

End Family Violence

We are seeking:

1. State Government investment to fund a four-year position for a Violence Free Officer to co-ordinate and streamline early intervention for family violence support services.
2. State Government investment to fund a four-year position to deliver on Gender Equity Action Plans and Gender Impact Assessments.



“We all deserve a world where we can live and love freely and fully, where families and relationships are safe and respectful, and people have everything they need to thrive.”

Safe + Equal 2023

Family violence is preventable

By addressing gender inequality and the underlying drivers and reinforcing factors of violence, we can prevent it from happening in the first place. Ending family and gendered-based violence saves lives, and alleviates the impacts on victim-survivors, families, friends and communities.

Banyule Council is a key partner in the prevention of family violence and all forms of violence against women and are well placed to influence community attitudes and behaviours as service providers, large local employers and municipal leaders.

We are committed to the goals of gender equity and reducing family violence and have endorsed Gender Equality Action Plans, with significant work to progress Gender Impact Assessments now required. These are the key to breaking the cycle of structural and systemic discrimination and gender inequality that drives violence against women and children. This work will also support diversity and inclusion for communities and requires adequate funding to progress.

Early intervention

We need better support to end family violence in our communities and increase early intervention to support children and young people’s wellbeing, including commitments to:

- improving the service system in each Council area through investment, integration and collaboration
- four years of funding to establish a Northern Councils Violence-Free Team to strengthen, streamline and co-design early intervention programs, men’s change management, multi-agency risk assessment and pathways for the region
- four years of funding to deliver Gender Equity Action Plans and Gender Impact Assessments.

Banyule asks for Victorian Government investment to fund:

- a four-year position to deliver on Gender Equity Action Plans and Gender Impact Assessments.
- a four-year position for a Violence Free Officer to co-ordinate and streamline early intervention for family violence support services.



Banyule
City Council

Why fund Councils to prevent family violence

Councils have a responsibility to their community to do work that will prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women before it happens. Local government is uniquely positioned to do this through their deep-rooted community connections. Many councils have been undertaking primary prevention work for a long time.



Characteristics of a whole-of-council approach to primary prevention

Shared understanding of purpose and goals

Leadership commitment

Organisational fluency in primary prevention



Councils' domains of influence

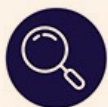
Council as a workplace

Council as a service provider

Council as a connector

Councillors as leaders and decision-makers

Focus areas for implementation (examples)



Monitoring, evaluation and dissemination



Critical elements required for successful primary prevention

- a. Internal communication and engagement
- b. Community communication and engagement
- c. Aboriginal self-determination

- d. Applying intersectional practice and inclusion of diverse groups
- e. Inclusion of people with lived experience

- f. Anticipation and response to resistance and backlash
- g. Connection to the response sector and support for victim-survivors

- h. Support from specialists
- i. Internal and external partnerships

Why do we need a Violence Free Officer?

The Free from Violence Project Officer role will be responsible for implementing a whole of Council approach to preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women.

The Free from Violence Project Officer will engage with key stakeholders across Council to embed a gender lens across all areas of service delivery. They will also work in partnership with external stakeholders to co-design and deliver community initiatives to support the prevention of violence against women for our diverse community.

Why do we need resources to deliver on Gender Equity Action Plans and Gender Impact Assessments?

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* required Councils to:

- Develop a strategic resource plan that outlines how development and implementation of the Gender Equity Action Plan (GEAP) will be resourced.
- Include basic information from this plan in the GEAP.
- Report progress in relation to the strategies and measures set out in your GEAP at least every second year.

We have learnt that pursuing gender equality is complex. When we apply an intersectional lens, the level of complexity and skill required to address issues and opportunities amplifies. If we are to take meaningful and significant steps towards achieving our gender equality goals, Council requires skilled and dedicated resources.

Facts about family violence

Almost 1 in 4 women have experienced intimate partner violence since the age of 15.

The impacts of violence against women are profound. Every 9 days a woman is killed by her current or former partner.¹

Violence has physical, mental, emotional and economic costs for victim-survivors. This has wide-reaching impacts in terms of opportunities and participation in education, the workforce and wider society.

Unfortunately, the impacts of family and gender-based violence means that many people miss out on experiencing opportunities, and these experiences are proportionately gendered.

While many people experience intimate partner violence, prevalence is clearly related to gender. Women mostly experience violence perpetrated by men, and people who are known to them, while men mostly experience violence from other men, and those they don't know.

Almost 1 in 14 men have experienced intimate partner violence since the age of 15.

Family violence is the leading cause of homelessness for women and children

Of adults seeking homelessness services due to family and domestic violence in 2018-19, 90% were women.

Of women who temporarily left violent partners, and later returned, 15% returned because they had no money and nowhere to go.²

Achieving gender equality is a fundamental step in addressing the root causes of family and gender-based violence.

- All Victorians should live in a safe and equal society, have access to equal power, resources and opportunities and be treated with dignity, respect and fairness.
- Gender equality benefits all Victorians regardless of gender.
- Gender equality is a human right and precondition to social justice.
- Gender equality brings significant economic, social and health benefits for Victoria.
- Gender equality is a precondition for the prevention of family violence and other forms of violence against women and girls.
- Advancing gender equality is a shared responsibility across the Victorian community.
- All human beings, regardless of gender, should be free to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives without being limited by gender stereotypes, gender roles or prejudices.
- Gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience on the basis of Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes.
- Women have historically experienced discrimination and disadvantage on the basis of sex and gender.

Key issues

Our Watch, the national leader in the primary prevention of violence against women and their children, confirms there is an explicit link between levels of family violence and lack of gender equity.

Addressing gender inequity presents many opportunities to improve relative and systematic disadvantage and create system change for the current and next generation.

Safe + Equal, the peak body for specialist family violence services that provide support to victim survivors in Victoria, demonstrate that the overlapping forms of oppression influence experiences of family and gender based violence.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women

3 in 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have experienced physical or sexual violence from a male intimate partner.

This violence is perpetrated by men from many cultural backgrounds, including indigenous and non-indigenous men.³

Compared to non-Indigenous women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience 8 times the rate of homicide and are 30 times more likely to be hospitalised for assault.⁴

To stop this violence, we must address the ongoing impacts of colonialism and racism, alongside gender inequality.

Women with disabilities

Almost 2 in 5 women with disabilities have experienced intimate partner violence since the age of 15.⁵

Women with disabilities are more likely to experience violence from multiple perpetrators, including carers and family members, and over longer periods of time.⁵ To stop this violence, we need to challenge ableism, and how this overlaps and interacts with gender inequality.⁶

Refugee and migrant women

1 in 3 refugee and migrant women living in Australia have experienced domestic and family violence.⁷

Those on temporary visas report higher levels of abuse. This is enabled by discriminatory migration policies and practices.⁷

To stop this violence, we must address racism and discrimination based on myths and misconceptions about cultural differences, to create an inclusive and gender equal society.⁸

LGBTIQA+ people

More than 2 in 5 LGBTIQA+ people reported having been in an intimate relationship where they were abused in some way by their partner/s.

A similar proportion reported experiencing violence from a family member.⁹

For bisexual women, and trans and gender diverse people (particularly trans women), rates of intimate partner violence are even higher.¹⁰

53.2% of trans and gender diverse people reported experiencing sexual violence or coercion.¹¹

To stop this violence, we must work together to challenge rigid gender norms, alongside heteronormativity and cisnormativity.

We must work together to break down these multiple and overlapping forms of structural and systemic inequality and oppression, and build a world where everyone is celebrated for being unique.



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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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¹ Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2019) *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: Continuing the national story 2019*

Source: Diemer, K. (2015) *Australian Bureau of Statistics Personal Safety Survey: Additional analysis on relationship and sex of perpetrator*

² <https://safeandequal.org.au/resources/fast-facts-2023/>

³ Our Watch (2018) *Changing the picture*

⁴ Kripps, K. (2023) *Indigenous women and intimate partner homicide in Australia: confronting the impunity of policing failures*

⁵ Centre of Research Excellence in Disability and Health (2021) *Nature and extent of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation against people with disability in Australia*

⁶ Our Watch (2022) *Changing the Landscape*

⁷ Segrave, M., Wickes, R. and Keel, C. (2021) *Migrant and refugee women in Australia: The safety and security study*

⁸ Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (2017) *Intersectionality matters*

⁹ Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (2020) *Private Lives 3: The health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ people in Australia*

¹⁰ Rainbow Health Australia (2020) *Pride in Prevention*

¹¹ Kirby Institute (2018) *Australian Trans and Gender Diverse Sexual Health Survey*