WORKFORCE: LINKING WITH *BUILDING FROM STRENGTH*

The specialist primary prevention sector is a small but growing sector. Primary prevention of family violence and violence against women practitioners currently have a wide range of academic backgrounds including health promotion, public health, gender studies, education, community development, youth work and public policy. Delivery of prevention activities at scale will require workers across a range of settings, including schools, workplaces, communities and the media, to have skills and knowledge to implement primary prevention activity.

Work already underway

... The Centre for Workforce Excellence, in partnership with key prevention stakeholders, has developed the Preventing Family Violence and Violence Against Women Capability Framework. The framework aims to clearly articulate the knowledge and skills needed to engage in primary prevention of family violence activities, for practitioners and contributors. Prevention of violence against women practitioners specialise in designing, implementing and monitoring prevention of family violence and violence against women initiatives and policy within and across settings. Practitioners may work in dedicated primary prevention or gender equity agencies or organisations but, for the most part, they work within a range of settings, including local government, community health and women's health organisations. Prevention of violence against women contributors have core duties and responsibilities that do not focus on prevention of family violence and violence against women, but they play a role in primary prevention initiatives and policies within diverse sectors across a range of workforces. The framework will guide the development and growth of the primary prevention workforce, and is intended for use by government, education and training providers, sector leaders, and management and human resources in organisations. The framework will be used for a range of purposes such as shaping formal and informal learning and development, role design, promoting cross-sectoral practice, communication in multidisciplinary work and supporting recruitment.

- ... We have continued to invest in the successful Gender and Disability Workforce Development Program to support disability service workers to embed primary prevention into their work.
- ... The Women's Health Association of Victoria has been funded to increase the capability of the workforce in women's health services in the prevention of violence against women, and to strengthen the broader prevention of violence against women sector.

Next steps

We will deliver the following actions in partnership with the Centre for Workforce Excellence:

1.3 Translate the Preventing Family Violence and Violence Against Women Capability Framework to sector- and community-specific contexts and develop new accredited primary prevention units of competency

We will undertake a project to forecast the size, skill and location requirements of the primary prevention workforce to inform future training and workforce development needs.

1.4 Develop and deliver new training in primary prevention

We will support the design and delivery of specialist primary prevention training to enhance prevention knowledge and skills for new and existing prevention practitioners and contributors. Training will support existing practitioners to advance to a more comprehensive level of practice, and new practitioners entering into the prevention workforce. This training will be the foundation for the development of a long-term training approach for specialist primary prevention practitioners.

1.5 Support the establishment of communities of practice and models of practice development for primary prevention practitioners and contributors

Communities and models of practice will foster sharing, learning and practice development.

BUILDING FROM STRENGTH: 10-YEAR INDUSTRY PLAN FOR FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Building from strength: 10-year industry plan for family violence prevention and response was launched in December 2017 and is a key element of the Victorian Government's family violence reform agenda. *Building from strength* aims to sustainably shift the way we prevent and respond to family violence and violence against women.

At its core is the creation of a system where the specialist family violence and primary prevention sectors work together with the community services, health, justice, education and training sectors to respond to the complexity and harms of family violence and violence against women, and to prevent this violence from occurring in the first place.

Building from strength has a broad scope across all workforces that intersect with family violence with respect to building family violence and primary prevention capability. It has a specific focus on the specialist family violence and the primary prevention sectors with regard to consistent and coordinated services, workforce supply and health and wellbeing of the workforce. The plan spans the continuum from prevention to response, recognising that having a system of services in place to respond to family violence and violence against women is matched by the need to prevent the violence from occurring.



BUILDING FROM STRENGTH

10-Year Industry Plan for Family
Violence Prevention and Response



Building from strength sets out a long-term vision for a workforce that is supported, valued, skilled and diverse. It outlines directions and immediate priority actions to lay the groundwork for sustained and enduring change.

A series of three-year rolling action plans will be developed, building on what works, incorporating emerging evidence and responding to the changing family violence, primary prevention and broader systems. The first *Building from strength* rolling action plan will be released in May 2018.

1.6 Support capacity building of the women's health sector

We will support the Women's Health Association of Victoria for a second year to strengthen the capacity and capability of the women's health sector to prevent family violence and violence against women.

Further support will be made available to the women's health sector to build the workforce capacity of regional partners to prevent family violence and violence against women.

1.7 Embed prevention practitioners

We will pilot a model of embedding prevention practitioners in the LGBTI community, seniors and Aboriginal sectors to improve primary prevention practice capacity and capability.

1.8 Support the disability sector and workforce

We will continue to invest in the successful Gender and Disability Workforce Development Program to support disability service workers to embed primary prevention into everyday practice.

1.9 Support future workforces to drive prevention efforts

We will work with professional bodies, universities and TAFEs to embed an understanding of prevention practice into the preservice qualifications of a range of workforces for example social workers, teachers, youth workers and nurses. By providing new graduates across a range of professions with the skills and knowledge to implement prevention frameworks and practice into their work we will maximise the opportunity for prevention.

PRIORITY AREA TWO: RESEARCH AND EVALUATE

There is a growing body of national and international research and evidence on the causes and impacts of family violence and violence against women, including what works to prevent it. As the focus on prevention expands across the state, we will take action to ensure that practice continues to be supported by a strong evidence base, that new and emerging findings are shared, and that data is available and up to date. We will take action to ensure that critical gaps in evidence are filled, particularly when they relate to violence against older Victorians; Aboriginal people and communities; people with a disability; culturally and linguistically diverse groups; adolescent violence; and violence in LGBTI communities.

To do this, the Victorian Government will establish a statewide research and evaluation agenda through Victoria's first Family Violence Prevention Research Alliance. The alliance will bring together academics, researchers and evaluators with an interest and expertise in the prevention of family violence and all forms of violence against women to identify immediate research priorities and set a long-term research agenda with government. This will complement the existing work of ANROWS, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety.



There will be an ongoing commitment to and investment in high-quality evaluation through the development of a monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework for *Free from violence*. This framework will assess the impact and outcomes of our actions and ensure a continuous cycle of review, with emerging lessons improving our approach over time. Findings will directly inform the design and delivery of future activities for priority area three ('Innovate and inform') and priority area four ('Scale up and build on what we know works').

By 2021, we will have built and strengthened family violence prevention knowledge and practice through sound, evidence-based research, monitoring and evaluation. Victoria will continue to lead the way in prevention research and practice.

Indicators from the Outcomes Framework that will be progressed by the long-term action in priority area two include:

- ... increased awareness of what constitutes violence
- ... increased recognition of the significant impact of violence on victim survivors
- ... increased awareness and understanding of the extent and impact of gender inequality**
- ... decrease in attitudes that justify, excuse, minimise, hide or shift blame for violence
- ... increase in organisations and institutions with systems to support people who challenge sexism and discrimination
- ... increased confidence in the systems and structures dedicated to preventing violence.

** *Safe and strong: A Victorian gender equality strategy* indicator

Work already underway

- ... In developing *Free from violence*, the Victorian Government commissioned a report to identify:
 - ... gaps in knowledge relating to all manifestations of family violence
 - ... factors that contribute to experiences of family violence among diverse communities
 - ... existing knowledge on what works to prevent family violence with different population groups and the key gaps in evidence that pose significant barriers to preventing family violence.

The report, *Family violence primary prevention: Building a knowledge base and identifying gaps for all manifestations of family violence*, developed by the Equality Institute, is available at www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence/prevention-strategy

- ... Recognising the significant gaps in research and knowledge with respect to family violence for people from LGBTI communities, the Victorian Government initiated a review of research on the broader determinants of violence against LGBTI people that have an impact on rates and patterns of family violence specific to LGBTI people. To identify effective prevention strategies for LGBTI communities, it is necessary to understand LGBTI people's experiences of violence, including family violence. The findings from this research, undertaken by Our Watch and Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria, will inform the development of innovative activity supported under priority area three ('Innovate and inform').
- ... The Royal Commission into Family Violence recommended that the Family Violence Index measure, as far as possible, the extent of and response to family violence in different communities. The purpose of the index is to enable the measurement of future policy impacts, system improvements and investments in family violence prevention and responses. Phase one of the Family Violence Index project scoped potential ways in which this could be done. Phase two of the Family Violence Index is now underway and will consider synergies with the Outcomes Framework.



Next steps

We will:

2.1 Continue to develop the *Free from violence* Outcomes Framework and Family Violence Index

We will do further work to distil the indicators that will allow us to measure progress against the Outcomes Framework. Data sources will be mapped and new data sets will be commissioned to ensure that progress can be monitored over time. As part of this project, a monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework will be developed for the strategy.

We will continue to progress the development of a Family Violence Index as recommended by the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

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Responds to recommendation 143 of the Royal Commission into Family Violence

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2.2 Undertake an audit of prevention activity across Victoria

An audit of prevention activity will identify opportunities for prevention initiatives across the priority areas of *Free from violence* and will inform future sequencing and scope of activity.

2.3 Commission immediate research and establish a Family Violence Prevention Research Alliance

We will commission immediate research to fill critical gaps in knowledge around what works to prevent family violence and violence against women, particularly for Aboriginal people and communities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities (with a focus on refugee and migrant woman), LGBTI communities, university settings, seniors, women with a disability, bystanders and men.

A Family Violence Prevention Research Alliance will bring together academics, researchers and evaluators with an interest and expertise in family violence prevention and behavioural science and public health. The alliance will inform the development of a long-term, strategic prevention research agenda. The research agenda will complement the existing work of ANROWS, Our Watch, VicHealth and other leading prevention organisations and experts.

2.4 Identify opportunities to scale up existing Community Partnerships for Primary Prevention projects

We will undertake further evaluation of the Community Partnerships for Primary Prevention grants program to identify opportunities for the scale up or expansion of existing partnerships, models and activity.

PRIORITY AREA THREE: INNOVATE AND INFORM

There are many organisations and sectors that are capable and willing to test new prevention activities, as well as opportunities to trial existing programs in new settings and with different communities. There is also an opportunity to better understand how to innovate in the prevention of family violence and all forms of violence against women. This includes applying the learning from other successful public health prevention programs and social change campaigns such as the prevention of skin cancer and promotion of road safety.

To build our knowledge of effective primary prevention in different settings and contexts, we will embrace and utilise innovation in the design, implementation and evaluation of new techniques and programs – by 2021, we will have trialled, tested and evaluated a range of new and innovative initiatives so we better understand what works to prevent violence.

The findings of new and emerging research evidence and program evaluations from priority area two ('Research and evaluate') will feed into the design of innovative programs and activities, including research from across jurisdictions and internationally.

Evaluation will be a key feature of each innovation activity from the outset and will inform decision making about innovation activities or elements of activities that can be incorporated into priority area four ('Scale up and build on what we know works'). Results from ongoing monitoring and evaluation will contribute to the broader prevention evidence base so that lessons from innovative activities can be built on and incorporated into new and revised activity.

Innovation will be supported with funding for testing initiatives in priority areas. A specific family violence prevention innovation fund will support Aboriginal-led services to design, monitor and evaluate innovative prevention practice for the Aboriginal community. Innovative practice will also develop the evidence base about new activities that will achieve gender equality change in media and reporting and at sporting clubs and associations.

Indicators from the Outcomes Framework that will be progressed by the long-term action in priority area three include:

- ... increased awareness of what constitutes violence
- ... increased recognition of the significant impact of violence on victim survivors
- ... increased awareness and understanding of the extent and impact of gender inequality**
- ... decrease in attitudes that justify, excuse, minimise, hide or shift blame for violence
- ... decrease in sexist and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours
- ... increase in organisations and institutions with systems to support people who challenge sexism and discrimination
- ... increased confidence in the systems and structures dedicated to preventing violence
- ... decrease in acceptance of bullying or controlling behaviour.

** *Safe and strong: A Victorian gender equality strategy* indicator



Work already underway

- ... The Bystanders for Prevention project applied a behavioural insights approach to improve understanding of the most effective ways young people and men can be supported to stand up to instances of sexism and discrimination. Extending the findings of this initial work, a behavioural insights bystander trial will be delivered in key settings.
- ... Initiatives for the prevention of elder abuse and associated community awareness raising campaigns are being rolled out in partnership with Carers Victoria and Seniors Rights Victoria. This includes a media campaign, 10 local elder abuse networks, an ambassador for elder abuse and research into elder abuse. Further work will be undertaken in priority area two ('Research and evaluate') and priority area five ('Engage and communicate with the community').
- ... Funding has been provided to community grantees to prevent violence for culturally and linguistically diverse groups.

Next steps

We will:

3.1 Deliver an innovation fund to support innovative prevention practice

An innovation fund will support innovative prevention practice across rural, regional and metropolitan Victoria.

3.2 Support innovation in the prevention of violence against Aboriginal people

We will support Aboriginal-led services, including Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and Indigenous family violence regional action groups, to design and deliver innovative prevention activity. The program will take a strengths-based approach and will ensure that Aboriginal-led services are supported to lead innovative prevention action for Aboriginal communities.

3.3 Pilot programs to support gender equality and primary prevention in media and reporting

We will deliver a program to develop gender equality and prevention in media and reporting. This will link closely with early actions around gender equality identified in *Safe and strong*.

3.4 Pilot programs to embed gender equality in sporting sites

We will deliver a grants program to pilot and test new gender equality and prevention guidelines in sports settings at a variety of sites. This will link closely with early actions around gender equality identified in *Safe and strong*.

3.5 Test a tailored approach of prevention for culturally diverse communities

In partnership with the Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, we will pilot and test innovative, place-based, integrated support models of prevention for culturally diverse communities.

3.6 Support the prevention of family violence and all forms of violence against women through the arts

A partnership with Creative Victoria will harness the arts as a mechanism to explore and challenge the social norms that drive family violence and all forms of violence against women.

PRIORITY AREA FOUR: SCALE UP AND BUILD ON WHAT WE KNOW WORKS

The number of prevention activities and initiatives that have been proven to work continues to grow. Some of these initiatives have been undertaken on a small or local scale, while others have had regional and statewide reach.

By 2021, we will have piloted, evaluated and rolled out a range of expanded activities in rural, regional and metropolitan areas in a variety of settings. In phase one, prevention models and approaches that have demonstrated their success by leveraging existing structures will be supported to scale up and expand. Local governments will be supported to engage dedicated family violence prevention officers, in recognition of their critical role in community capacity building; and achieving equity, economic and liveability outcomes for all Victorians.



As a major employer of people across the state, the Victorian public service will also be a key setting to scale up and embed successful primary prevention approaches to support organisational change and will be supported to implement best-practice prevention workplace programs in public sector workplaces.

Primary prevention activities will be strengthened in university and TAFE sites, adopting a whole-of-site approach to reach both students and staff. A number of existing projects supported through the 2016–2017 Community Partnerships for Primary Prevention grants programs will be scaled up following evaluation.

Victorians will engage with prevention messages and activity in the places we work, learn, live and play. The scaling up of prevention activities will accelerate progress, resulting in noticeable changes in awareness and attitudes towards inequality and violence.

Indicators from the Outcomes Framework that will be progressed by the long-term action in priority area four include:

- ... increased awareness of what constitutes violence
- ... increased recognition of the significant impact of violence on victim survivors
- ... increased awareness and understanding of the extent and impact of gender inequality**
- ... decrease in attitudes that justify, excuse, minimise, hide or shift blame for violence
- ... decrease in sexist and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours
- ... increased visible rejection of violence by public and community leaders and in the media
- ... decrease in sexist and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours
- ... increase in organisations and institutions with systems to support people who challenge sexism and discrimination
- ... increase in bystanders feeling supported to challenge sexism and discrimination
- ... increased confidence in the systems and structures dedicated to preventing violence
- ... increased number of organisations and institutions who model and promote inclusive behaviour
- ... increased understanding of what constitutes healthy, supportive and safe relationships
- ... decrease in acceptance of bullying or controlling behaviour.

** *Safe and strong: A Victorian gender equality strategy* indicator

Work already underway

- ... The Community Partnerships for Primary Prevention grants program is designed to support innovative community partnerships to coordinate and drive family violence prevention activities at the local level. In 2017, 34 community grants totalling \$3.85 million were provided to a range of organisations and community groups to promote primary prevention within local and regional communities. The most successful will be continued under this priority area.
- ... Partners in Prevention is a capacity-building network of professionals working to support the delivery of Respectful Relationships education. The program is currently being supported for broader rollout to complement the Department of Education and Training's statewide rollout of Respectful Relationships education.
- ... The Workplace Equality and Respect Project is a primary prevention program delivered to workplaces through partnerships with relevant organisations. This innovative project piloted existing evidence and emerging practice in workplaces, consolidating and building on existing initiatives to produce a package of evidence-based standards and tools to support workplaces to take action to prevent violence against women.

Next steps

We will:

4.1 Scale up workplace prevention programs

We will scale up primary prevention programs in the public sector by implementing best-practice programs in public sector workplaces; maintaining a web-based portal or database of program models, tool kits, training resources and packages for application and use in all workplaces; and utilising existing regulatory frameworks and government procurement policies to support all Victoria employers in implementing best-practice family violence policies.

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Responds to recommendation 192 of the Royal Commission into Family Violence

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4.2 Support universities and TAFEs to deliver whole-of-university prevention initiatives

Universities and TAFES in metropolitan and regional areas will be supported to implement whole-of-setting approaches at five sites based on existing successful models. A framework will be established to undertake a rigorous cross-site evaluation.

4.3 Support local government to be leaders in prevention

We will support local government in the design and delivery of innovative prevention activity.

Local government will be invited to participate in a co-contribution model.

We will support the Municipal Association of Victoria to strengthen coordination and whole-of-sector primary prevention activity.

4.4 Support antenatal and postnatal settings to deliver primary prevention activities

We will deliver a primary prevention program for expecting and new parents in antenatal and/or prenatal service delivery sites across the state.

4.5 Expand the Partners in Prevention program

We will expand the Partners in Prevention program to build the capacity of family violence prevention agencies and support them in partnering with early childhood services and schools in Victoria to develop, implement and evaluate Respectful Relationships education.

4.6 Pilot primary prevention bystander programs

Learnings from behavioural science will inform the design and delivery of a Bystander for Primary Prevention trial supporting bystander action against instances of sexism and discrimination in key settings.

4.7 Scale up projects from the Community Partnerships for Primary Prevention grants program

We will provide funding to continue a number of Community Partnerships for Primary Prevention grants projects following evaluation.

PRIORITY AREA FIVE: ENGAGE AND COMMUNICATE WITH THE COMMUNITY

All Victorians have a role to play in preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women. Community behaviour change and awareness campaigns will help ensure that everyone in Victoria actively embraces their role in shaping cultures that reject discrimination, inequality and violence.

Changing attitudes and behaviours towards family violence and all forms of violence against women will take time, but it is critical to achieving progress. Successful road safety, workplace safety and quit-smoking campaigns have demonstrated that consistent and long-term messaging that reach people in a variety of ways, is essential to sustained change.

We will continue to deliver a mass behaviour change campaign including individualised campaigns supporting the prevention of family violence for seniors as well as the LGBTI and Aboriginal communities.

We will use real voices to tell real stories and ensure that the prevention of family violence and all forms of violence against women is on everyone's agenda.

By 2021, we will see an increased awareness of what constitutes family violence and all forms of violence against women, an increase in the number of individuals seeking assistance and/or support, and a greater level of community ownership and understanding in ending family violence.



Indicators from the Outcomes Framework that will be progressed by the long-term action in priority area five include:

- ... increased awareness of what constitutes violence
- ... increased recognition of the significant impact of violence on victim survivors
- ... increased awareness and understanding of the extent and impact of gender inequality**
- ... decrease in attitudes that justify, excuse, minimise, hide or shift blame for violence
- ... decrease in sexist and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours
- ... increased visible rejection of violence by public and community leaders and in media
- ... increased confidence in the systems and structures dedicated to preventing violence
- ... increased number of organisations and institutions who model and promote inclusive behaviour
- ... increased understanding of what constitutes healthy, supportive and safe relationships.

** *Safe and strong: A Victorian gender equality strategy indicator*



Next steps

We will:

5.1 Further develop a prevention of family violence and violence against women communications strategy

We will further develop the Victorian Government's strategic and evidence-informed prevention communications strategy. The strategy draws on best-practice messaging to effectively reach the Victorian community and promote positive cultural change in order to shift the behaviours and attitudes that drive family violence and violence against women.

5.2 Deliver a prevention of family violence and violence against women behaviour change campaign

We will develop a second mass behaviour change campaign, drawing on lessons learned from successful quit-smoking and road safety behaviour change campaigns.

Work already underway

- ... In 2017-2018, the Victorian Government will continue to develop and lead the family violence behaviour change campaign. From February 2018, the campaign will expand on the mass awareness commercials launched in December 2016 by focusing on prevention. The expansion will include a mainstream television campaign, as well as specific campaigns targeting various cohorts considered at 'high risk' of exposure to family violence.
- ... Victoria Against Violence (VAV) is a 16-day community-based education and awareness initiative designed to promote a greater understanding of the devastating impact of family violence and violence against women in the community and to encourage collective action to prevent family violence.



5.3 Deliver an Aboriginal family violence behaviour change campaign

In collaboration with the Aboriginal community, we will develop a behaviour change campaign that focuses on preventing family violence for Aboriginal people and communities.

5.4 Deliver an LGBTI family violence behaviour change campaign

In collaboration with the LGBTI community, we will develop a behaviour change campaign that focuses on preventing family violence for LGBTI communities.

5.5 Deliver an elder abuse behaviour change campaign

We will develop an elder abuse family violence behaviour change campaign that focuses on increasing the knowledge and recognition of elder abuse amongst older people, the wider community and professionals in health and family violence services.

5.6 Deliver a financial abuse media campaign

We will develop a media campaign to raise awareness of financial abuse.

5.7 Support the 2018 Victoria Against Violence (VAV) 16 Days of Activism campaign

We will again support the VAV 16 days of activism campaign. In 2018 VAV will continue to call the whole Victorian community to take action to prevent family violence and violence against women, including grant funding to community organisations to carry out their own 16 days prevention activities.



FREE FROM VIOLENCE: VICTORIA'S STRATEGY TO PREVENT FAMILY
VIOLENCE AND ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

FIRST ACTION PLAN 2018–2021

Accessibility

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In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 'Indigenous' or 'Koori/Koorie' is retained when part of the title of a report, program or quotation.

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