

Taking action to end violence against women

A guide for members of the
CoRE Alliance



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Acknowledgements

Women's Health Grampians acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands across the Grampians region: the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Djab Wurrung, Wurundjeri, Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Peoples, and recognises their continuing connection to the land and waterways. We recognise the strength and courage of Aboriginal women and girls in our communities who bravely speak up against oppression and the consequences of colonisation and generously share their wisdom on family, country and culture.

Women's Health Grampians also acknowledges the many women and gender diverse people who have lived experience of discrimination and violence, and who, by bravely sharing their stories, have helped inspire cultural change.

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About this resource

As a member of the Communities of Respect and Equality (CoRE) Alliance, your organisation has demonstrated a meaningful commitment to the prevention of violence against women and children.

Our communities should be safe, inclusive and welcoming places for people to live, work and thrive. While family violence and violence against women and gender diverse people is perpetrated by individuals, it stems from inequality, tolerance of harmful behaviours, gendered norms and stereotypes, and disrespectful attitudes towards women, girls and gender diverse people. These factors are known as the drivers of gendered violence. CoRE members can make an impact on community safety by actively challenging these drivers.

This guide offers practical, evidence-based actions that your organisation can take to foster happy and healthy communities free from violence and inequality, in line with Our Watch's *Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia* (2nd edition).

Change the Story provides an evidence-based approach and conceptual model for action for the primary prevention of violence against women. It is accompanied by *Changing the Picture: a national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children* and *Changing the Landscape: a national resource to prevent violence against women and girls with disabilities*.

Note: Women's Health Grampians uses an inclusive definition of 'women' that includes all people who identify as women.



Eight Essential Areas for Action

Primary prevention means stopping violence before it starts. There are eight essential action areas set out in the *Change the Story* framework that CoRE members can consider to address the gendered drivers to prevent violence against women.

Essential actions to address the gendered drivers of violence against women

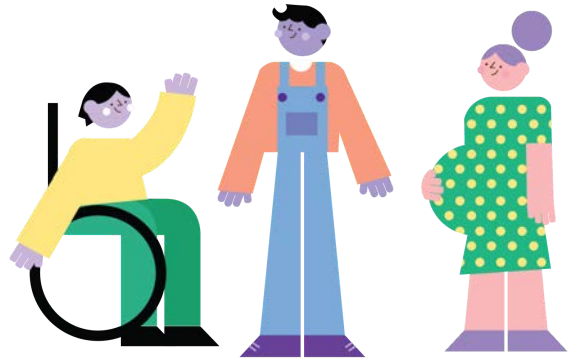
ACTION AREA 1: Challenge condoning of violence against women

ACTION AREA 2: Promote women's independence in decision-making in public life and relationships

ACTION AREA 3: Build new social norms that foster personal identities not constrained by rigid gender stereotypes

ACTION AREA 4: Support men and boys to develop healthy masculinities, and positive, supportive male peer relationships





Essential actions to address the social context that gives rise to violence against women

ACTION AREA 5: Promote and normalise gender equality in public and private life

ACTION AREA 6: Address the intersections between gender inequality and other forms of systemic and structural oppression and discrimination, and promote broader social justice

ACTION AREA 7: Build safe, fair and equitable organisations and institutions by focusing on policy and systems change

ACTION AREA 8: Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relations between and among women and men, girls and boys, in public and private spheres

While this guide offers direct examples and practical solutions, it is up to CoRE members to decide how to implement and expand on these ideas, based on the specific purpose, setting and circumstances of your organisation. As a member of the CoRE Alliance, your organisation can use these action areas as a guide to tailor a plan specific to your unique context.

Together, we can create a safe, equal and respectful community.

Action 1:

Challenge the condoning of violence against women

We must all challenge the attitudes, behaviours, systems and beliefs that perpetuate disrespect and inequality within personal and peer relationships, and in the wider community. It is imperative that we don't downplay, trivialise, justify or normalise violence against women and gender diverse people, or shift blame away from the perpetrator.

Examples of action

Leadership

Challenge violence against all women and gender diverse people and foster a culture of respect which supports staff and stakeholders to do the same.

Model strong leadership and take action against sexist language and jokes.

Policies

Reiterate your organisation's policy of respect and equality through public messaging, training, staff induction and policy reviews.

Ensure that your staff are aware of their ability to access Family Violence Leave.

Facilitate a process for accessing family violence leave which considers the barriers some survivors may face in requesting it.

Communications

Display your CoRE Alliance Commitment Charter and Leadership Statement in offices, venues and online.

Develop a communications strategy which enables a strong response to examples of violence against women and gender diverse people in the community. Be proactive in calling out these incidents and supporting survivors.

Publicly support campaigns that challenge the condoning of violence against women and gender diverse people such as 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. Host events and promote messaging within your organisation and publicly. Encourage staff or members to attend events.

Training

Provide active bystander training to foster a speak-out culture around sexism, discrimination and violence. Embed the training into learning and development schedules for ongoing impact.

Embed a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment. Consider training for managers on how to create a culture that prevents sexual harassment from occurring.

Action 2: Promote women's independence and decision making in public life and relationships

Limitations on women's independence and decision-making occurs in both the public and private spheres. Within the public sphere, this takes the shape of lower numbers of women (particularly women from diverse backgrounds) in politics, at decision-making levels throughout the community and in leadership roles within organisations.

Within the personal sphere, it is evident in heteronormative stereotypes of the male breadwinner who controls household finances and decision-making. To foster a more equitable society, we must create space for women, girls and gender-diverse people to participate on an equal footing with men and boys - economically, politically and socially.

Examples of action

Leadership

Create leadership pathways and mentoring for women and gender diverse people across a range of roles in your organisation and in the community.

Ensure the voices of women and gender diverse people are included at a leadership and decision-making level in your organisation and the broader community.

Consider gender equality goals in strategic planning. Set gender diversity targets across roles including in management.

Policies

Collect, report and analyse organisational data by gender and other demographic factors, and set up processes so that this is done systematically.

Conduct a gender audit across the organisation and develop an action plan for change - through CoRE or, for defined entities, as part of your obligations under the Gender Equality Act.

Identify and analyse the gender pay gap in your organisation. Build awareness about the need for change, and implement strategies recommended by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency.

Communications

Celebrate the accomplishments and achievements of women, girls and gender diverse people in your community and specific organisation.

Training

Support managers to undertake gender equality training to provide them with an understanding of the impact of gender inequality and stereotypes.

Ensure your senior staff and board are aware of unconscious bias and how to mitigate its effect, organisationally and on a community level through training and ongoing dialogue.

Action 3:

Build new social norms that foster personal identities not constrained by rigid gender stereotypes

Sometimes prescribed roles for men and women appear harmless, however it is these attitudes that ultimately contribute to the perpetuation of gendered violence. Disrupting the gender binary and traditional ideas about masculinity and femininity is vital. Your organisation can reject gendered roles and stereotypes by creating a culture of equality and respect for all staff, regardless of gender.

Examples of action

Leadership

Consult and collaborate with women and gender diverse people in the community, particularly on issues that affect them. Ensure that diverse groups are represented in decision-making processes.

Tackle gender segregation in the workplace and in the community by ensuring recruitment processes and professional opportunities are inclusive of and promoted to women, men and gender diverse people.

Policies

Promote flexible work arrangements and parental and carers leave to all employees and encourage men to take up these options as well as women.

Ensure facilities are welcoming for all people. For example, gender neutral baby changing facilities are preferable to changing tables in women's bathrooms.

Communications

Challenge the gender binary. Ensure policies and programs are inclusive of gender diverse people, and encourage and support the use of pronouns.

To learn more, prioritise professional development and cultural change programs by LGBTIQA+-led organisations.

Undertake an image audit and use promotional images which portray people of all genders and diversity representing your organisation in varied ways.

Training

Provide active bystander training to staff to foster a speak-out culture around sexism, discrimination and violence. Embed the training into learning and development schedules for ongoing impact.

Support managers to undertake gender equality training to provide them with an understanding of the impact of gender inequality and stereotypes.

Avoid making assumptions about people based on gender in social and professional settings - consider unconscious bias training to address this at the organisational level.

Action 4:

Support men and boys to develop healthy masculinities and positive, supportive male peer relationships

Forms of masculinity that promote aggression and disrespect don't just hurt women, girls and gender diverse people. Men and boys are also negatively affected by social norms and traditional masculine stereotypes. Encouraging expressions of healthy masculinities is vital to the prevention of violence against women and gender diverse people in our communities.

Examples of action

Leadership

Model respectful behaviours and communication across all areas of your organisation - reinforce positive forms of masculinity, emphasising inclusivity, respect and mutual support.

Promote community actions which encourage depictions of healthy and positive masculinities and engage staff in prevention campaigns, such as 16 Days of Activism to End Gender-based Violence and International Women's Day.

Policies

Encourage men to take carers and parental leave. Celebrate fatherhood and discuss flexible roles with male employees.

Communications

Use imagery that challenges gendered norms and promotes healthy expressions of masculinity and respectful relationships - consider an image audit to assess existing communications collateral in a systematic way.

Training

Provide active bystander training to foster a speak-out culture around sexism, discrimination and violence. Embed the training into learning and development schedules for ongoing impact.

Embed a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment. Consider training for managers on how to create a culture that prevents sexual harassment from occurring.

Prepare for and manage resistance and backlash within the organisation. Provide training on how to do this to leadership teams.

Action 5:

Promote and normalise gender equality in public and private life

Gender inequality can be difficult to quantify in everyday life because it can be subtle, impersonal and normalised. Viewing social structures and systems through a gendered lens will allow your organisation to act meaningfully and contribute to a more equitable world.

Examples of action

Leadership

Be clear and public in your organisation's zero tolerance for violence and disrespect towards women and gender diverse people - develop a leadership statement emphasising this and promote it internally and externally.

Participate in regional, national and international campaigns denouncing violence against women (for example: 16 Days of Activism, Ochre Ribbon Week, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women).

Publicly support and advocate for equal pay, equal representation and equal opportunities for women, men and gender diverse people.

Policies

Apply a gender lens to your policies and procedures. For example, ensure that your recruitment process is gender neutral - consider the language and images used in advertisements, or representation on interview panels.

Actively promote flexible work arrangements and conduct an audit of positions, departments and position descriptions. Include flexible work options where possible, including for senior and leadership positions.

Conduct a facilities audit to ensure facilities are accessible and equally fitted for all users, including people from diverse backgrounds and non-binary community members.

Communications

Publicly promote your membership to the CoRE Alliance. Display the CoRE logo and your CoRE Commitment Charter on your organisation's website and in promotional materials.

Apply an intersectional gender lens to your organisation's communications strategy. Consider the images and language your organisation uses in collateral and marketing material.

Training

Support managers to undertake gender equality training to provide them with an understanding of the impact of gender inequality and stereotypes.

Action 6:

Address the intersections between gender inequality and other forms of systemic and structural oppression and discrimination, and promote broader social justice

Intersectionality acknowledges that gender inequality is compounded by the overlapping effects of other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience due to characteristics such as race, Aboriginality, religion, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, rurality and/or gender identity. By planning and implementing actions which take an intersectional approach to inequality, we can play a role in promoting social justice for everyone in our communities.

Examples of action

Leadership

Ensure women from diverse groups have a voice in your organisation. Provide opportunities for participation and leadership.

Engage representative groups within your community to consult on issues which affect them, relevant to your organisation. Ensure you budget for this in the planning.

Policies

Embed intersectionality in your approach to promoting gender equity. Collect data with consideration to different demographic factors and implement diversity targets representative of diverse groups in your community.

Consider developing inclusion plans for your organisation/club such as Reconciliation Action Plan, Accessibility Inclusion Plan, Tiny Pride or Rainbow Tick accreditation.

Communications

Support community efforts to celebrate and promote diversity and challenge discrimination in all forms. Embrace opportunities to partner with advocacy groups within your community on campaigns promoting diversity.

Promote diversity in marketing material, publications and on your organisation's website and social media channels.

Training

Encourage staff to attend intersectionality training and other professional development opportunities to enhance anti-discrimination and anti-inequality actions within your organisation.

Ensure all staff attend cultural safety training at induction, and at regular intervals.

Action 7:

Build safe, fair and equitable organisations and institutions by focusing on policy and systems change

Preventing violence against women and children needs to be addressed holistically. As individuals, we can all make a commitment to challenging the drivers of gendered violence. However, this effort should also occur structurally and systemically - within organisations and institutions - if we are to create a meaningful, sustainable reduction in the prevalence of gender-based violence.

Examples of action

Leadership

Link gender equality with the organisation's mission, vision and values. Develop and publish gender equality statements for each value.

Ensure contracts with other businesses include requirements for gender equality.

Policies

Collect, report and analyse organisational data by gender and other demographic factors, and set up processes so that this is done systematically.

Conduct a gender audit across the organisation and develop an action plan for change - through CoRE, or, for defined entities, as part of your obligations under the Gender Equality Act.

Review or develop policies with a gender and intersectionality lens, particularly: Flexible Work Policy; Working from Home Policy; Family Violence Leave Policy; Parental Leave Policy; and Sexual Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination policies, as well as processes for complaints.

Communications

Ensure your communications materials, website and social media channels are accessible and include information in other languages.

Conduct an image audit to systematically assess existing communications collateral to ensure it promotes equality and diversity.

Training

Provide active bystander training to foster a speak-out culture around sexism, discrimination and violence. Embed the training into learning and development schedules for ongoing impact.

Consider management or leadership training in addressing unconscious bias; flexible work arrangements; sexual harassment; and responding to disclosures of family violence.

Action 8:

Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relations between and among women and men, girls and boys, in public and private spheres

Respectful relationships are based on trust, respect and equality. Organisations have a role to play in promoting and modelling positive, equal and respectful relationships in all contexts, demonstrating how sexism and discrimination can be challenged and gender equality normalised.

Examples of action

Leadership

Foster a culture of respect, inclusion and equality among people of all genders by modelling positive relationships within your organisation and the community.

If children and young people are involved with your organisation, ensure the presence of positive role models who champion respect and inclusion.

Link gender equality with the organisation's mission, vision and values. Develop and publish gender equality statements for each value.

Policies

Appoint gender-balanced teams when allocating tasks and activities and avoid gender segregation where possible.

Ensure staff and community members in contact with your organisation have access to information regarding family violence resources and support if needed.

Communications

Celebrate the accomplishments and achievements of women, girls and gender diverse people in your community and specific organisation.

Publicly promote your membership to the CoRE Alliance. Display the CoRE logo and your CoRE Commitment Charter on your organisation's website and in promotional materials.

Training

Provide active bystander training to staff to foster a speak-out culture around sexism, discrimination and violence. Embed the training into learning and development schedules for ongoing impact.

Embed a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment. Consider training for managers on how to create a culture that prevents sexual harassment from occurring.



CoRE support

Women's Health Grampians can support your organisation to take action to end violence against women. Support is provided through:

- One-on-one consultations with WHG's Regional Consultants
- Leadership briefings
- Training programs
- Community of Practice events
- Practical resources
- CoRE Friends Network for individuals within CoRE member organisations

Get in touch with your Regional Consultant to find out more.

Further resources

The following CoRE resources can also support and inspire your actions.

CoRE Sporting Clubs - Taking Action Guide

https://whg.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/CoRE-Resource_Sporting-Clubs_Taking-Action-Guide_FINAL.pdf

Intersectionality Guide - a tool for CoRE members

<https://whg.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Intersectionality-Guide-FINAL-February-2020.pdf>

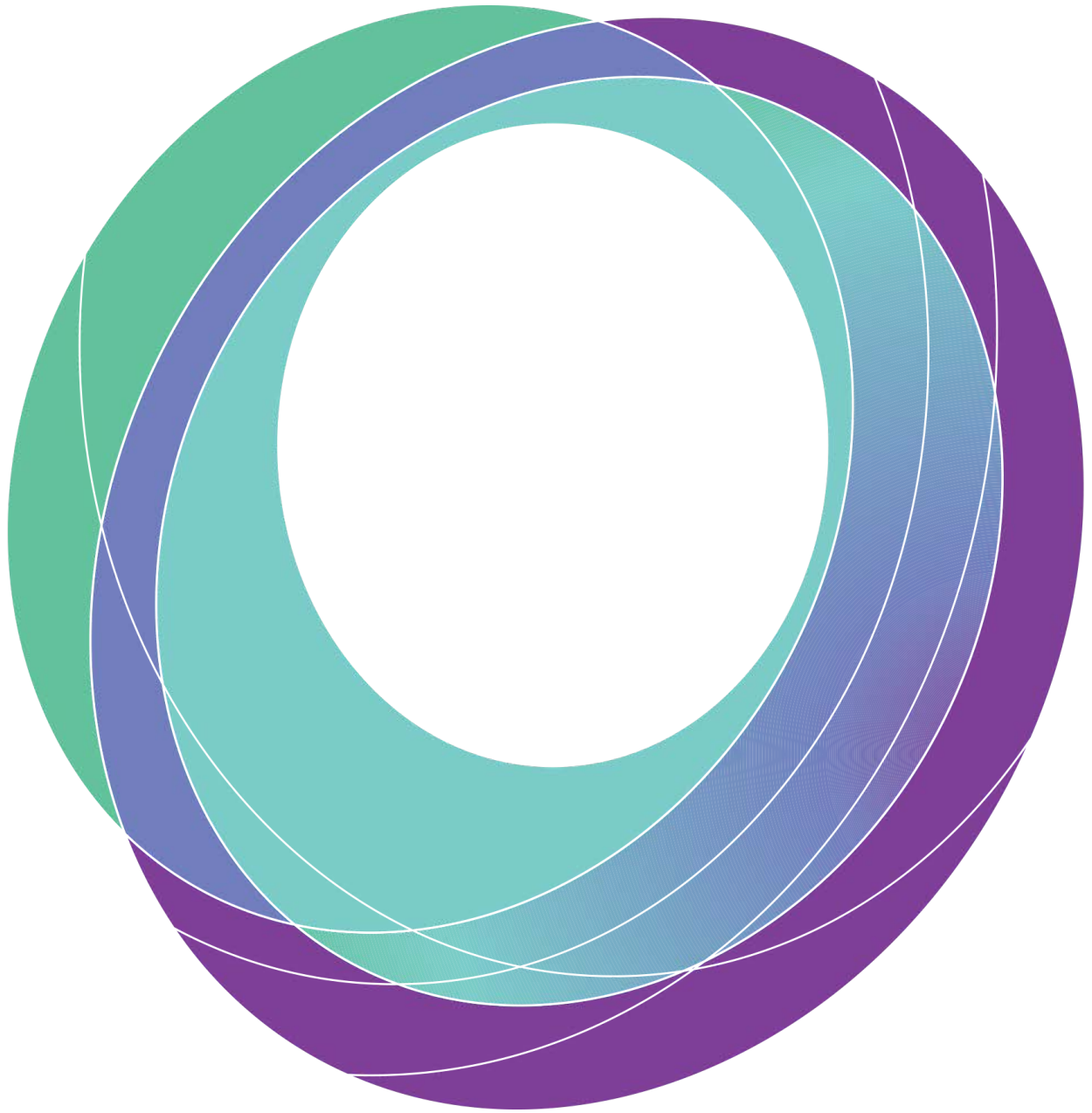
Local stories of action: A resource to support members of the Communities of Respect & Equality (CoRE) Alliance

https://whg.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/CoRE_LocalStoriesResource.pdf

Advice Note: Sexual harassment in the workplace

<https://whg.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/ADVICE-NOTE-Sexual-Harassment-in-the-Workplace.pdf>





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