

World first framework launches to *Change the story* of violence against women and their children in Australia

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In a world first, Australia now has a framework for a consistent and integrated national approach to prevent violence against women and their children.

Our Watch, the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) and Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) today launched [*Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*](#).

Change the story brings together the latest international evidence on what drives violence against women, and what works to prevent it. The Framework represents more than 400 diverse stakeholder groups from around the country, explained Our Watch Chair Natasha Stott Despoja.

"This is a watershed moment," Ms Stott Despoja said.

"With *Change the Story* we are better placed than ever before to end violence against women and children in Australia."

"As we have seen with other major social changes, such as smoking prevention and the wearing of seat-belts, we need governmental, organisational and systematic change across the community," she said.

ANROWS Chief Executive Officer Heather Nancarrow said that throughout the extensive research and consultations, one major theme stood out.

"Gender influences patterns of violence victimisation and perpetration more than any other variable, according to our recent analysis of data from the 2012 ABS Personal Safety Survey," Ms Nancarrow said.

"This Framework will help to change the story on gender inequality and violence against women."

"Building communities that are safe, respectful and free from violence requires effective, and evidence-based, primary prevention strategies," she said.

The Framework and [related video](#), also launched today, show that to *Change the story* that ends in violence against women, we must begin with gender equality and respect. Both bring together extensive research indicating that, for survivors and perpetrators, violence against women is the conclusion often reached after a life story informed by gender inequality.

The Framework extends to a national level, building on previous work undertaken in Victoria. VicHealth's 2007 prevention framework helped drive activity across research, policy and programs, explained VicHealth Chief Executive Officer, Jerril Rechter.

"State and territory governments and their communities are now ready to move to the next stage of prevention" she said.

"Our research shows that too many people still think violence against women occurs because of individual stress or anger management issues, or that men can't control themselves."

"But the fact is we need to focus on gender equality and respectful relationships if we want to make a difference."

“Across sectors like sports, business, media and advertising, education and all levels of government, everyone has a reinforcing role to play in changing the story that ends in violence against women,” Ms Rechter said.

Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia is an initiative under the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022.

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*If you cover this story, or any story regarding violence against women and children, please include the following tagline:

“If you or someone you know is impacted by sexual assault, family or domestic violence, call 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732 or visit www.1800RESPECT.org.au. In an emergency, call 000”

To access guides for reporting about violence against women and their children, visit: www.ourwatch.org.au

Media contacts available across Australia

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ABOUT OUR WATCH

Our Watch's (previously the Foundation to Prevent Violence against Women and their Children) purpose is to raise awareness and engage policy-makers and the Australian community in action to prevent violence against women and their children.

Our Watch was conceived of and brought into existence in 2013 by the Commonwealth of Australia and the State of Victoria. The Northern Territory, South Australian and Tasmanian governments have also since become members of the organisation.

Our Watch's work derives from the government's commitment to the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010 – 2022* and gives expression to many of the activities in the *Second Action Plan 2013–2016 – Moving Ahead*.