

Overview:



Our Watch Respectful Relationships Education Toolkit

This document includes:

- Background, definition and awareness of Respectful Relationships Education
- Elements of the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education
- Respectful Relationships Education annual cycle
- Do's and don'ts of Respectful Relationships Education

If you or someone you know needs support or information, call the National Sexual Assault Domestic Family Violence Counselling Line on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) or visit <http://www.1800respect.org.au>



Education
and Training

Our Watch acknowledges the support of the State Government of Victoria

Introduction

The *Our Watch Respectful Relationships Education Toolkit* is designed to help you and your school develop and sustain a whole school approach to prevent gender-based violence by promoting gender equality and respectful relationships.

The Toolkit is designed to be adaptable for schools across Australia to support the implementation of a whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education. Each school is unique and will be at different stages of addressing gender-based violence and promoting respectful relationships and gender equality. The Toolkit has information to assist you at every stage.

Background

This Toolkit was developed by Our Watch as part of the Respectful Relationships Education in Schools (otherwise known as RREiS) pilot in Victoria, funded by the Victorian Government.

The Toolkit has been developed to support schools in Respectful Relationships Education. It draws on the experiences of the 19 Victorian schools that participated in the Respectful Relationships Education in Schools pilot as well as the decades of work in this area that has been led by many schools and women's sector leaders. This Toolkit is not comprehensive or definitive – it is a point in time accumulation of what we know and we continue to improve our evidence. Our Watch, along with education departments, schools and other experts, will continue to expand the Toolkit.

Our Watch acknowledges the various organisations that have pioneered Respectful Relationships Education in Victoria and elsewhere. Through that they have contributed to this Toolkit, including our colleagues in the prevention, family violence and sexual assault sectors and the many schools, teachers and education experts. Their efforts and advocacy have put gender-based violence prevention in schools at the forefront of prevention activity.

Our Watch acknowledges the following organisations and individuals whose work has directly informed the Respectful Relationships Education in Schools pilot and Toolkit:

- CASA House
- City of Melbourne
- Dr Deb Ollis, Senior Lecturer – Education, Deakin University
- Emily Maguire, CEO, Domestic Violence Resource Centre
- Gippsland Women's Health
- Lyn Walker, Principal Consultant, Lyn Walker and Associates
- Shine South Australia
- Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth)
- Victorian Department of Education and Training.

Awareness of Respectful Relationships Education

Australia has a choice. We can continue the story that currently sees one in three women experiencing physical assault in their lifetime, one in five sexual assault and one in four violence by an intimate partner.¹ Or we can change the story and choose a future where women and their children live free from violence.

Violence against women, referred to as gender-based violence in this Toolkit, is not an inevitable or intractable social problem. Rather, it is the product of complex yet modifiable social and environmental factors. Put simply, gender-based violence is preventable.

Although there is no single cause of gender-based violence, the latest international evidence shows there are certain factors that consistently predict – or drive – higher levels of gender-based violence. These include the following four key drivers:

1. Condoning of violence against women
2. Men’s control of decision making and limits to women’s independence
3. Stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity
4. Disrespect towards women and male peer relations that emphasise aggression.²

There are actions we can take as individuals, in our workplaces, in our schools and in our community to prevent violence against women from occurring. Respectful Relationships Education is an example of this work in the education setting. Together with a comprehensive program of activity across other settings, evidence-based and properly funded Respectful Relationships Education in the national school system could create the generational change needed to free Australia from gender-based violence.

What is gender-based violence?

In Respectful Relationships Education, the term gender-based violence is commonly used as it better encompasses the experiences of young people. It captures violence against girls and young women – such as dating violence, sexting and revenge porn – as well as violence against adult women, but it also recognises that violence is experienced by people whose experience and/or identity does not conform to binary definitions of sex and gender and as such includes violence experienced by the lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer and intersex communities. For this reason we use this term throughout the Toolkit.

What is the primary prevention of gender-based violence?

Primary prevention draws from public health and is about changing attitudes, behaviours, norms and practices to prevent an undesirable consequence. Just like other major social and health issues, such as smoking and drink driving, gender-based violence can be prevented by working across the whole population, in many different ways, and using different strategies to address key drivers and stop violence before it starts.

What is Respectful Relationships Education?

Gender-based violence is serious, prevalent and driven by gender inequality. In line with evidence on the specific key drivers of gender-based violence, Respectful Relationships Education aims to:

1. Challenge condoning of gender-based violence
2. Promote women’s independence and decision making
3. Challenge gender stereotypes and roles
4. Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relationships.

For more information see *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia.*

Figure 1: Respectful Relationships Education definition

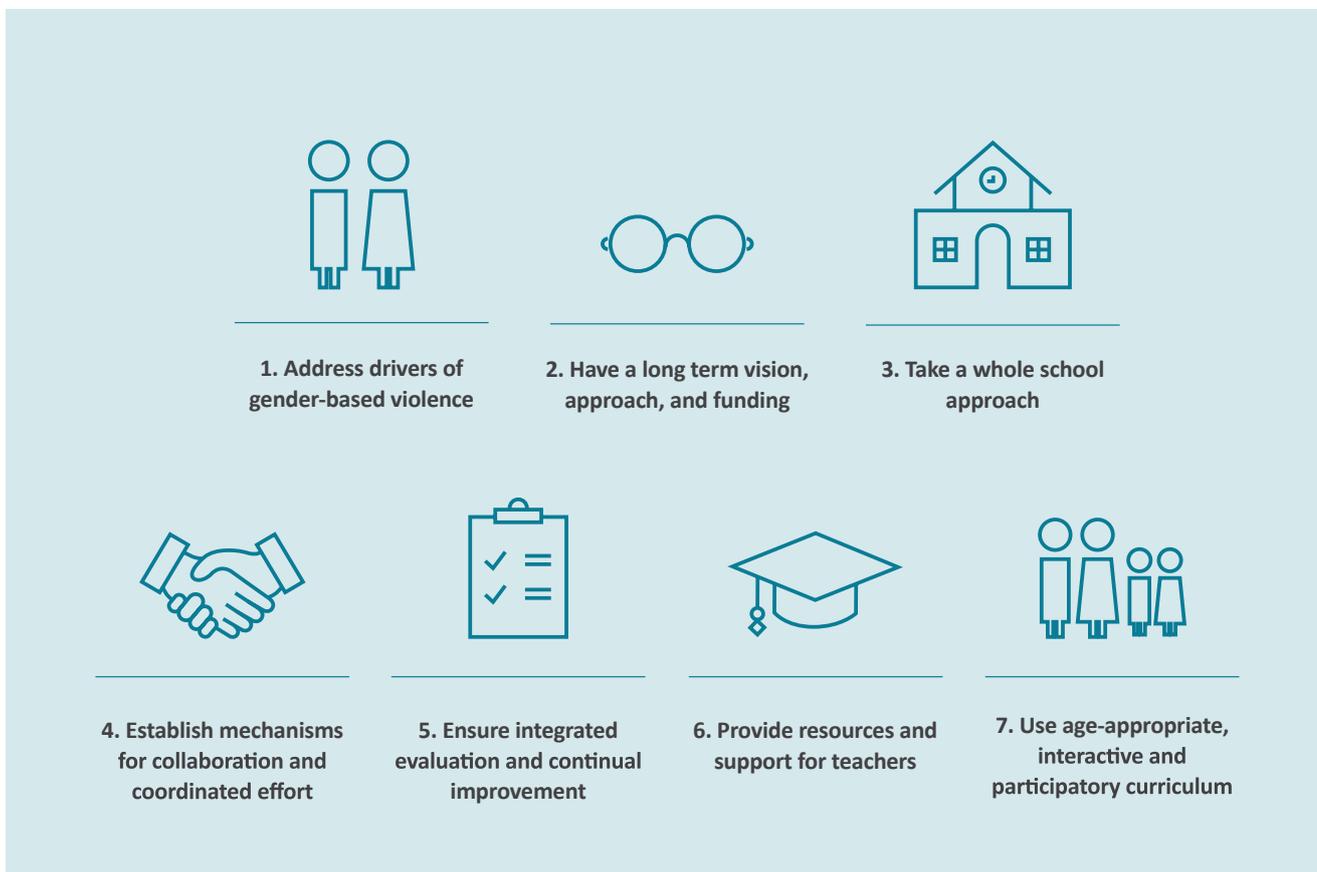


Respectful Relationships Education most commonly takes place in schools but can also take place in other settings where children and young people work, rest and play including sporting clubs, youth clubs and other community organisations.

Teaching children and young people the skills to engage in respectful and equal relationships, and supporting teachers and school leaders to create school cultures which promote equality and respect, has shown strong evidence of success. Before you and your school commence Respectful Relationships Education, it is helpful to understand why this work is important and what evidence tells us about best practice and effective approaches.

A recent review of international and national evidence on Respectful Relationships Education summarised seven core elements (see Figure 2) for best practice approaches. It's important to note that some of the below elements for best practice are not in the control or responsibility of individual schools but are directed at national, state and territory governments to incorporate into their education and social policy on the prevention of violence against women.

Figure 2: Seven core elements for Respectful Relationships Education in Australia



Why should schools be a part of this work?

Working with schools to prevent gender-based violence makes sense. Australian schools offer an existing structure to promote gender equality and respectful relationships to a large workforce and near universal reach to Australia's children and young people.

Children and young people are a key focus for the primary prevention of gender-based violence for several reasons. They are still forming their knowledge and attitudes and are open to guidance and support. They

are also beginning to form relationships and ideas about acceptable relationship behaviour. Respectful Relationships Education can help children act as agents for change, building skills for them to advocate for gender equality and non-violence and exercise a positive influence on their societies and future generations.

A high price to pay

Recent research released by PricewaterhouseCoopers, Our Watch and VicHealth estimates that violence against women costs Australia \$21.7 billion annually.

The largest part of this cost is borne by victims. Governments in Australia (national and state and territory) spend \$7.8 billion a year in health, administration and social welfare costs as a consequence of violence against women.

A high price to pay: the economic cost for preventing violence against women,
PricewaterhouseCoopers, Our Watch and VicHealth 2015

Whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education

While classroom activity targeted at students is important, Respectful Relationships Education should also focus on staff, organisational culture and school structures. For Respectful Relationships Education to effectively address the key drivers of gender-based violence, gender equality and respect need to be embedded throughout the school using a whole school approach (see Figure 3).

Preventing gender-based violence in schools requires recognising that every policy, practice and activity has the potential to challenge or reinforce existing stereotypes and gender inequities.

What we teach students in the classroom will only transform their attitudes and behaviours and prevent gender-based violence when the core concepts of respect, equality, gender, power and consent are reinforced and modelled formally and informally throughout the school community.

Effective Respectful Relationships Education requires considering all aspects of how your school operates to ensure you build a culture, among both staff and students, where gender stereotypes are challenged, gender-based discrimination is unacceptable and gender equality is actively promoted and modelled.

Figure 3: Whole school approach

Adapted from Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence, Department of Education and Training (2014).



1. School culture and environment

- School vision, values and ethos enable gender equality and respectful relationships.
- The messages of Respectful Relationships curriculum are reinforced internally and externally by a culture of gender equality that is modelled throughout the school community.
- School environment, facilities, procedures and policies enable gender equality and respectful relationships, including ensuring that leadership positions are not heavily male-dominated.

2. Leadership and commitment

- The governance and leadership team, in particular the principal, drives school wide commitment to respectful relationships by modelling gender equality in their language, professional practice and decision making and by speaking about issues of gender and violence with the school community.
- There are adequate resources for Respectful Relationships Education planning, monitoring and coordination.
- School policies and procedures model gender equality and respectful relationships.
- Students should be recognised as key partners in developing action for positive change, with student consultation embedded throughout the delivery of Respectful Relationships Education.
- Students should take leadership and social action to embed respectful relationships in their school and the wider community such as organising awareness raising activities on Equal Pay Day or International Women's Day.

3. Professional learning strategy

- All staff are engaged in a whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education, including developing awareness and skills around integrating gender equality into the curriculum across all key learning areas such as including women's experiences and contributions to key historical events, and considering and critically discussing how women are represented in art, music and literature.
- Using a 'do no harm' approach to primary prevention, all staff receive professional learning on appropriately responding to disclosures of violence or discrimination and refer students and staff for further support.
- Staff who deliver Respectful Relationships curriculum are supported through ongoing professional learning, peer support (including communities of practice) and connections to specialist services to support the primary prevention and gender equality elements of this work.

4. Teaching and learning

- Students have the skills, knowledge and attitudes to engage in respectful relationships and to reject attitudes or behaviours that support gender-based violence. To be effective, Respectful Relationships curriculum needs to address the links between gender, power and violence.
- Students have the skills, knowledge and attitudes to engage in respectful relationships and to reject attitudes or behaviours that support gender-based violence. To be effective, Respectful Relationships curriculum needs to address the links between gender, power and violence.
- The Respectful Relationships resource curriculum is evidence-based and consists of multiple sessions delivered by trained educators. For instance, Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence recommends trained teachers deliver eight sessions per year in Year 8 and 9.
- The promotion of gender equality is integrated across all key learning areas and teachers have the capability and confidence to engage students in understanding and discussing gender inequality as it relates to their key learning area. See List 1: Resources to support the teaching of Respectful Relationships.
- Teachers should apply a gendered lens across all key learning areas in all year levels to ensure that gender equality is actively promoted and modelled throughout the school.

5. Community partnerships

- Schools are supported by local community organisations and stakeholders to implement long term, holistic strategies to build and promote respectful relationships.
- Strong relationships exist with partners that specialise in the promotion of gender equality to prevent gender-based violence and can support schools to reinforce messages on gender equality.
- Families are empowered as key partners in violence prevention and are informed about, consulted with and engaged in Respectful Relationships Education so they can provide consistent messages about gender, violence and gender equality and feed into the cultural change process at their school.

6. Support for staff and students

- The school recognises the prevalence of gender-based violence and the likelihood of members of the school community, including staff and students, experiencing, witnessing or perpetrating gender-based violence.
- Strong relationships exist with partners that support and respond to gender-based and family violence and can advise schools on supporting staff or students who have experienced, witnessed or perpetrated gender-based violence.
- School leaders feel confident that everyone in the school can respond appropriately, safely and effectively to disclosures or incidents of gender-based violence.

Respectful Relationships Education versus Respectful Relationships curriculum

Respectful Relationships Education is the holistic approach to prevent gender-based violence in schools. Respectful Relationships curriculum is part of Respectful Relationships Education and is the activity that happens in the classroom and is student focused. Evidence-based resource material that focuses on the links between gender power and violence will support students to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes to engage in respectful relationships and to reject attitudes or behaviours that support gender-based violence.

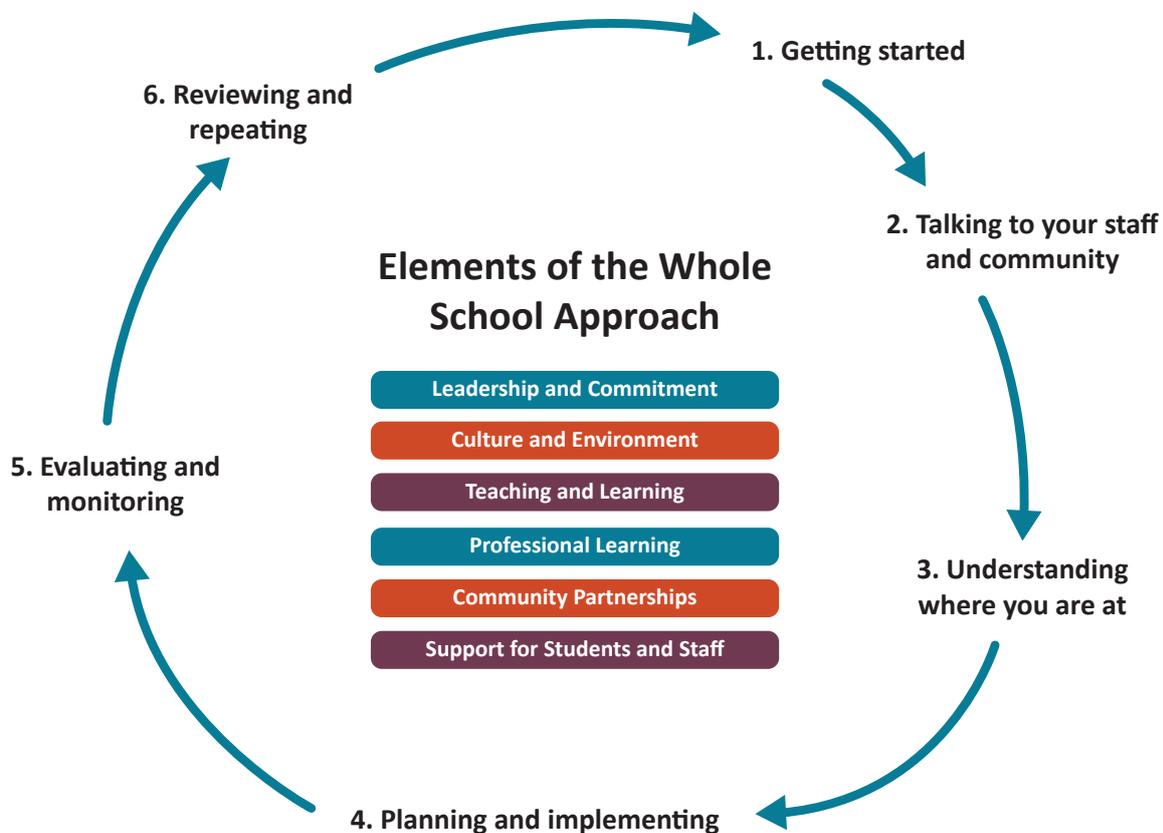
The Respectful Relationships Education annual cycle

The annual cycle in Figure 4 can support you and your school to have a comprehensive and context appropriate approach to Respectful Relationships Education. This cycle is based on the learnings of the Respectful Relationships Education in Schools pilot on what works best for schools. While there are six steps detailed below, the cycle is not necessarily a linear progression. Some steps may be completed more rapidly, and the approach should be tailored to the needs of your individual school.

Tracking your progress and reflecting on the successes and challenges is important in this work, and it is important to ensure that this is integrated throughout the annual cycle. For further detail please see Step 5: Evaluating and Monitoring.

For each of these steps, the Toolkit has further information, templates, resources and guidance that you can use or adapt for your school.

Figure 4: Respectful Relationships Education annual cycle



Respectful Relationships Education: What to do, what not to do

There are simple steps schools can take to implement an effective whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education. The Toolkit helps you start or strengthen this work.

Figure 5: What to do checklist

Do's	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide age-appropriate curriculum guidance for all year levels covering an appropriate number of classon sessions (e.g. weekly classes for one term at each year level) ✓ Include gender equality and power analysis in other subjects and learning areas ✓ Ensure all teachers, particular teachers of Respectful Relationships Education, receive professional learning, potentially accredited ✓ Provide ongoing support for teachers and schools to respond effectively and appropriately ✓ Aim to make the school a gender equality best practice workplace ✓ Support collaboration with parents/carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure leadership is educated and engaged to model gender equality anwd respectful relationships ✓ Ensure response services are appropriately resourced, recognising that there will be a general increase in demand for services ✓ Fund and coordinate violence prevention and women's organisations to support schools and teachers in primary prevention of gender-based violence and to promote gender equality ✓ Work with wider community, such as local government, sporting clubs, local workplaces and other community organisations, to reinforce messaging.
Don'ts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Don't take action only after violence has occurred. ✗ Don't focus only on strategies of support and welfare. ✗ Don't ignore the wider contexts in which violence occurs and is sustained, including formal and informal school cultures, policies and processes. ✗ Don't focus only on the production and dissemination of a resource. Focus on the intended outcomes and what you need to support you to achieve this. ✗ Don't use one-off sessions, isolated from other teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Don't establish programs that are unsustainable. Ensure policy and institutional support, support teacher capacity and establish partnerships with stakeholders. ✗ Don't lecture students. Ensure discussions are interactive or participatory. ✗ Don't focus only on raising awareness of the issue. Transform culture and behaviour. ✗ Don't evaluate only students' satisfaction with the program. Evaluate impact too.

Adapted from Violence Prevention and Respectful Relationships Education in Victorian secondary schools, Department of Education and Training, 2009

Glossary

A bystander is someone who sees or hears about an act of sexism, harassment, discrimination or any other form of inappropriate behaviour. People who witness inappropriate behaviour, but aren't involved in an incident (either as an instigator or a target), are increasingly recognised as having the potential to be powerful allies in challenging sexist or discriminatory behaviours and attitudes.

Drivers are the underlying causes that are required to create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality in public and private life, but which must always be considered in the context of other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage.

Domestic violence refers to acts of violence that occur in domestic settings between two people who are, or were, in an intimate relationship. It includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and financial abuse.⁴ See also family violence.

Emotional/psychological violence can include a range of controlling behaviours such as control of finances, isolation from family and friends, continual humiliation, threats against children or being threatened with injury or death.⁵

Family violence is a broader term than domestic violence, as it refers not only to violence between intimate partners but also to violence between family members.⁶ This includes for example, elder abuse and adolescent violence against parents. Family violence includes violent or threatening behaviour, or any other form of behaviour that coerces or controls a family member or causes that family member to be fearful.⁷ In Indigenous communities, family violence is often the preferred term as it encapsulates the broader issue of violence within extended families, kinship networks and community relationships, as well as intergenerational issues.⁸

Gender refers to the socially learnt roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for men and women; gender defines masculinity and femininity.⁹ Gender expectations vary between cultures and can change over time.¹⁰

Gender-based violence is usually used to explain violence against women, referring to violence that is specifically 'directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately'. However it is also useful to explain other forms of violence, in recognition that rigid, binary and hierarchical constructions of gender, sex and sexuality are also a driver of violence against people whose experience and/or identity does not conform to such binary definitions, including members of the lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer and intersex communities.¹¹ In Respectful Relationships Education, the term gender-based violence is often used as it is considered to better encompass the experiences of girls and young women than 'domestic violence' or 'violence against women'. The term encompasses the various forms of violence that girls and young women experience, such as dating violence, sexting and revenge porn, and is also inclusive and extends to violence experienced by the lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer and intersex communities.

Gender equality¹² involves equality of opportunity and equality of results. It includes the redistribution of resources and responsibilities between women and men and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures of gender inequality to achieve substantive equality. It is about recognising diversity and disadvantage to ensure equal outcomes for all¹³ and therefore often requires women-specific programs and policies to end existing inequalities.

Gender equity refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of rights, responsibilities and resources between women and men according to their respective needs.

Gender identity is a person's deeply held internal and individual sense of their gender¹⁴ in how they define themselves in relation to masculine and feminine characteristics.

Gender inequality is the unequal distribution of power, resources, opportunity and value afforded to women and men in a society due to prevailing gendered norms and structures.

Gender roles are the functions and responsibilities¹⁵ expected to be fulfilled by women and men, girls and boys within a given society.

Gender stereotyping is a form of sexism. Gender stereotypes are simplistic assumptions about the behaviours, attributes, skills, differences and roles of women and men. These attributes are often perceived as natural or innate but are more often the result of women and men being socialised in different ways. Gender stereotypes can be positive, for example 'women are naturally caring and nurturing' or negative, for example 'men can't communicate their emotions very well', but they are usually incorrect and based on generalised assumptions about how we believe people will act, what people are good at or what people will like and dislike, simply because of their gender.

Gender transformative approaches move beyond 'gender blind' or 'gender specific' approaches to encourage critical awareness of, and explicitly challenge, harmful gender roles, practices and norms, and shift the unequal distribution of power and resources between women and men.

Gendered drivers are the specific elements or expressions of gender inequality that are most strongly linked to violence against women. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality in public and private life. The gendered drivers are the underlying causes required to create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They must always be considered in the context of other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage.

Gendered norms consist of a set of dominant beliefs and rules of conduct which are determined by a society or social group in relation to the types of roles, interests, behaviours and contributions expected from girls and boys, women and men.

Gendered practices are the everyday practices, processes and behaviours undertaken at an individual/relationship level, organisational/institutional and societal level that reinforce and perpetuate gendered norms and structures.

Gendered structures are the laws and systemic mechanisms that organise and reinforce an unequal distribution of economic, social and political power and resources between women and men.

Intimate partner violence is any behaviour by a man or a woman within an intimate relationship (including current or past marriages, domestic partnerships, familial relations, or people who share accommodation) that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm to those in the relationship. This is the most common form of violence against women.¹⁶

Respectful relationships refer to relationships among intimate, romantic or dating partners characterised by non-violence, equality, mutual respect and consideration and trust.

Respectful Relationships Education is the holistic approach to school based, primary prevention of gender based violence. It uses the education system as a catalyst for generational and cultural change by engaging schools as both education institutions and as workplaces, to comprehensively address the drivers of gender based violence and to create a future free from such violence.

Settings are environments in which people live, work, learn, socialise and play.

Sex refers to the biological and physical characteristics used to define humans as female or male.

Sex discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than a person of the opposite sex would be treated in the same or similar circumstances. Direct discrimination (for example women and men doing the same job but receiving different pay) and indirect discrimination (for example a policy requirement that all managers must work full time) are both illegal in Australia.

Sexism is discrimination based on gender, and the attitudes, stereotypes and cultural elements that promote this discrimination.¹⁷

Sexual harassment is unwelcome or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, which could be expected to make a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment can be obvious or subtle, direct or indirect, physical or verbal, repeated or one off, and can be perpetrated by both women and men against people of the same or opposite sex. Men are most likely to perpetrate sexual harassment against both women and other men, and women are most likely to be the victims of sexual harassment.

Sexual violence is sexual activity that happens where consent is not obtained or freely given. It occurs any time a person is forced, coerced or manipulated into any unwanted sexual activity, such as touching, sexual harassment and intimidation, forced marriage, trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual assault and rape.

Social norms are rules of conduct and models of behaviour expected by a society or social group. They are grounded in the customs, traditions and value systems that develop over time in a society or social group.¹⁸

Socio-ecological model is a feature of public health and is used to demonstrate how violence is a product of multiple, interacting components and social factors.¹⁹ The model conceptualises how the

drivers of violence manifest across the personal, community and social level and illustrates the value of implementing multiple mutually-reinforcing strategies across these levels.

Violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or in private life.²⁰ This definition encompasses all forms of violence that women experience, including physical, sexual, emotional, cultural/spiritual, financial and others, that are gender-based. See also gender-based violence.

Violence prevention refers in Respectful Relationships Education to the primary prevention of gender-based violence. Primary prevention focuses on stopping gender-based violence before it occurs, rather than intervening once an incident has already happened. Primary prevention involves working with whole communities to address the attitudes, behaviours, norms and practices that drive gender-based violence.

Whole school approach refers in Respectful Relationships Education to providing students with multiple exposure to key messages across the curriculum and in different areas of the school and community. It involves engaging not just students, but school staff and the wider school community in the process of cultural change. For example, school staff, including non-teaching staff, might undergo professional learning and development around the drivers of gender-based violence and their role in prevention.

- ¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013) *2012 Personal Safety Survey*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra and Cox, P. (2015) *Violence against women: Additional analysis of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Personal Safety Survey*, ANROWS Horizons Research Report No. 1, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety, Sydney.
- ² Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth (2015) *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*, Our Watch, Melbourne.
- ³ Department of Education (2014) *Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence*, p. 8.
- ⁴ Morgan, A. and Chadwick, H. (2009) *Key issues in domestic violence*, Summary paper, no. 7, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/rip/1-10/07.html>.
- ⁵ Council of Australian Governments (2011) *National plan to reduce violence against women and their children 2010-2022*, p. 1, <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children-2010-2022>.
- ⁶ Morgan, A. and Chadwick, H. (2009). See note 4
- ⁷ Australian Law Reform Commission [ALRC] and New South Wales Law Reform Commission [NSWLRC] (2010) *Family violence: a national legal response: Final report, volume 1*, ALRC Report 114/NSWLRC Report 128, ALRC and NSWLRC, Sydney, p. 17, http://www.alrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/pdfs/publications/ALRC114_WholeReport.pdf.

- ⁸ Stanley, J., Tomison, A.M. and Pocock, J. (2003) *Child abuse and neglect in Indigenous Australian communities*, Child abuse prevention issues no. 19, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, <http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/issues/issues19/issues19.pdf>.
- ⁹ Australian Women's Health Network (2014) *Health and the primary prevention of violence against women position paper 2014*, http://www.gasgasgas.com.au/AWHN/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/172_AWHNHealthandThePrimaryPreventionofViolenceAgainstWomen2014.pdf.
- ¹⁰ World Health Organization (2015) *Gender*, Factsheet No. 403, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs403/en/>.
- ¹¹ Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth (2015). See note 2.
- ¹² Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, opened for signature 1 March 1980, 1249 UNTS 13 (entered into force 3 September 1981) <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No 25, on Article 4, Paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, on Temporary Special Measures [3]-[14] [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/General%20recommendation%2025%20\(English\).pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/General%20recommendation%2025%20(English).pdf), Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No 28 on the Core Obligations of States Parties under Article 2 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 47th session, UN Doc CEDAW/C/GC/28 (16 December 2010) ('General Recommendation 28'); Report on the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Thirtieth Session <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CEDAW/Pages/Recommendations.aspx>.
- ¹³ Australian Women's Health Network (2014). See note 9.
- ¹⁴ Australian Human Rights Commission (2015) *Resilient individuals: Sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex rights*, National Consultation Report, https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/SOGII%20Rights%20Report%202015_Web_Version.pdf.
- ¹⁵ World Health Organization (2015). See note 10.
- ¹⁶ World Health Organization and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2010) *Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women: Taking action and generating evidence*, World Health Organization, Geneva, <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241564007/en/>.
- ¹⁷ Australian Women's Health Network (2014). See note 13.
- ¹⁸ VicHealth (2007) *Preventing violence before it occurs: A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria*, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne, <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/preventing-violence-before-it-occurs>.
- ¹⁹ Wall, L. (2013) *Issues in evaluation of complex social change programs for sexual assault prevention*, Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault, <http://www3.aifs.gov.au/acssa/pubs/issue/i14/i14.pdf>.
- ²⁰ This definition derives from United Nations (1993) *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*, <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>, and in turn is used in Council of Australian Governments (2011) *National plan to reduce violence against women and their children 2010-2022*, <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children-2010-2022>.

Alternative text for Figures

Alternative text for Figure 1: Respectful Relationships Education definition

Figure 1 defines Respectful Relationships Education as “the holistic approach to school based, primary prevention of gender based violence. It uses the education system as a catalyst for generational and cultural change by engaging schools as both education institutions and as workplaces, to comprehensively address the drivers of gender based violence and to create a future free from such violence.”

Alternative text for Figure 2: Core elements of Respectful Relationships in Schools

Figure 2 is a graphic representation of the seven core elements of effective Respectful Relationships in Schools:

1. Address drivers of gender-based violence
2. Have a long term vision, approach and funding
3. Take a whole school approach
4. Establish mechanisms for collaboration and coordinated effort
5. Ensure integrated evaluation and continual improvement
6. Provide resources and support for teachers
7. Use age-appropriate, interactive and participatory curriculum.

Alternative text for Figure 3: The Whole School Approach

Figure 3 depicts the key elements of the whole of school approach to Respectful Relationships Education. The figure depicts 6 equally weighted and interdependent factors, which include the school culture and environment, school leadership and commitment, professional learning strategy, teaching and learning, support for staff and students, and community partnerships. At the center of these six interlinked elements is the evaluation process.

Alternative text for Figure 4: Respectful Relationships Education Annual Cycle

Figure 4 depicts the annual cycle of Respectful Relationships education, with arrows connecting each step of the cycle as follows:

1. Getting started
2. Talking to your staff and community
3. Understanding where you are at
4. Planning and implementing
5. Evaluation and monitoring
6. Reviewing and repeating

In the center of the cycle, the six key elements of the Whole School Approach are listed:

Leadership and Commitment, Culture and Environment, Teaching and Learning, Professional Learning, Community Partnerships and Support for Staff and Students.

Alternative text for Figure 5: What to do checklist

Figure 5 depicts the do's and don'ts of Respectful Relationships Education. The do's are:

- Provide age appropriate curriculum guidance for all year levels covering an appropriate number of classroom sessions (e.g. weekly classes for one term at each year level)
- Include gender equality and power analysis in other subjects and learning areas
- Ensure all teachers, in particular teachers of Respectful Relationships Education, receive professional learning, potentially accredited
- Provide ongoing support for teachers and schools to respond effectively and appropriately
- Aim to make the school a gender equality best practice workplace
- Ensure leadership is educated and engaged to model gender equality and respectful relationships
- Support collaboration with parents/carers
- Ensure response services are appropriately resourced, recognising that there will be a general increase in demand for services
- Fund and coordinate violence prevention and women's organisations to support schools and teachers in primary prevention of gender-based violence and to promote gender equality
- Work with wider community, such as local government, sporting clubs, local workplaces and other community organisations to reinforce messaging.

The don'ts are:

- Don't take action only after violence has occurred.
- Don't focus only on strategies of support and welfare.
- Don't ignore the wider contexts in which violence occurs and is sustained, including formal and informal school cultures, policies and processes.
- Don't focus only on the production and dissemination of a resource. Focus on the intended outcomes and what you need to support you to achieve this.
- Don't establish programs that are unsustainable. Ensure policy and institutional support, support teacher capacity and establish partnerships with stakeholders.
- Don't use one-off sessions, isolated from other teaching.

- Don't lecture students. Ensure discussions are interactive or participatory.
- Don't focus only on raising awareness of the issue. Transform culture and behaviour.
- Don't evaluate only students' satisfaction with the program. Evaluate impact too.

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Step 1:

Getting Started



Step 1 includes:

- understanding the importance of the whole school approach
- creating a team and confirming commitment to action
- providing student and staff disclosure support
- completing a school public commitment statement ([Template A](#))

If you or someone you know needs support or information, call the National Sexual Assault Domestic Family Violence Counselling Line on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) or visit <http://www.1800respect.org.au>



Education and Training

Step 1: Getting started

It's natural that each school will be at a different stage in addressing gender-based violence and promoting gender equality and respect among staff and students. Before you start this important work it is critical that you have a thorough understanding of Respectful Relationships Education and are committed to seeing this work through. Read the overview section of this Toolkit to understand key concepts and terminology.

Understanding the importance of the whole school approach

When doing this work in your school it is important to recognise the school as more than a space for young people to learn. As illustrated in Figure 1, the school is an important hub in the community and has the opportunity to lead, influence and contribute to healthy community culture. It is also a workplace where all staff deserve to feel respected, safe and valued and to be treated equally regardless of their gender, when thinking of who will benefit from Respectful Relationships Education, it is not just your students, but your staff, families and the wider school community.

Figure 1: Our school is a workplace, education institution and a community hub



Creating a team

Before you start this work, it is important to establish a Respectful Relationships Education leadership team in your school to drive the delivery of Respectful Relationships Education. The group generally includes the principal, assistant principal(s), wellbeing leaders and key teachers who are delivering the Respectful Relationships curriculum in classrooms. In many cases, a team may already be established to run programs across the school, such as the leadership or wellbeing team.

It is important to ensure that this team, and all key decision makers in your school, have a strong shared understanding of what will be expected of them in Respectful Relationships Education, and in particular that they understand what will be expected in the whole school approach. Student voice is an important part of a whole school approach. You may want to consider including students on this group, or setting up or using an existing student committee such as the school student council, to feed into the Respectful Relationships Education leadership team.

This team will be involved in – and committed to – identifying, leading and resourcing actions to promote gender equality and implement respectful relationships across the school community.

This responsibility means:

- supporting staff in the delivery of the Respectful Relationships curriculum and releasing selected staff for professional learning
- making time to brief and build the understanding of all school staff on gender-based violence and the importance of Respectful Relationships Education
- creating mechanisms for staff feedback on gender equality in the workplace
- undertaking a school gender equality assessment to highlight areas of need
- identifying actions to promote gender equality across the school community.

Committing to action

It is important to ensure key stakeholders and leaders in your school have a strong shared understanding of what the whole school approach is and what will be expected of them while implementing Respectful Relationships Education.

It is also important to ensure this commitment is communicated to all staff and other members of the school community. One means of doing this is to prepare a School Public Commitment Statement such as that found at Template A (An editable version of the template can be downloaded here). Discussing this commitment and displaying it somewhere prominent within the school can be a great way to ensure that the whole school community are aware of the commitment made by your school.

Providing student and staff disclosure support

Before undertaking this work you will need to think about what support might be required for your students and staff, in particular those who disclose witnessing, experiencing or perpetrating violence.

We know that gender-based violence is prevalent and that for young people and adults alike being supported appropriately when disclosing an experience of violence can have a significant impact on their wellbeing and recovery. Often people will choose to disclose their experience of violence to someone they trust and feel they can confide in, a colleague, a teacher and a principal can be the first person someone might tell. Especially when they know that their school has taken a leadership role in this area. Keep in mind, that the person who people will confide in may not always be the designated wellbeing staff member or teacher who is trained to deliver Respectful Relationships curriculum.

In line with the 'do no harm' approach to primary prevention, all staff should receive professional learning on appropriately responding to disclosures of violence or discrimination and be made aware of processes to refer students and fellow staff for further support. In developing internal policies and processes for responding to disclosures, you can look to your department of education for policies and professional guidance and beyond that look to your local women's organisation or response service. You will find more information about this throughout the toolkit, including in Step 3 Understanding where you are at.

Suggested actions for Step 1

- Build your and your school's understanding of the prevalence, impacts and key drivers of gender-based violence.
- Establish a Respectful Relationships Education Leadership team which will lead your whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education.
- Ensure that this team is supported in its work and adequately resourced.
- Publicly communicate your commitment to Respectful Relationships Education using the School Public Commitment Statement (Template A).

Support resources for Step 1

- Our Watch: Understanding Violence
- Our Watch: Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia – various resources including report, video, infographic and implementation guide
- Our Watch: Evidence Paper: Respectful Relationships in Schools

Step 1 Checklist

You have completed Step 1 and are ready for Step 2 if you have:

- ✓ Developed a strong shared understanding among key staff and leaders of the drivers of gender-based violence and the core elements of Respectful Relationships Education.
- ✓ Ensured key staff and leaders are committed to the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education and understand how they contribute.
- ✓ Set up your Respectful Relationships Education leadership team.
- ✓ Signed and displayed your School Public Commitment Statement.
- ✓ Ensured key staff and leaders are committed to building a school culture that promotes gender equality among both staff and students.
- ✓ Considered what you need to do to prepare for implementing Respectful Relationships Education at your school.
- ✓ Started to think about how you will communicate your commitment to your whole school community.

Step 2:

Talking to your staff
and community



[Download a Word version of this document here](#)

Template A: School Public Commitment Statement

School Public Commitment Statement

<SCHOOL NAME> is committed to implementing a whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education.

We recognise that our school is more than a place for young people to learn. Our school is a workplace where all staff deserve to feel respected, safe and valued. Schools, like ours, are also important hubs in the community and we have the opportunity to lead, influence and contribute to healthy community culture.

As part of this commitment:

- Our principal will actively promote gender equality and speak out against gender-based violence.
- Our school will provide:
 - professional learning for leadership staff for the planning and implementation of the whole school approach to promote respectful relationships and gender equality
 - professional learning for teachers delivering Respectful Relationships curriculum in the classroom
 - professional learning for all school staff on gender equality, the prevention of gender-based violence and Respectful Relationships Education.
- Our school will undertake a thorough assessment and planning process to identify gaps and limitations in existing culture, policies and practices in gender equality.
- Our school will create mechanisms for staff feedback on gender equality in the workplace.
- Our school will identify, resource and implement key actions to promote gender equality and prevent gender-based violence.
- Our school will engage with external experts for advice and support in promoting gender equality and respectful relationships among staff and students.
- Our school will build partnerships with expert family violence services to increase school capacity to respond to students and staff who experience, witness or perpetrate gender-based violence.
- Our school commits to continual improvement and evaluation of Respectful Relationships Education.

Signed:
(Principal)

Date:

Glossary

A bystander is someone who sees or hears about an act of sexism, harassment, discrimination or any other form of inappropriate behaviour. People who witness inappropriate behaviour, but aren't involved in an incident (either as an instigator or a target), are increasingly recognised as having the potential to be powerful allies in challenging sexist or discriminatory behaviours and attitudes.

Drivers are the underlying causes that are required to create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality in public and private life, but which must always be considered in the context of other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage.

Domestic violence refers to acts of violence that occur in domestic settings between two people who are, or were, in an intimate relationship. It includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and financial abuse.⁴ See also family violence.

Emotional/psychological violence can include a range of controlling behaviours such as control of finances, isolation from family and friends, continual humiliation, threats against children or being threatened with injury or death.⁵

Family violence is a broader term than domestic violence, as it refers not only to violence between intimate partners but also to violence between family members.⁶ This includes for example, elder abuse and adolescent violence against parents. Family violence includes violent or threatening behaviour, or any other form of behaviour that coerces or controls a family member or causes that family member to be fearful.⁷ In Indigenous communities, family violence is often the preferred term as it encapsulates the broader issue of violence within extended families, kinship networks and community relationships, as well as intergenerational issues.⁸

Gender refers to the socially learnt roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for men and women; gender defines masculinity and femininity.⁹ Gender expectations vary between cultures and can change over time.¹⁰

Gender-based violence is usually used to explain violence against women, referring to violence that is specifically 'directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately'. However it is also useful to explain other forms of violence, in recognition that rigid, binary and hierarchical constructions of gender, sex and sexuality are also a driver of violence against people whose experience and/or identity does not conform to such binary definitions, including members of the lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer and intersex communities.¹¹ In Respectful Relationships Education, the term gender-based violence is often used as it is considered to better encompass the experiences of girls and young women than 'domestic violence' or 'violence against women'. The term encompasses the various forms of violence that girls and young women experience, such as dating violence, sexting and revenge porn, and is also inclusive and extends to violence experienced by the lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer and intersex communities.

Gender equality¹² involves equality of opportunity and equality of results. It includes the redistribution of resources and responsibilities between women and men and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures of gender inequality to achieve substantive equality. It is about recognising diversity and disadvantage to ensure equal outcomes for all¹³ and therefore often requires women-specific programs and policies to end existing inequalities.

Gender equity refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of rights, responsibilities and resources between women and men according to their respective needs.

Gender identity is a person's deeply held internal and individual sense of their gender¹⁴ in how they define themselves in relation to masculine and feminine characteristics.

Gender inequality is the unequal distribution of power, resources, opportunity and value afforded to women and men in a society due to prevailing gendered norms and structures.

Gender roles are the functions and responsibilities¹⁵ expected to be fulfilled by women and men, girls and boys within a given society.

Gender stereotyping is a form of sexism. Gender stereotypes are simplistic assumptions about the behaviours, attributes, skills, differences and roles of women and men. These attributes are often perceived as natural or innate but are more often the result of women and men being socialised in different ways. Gender stereotypes can be positive, for example 'women are naturally caring and nurturing' or negative, for example 'men can't communicate their emotions very well', but they are usually incorrect and based on generalised assumptions about how we believe people will act, what people are good at or what people will like and dislike, simply because of their gender.

Gender transformative approaches move beyond 'gender blind' or 'gender specific' approaches to encourage critical awareness of, and explicitly challenge, harmful gender roles, practices and norms, and shift the unequal distribution of power and resources between women and men.

Gendered drivers are the specific elements or expressions of gender inequality that are most strongly linked to violence against women. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality in public and private life. The gendered drivers are the underlying causes required to create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They must always be considered in the context of other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage.

Gendered norms consist of a set of dominant beliefs and rules of conduct which are determined by a society or social group in relation to the types of roles, interests, behaviours and contributions expected from girls and boys, women and men.

Gendered practices are the everyday practices, processes and behaviours undertaken at an individual/relationship level, organisational/institutional and societal level that reinforce and perpetuate gendered norms and structures.

Gendered structures are the laws and systemic mechanisms that organise and reinforce an unequal distribution of economic, social and political power and resources between women and men.

Intimate partner violence is any behaviour by a man or a woman within an intimate relationship (including current or past marriages, domestic partnerships, familial relations, or people who share accommodation) that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm to those in the relationship. This is the most common form of violence against women.¹⁶

Respectful relationships refer to relationships among intimate, romantic or dating partners characterised by non-violence, equality, mutual respect and consideration and trust.

Respectful Relationships Education is the holistic approach to school based, primary prevention of gender based violence. It uses the education system as a catalyst for generational and cultural change by engaging schools as both education institutions and as workplaces, to comprehensively address the drivers of gender based violence and to create a future free from such violence.

Settings are environments in which people live, work, learn, socialise and play.

Sex refers to the biological and physical characteristics used to define humans as female or male.

Sex discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than a person of the opposite sex would be treated in the same or similar circumstances. Direct discrimination (for example women and men doing the same job but receiving different pay) and indirect discrimination (for example a policy requirement that all managers must work full time) are both illegal in Australia.

Sexism is discrimination based on gender, and the attitudes, stereotypes and cultural elements that promote this discrimination.¹⁷

Sexual harassment is unwelcome or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, which could be expected to make a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment can be obvious or subtle, direct or indirect, physical or verbal, repeated or one off, and can be perpetrated by both women and men against people of the same or opposite sex. Men are most likely to perpetrate sexual harassment against both women and other men, and women are most likely to be the victims of sexual harassment.

Sexual violence is sexual activity that happens where consent is not obtained or freely given. It occurs any time a person is forced, coerced or manipulated into any unwanted sexual activity, such as touching, sexual harassment and intimidation, forced marriage, trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual assault and rape.

Social norms are rules of conduct and models of behaviour expected by a society or social group. They are grounded in the customs, traditions and value systems that develop over time in a society or social group.¹⁸

Socio-ecological model is a feature of public health and is used to demonstrate how violence is a product of multiple, interacting components and social factors.¹⁹ The model conceptualises how the

drivers of violence manifest across the personal, community and social level and illustrates the value of implementing multiple mutually-reinforcing strategies across these levels.

Violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or in private life.²⁰ This definition encompasses all forms of violence that women experience, including physical, sexual, emotional, cultural/spiritual, financial and others, that are gender-based. See also gender-based violence.

Violence prevention refers in Respectful Relationships Education to the primary prevention of gender-based violence. Primary prevention focuses on stopping gender-based violence before it occurs, rather than intervening once an incident has already happened. Primary prevention involves working with whole communities to address the attitudes, behaviours, norms and practices that drive gender-based violence.

Whole School approach refers in Respectful Relationships Education to providing students with multiple exposure to key messages across the curriculum and in different areas of the school and community. It involves engaging not just students, but school staff and the wider school community in the process of cultural change. For example, school staff, including non-teaching staff, might undergo professional learning and development around the drivers of gender-based violence and their role in prevention.

- ¹ Morgan, A. and Chadwick, H. (2009) *Key issues in domestic violence*, Summary paper, no. 7, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/rip/1-10/07.html>.
- ² Council of Australian Governments (2011) *National plan to reduce violence against women and their children 2010-2022*, p. 1, <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children-2010-2022>.
- ³ Morgan, A. and Chadwick, H. (2009). See note 4
- ⁴ Australian Law Reform Commission [ALRC] and New South Wales Law Reform Commission [NSWLRC] (2010) *Family violence: a national legal response: Final report, volume 1*, ALRC Report 114/NSWLRC Report 128, ALRC and NSWLRC, Sydney, p. 17, http://www.alrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/pdfs/publications/ALRC114_WholeReport.pdf.
- ⁵ Stanley, J., Tomison, A.M. and Pocock, J. (2003) *Child abuse and neglect in Indigenous Australian communities*, Child abuse prevention issues no. 19, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, <http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/issues/issues19/issues19.pdf>.
- ⁶ Australian Women's Health Network (2014) *Health and the primary prevention of violence against women position paper 2014*, http://www.gasgasgas.com.au/AWHN/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/172_AWHNHealthandThePrimaryPreventionofViolenceAgainstWomen2014.pdf.
- ⁷ World Health Organization (2015) *Gender*, Factsheet No. 403, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs403/en/>.

- ⁸ Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth (2015). *Change the story: a shared framework for the prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*. OurWatch, Melbourne, Australia. <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/getmedia/0aa0109b-6b03-43f2-85fe-a9f5ec92ae4e/Change-the-story-framework-prevent-violence-women-children-AA-new.pdf>
- ⁹ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, opened for signature 1 March 1980, 1249 UNTS 13 (entered into force 3 September 1981) <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No 25, on Article 4, Paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, on Temporary Special Measures [3]-[14] [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/General%20recommendation%2025%20\(English\).pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/General%20recommendation%2025%20(English).pdf), Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No 28 on the Core Obligations of States Parties under Article 2 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 47th session, UN Doc CEDAW/C/GC/28 (16 December 2010) ('General Recommendation 28'); Report on the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Thirtieth Session <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CEDAW/Pages/Recommendations.aspx>.
- ¹⁰ Australian Women's Health Network (2014). See note 6.
- ¹¹ Australian Human Rights Commission (2015) *Resilient individuals: Sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex rights*, National Consultation Report, https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/SOGII%20Rights%20Report%202015_Web_Version.pdf.
- ¹² World Health Organization (2015). See note 7
- ¹³ World Health Organization and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2010) *Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women: Taking action and generating evidence*, World Health Organization, Geneva, <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241564007/en/>.
- ¹⁴ Australian Women's Health Network (2014). See note 6.
- ¹⁵ VicHealth (2007) *Preventing violence before it occurs: A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria*, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne, <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/preventing-violence-before-it-occurs>.
- ¹⁶ Wall, L. (2013) *Issues in evaluation of complex social change programs for sexual assault prevention*, Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault, <http://www3.aifs.gov.au/acssa/pubs/issue/i14/i14.pdf>.
- ¹⁷ This definition derives from United Nations (1993) *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*, <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>, and in turn is used in Council of Australian Governments (2011) *National plan to reduce violence against women and their children 2010-2022*, <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children-2010-2022>.

Alternative text for Figures

Alternative text for Figure 1: Our school is a workplace, education institution and a community hub

Figure 1 depicts a venn diagram with three overlapping spheres which represent the three key roles of a school in relation to respectful relationships education. The first of these roles is as a workplace; where all staff should feel equally respected, safe and valued and have equal opportunities, regardless of gender. The second role is as a community hub; and influential voice in the school and wider community that can promote gender equality and respectful relationships, and the third role is as an education institution; a safe space where young people can learn about gender equality and respectful relationships, in and out of the classroom.

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Step 2:

Talking with your staff and community



Step 2 includes:

- communicating with staff
- gathering evidence from your school community.

If you or someone you know needs support or information, call the National Sexual Assault Domestic Family Violence Counselling Line on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) or visit <http://www.1800respect.org.au>



Education
and Training

Step 2:

Talking with your staff and community

Communicating with staff

While the leadership of key staff and school leaders is vital, a genuine whole school approach requires that all staff, not just those engaged with curriculum delivery, understand the importance of promoting gender equality and respectful relationships to prevent gender-based violence.

All staff in your school will need to be supported to build a culture where gender stereotypes are challenged, gender-based discrimination is unacceptable and gender equality is actively promoted and modelled, in and out of the classroom. Staff also need to be equipped to respond to questions, challenges and disclosures of violence being experienced that may arise from your school's implementation of Respectful Relationships Education.

The best approach to increasing staff understanding will depend on your school structure and culture, but consider some of the following methods:

- provide on-site professional learning sessions, internally or externally facilitated
- encourage regular discussions in whole of staff or team meetings
- display informative posters in staff areas
- use video clips or recent news items to prompt discussion among staff about gender equality and/or gender-based violence
- include communications in staff bulletins and share information and resources on the staff intranet.

It is important to note that staff start with different perceptions, experiences, history and levels of support. Reflecting on something as personal as gender can be confronting. Likewise, discussing gender-based violence can be distressing and potentially traumatic for some staff. It is essential that pathways for support are made clear to all staff, staff are made aware of topics to be discussed in advance of meetings and there is an opportunity to opt-out of curriculum delivery or staff discussions.

Gathering evidence from your school community

Just as this work is personal for the individual, it should be tailored to your school and community. School communities encompass all of those who have an interest in the school, including the students, staff, administrators, parents and family members of students and others. While this Toolkit can support you in developing your approach to Respectful Relationships Education, it's important to make sure what you develop and implement is based on the experience of your school community. The best way to do this is by asking your school community. Creating opportunities for discussion and feedback from staff, students and families is essential to informing your planning and actions. It also means that you're already engaging members of the school community in critical thinking about gender equality and gender-based violence.

An effective whole school approach relies on grounding priority actions and key messages in an understanding of the different perceptions, experiences, history and levels of support of students, staff and families. Creating opportunities for regular feedback from staff and students is the only way to uncover our unconscious bias in areas of potential inequality.

Suggested actions

- Share evidence and information with staff about gender-based violence and gender equality issues and regularly communicate your support for gender equality.
- Discuss school values and/or your staff Code of Conduct (see page 29 of Step 4 for further guidance) at the start of the school year. Use examples to make clear to all staff the link between these agreed values and the promotion of gender equality.
- Brief all staff on gender-based violence and Respectful Relationships Education.
- Ensure school leaders respond consistently to frequently asked questions about Respectful Relationships Education and preventing gender-based violence.
- Create opportunity for staff to provide feedback on their experience of gender equality in their workplace.
- Include questions about gender equality in staff surveys, annual appraisals and exit interviews and review these as a leadership group to identify recurring issues.
- Offer a third-party feedback channel so staff can report issues to someone outside the leadership team.
- Undertake a simple gender analysis by reviewing your organisational chart or staff structure and identifying the ratio of male to female staff in total and in particular roles or departments to identify areas of gender inequality. Ensure this is reflected in the school strategic plan and annual implementation plans.
- Understand and discuss the gender pay gap with school leaders and staff. Undertake a simple gender equality audit by comparing the average salaries earned by male staff and female staff.
- Let your community know about this work and give them an opportunity to be involved using your school newsletter or other form of regular communication with the school community.

What is unconscious bias?

We all perceive situations and make decisions based on our own background, personal experiences, societal stereotypes and cultural context. This can be true for organisations as well as individuals, so it is important to recognise potential areas of unconscious bias or assumptions about the way others experience situations or cultures in your school. Unhelpful stereotypes, unconscious bias and a lack of role models can act as barriers to gender equality, even in a predominately female workplace.

Support resources

- [Step 5: Evaluating and monitoring](#)
- [List 2: Visual resources for Respectful Relationships Education](#)
- [The Line – Articles for Teachers](#)
- [Workplace Gender Equality Agency: About gender equality for small business](#)
- [Workplace Gender Equality Agency: Three step guide to fairer pay in your organisation](#)

Step 2 Checklist

You have completed Step 2 and are ready for [Step 3](#) if you have:

- ✓ Developed an understanding among all staff of [Respectful Relationships Education](#), the [drivers of gender-based violence](#), the [whole school approach](#) and how all staff can contribute to building a school culture that promotes [gender equality](#) among both staff and students.
- ✓ Given all staff an opportunity to share their perspectives and experience of [gender equality](#) in the school as their workplace and school leaders have communicated to staff how they will respond to this feedback.
- ✓ Communicated with the wider school community about the school's approach to [Respectful Relationships Education](#), and ensured opportunities for consultation with the community.

Step 3:

[Understanding where you are at](#)



Glossary

A bystander is someone who sees or hears about an act of sexism, harassment, discrimination or any other form of inappropriate behaviour. People who witness inappropriate behaviour, but aren't involved in an incident (either as an instigator or a target), are increasingly recognised as having the potential to be powerful allies in challenging sexist or discriminatory behaviours and attitudes.

Drivers are the underlying causes that are required to create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality in public and private life, but which must always be considered in the context of other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage.

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Gendered norms consist of a set of dominant beliefs and rules of conduct which are determined by a society or social group in relation to the types of roles, interests, behaviours and contributions expected from girls and boys, women and men.

Gendered practices are the everyday practices, processes and behaviours undertaken at an individual/relationship level, organisational/institutional and societal level that reinforce and perpetuate gendered norms and structures.

Gendered structures are the laws and systemic mechanisms that organise and reinforce an unequal distribution of economic, social and political power and resources between women and men.

Intimate partner violence is any behaviour by a man or a woman within an intimate relationship (including current or past marriages, domestic partnerships, familial relations, or people who share accommodation) that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm to those in the relationship. This is the most common form of violence against women.¹⁶

Respectful relationships refer to relationships among intimate, romantic or dating partners characterised by non-violence, equality, mutual respect and consideration and trust.

Respectful Relationships Education is the holistic approach to school based, primary prevention of gender based violence. It uses the education system as a catalyst for generational and cultural change by engaging schools as both education institutions and as workplaces, to comprehensively address the drivers of gender based violence and to create a future free from such violence.

Settings are environments in which people live, work, learn, socialise and play.

Sex refers to the biological and physical characteristics used to define humans as female or male.

Sex discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than a person of the opposite sex would be treated in the same or similar circumstances. Direct discrimination (for example women and men doing the same job but receiving different pay) and indirect discrimination (for example a policy requirement that all managers must work full time) are both illegal in Australia.

Sexism is discrimination based on gender, and the attitudes, stereotypes and cultural elements that promote this discrimination.¹⁷

Sexual harassment is unwelcome or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, which could be expected to make a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment can be obvious or subtle, direct or indirect, physical or verbal, repeated or one off, and can be perpetrated by both women and men against people of the same or opposite sex. Men are most likely to perpetrate sexual harassment against both women and other men, and women are most likely to be the victims of sexual harassment.

Sexual violence is sexual activity that happens where consent is not obtained or freely given. It occurs any time a person is forced, coerced or manipulated into any unwanted sexual activity, such as touching, sexual harassment and intimidation, forced marriage, trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual assault and rape.

Social norms are rules of conduct and models of behaviour expected by a society or social group. They are grounded in the customs, traditions and value systems that develop over time in a society or social group.¹⁸

Socio-ecological model is a feature of public health and is used to demonstrate how violence is a product of multiple, interacting components and social factors.¹⁹ The model conceptualises how the

drivers of violence manifest across the personal, community and social level and illustrates the value of implementing multiple mutually-reinforcing strategies across these levels.

Violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or in private life.²⁰ This definition encompasses all forms of violence that women experience, including physical, sexual, emotional, cultural/spiritual, financial and others, that are gender-based. See also gender-based violence.

Violence prevention refers in Respectful Relationships Education to the primary prevention of gender-based violence. Primary prevention focuses on stopping gender-based violence before it occurs, rather than intervening once an incident has already happened. Primary prevention involves working with whole communities to address the attitudes, behaviours, norms and practices that drive gender-based violence.

Whole School approach refers in Respectful Relationships Education to providing students with multiple exposure to key messages across the curriculum and in different areas of the school and community. It involves engaging not just students, but school staff and the wider school community in the process of cultural change. For example, school staff, including non-teaching staff, might undergo professional learning and development around the drivers of gender-based violence and their role in prevention.

- ¹ Morgan, A. and Chadwick, H. (2009) *Key issues in domestic violence*, Summary paper, no. 7, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/rip/1-10/07.html>.
- ² Council of Australian Governments (2011) *National plan to reduce violence against women and their children 2010-2022*, p. 1, <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children-2010-2022>.
- ³ Morgan, A. and Chadwick, H. (2009). See note 4
- ⁴ Australian Law Reform Commission [ALRC] and New South Wales Law Reform Commission [NSWLRC] (2010) *Family violence: a national legal response: Final report, volume 1*, ALRC Report 114/NSWLRC Report 128, ALRC and NSWLRC, Sydney, p. 17, http://www.alrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/pdfs/publications/ALRC114_WholeReport.pdf.
- ⁵ Stanley, J., Tomison, A.M. and Pocock, J. (2003) *Child abuse and neglect in Indigenous Australian communities*, Child abuse prevention issues no. 19, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, <http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/issues/issues19/issues19.pdf>.
- ⁶ Australian Women's Health Network (2014) *Health and the primary prevention of violence against women position paper 2014*, http://www.gasgasgas.com.au/AWHN/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/172_AWHNHealthandThePrimaryPreventionofViolenceAgainstWomen2014.pdf.
- ⁷ World Health Organization (2015) *Gender*, Factsheet No. 403, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs403/en/>.

- ⁸ Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth (2015). *Change the story: a shared framework for the prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*. OurWatch, Melbourne, Australia. <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/getmedia/0aa0109b-6b03-43f2-85fe-a9f5ec92ae4e/Change-the-story-framework-prevent-violence-women-children-AA-new.pdf>
- ⁹ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, opened for signature 1 March 1980, 1249 UNTS 13 (entered into force 3 September 1981) <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No 25, on Article 4, Paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, on Temporary Special Measures [3]-[14] [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/General%20recommendation%2025%20\(English\).pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/General%20recommendation%2025%20(English).pdf), Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No 28 on the Core Obligations of States Parties under Article 2 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 47th session, UN Doc CEDAW/C/GC/28 (16 December 2010) ('General Recommendation 28'); Report on the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Thirtieth Session <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CEDAW/Pages/Recommendations.aspx>.
- ¹⁰ Australian Women's Health Network (2014). See note 6.
- ¹¹ Australian Human Rights Commission (2015) *Resilient individuals: Sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex rights*, National Consultation Report, https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/SOGII%20Rights%20Report%202015_Web_Version.pdf.
- ¹² World Health Organization (2015). See note 7
- ¹³ World Health Organization and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2010) *Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women: Taking action and generating evidence*, World Health Organization, Geneva, <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241564007/en/>.
- ¹⁴ Australian Women's Health Network (2014). See note 6.
- ¹⁵ VicHealth (2007) *Preventing violence before it occurs: A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria*, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne, <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/preventing-violence-before-it-occurs>.
- ¹⁶ Wall, L. (2013) *Issues in evaluation of complex social change programs for sexual assault prevention*, Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault, <http://www3.aifs.gov.au/acssa/pubs/issue/i14/i14.pdf>.
- ¹⁷ This definition derives from United Nations (1993) *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*, <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>, and in turn is used in Council of Australian Governments (2011) *National plan to reduce violence against women and their children 2010-2022*, <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children-2010-2022>.

ourwatch.org.au

Step 3:

Understanding where you are at



Step 3 includes:

- understanding gender, gender stereotypes and gender-based violence
- understanding the 'gender lens' approach
- performing a school gender equality assessment ([Template B](#))

If you or someone you know needs support or information, call the National Sexual Assault Domestic Family Violence Counselling Line on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) or visit <http://www.1800respect.org.au>



Education
and Training

Step 3:

Understanding where you are at

What is gender?

While people often think about women and girls when they hear the word *gender*, it is not just about the feminine or females. Nor is it the biological sex of females and males. Gender is the socially learnt roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for women and men. Gender is what defines femininity and masculinity.¹

Gender can impact significantly on the power, status and resources we access and control, how we relate to each other and how we make decisions. Power is not only about how much influence we have, as individuals and as groups, over the beliefs or actions of other people or groups. It also relates to our access to and control of opportunities and resources that support us to live comfortable, productive and safe lives.

Gender can strongly influence attitudes and behaviours towards us,² and our attitudes and behaviours towards others. Our beliefs about the way girls and boys, women and men are supposed to act are formed in childhood and adolescence. They are also shaped by how we see gender roles and relationships in families and organisations such as schools and by how women and men are portrayed in the media and popular culture.³

What are gender stereotypes and gender-based violence?

The belief that women and men have different roles or characteristics, whether in relationships or society, is known as gender stereotyping. The stereotyped views of femininity and masculinity have been identified as one of the four key drivers of gender-based violence.⁴ Research has shown that violence is more common in families and relationships in which men control decision making.⁵ In societies where women and men are more equal in their relationships, and where they are not expected to play different roles based on their sex, violence is less prevalent.

Understanding the 'gender lens' approach

What is a 'gender lens'?

A gender lens is a way of seeing difference in the way women and men experience the world and recognising when, where and how this difference occurs.⁶ Some people find it useful to think of a gender lens as putting on a pair of glasses. Through one lens, you see the needs and realities of women, and through the other the needs and realities of

Belief in rigid gender stereotypes at the community level is one of the most significant 'predictors' of violence against women.

men.⁷ Throughout our lives, our needs and our realities are influenced by various social, cultural, political, biological, educational and economic factors. They are also strongly influenced by community expectations of how women and men should behave and interact and by gender stereotypes.⁸

Difference is not necessarily bad; diversity makes our communities stronger and allows us all to make unique contributions. However, difference can also impact on the power we have within ourselves and in relation to others. It is critical that the 'gender lens' is used not just to see differences in people, but also differences in power and status.

Gender-based violence, whether physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, psychological or economic, is based on the belief that men have the right to control and exert power over women. Men's power over women is evident in our society in the prevalence of violence, rape and sexual assault and discrimination against women. It is also evident in 'glass ceilings' in the workplace, inadequate or prohibitively expensive childcare, political under-representation of women, and women's financial disadvantage such as unequal pay and superannuation.⁹

Failing to apply a gender lens, or relying on our own assumptions when doing so, can reinforce existing inequities and stereotypes and contribute to a society in which men's gender-based violence continues to be perpetrated and excused.

A 'gender lens' is used not just to see differences in people, but also differences in power.

Challenging structures, cultures and messages that support men's power over women is key to preventing gender-based violence.

Real life example

A female student wore short shorts on a casual clothes day and this distracted some boys in her class. The girl was pulled out of class to be told her clothing was inappropriate and asked to change. There was no discussion with the boys.

Stereotypes perpetuated by this response: By speaking only to the girl the idea that boys and men 'can't help it' and that women are responsible for curbing their temptation was perpetuated.

How the student felt: *When my school pulled me out of maths class because they thought my clothing was distracting the boys... [they] demonstrated to me that my education is less valuable than that of the boys in my class. The way I felt the day I was pulled out of class, nervous and violated and insubstantial, I wouldn't wish that on anyone.*

How to use a gender lens

It is helpful to think of a gender lens as a list of questions that we should routinely ask to make sure we are not being 'blind' to harmful gender stereotypes, gender-based discrimination and inequality.

These questions might include:

- How will this policy, action or approach impact on women and men or girls and boys? Will this impact be different for different genders?
- How will the realities of girls and boys impact on their ability to participate in this situation?

- What are the needs of women, men, girls and boys in this instance?
- Is power shared equally between females and males in this instance? How will this policy, action or approach impact how power is shared?
- How might the policy, activity or approach inadvertently perpetuate or actively work to overcome existing stereotypes and gender inequities? Are there measures in place to address gender inequities and to ensure that girls and boys, women and men have equal opportunities, and are equally valued and respected?^{10 11}
- How might your own values, biases and assumptions affect your decisions? Do you have specific beliefs about women's and men's roles in society? Does this impact on your actions and decision making?¹²

When asking these questions consider who you and the Respectful Relationships Education Leadership team within your school represent. Does your team include a diverse range of ages, career stages, genders and cultural backgrounds? Do you have staff who are parents or primary carers? Will some of these policies, action and approaches impact upon those who are not represented? How can this be considered or accounted for during their development?

Creating and maintaining space for safe and honest communication and feedback about gender equality in the school community is necessary to understand how female and male staff, students and parents might perceive and experience policies, actions and approaches.

Real life example

Upon return to full time work after working part time for a year to care for young children a man is jokingly mocked and asked if he had 'finished breastfeeding yet?'

Stereotypes perpetuated by this response: That caring for a child is an inherently female role, and that men who act as shared or primary carers must be 'women', that is they are seen as less 'masculine' than other men.

Impact: Criticism, ridicule and rejection are common ways that feminine and masculine norms are reinforced. This 'policing', which often occurs playfully within peer groups, sends a message that it is not acceptable to go outside the norm and that doing so is a threat to an individual's 'status' as a woman or man. This is a strong deterrent to change, both for the individual being 'policed' and those listening, and reinforces rigid gender roles.

1. Doing a school gender equality assessment

Doing a school gender equality assessment will allow you and your team to explore how you are promoting gender equality and respectful relationships and areas that you might need to improve on. The school gender equality assessment is strengthened by engaging an expert facilitator – an outside expert who is skilled in applying gender analysis to different systems and processes. This could be someone from your organisation. You may only require an external facilitator for the first year, as over time you will build you and your team’s capacity to self-reflect and assess.

The school gender equality assessment is an important step to take before you develop your implementation plan as it allows you to see what you are already doing well and identify your future priority actions across the six elements of the whole school approach.

The assessment template is designed to assist your school leadership team to assess your current activity on gender equality and to identify gaps in your school’s approach to gender equality and respectful relationships.

It can be used as both a baseline assessment of your school’s current activity and capacity for change, and as a tool to guide planning actions as part of a whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education in your annual cycle. Gathering baseline data is important because this gives you a point to measure improvement from.

Ensuring that staff feel respected, safe and valued regardless of their gender, with equity of opportunity and outcomes for females and males, is essential to a strong culture of gender equality among staff, and also for promoting and modelling that culture for students. It is important that measures are taken to consult with staff, identify and eliminate conscious and unconscious gender discrimination, and provide equal opportunities for all.

In order for future actions to be owned and implemented effectively it is important that consultation with the wider school community is included. This can be as simple as asking for feedback about which aspects of the approach are working well, or what improvements could potentially be made. It is vital to ensure that the voices of both students and their families are being heard throughout this process. Due to time constraints, the RREIS Pilot program had limited capacity for wider community and student engagement, but recognises this as a key element of the whole school approach.

Suggested actions

- Read about the gendered lens and discuss with the Respectful Relationships Education leadership team and wider school community.
- Undertake the School Gender Equality Assessment (Template B).
- Ensure that relationships are formed with local women’s organisations and service providers.

Support resources

- [Template B: School Gender Equality Assessment \(word version\)](#)
- Video: [Let's Change the Story: Violence Against Women in Australia](#)
- Video: [Attitudes to gender equality and violence against women](#)
- [Engaging Men in Gender Initiatives: What Change Agents Need to Know](#)

Step 3 Checklist

You have completed Step 3 and are ready for [Step 4](#) if you have:

- ✓ Ensured that the Respectful Relationships Education Leadership Team and key staff have a clear understanding of gendered analysis and what it means for school operations.
- ✓ Engaged key staff, including your leadership team, through the [School Gender Equality Assessment \(Template B\)](#).
- ✓ Connected with local women's organisations and potentially engaged with a facilitator to assist in the delivery of [Respectful Relationships Education](#).
- ✓ Ensured that wider consultation on this step has occurred with students and their families.

Step 4:

[Planning and Implementing](#)



[Download a Word version of this document here](#)

Template B: School gender equality assessment

The template is designed as a guide for discussion and reflection among the team leading Respectful Relationships Education in your school. The presence of senior school leadership on this team will ensure that this assessment has the most impact possible.

This template has six sections based on the six elements of the whole school approach:

1. School culture and environment
2. Leadership and commitment
3. Professional learning strategy
4. Teaching and learning
5. Community partnerships
6. Support for students and staff.

Figure 1: The Whole School approach



Adapted from Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence, Department of Education and Training (2014).

Each section has an introduction and then a series of statements for you to answer 'yes' or 'no'. While you're discussing each statement jot down in the comment section any comments, concerns or actions you would like to undertake to address the needs or gaps identified.

Remember, this template is not designed to externally assess your performance; it helps you to highlight conscious and unconscious gender bias and identify areas that may need to be strengthened.

Before starting here are some things to consider:

- Having a facilitator or critical friend with expertise in gender equality, in particular in the workplace, will support and strengthen the process. We recommend you contact your local women's health organisation who can direct you to an experienced facilitator in your region.
- While this can be used any time of year, it may be best to schedule this early in Term 4 so that it can feed directly into your planning for the coming year.
- You can work through this template in total or you can select aspects to work through at different stages or with different teams of staff.
- Step 4: Planning and Implementing contains a template for an implementation plan which connects to this activity. It might be useful to read the implementation plan before starting your school gender equality assessment.

1. School culture and environment

This section includes assessing:

- school ethos, vision and values
- internal and external communications
- school environment and facilities.

Introduction

Schools are more than a place for young people to learn. The school is an important hub in the community and has the opportunity to lead, influence and contribute to healthy community culture. It is also a workplace where all staff deserve to feel respected, safe and valued.

A school culture that clearly shows commitment to gender equality and respectful relationships is essential to creating a supportive environment to prevent gender-based violence. Commitment to these values, demonstrated by staff and students alike, is essential for developing and maintaining school structures, policies and procedures that promote equality and respect. The positive messages of Respectful Relationships Education can be supported and amplified by regular conversations, commitments and actions so that respect and equality are modelled throughout the school community.

As a school you will already be required to have certain policies in place, most likely set by your department of education. Embedding a culture of gender equality means going beyond these requirements to ensure commitments to promote respectful attitudes, norms, behaviours and practices are also embedded in school policies and procedures – beyond just the minimum.

Figure 2: Our school is...

Our school is:



It is particularly important to recognise the culture, structures and supports that exist in the school as a workplace. Inequality and discrimination exist everywhere in our society – including schools and communities – and need to be challenged wherever we see them. Equality of opportunities and outcomes for female and male employees is essential to ensuring a strong culture of gender equality in your school and to promoting and modelling that culture for students.

For Respectful Relationships Education, you will need to consult with staff, identify and eliminate conscious and unconscious gender discrimination, and provide equal opportunities for all. Part of this work includes recognising that gender-based violence and harassment is prevalent in our society and working to ensure this is recognised in the workplace and your school. This is important because workplaces are such influential parts of our lives and because:

- violence, even when occurring in private, can impact on the wellbeing of those who experience, witnesses and perpetrate it
- the school has a legal responsibility as an employer to create a safe work environment
- workplace cultures that promote wellbeing, respect and equality are more productive.¹³

School ethos, vision and values

Commitment to these values, demonstrated by staff and students alike, is essential for supporting the development and maintenance of school structures, policies and procedures that promote equality and respect.

School ethos, vision and values	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
1.1 Our school values statement includes a focus on gender equality and respectful relationships among all members of the school community.			
1.2 We have mechanisms in place to ensure that our staff and students model school values on gender equality and respectful relationships.			
1.3 Our School Strategic Plan includes at least one goal (and associated targets and key improvement strategies) that focus on increasing gender equality and supporting respectful relationships relevant to both staff and students.			

Internal and external communications

Communication materials that present information on gender, respect and gender-based violence in an informative and simple way can have a positive impact on parent and community engagement as well as contribute to shifting negative attitudes on equality, gender and violence. It is also important to ensure that all school communication materials promote diversity, equality and respect and do not reinforce gender roles and stereotypes.

Communications	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
1.4 We produce and disseminate material relevant to both staff and students which indicates our commitment to gender equality and respectful relationships.			
1.5 We regularly review our communications materials (including our school website, school newsletter, orientation, enrolment and parent information materials) to ensure they do not unconsciously promote gender inequality or gender stereotypes or use language that promotes inequality or stereotypes.			
1.6 We provide practical information to staff and students and skill them to take bystander action, promote gender equality and support victims of sexism, harassment, discrimination or gender-based violence.			
1.7 We look for opportunities to promote messages and themes of gender equality and respect in extracurricular activities and school events such as sporting events, carnivals, school musicals, school discos and formals and we ensure extracurricular activities do not promote negative gender stereotypes.			
1.8 We have communication materials visible in the school for staff and students and the broader school community indicating our commitment to gender equality and respectful relationships.			
1.9 We prohibit material being placed or distributed in our school that is sexist, discriminatory or which stereotypes women or men.			

School environment and facilities

The workplace environment reflects your school’s commitment to gender equality to prevent gender-based violence and communicates to employees, the school community and the public that your school is committed to gender equality. It is important to consider the messages shared in the school environment and to ensure that facilities are appropriate to the needs of women and men.

Environment and facilities	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
1.10 We produce and disseminate material relevant to both staff and students which indicates our commitment to gender equality and respectful relationships.			
1.11 We offer or are able to refer to childcare facilities for our staff.			
1.12 Women have access to appropriate private breastfeeding facilities at our school, including storage and equipment cleaning facilities for expressing milk.			

2. Leadership and commitment

This section includes assessing:

- governance and leadership
- planning, monitoring and coordination
- school policies and procedures.

Introduction

The commitment of your school's leadership is essential to the success of Respectful Relationships Education in your school.

Effective strategies to promote gender equality and respectful relationships among staff and students require a whole school approach. To successfully implement systems, policies and procedures to promote gender equality and respectful relationships through a whole school approach, your school leadership team and other senior staff must actively promote this work, as well as providing support to ensure that all school staff can help create a safe, equitable and respectful school environment.

Good engagement comes from communicating with your staff and students on this issue. It is best if your commitment to respectful relationships is displayed publicly (see [Template A](#)) and is visible through varied communication channels. Communication materials can help staff and the public become aware of your school's commitment to creating school culture which promotes gender equality and respectful relationships.

Communication materials that present information on gender, respect and violence against women in an informative and accessible way can have a positive impact on parent and community engagement as well as contribute to changing negative attitudes on equality, gender and violence.

Governance and leadership

Effective strategies to promote gender equality and respectful relationships among staff and students require a whole school approach. To successfully implement systems, policies and procedures to ensure these activities are successful, it is imperative that the school leadership team and other senior staff actively promote this work and provide support to ensure that all school staff create a safe, equitable and respectful school environment.

Governance and leadership	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
2.1 Our school leaders demonstrate the skills and confidence required to plan and embed a whole school approach to gender equality and respectful relationships.			
2.2 Our school allocates financial and staffing resources to the promotion of gender equality and respectful relationships.			
2.3 Our school leaders take responsibility for planning and implementing activities to promote gender equality and respectful relationships.			
2.4 Our school leaders, including the principal, actively promote gender equality and respectful relationships and regularly express commitment to these issues.			
2.5 Our school has a process for the early identification of staff with leadership potential which addresses the specific barriers women face in becoming leaders.			

Planning, monitoring and coordination

Having systems for planning and monitoring helps ensure that activities to promote gender equality and prevent gender-based violence are carefully designed and align with best practice and government policy. These systems and procedures also help ensure implementation of key actions is supported through regular feedback about achievements and areas for development.

Planning, monitoring and coordination	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
2.6 We allocate a senior member of staff responsibility to ensure that activities on gender equality and respectful relationships are coordinated in our school.			
2.7 We ensure data and information we collect is disaggregated by gender to support our school to better understand how we need to address gender equality.			
2.8 We conduct regular surveys with staff, students and families on safety, gender equality, respectful relationships, discrimination and harassment.			
2.9 We incorporate key issues and actions identified using surveys or this assessment tool annually into our school planning process.			

School policies and procedures

Effective activity to promote gender equality to prevent gender-based violence is assisted by policies and procedures which support and guide the work of the school, staff and students. Schools are required by state and federal equal opportunity and antidiscrimination legislation to have particular policies in place. However, embedding a culture of gender equality means going beyond these requirements to ensure schools commit to promoting respectful attitudes, norms, behaviours and practices through their policies and procedures.

School policies and procedures	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
2.10 We have a gender equality and/or equal opportunity policy and procedure for staff and students.			
2.11 We have a sexual harassment policy and procedure, including a clearly articulated complaints process, for staff and students.			
2.12 We include a statement on preventing gender-based violence in our equal opportunity or gender equality policy.			
2.13 We have procedures to respond effectively to staff and students who have witnessed, experienced or perpetrated gender-based violence (physical, verbal, emotional or technological). This includes disclosures that are not within mandatory reporting requirements.			
2.14 Our Student Engagement Policy includes a clear statement about our commitment to promoting gender equality and respectful relationships.			
2.15 Our Staff Code of Conduct includes a clear statement that all employees and students will be treated with dignity and respect regardless of their sex, gender identity, socioeconomic status, cultural background, sexual orientation or level of ability.			
2.16 Our policies are accessible, visible, disseminated and regularly promoted to staff and students.			
2.17 We provide training to staff on relevant policies when updated and as part of the induction process.			

3. Professional learning strategy

This section includes assessing:

- professional development and capacity building.

Introduction

Teachers and other school staff are focused on the wellbeing and social development of their students. This is one of the many reasons that they are best placed to lead Respectful Relationships Education and deliver Respectful Relationships curriculum. However evaluations have shown that even the most experienced teachers can feel uncomfortable discussing gender, sex and power without professional learning and ongoing support and advice.

In order to design, implement, monitor and evaluate activity to promote gender equality and prevent gender-based violence, a skilled, committed and supported workforce is required. Professional development is critical to ensuring that schools can develop this capacity within their workforce. As such, staff who deliver Respectful Relationships curriculum will need to be supported through ongoing professional learning, peer support (including communities of practice) and connections to specialist support services.

An effective whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education requires the engagement of all staff in the school, and must extend beyond the classroom to further support gender analysis as part of your school's operations. It is vital that all staff receive adequate professional learning that develops their awareness and skills to respond to disclosures of gender-based violence and integrate gender equality into the curriculum across all key learning areas, alongside a leadership-focused professional learning strategy for key staff including the principal and the leadership team.

Review the issues below to help plan professional learning and development for your staff and to ensure that they also promote gender equality and actively encourage women's leadership.

Ensuring the safety of your staff and students

We know that gender-based violence is prevalent and that for young people and adults alike being supported appropriately when disclosing an experience of violence can have a significant impact on their wellbeing and recovery. Often people will choose to disclose their experience of violence to someone they trust and feel they can confide in. In the school environment this may not always be a designated wellbeing staff member or teacher who is trained to deliver Respectful Relationships curriculum.

In line with the 'do no harm' approach to primary prevention, all staff should receive professional learning on appropriately responding to disclosures of violence or discrimination and be made aware of processes to refer students and fellow staff for further support. In developing internal policies and processes for responding to disclosures, individual schools should be guided by department of education policies and professional guidance and supported by the expertise of local specialist services.

Professional development and capacity building	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
3.1 We have mechanisms in place to ensure that staff have adequate support and supervision when undertaking activities to promote gender equality and respectful relationships including supporting disclosures from staff, students and the wider community.			
3.2 Our relevant teaching staff are trained to deliver Respectful Relationships curriculum to students.			
3.3 Our staff professional learning development strategy is regularly reviewed to ensure female and male staff have equal access to and participate equally in all professional development.			
3.4 Our staff receive adequate training on responding to and referring to disclosures and incidents of violence from staff and students, aligned with school policies and procedures.			
3.5 Our leadership staff receive training on their roles and responsibility to promote gender equality and respectful relationships through their leadership roles.			

4. Teaching and learning

This section includes assessing:

- teaching and learning practices.

Introduction

Respectful Relationships curriculum, the activity that happens in the classroom and is student focused, is a core part of any whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education. Evidence-based curriculum resources that focus on the links between gender, power and violence will support students to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes to engage in respectful relationships and to reject attitudes or behaviours that support gender-based violence and gender stereotypes.

Quality Respectful Relationships education should consist of multiple sessions delivered by trained educators. For example, [Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence](#) recommends trained teachers deliver eight sessions per year in Year 8 and 9 and six sessions in Year 10.

As well as the Respectful Relationships curriculum, a whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education should promote gender equality and respect across all learning areas. This will also support the capability and confidence of all teachers to engage students in understanding and discussing gender inequality as it relates to their learning area.

Teaching and learning – not only the formal curriculum, but how it is implemented and by whom – is a core part of a whole school approach. Regularly reviewing curriculum materials, teaching allocation and practices to ensure they promote equality and respect will ensure that messages students receive as part of the formal curriculum are reinforced through teaching practices and in other areas of the classroom.

Teaching and learning	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
4.1 Our staff use language that is equitable and respectful and does not unconsciously promote gender stereotypes or gender inequality.			
4.2 Our school regularly reviews curriculum content across key learning areas to ensure equal representation of the range of experiences, knowledge, skills and aspirations of females and males.			
4.3 Our school ensures that teacher allocation (classes or subjects) actively promotes gender equality and challenges gender stereotypes.			
4.4 Our school uses evidence-based curriculum that promotes gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence.			
4.5 Our school challenges disruptive and dominating student behaviour in a framework that understands gender equality. For example, a male student is not allowed to misbehave through excuses such as 'boys will be boys'.			

5. Community partnerships

This section includes assessing:

- school community partnerships.

Introduction

Respectful Relationships Education is most effective when members of the school community are supportive and hear and deliver consistent messages about gender equality and respectful relationships in all aspects of their life. As such, a core part of the whole school approach is engaging the wider community, including response and specialist community organisations and families.

Strong relationships with members of your school community, including families and local women's organisations, will support you in promoting gender equality and supporting any staff, student or community member that discloses experiences of violence. Ensuring that families are partners in learning and are equipped to support the messages you give your students will have a positive impact on activities designed to promote equality and respect.

Responding to disclosures of gender-based violence

As Respectful Relationships Education increases the awareness of what constitutes gender-based violence and creates safe spaces for discussion of these issues, it commonly results in staff and students disclosing, perhaps for the first time, their own experiences of gender-based violence, whether as a victim/survivor or perpetrator. While this may seem alarming or concerning, it is a sign that you're on the right track with your Respectful Relationships Education approach. It is important to ensure that, if and when this happens, you and your school can do all they can to support the individual.

Strengthening your links and partnerships with your local services and organisations that respond to gender-based violence, and ensuring that this information is known by all students and staff, sends a clear message about how seriously your school takes the primary prevention of gender-based violence by ensuring that everyone is aware of your local response services. It is important to also ensure that the Respectful Relationships Education leadership team has regular contact and meetings with these organisations. You will find more about support for staff and student in the following section.

Engaging families and carers

Families and carers should be recognised as key partners in Respectful Relationships Education and equipped to model respectful relationships and provide messages about gender, violence and gender equality that are consistent with what students are hearing at school. It is important for each school to determine what messages the families and carers in their school community will connect with to ensure Respectful Relationships Education is supported.

For some schools, this will consist of providing information to families and carers about Respectful Relationships Education and how it forms part of core personal development curriculum and is linked to national or state curriculum. For other schools, it may include hosting information nights, consulting representative councils or advisory groups or sharing information with families and carers through existing communication platforms.

Given families and carers are engaged in other settings in the community, such as workplaces, sporting clubs, local government and health services, linking in with other community organisations can support the delivery of key Respectful Relationships Education messages to families and carers.

Reinforcing messages in the community

Given families, teachers and young people play many diverse roles in the community, it is important that schools connect and work collaboratively with multiple organisations and groups. There is strong community support for preventing gender-based violence. Connecting with organisations in your community working on this complex issue can be a great way for students, parents and staff to hear respectful relationships messages. This may mean supporting the campaigns and activities of local government, working alongside sporting clubs and community organisations or engaging directly with primary prevention and gender equality specialists to ensure your staff have the support they need to promote gender equality in and out of the classroom.

School community partnerships	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
5.1 We provide all members of our school community including families, the school council and community partners with information on their role in supporting our approach to gender equality and respectful relationships.			
5.2 We undertake joint activities focused on gender equality and respectful relationships with other organisations in the wider school community including other local schools, sports clubs, youth services, local governments or community health centres.			
5.3 We actively facilitate and promote staff participation in events focusing on preventing gender-based violence and promoting gender equality.			
5.4 We engage families as active supporters of gender equality and violence prevention in our school, where possible.			

6. Support for staff and students

This section includes assessing:

- support for staff and students.

Introduction

Schools have an established duty of care to support students and staff experiencing violence. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff and students, it is essential you and your school understand the prevalence of gender-based violence and the high likelihood that members of your school community may experience, witness or perpetrate it. While the focus of Respectful Relationships Education is on primary prevention, as part of a duty of care and a 'do no harm' principle you will need to consider how to respond to disclosures of violence.

It is important to consider the impact gender-based violence can have on the workplace. Violence, even when occurring in private, can impact the wellbeing of those who experience, witness and perpetrate it, and the school has a legal responsibility as an employer to create a safe work environment.¹⁴

It is vital that school leaders feel confident in their ability to respond appropriately, safely and effectively to disclosures and have the connections they need to refer staff and students where necessary. This means having clear policies and procedures in place that include legislative and departmental responsibilities and respond to best practice knowledge from specialist services.

You can do this by developing strong relationships with organisations in your community that specialise in responding to gender-based violence, as well as department of education staff who can support you to understand local referral networks and systems and to develop policies and procedures for your school that genuinely support the person disclosing.

Support for staff and students	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
6.1 We have partnerships with local community organisations with expertise in gender equality and violence prevention.			
6.2 We have partnerships with local community organisations with expertise in responding to gender-based violence.			
6.3 We have sought relevant support from gender and family violence organisations for technical advice, input into policies and procedures on response and referral and training opportunities for all staff on responding to violence and gender equality as needed.			
6.4 We are confident that we have clear and well understood policies and protocols on how staff should respond to disclosures from staff and students.			
6.5 We are confident that our staff feel capable and competent to respond to disclosures from staff and students.			

Glossary

A bystander is someone who sees or hears about an act of sexism, harassment, discrimination or any other form of inappropriate behaviour. People who witness inappropriate behaviour, but aren't involved in an incident (either as an instigator or a target), are increasingly recognised as having the potential to be powerful allies in challenging sexist or discriminatory behaviours and attitudes.

Drivers are the underlying causes that are required to create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality in public and private life, but which must always be considered in the context of other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage.

Domestic violence refers to acts of violence that occur in domestic settings between two people who are, or were, in an intimate relationship. It includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and financial abuse.⁴ See also family violence.

Emotional/psychological violence can include a range of controlling behaviours such as control of finances, isolation from family and friends, continual humiliation, threats against children or being threatened with injury or death.⁵

Family violence is a broader term than domestic violence, as it refers not only to violence between intimate partners but also to violence between family members.⁶ This includes for example, elder abuse and adolescent violence against parents. Family violence includes violent or threatening behaviour, or any other form of behaviour that coerces or controls a family member or causes that family member to be fearful.⁷ In Indigenous communities, family violence is often the preferred term as it encapsulates the broader issue of violence within extended families, kinship networks and community relationships, as well as intergenerational issues.⁸

Gender refers to the socially learnt roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for men and women; gender defines masculinity and femininity.⁹ Gender expectations vary between cultures and can change over time.¹⁰

Gender-based violence is usually used to explain violence against women, referring to violence that is specifically 'directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately'. However it is also useful to explain other forms of violence, in recognition that rigid, binary and hierarchical constructions of gender, sex and sexuality are also a driver of violence against people whose experience and/or identity does not conform to such binary definitions, including members of the lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer and intersex communities.¹¹ In Respectful Relationships Education, the term gender-based violence is often used as it is considered to better encompass the experiences of girls and young women than 'domestic violence' or 'violence against women'. The term encompasses the various forms of violence that girls and young women experience, such as dating violence, sexting and revenge porn, and is also inclusive and extends to violence experienced by the lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer and intersex communities.

Gender equality¹² involves equality of opportunity and equality of results. It includes the redistribution of resources and responsibilities between women and men and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures of gender inequality to achieve substantive equality. It is about recognising diversity and disadvantage to ensure equal outcomes for all¹³ and therefore often requires women-specific programs and policies to end existing inequalities.

Gender equity refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of rights, responsibilities and resources between women and men according to their respective needs.

Gender identity is a person's deeply held internal and individual sense of their gender¹⁴ in how they define themselves in relation to masculine and feminine characteristics.

Gender inequality is the unequal distribution of power, resources, opportunity and value afforded to women and men in a society due to prevailing gendered norms and structures.

Gender roles are the functions and responsibilities¹⁵ expected to be fulfilled by women and men, girls and boys within a given society.

Gender stereotyping is a form of sexism. Gender stereotypes are simplistic assumptions about the behaviours, attributes, skills, differences and roles of women and men. These attributes are often perceived as natural or innate but are more often the result of women and men being socialised in different ways. Gender stereotypes can be positive, for example 'women are naturally caring and nurturing' or negative, for example 'men can't communicate their emotions very well', but they are usually incorrect and based on generalised assumptions about how we believe people will act, what people are good at or what people will like and dislike, simply because of their gender.

Gender transformative approaches move beyond 'gender blind' or 'gender specific' approaches to encourage critical awareness of, and explicitly challenge, harmful gender roles, practices and norms, and shift the unequal distribution of power and resources between women and men.

Gendered drivers are the specific elements or expressions of gender inequality that are most strongly linked to violence against women. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality in public and private life. The gendered drivers are the underlying causes required to create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They must always be considered in the context of other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage.

Gendered norms consist of a set of dominant beliefs and rules of conduct which are determined by a society or social group in relation to the types of roles, interests, behaviours and contributions expected from girls and boys, women and men.

Gendered practices are the everyday practices, processes and behaviours undertaken at an individual/relationship level, organisational/institutional and societal level that reinforce and perpetuate gendered norms and structures.

Gendered structures are the laws and systemic mechanisms that organise and reinforce an unequal distribution of economic, social and political power and resources between women and men.

Intimate partner violence is any behaviour by a man or a woman within an intimate relationship (including current or past marriages, domestic partnerships, familial relations, or people who share accommodation) that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm to those in the relationship. This is the most common form of violence against women.¹⁶

Respectful relationships refer to relationships among intimate, romantic or dating partners characterised by non-violence, equality, mutual respect and consideration and trust.

Respectful Relationships Education is the holistic approach to school based, primary prevention of gender based violence. It uses the education system as a catalyst for generational and cultural change by engaging schools as both education institutions and as workplaces, to comprehensively address the drivers of gender based violence and to create a future free from such violence.

Settings are environments in which people live, work, learn, socialise and play.

Sex refers to the biological and physical characteristics used to define humans as female or male.

Sex discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than a person of the opposite sex would be treated in the same or similar circumstances. Direct discrimination (for example women and men doing the same job but receiving different pay) and indirect discrimination (for example a policy requirement that all managers must work full time) are both illegal in Australia.

Sexism is discrimination based on gender, and the attitudes, stereotypes and cultural elements that promote this discrimination.¹⁷

Sexual harassment is unwelcome or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, which could be expected to make a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment can be obvious or subtle, direct or indirect, physical or verbal, repeated or one off, and can be perpetrated by both women and men against people of the same or opposite sex. Men are most likely to perpetrate sexual harassment against both women and other men, and women are most likely to be the victims of sexual harassment.

Sexual violence is sexual activity that happens where consent is not obtained or freely given. It occurs any time a person is forced, coerced or manipulated into any unwanted sexual activity, such as touching, sexual harassment and intimidation, forced marriage, trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual assault and rape.

Social norms are rules of conduct and models of behaviour expected by a society or social group. They are grounded in the customs, traditions and value systems that develop over time in a society or social group.¹⁸

Socio-ecological model is a feature of public health and is used to demonstrate how violence is a product of multiple, interacting components and social factors.¹⁹ The model conceptualises how the

drivers of violence manifest across the personal, community and social level and illustrates the value of implementing multiple mutually-reinforcing strategies across these levels.

Violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or in private life.²⁰ This definition encompasses all forms of violence that women experience, including physical, sexual, emotional, cultural/spiritual, financial and others, that are gender-based. See also gender-based violence.

Violence prevention refers in Respectful Relationships Education to the primary prevention of gender-based violence. Primary prevention focuses on stopping gender-based violence before it occurs, rather than intervening once an incident has already happened. Primary prevention involves working with whole communities to address the attitudes, behaviours, norms and practices that drive gender-based violence.

Whole School approach refers in Respectful Relationships Education to providing students with multiple exposure to key messages across the curriculum and in different areas of the school and community. It involves engaging not just students, but school staff and the wider school community in the process of cultural change. For example, school staff, including non-teaching staff, might undergo professional learning and development around the drivers of gender-based violence and their role in prevention.

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- ² Brasher, K. (2014) *Gender 'goggles' strip away men's sense of entitlement towards women*, Canberra Times, 11 December, <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/comment/gender-goggles-strip-away-mens-sense-of-entitlement-towards-women-20141210-123vho.html>.
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- ⁶ Crooks, M. (2013) *Gender lens for inclusive philanthropy*, Victorian Women's Trust, <http://vwt.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Gender-Lens-FINAL-COPY2.pdf>.
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- ¹⁰ Department of Education and Training (2009). *Respectful Relationships Education: Violence Prevention in Victorian Secondary schools*, DET, Melbourne <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/health/respectfulrel.pdf>
- ¹¹ Prime, J. and Moss-Racusin, C.A. (2009) *Engaging men in gender initiatives: What change agents need to know*, Catalyst, New York, http://www.catalyst.org/system/files/Engaging_Men_In_Gender_Initiatives_What_Change_Agents_Need_To_Know.pdf.
- ¹² Municipal Association of Victoria. (2012) *Ten ways local government can advance gender equity, Fact Sheet 2: Gender Analysis*, <http://www.mav.asn.au/policy-services/social-community/gender-equity/gender-equity-factsheets/Pages/default.aspx>.
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- ¹⁴ Powell, A. and Sandy, L. (2015). See note 13.
- ¹⁵ Morgan, A. and Chadwick, H. (2009) *Key issues in domestic violence*, Summary paper, no. 7, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/rip/1-10/07.html>.
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- ²³ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, opened for signature 1 March 1980, 1249 UNTS 13 (entered into force 3 September 1981) <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No 25, on Article 4, Paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, on Temporary Special Measures [3]-[14] [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/General%20recommendation%2025%20\(English\).pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/General%20recommendation%2025%20(English).pdf), Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No 28 on the Core Obligations of States Parties under Article 2 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 47th session, UN Doc CEDAW/C/GC/28 (16 December 2010) ('General Recommendation 28'); Report on the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Thirtieth Session <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CEDAW/Pages/Recommendations.aspx>.
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Step 4:

Planning and implementing



Step 4 includes:

- developing a school implementation plan ([Template C](#))
- understanding policy guidance and templates, including:
 - School Gender Equality Policy ([Template D](#))
 - Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment Policy ([Guidance A](#))
 - Student Engagement Policy ([Guidance B](#))
 - Staff Code of Conduct ([Guidance C](#))
 - Promoting Gender Equality in Curriculum Planning ([Guidance D](#))

If you or someone you know needs support or information, call the National Sexual Assault Domestic Family Violence Counselling Line on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) or visit <http://www.1800respect.org.au>



Education
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Our Watch acknowledges the support of the State Government of Victoria

Step 4:

Planning and implementing

Now that you have completed [Step 3](#) including the school gender equality assessment ([Template A](#)), you have a better understanding of your school's areas of need and can consider what can be done to make small but significant changes.

This step includes a template for your implementation plan for [Respectful Relationships Education](#). It maps your priorities over the six elements of the [whole school approach](#). While the template is prepared into the six components, naturally you may find that many actions support each other, or in other words are mutually reinforcing. As you move through the template it can be helpful to refresh what you have in other sections too. It is also important to consider your short and longer term actions – don't commit to everything in the first term!

There are suggested actions in each section, and helpful templates and further guidance to assist you in these actions. There's a broad range of actions your school can take including developing or reviewing key policies for staff and students, mainstreaming the promotion of gender equality across different learning areas and communicating regularly with the school community to increase awareness and confirm the school's commitment to [preventing gender-based violence](#).

Not all actions can be undertaken in one year; and some of the larger actions may need to be broken up into smaller activities that will build towards the achievement of a larger goal. It is recommended that you plan your actions and clearly identify steps towards larger goals over each term.

Before agreeing on the priority actions in your implementation plan it is important to ask:

- Do these actions respond to the feedback and evidence gathered from members of the school community?
- Do these actions equally address the needs of staff and students?
- Are these actions likely to help us create sustainable cultural change in our school?
- Do these actions align with the goals and strategies in our School Strategic Plan or other overarching planning documents?
- Are these actions feasible right now? Do we have the knowledge, resources and support systems to undertake this action?
- How much impact will these actions have?

When you are making your priority actions think **SMART** – Simple, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely. For more information see [here](#).

Once priority actions are selected it is important to consider timing, resourcing and responsibility. Having the implementation plan signed off by the leadership team and shared among the school community will help promote whole school ownership and accountability to meet the priority actions. Also remember that you have your wider school community to help and support you with the implementation. They can be a valuable resource.

Suggested actions

- Build your and your school's understanding of the six elements of the whole school approach and how they will provide a framework for your school's implementation plan.
- Ensure that you have worked through the above questions prior to agreeing on the priority actions for your implementation plan.
- Ensure that you have assigned appropriate resources and responsibilities to be able to act on your implementation plan, and that your priority actions are mapped across the academic year.
- Ensure the wider school community know what the priority actions are and what the school is planning to do and if applicable their role.

Support resources

- [Template A: School Commitment Statement](#)
- [Template B: School Gender Equality Assessment](#)
- [Template D: Gender Equality Policy](#)
- [Guidance A: Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment Policy](#)
- [Guidance B: Student Engagement Policy](#)
- [Guidance C: Staff Code of Conduct guidance](#)
- [Guidance D: Promoting Gender Equality in Curriculum Planning](#)
- Our Watch [Evidence Paper: Respectful Relationships in Schools](#)
- [Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence](#)

Step 4 Checklist

You have completed Step 4 and are ready for [Step 5](#) if you have:

- ✓ Identified priority actions, mapped them across the next year and assigned suitable resources and responsibility to ensure accountability.
- ✓ Looked at internal school policies and utilised templates and guidance to ensure that you are addressing the gendered drivers of violence against women.
- ✓ Communicated your priority actions and implementation plan to other members of the school community.

Step 5:

[Evaluating and Monitoring](#)



Template C: Implementation Plan

1. School culture and environment

Suggested actions

- Increase your school's understanding of gender equality issues in the workplace and strategies to challenge unconscious bias and structural inequality.
- Strengthen your policies and procedures to promote gender equality in school structures and norms, including drafting a [school gender equality policy](#) and disseminate to staff.
- Ensure strong shared understanding among staff of Respectful Relationships Education.
- Speak publicly about the school's commitment to gender equality and respectful relationships, including displaying your school commitment statement ([Template B](#)) in [Step 1: Getting Started](#).
- Use visual communications to promote gender equality throughout the school including your school commitment statement ([Template B](#)).
- Create a position description to focus on promoting gender equality for the prevention of gender-based violence in your school.
- Undertake an audit of school communication messages in newsletters and website information and ensure both female and male achievements are promoted.

Support resources

The following material will support you in this work.

- [Template A: School Commitment Statement](#)
- [Template D: Gender Equality Policy](#)
- [Guidance A: Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment Policy](#)
- [Guidance B: Student Engagement Policy](#)
- [Guidance C: Staff Code of Conduct](#)
- [List 1: Visual resources for Respectful Relationships Education](#)

Other resources

- [Workplace Gender Equality Agency: About gender equality for small business](#)
- [Workplace Gender Equality Agency: e-learning module – What is workplace gender equality?](#)

Implementation plan: School culture and environment

Key improvements <i>Strategies and significant projects</i>	What <i>Activities and programs to progress the key improvement strategies</i>	How <i>Budget, equipment, IT, learning time, learning space</i>	Who <i>Individuals or teams responsible for implementation</i>	When <i>Start and anticipated end dates to track progress</i>	Achievement milestones <i>Changes in practice or behaviours</i>

2. Leadership and commitment

Suggested actions

- Prompt discussion among staff about key gender issues.
- Talk to staff about the impact of gender roles, norms and stereotypes in the classroom.
- Include gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence on the staff meeting agenda.
- Encourage critical thinking among staff about language and the impact of sexist words and phrases.
- Ensure that goals on gender equality are included in annual and strategic planning.
- Engage in reflection and a progress assessment of the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education on an annual basis.

Support resources

- [The Line: Are you a gender equitable teacher?](#)
- [The Line: Discussing gender and stereotypes with students](#)
- [The Line: Promoting gender equality in the classroom](#)
- [Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence](#)

Implementation plan: Leadership and commitment

Key improvements <i>Strategies and significant projects</i>	What <i>Activities and programs to progress the key improvement strategies</i>	How <i>Budget, equipment, IT, learning time, learning space</i>	Who <i>Individuals or teams responsible for implementation</i>	When <i>Start and anticipated end dates to track progress</i>	Achievement milestones <i>Changes in practice or behaviours</i>

3. Professional learning strategy

Suggested actions

- Get in touch with your department of education to see what professional learning and training is available for you and your staff for Respectful Relationships Education.
- Increase the awareness and understanding among all staff of the links between gender inequality and gender-based violence and the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education.
- Develop the skills of all staff to integrate gender equality into the curriculum across all key learning areas.
- Ensure all staff receive professional learning on appropriately responding to disclosures of violence or discrimination and know the processes to refer students and fellow staff for further support.

Support resources

- [The Line: Are you a gender equitable teacher?](#)
- [The Line: Discussing gender and stereotypes with students](#)
- [The Line: Promoting gender equality in the classroom](#)
- [Australian Women's Health Network: National List of Women's Health Organisations](#)
- [1800 RESPECT: Services and Support Map](#)

Implementation plan: Professional learning strategy

Key improvements <i>Strategies and significant projects</i>	What <i>Activities and programs to progress the key improvement strategies</i>	How <i>Budget, equipment, IT, learning time, learning space</i>	Who <i>Individuals or teams responsible for implementation</i>	When <i>Start and anticipated end dates to track progress</i>	Achievement milestones <i>Changes in practice or behaviours</i>

4. Teaching and learning

Suggested actions

- Support staff to deliver evidence-based Respectful Relationships curriculum resource material such as [Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out Against Gender Based Violence](#).
- Work to ensure students receive messages as part of the formal curriculum that is reinforced through teaching practices and in other areas of the classroom.
- Ask students to undertake a gender audit of a school extracurricular activity (musical, formal, sporting event). Ask what they could do to ensure these events promote gender equality and challenge negative stereotypes.
- Undertake a review of teaching topics and resources to ensure that they are gender equitable and do not condone violence or promote negative gender stereotypes.
- In your curriculum planning process, encourage your staff to develop the skills to integrate gender equality across all learning areas. Encourage discussion and questions on each other about how they can improve in this area.
- Discuss how to be a gender-equitable teacher in staff meetings.

Support resources

- [List 1: Resources to support Respectful Relationships Curriculum](#)
- [Guidance D: Promoting Gender Equality in Curriculum Planning](#)
- [Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence](#)
- [Our Watch: Evidence Brief on Respectful Relationships Education in Schools](#)
- [The Line: Are you a gender equitable teacher?](#)
- [The Line: Promoting gender equality in the classroom](#)
- [The Line: Managing student behaviour – What’s gender got to do with it?](#)

Implementation plan: Teaching and learning

Key improvements <i>Strategies and significant projects</i>	What <i>Activities and programs to progress the key improvement strategies</i>	How <i>Budget, equipment, IT, learning time, learning space</i>	Who <i>Individuals or teams responsible for implementation</i>	When <i>Start and anticipated end dates to track progress</i>	Achievement milestones <i>Changes in practice or behaviours</i>

5. Community partnerships

Suggested actions

- Understand and assess your key community partnerships.
- Strengthen relationships with partners that specialise in the promotion of gender equality and can support work to prevent gender-based violence in your school.
- Engage with other organisations to ensure coordination of strategies and messages and support work in your school, and to gain further gender equality expertise to support the implementation of a whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education.
- Engage with local government, as local governments are playing an increasing role in promoting gender equality and have a good overview of the work of other community organisations.
- Share information with families and carers about links to national or state level curriculum.
- Identify key strategies for engaging families in a whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education. For instance, theme a school carnival around gender equality, challenging traditional stereotypes, and actively engage families in the running of this event.

Support resources

- [Victorian Department of Education: Evidence and benefits of partnership](#)
- [Victorian Department of Education: Stakeholder Engagement Framework](#)
- [VicHealth: The Partnership Analysis Tool](#)
- Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth: [Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia](#)
- [Australian Women's Health Network: National List of Women's Health Organisations](#) – connect with women's health organisations who specialise in promoting gender equality
- [National Legal Aid](#) – links to state based legal aid commissions who may have programs to support staff to understand and present legal information to students, staff and families.

Implementation plan: Community partnerships

Key improvements <i>Strategies and significant projects</i>	What <i>Activities and programs to progress the key improvement strategies</i>	How <i>Budget, equipment, IT, learning time, learning space</i>	Who <i>Individuals or teams responsible for implementation</i>	When <i>Start and anticipated end dates to track progress</i>	Achievement milestones <i>Changes in practice or behaviours</i>

6. Support for staff and students

Suggested actions

- Connect with staff in the department of education who are responsible for providing advice about responding to family violence.
- Connect with specialist services in your local area, including family violence service providers to ensure staff know where to refer staff and how to respond to disclosures of violence.

Support resources

- [1800 RESPECT: Services and Support Map](#)
- [Australian Women's Health Network: National List of Women's Health Organisations](#)

Implementation plan: Support for staff and students

Key improvements <i>Strategies and significant projects</i>	What <i>Activities and programs to progress the key improvement strategies</i>	How <i>Budget, equipment, IT, learning time, learning space</i>	Who <i>Individuals or teams responsible for implementation</i>	When <i>Start and anticipated end dates to track progress</i>	Achievement milestones <i>Changes in practice or behaviours</i>

Policy guidance and templates

Introduction

Respectful Relationships Education is assisted by policies and procedures which support and guide the work of the school, its staff and students. Schools are required by federal and state equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation and by state institutions such as the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority to have particular policies in place. However, embedding a culture of gender equality requires going beyond these requirements to ensure commitments to promote respectful attitudes, norms, behaviours and practices are also embedded in school policies and procedures.

As part of Respectful Relationships Education, consider developing and reviewing many of your policies including:

- Gender Equality Policy
- Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment Policy
- Student Engagement Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct.

Guidance is provided on each of these policies. Schools should reflect on their individual context and needs and adapt this guidance as necessary. Regular reviewing of all of your policies is recommended.

Domestic Violence, Family Violence and Sexual Assault Policy

It is important to make sure that your school's commitment to supporting students and staff who experience domestic violence, family violence or sexual assault is embedded in policy.

This will create awareness in the school of the prevalence and impact of domestic violence, family violence and sexual assault and send a message to students and staff who experience domestic violence, family violence or sexual assault that the school environment is one in which they can safely disclose their experience and be linked to appropriate support.

This Toolkit does not include direction on developing a domestic violence, family violence or sexual assault policy. Schools should seek guidance from local specialist services experienced in supporting those who experience domestic violence, family violence or sexual assault when developing a policy.

You can find more information on specialist services at [1800 RESPECT: Services and Support Map](#).

[Download a Word version
of this document here](#)

Template D: Gender Equality Policy

This template policy is designed to be a sample only. Adapting it to your context, guided by consultation with your team, can help you create a safe and inclusive school and workplace where all staff and students, regardless of gender, have equity of opportunity and outcomes.

Introduction

[Name of school] is committed to creating a school community where all staff and students are equally respected and valued and enjoy equity of both opportunity and outcomes.

[Name of school] recognises that gender inequality has the potential to limit and impact negatively on the safety, education, employment, family lives and opportunities of staff and students, particularly women and girls, in the immediate and long term.

Under the *Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010* all organisations have a positive duty to take proactive steps to prevent discriminatory practices.¹ **[Name of school]** recognises the prevalence and impact of gender-based discrimination and harassment, and is committed to building a school culture that challenges the stereotypes, power differences and social norms that foster gender inequality.

[Name of school] recognises that gender inequality is both structural and individual; this means it is not only the result of individual attitudes and actions, but also of biases in structures, systems, policies and processes throughout our community.

Girls and boys, women and men are subject to gendered stereotypes and expectations about how they should behave, think and act. These gendered stereotypes and expectations contribute to gender inequality by assigning unequal value, status and power to women and men. These expectations are reinforced by structures, systems, norms and cultures that often privilege the knowledge, rights, perspectives and skills of males over females.

Gender inequality can be both a cause and a consequence of direct and indirect discrimination. This discrimination is sometimes the result of unconscious bias which is when our behaviours, choices and practices are shaped by underlying assumptions and attitudes without us realising. Gender inequality is evident throughout our society, and research suggests it is one of the key factors driving the prevalence of gender-based violence.²

[Name of school] recognises that schools are vital spaces in our community to promote gender equality and prevent violence against women. Every policy, practice and activity has the potential to reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes and gendered inequality.

On behalf of the whole school community, the principal, the School Council and the Student Representative Council support this policy.

¹ Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (2011) [Positive duty: Know your responsibilities](#).

² Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth (2015) [Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia](#), Our Watch, Melbourne.

Our commitments

[Name of school], as an education institution and an employer, is committed to promoting **gender equality** and to ensuring equality of opportunity and outcomes for all staff and students.

Gender equality involves equality of opportunity and equality of results. It includes the redistribution of resources and responsibilities between women and men and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures of gender inequality to achieve substantive equality. It is about recognising diversity and disadvantage to ensure equal outcomes for all and therefore often requires women-specific programs and policies to end existing inequalities.

[Name of school] will ensure that all staff, students and school policies, procedures, systems and structures actively promote gender equality and seek to expose and redress gender inequities.

School culture and environment

At **[Name of school]** all students and staff are responsible for promoting gender equality and modelling respectful relationships. All staff and students will be held accountable if they use language and/or demonstrate behaviour that:

- promotes unequal power relations between women and men
- perpetuates harmful gender stereotypes
- condones violence against women.

For example: Unacceptable behaviour includes accessing or sharing sexist or discriminatory materials at school, during school hours or using school property, using sexist, stereotyping or discriminatory language, dismissing acts of gender-based violence as trivial, making jokes that rely on gender stereotypes, and victim blaming when discussing gender-based violence.

Promoting gender equality and modelling respectful relationships is just as important for staff as it is for students.

[Name of school] will work to ensure all staff feel respected, safe and valued in the workplace, and will take proactive measures to prevent and eliminate gender discrimination and provide equal opportunities for all staff. This will include promoting gender equality in school leadership, ensuring processes and policies are free of bias, and supporting all staff to balance work and family commitments.

For example: Commitments include actively supporting and/or mentoring female staff, reviewing recruitment and professional processes to eliminate unconscious gender bias, facilitating flexible work arrangements and family leave in line with department guidelines, and providing private breastfeeding facilities.

[Name of school] will support staff who experience domestic/family violence or sexual assault including by making reasonable efforts to grant appropriate leave, adjust work assignments or accommodate requests for flexible work hours.

Teaching and learning

[Name of school] is committed to supporting all staff to explicitly promote gender equality in their teaching practices, the formal curriculum and their engagement with students outside the classroom.

[Name of school] will ensure adequate support and professional development is provided to staff across key learning areas to select, review and deliver curriculum that:

- represents the range of experience, knowledge, skills and aspirations of girls and women, boys and men
- provides opportunities for students to understand, identify and challenge gender inequality, harassment, discrimination, gender stereotypes and violence against women.

For example: Commitments include implementing best practice curriculum which addresses the underlying causes of violence against women, ensuring gender is considered in curriculum review processes across all key learning areas, and professional learning for staff about gender stereotypes, gender equality or violence against women.

Behaviour is affected by the culture and environment in which it occurs. To promote gender equality it is important to recognise the way that gender stereotypes can influence what is seen as acceptable behaviour for both girls and boys, and the impact this can have on both student behaviour and the ways behaviour is managed.

For example: Unacceptable behaviour includes male students displaying particular behaviours as a means of proving or asserting their masculinity, teachers dismissing problem behaviours as normal or natural for either gender, and using gendered insults as a means of motivating behaviour change such as 'Do you want to gossip like a bunch of girls or just get this done?' or 'Just be a man, get it together and move on'.

Many subtle forms of gender-based discrimination, harassment or violence can be invisible, normalised or seen as acceptable.

The [Name of school] behaviour management framework:

- clearly sets out and models expected behaviours for students and staff
- recognises how gendered social dynamics and norms can influence student behaviour
- gives staff tools to engage students in challenging gender stereotypes
- gives staff tools to identify and respond to dominating or disruptive behaviours so they do not inhibit the learning of other students.

Responsibilities

The principal of [name of school] is accountable for implementation of this policy. The principal of [name of school] may appoint a coordinator to support implementation of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed regularly by [insert name and position e.g. the principal, assistant principal, Equal Opportunity Coordinator or subcommittee of School Council] and ratified by the School Council.

All members of the school community have a responsibility to respect and promote the rights of others.

[Name of school] encourages all members of the school community to take appropriate bystander action to intervene safely and respectfully when they see or hear about sexist language, sex discrimination, sexual harassment or a potentially violent situation in the school community.

Complaints procedures

Complaints procedures provide an avenue to address unacceptable behaviour. These procedures are outlined in the **[name of school]** Equal Opportunity Policy.

Any member of the school community who raises an issue of gender inequality will not be victimised or otherwise unfairly treated or disadvantaged. All complaints of victimisation will be taken seriously, investigated and acted upon as quickly as possible.

Relevant policies and guidance

- [Name of school] Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment Policy
- [Name of school] Domestic Violence, Family Violence and Sexual Assault Policy
- [Name of school] Student Engagement Policy
- [Name of school] Staff Code of Conduct

Victorian Department of Education and Training

- [Sexual Harassment Policy](#)
- [Building Respectful and Safe Schools](#)
- [Managing Diversity and Inclusive Workplaces](#)
- [Flexible Work in Victorian Government Schools](#)

Endorsed by School Council and effective as of:

.....
(insert date)

Guidance A: Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment Policy

Equal Opportunity is a requirement under federal and state anti-discrimination legislation and principals have a legal responsibility for its implementation in individual schools.

Schools in Victoria should be guided by the following Victorian Department of Education and Training policies:

- [Human Resources: Equal Opportunity Guidelines for Victorian Government Schools](#)
- [Equal Opportunity Checklist](#)
- [Equal Opportunity Policy Template](#).

Schools in other states may wish to review the Victorian policies for guidance.

Please review the Equal Opportunity Policy Template and then consider the following suggested additions:

Section	Suggested addition and rationale for inclusion	Example clause
OUR COMMITMENTS	Acknowledging the gendered nature of multiple forms of harassment	
	<p>There several categories of discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation that are experienced either solely or disproportionately by women. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • solely – breastfeeding, pregnancy • disproportionately – carer status, marital status, parental status, sex. <p>The overwhelming majority of people sexually harassed in the workplace are women.³</p> <p>It is important to acknowledge that gender inequality is a key cause of these forms of discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation and that schools have a <i>positive duty</i>⁴ to proactively address it.</p>	<p>While both women and men can experience discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation, [Name of school] acknowledges that several forms are experienced either solely or disproportionately by women (such as pregnancy, carer status and sexual harassment). [Name of school] will work to address gender inequality as the root cause of these forms of discrimination.</p>

³ For more information on **sexual harassment** see: Australian Human Rights Commission (2012) *Working without fear: The 2012 Australian Human Rights Commission National Sexual Harassment Survey*.

⁴ For more information on **positive duty** see: Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (2011) *Positive duty: Know your responsibilities*.

Section	Suggested addition and rationale for inclusion	Example clause
OUR COMMITMENTS	Positive duty	
	<p>The Victorian <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010</i> introduces a positive duty requiring all organisations to take reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation as far as possible.⁵</p> <p>‘Positive duty’ is aimed at addressing the systemic causes of discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation.</p> <p>As such it is important that schools recognise the impact school culture can have on gender-based discrimination and harassment.</p>	<p>Under the Victorian <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010</i> all organisations have a positive duty to be proactive about discrimination and take steps to prevent discriminatory practices. [Name of school] recognises the prevalence and impact of gender-based discrimination and harassment, and is committed to building a school culture that challenges the stereotypes, power differences and social norms that foster gender inequality.</p>

The Victorian Department of Education and Training Sexual Harassment Policy applies to ‘Department and school council employees, casual staff, volunteers, contractors and students’. While individual schools are covered by this policy, it is recommended that schools develop an school-specific Sexual Harassment Policy as a way of signalling to staff and students their commitment to deterring and responding to sexual harassment.

A Sexual Harassment Policy can stand alone, or can be integrated into the Equal Opportunity Policy.

The development and review of your Sexual Harassment Policy (or the Sexual Harassment section of your Equal Opportunity Policy) should be guided by the following Victorian Department of Education and Training policies:

- [Sexual Harassment Policy](#)
- [Guidelines for Managing Complaints, Unsatisfactory Performance and Misconduct – Teaching Service.](#)

⁵ See note 4.

For further explanations and examples of sexual harassment see [Ending workplace sexual harassment: A resource for small, medium and large employers](#) by the Australian Human Rights Commission (2014).

In addition to the above guidance, consider the following inclusions:

Section	Suggested addition and rationale for inclusion	Example clause
<p>SEXUAL HARASSMENT</p>	<p>Amendment to sexual harassment definition and examples</p>	
	<p>Ensure definition of Sexual Harassment is the same as that included in the Victorian Department of Education and Training Sexual Harassment Policy. This ensures the definition of Sexual Harassment is sufficiently broad and makes it clear that the intent of actions is irrelevant to whether they are lawful.</p>	<p><i>‘Sexual harassment is conduct of a sexual nature that is unwelcome. Sexual harassment can be physical, verbal or written. It involves behaviour that could reasonably be expected to make a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Even if the behaviour is not intended by the individual to be sexually harassing, it may still be unlawful’.</i></p>
<p>Many subtle forms of sexual harassment can be invisible, normalised or seen as acceptable.</p> <p>You should include as many examples as possible from the Victorian Department of Education and Training Sexual Harassment Policy to ensure clear understanding of what constitutes sexual harassment.</p>	<p>Sexual harassment can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comments about a person’s sex life or physical appearance • comments of a sexual nature • suggestive behaviours such as leering and ogling • unnecessary physical intimacy such as brushing up against a person • physical contact such as touching or fondling • ‘flashing’ or sexual gestures • sexual propositions or repeated unwanted requests for dates • making promises or threats in return for sexual favours • sexual jokes, offensive telephone calls, displays of offensive photographs, reading matter or objects • sending jokes or graphics of a sexual nature by email or internet • unwelcome questioning about a person’s private life • offensive computer screen savers • unwanted requests for sex • stalking, indecent assault or rape (which are also criminal offences). 	

Section	Suggested addition and rationale for inclusion	Example clause
ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING STUDENTS	<p>Acknowledgement that staff may experience sexual harassment perpetrated by students</p> <p>Due to the inherent power imbalance between staff and students, some victims may fail to disclose due to fear that a report of harassment perpetrated by a student will be dismissed or not taken seriously.</p> <p>Making clear the school’s stance on student perpetration sends an important message to staff that sexual harassment will be taken seriously regardless of who is perpetrating.</p> <p>The current Victorian Department of Education and Training <u>Sexual Harassment Policy</u> states that: <i>‘The Sexual Harassment Policy applies to all people in the workplace including Department and school council employees, casual staff, volunteers, contractors and students’</i>, however gives no further details about the potential for student perpetration of sexual harassment.</p>	<p>[Name of school] acknowledges that staff may sometimes be the victim of sexual harassment from students and commits to treating seriously complaints and behaviour which may constitute sexual harassment and to taking immediate action.</p>
RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	<p>Endorsement of bystander action as a way of supporting equal opportunity</p> <p>Specifically including bystander action in your Equal Opportunity Policy will encourage staff to take constructive actions as part of their shared responsibility to eliminate sex discrimination and harassment.⁶</p>	<p>[Name of school] encourages all staff and students to report actions or behaviours that contravene our values, policies and Code of Conduct, and take appropriate bystander action to intervene safely and respectfully when they see or hear about sexist language, sex discrimination, sexual harassment or a potentially violent situation in the school community.</p>

⁶ For more information on **bystander action** see: VicHealth (2014) *‘Stepping in’: A bystander action toolkit to support equality and respect at work.*

Guidance B: Student Engagement Policy

The development and review of the Student Engagement Policy should be guided by:

- School Policy and Advisory Guide – Victorian Student Engagement: Policy Requirements and Development
- School Policy and Advisory Guide – Student Engagement: What the policy should include (Victorian).

In *Building Respectful and Safe Schools*, Victorian government schools ‘are expected to integrate their strategies to prevent and respond to bullying and unacceptable behaviour within their Student Engagement Policy’.

Schools must ensure that their Student Engagement Policy outlines:

- that every student has the right to feel safe at school (including broader learning situations such as digital learning environments) and bullying or unacceptable behaviour including harassment, discrimination or a threat or act of violence is not tolerated
- goals, standards and expectations for student behaviour
- that the school environment is inclusive of all children and young people and diversity is valued and respected
- the whole school approach to promoting respectful relationships includes school culture, policies and procedures, curriculum, programs and partnerships with families and community organisations
- the range of initiatives and strategies to be utilised to prevent and respond to bullying and unacceptable behaviour
- explicit reference to how the behaviours and strategies relate to the safe and responsible use of digital technologies.

In addition to the above guidance, consider the following inclusions:

Section	Suggested addition and rationale for inclusion	Example clause
OUR COMMITMENTS	Acknowledgement of gender-based student engagement issues	
	<p>School policy, culture and environment can have a significant impact on the engagement of pregnant or parenting students, gender diverse or gender questioning students and those who experience or witness domestic/family violence and sexual assault.</p> <p>Acknowledging this and detailing commitments to support these students is key to ensuring gender inequality and violence against women does not result in the disengagement or exclusion of particular students.</p>	<p>[Name of school] recognises there are actions that need to be taken to ensure gender-based discrimination and the prevalence of violence against women does not impact on the opportunities and outcomes of students.</p>

Section	Suggested addition and rationale for inclusion	Example clause
ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES	Support for students who experience and/or witness domestic violence, family violence and sexual assault	
	<p>Experiencing or witnessing domestic violence, family violence and sexual assault can impact on the wellbeing and education of students.</p> <p>Students who experience domestic violence, family violence and sexual assault may have decreased engagement in school, such as absenteeism, work interruptions, behavioural issues or trouble concentrating.⁷</p> <p>Ensuring commitment to supporting students who experience violence is enshrined in policy is an important way to create awareness within the school of the prevalence and impact of domestic violence, family violence and sexual assault.</p>	<p>[Name of school] recognises that experiencing or witnessing domestic violence, family violence and sexual assault can have a significant impact on the wellbeing and engagement of students.</p> <p>[Name of school] will work with students who experience domestic violence, family violence and sexual assault, their parents/ carers (where appropriate) and involved teaching staff to agree on ‘reasonable adjustments’ to the student’s workload, assessment and attendance requirements to ensure as little interruption to their education as possible.</p>
	Support for pregnant and parenting students	
	<p>The consequences of not completing a secondary education for a young mother include social isolation, a higher risk of violent or unhealthy relationships, a higher risk of welfare dependency and/or poverty and a reduced capacity and likelihood to return to schooling or post-school.⁸</p> <p>The Victorian Department of Education and Training <u>School Policy & Advisory Guide – Student Pregnancy and Parenting</u> advises that ‘schools and principals can make local decisions to support students to continue their schooling’ so it is important to make clear your stance as a school.</p>	<p>[Name of school] recognises the right of pregnant and parenting students to continue their schooling, and is committed to working with pregnant and parenting students to support their continued engagement with education.</p> <p>[Name of school] will work with the student, their family and involved teaching staff to agree on ‘reasonable adjustments’ to the student’s workload, assessment and attendance requirements in order to ensure the student has every chance to complete their education free of discrimination.</p>

⁷ For more information on the **impact of experiencing** domestic violence, family violence and sexual assault **on young people** see: Australian Childhood Foundation (2014) *Safe and secure: A trauma informed practice guide for understanding and responding to children and young people affected by family violence and* Australian Childhood Foundation (2010) *Making space for learning: Trauma informed practice in schools.*

⁸ For more information on **equity issues related to pregnant and parenting students** see: Australian Education Union (2008) *Policy on gender equity.*

Section	Suggested addition and rationale for inclusion	Example clause
<p>ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES</p>	<p>Support for gender diverse and gender questioning students</p>	<p>[Name of school] will maintain a safe and welcoming environment for gender diverse students to ensure no interruption to their education.</p> <p>[Name of school] will work with gender diverse students, their parents/carers (where appropriate) and involved teaching staff to ensure that school facilities, practices and culture do not deter the student’s continued engagement in education.</p>
	<p>While the Victorian Department of Education and Training <u>School Policy & Advisory Guide – Gender Identity</u> gives clear guidance on expectations of schools to support gender diverse students you may wish to include reference to this in the student engagement policy so your support for gender diverse and gender questioning students is clear.</p>	
<p>BEHAVIOURAL EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSES</p>	<p>Managing student behaviour within a framework that reflects an understanding of gender equality</p>	<p>The [Name of school] behaviour management framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly sets out and models expected behaviours for students and staff • recognises how gendered social dynamics and norms can influence student behaviour • gives staff tools to engage students in challenging gender stereotypes • gives staff tools to identify and respond to dominating or disruptive behaviours so they do not inhibit the learning of other students.
	<p>Behaviour is affected by the culture and environment in which it occurs. To promote gender equality it is important to recognise the way that gender stereotypes, roles and norms can influence what is seen as acceptable behaviour for both girls and boys, and the impact this can have on both student behaviour and the ways behaviour is managed.</p> <div style="background-color: #e0f2f1; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>For example: Unacceptable behaviour includes male students displaying particular behaviours as a means of proving or asserting their masculinity, teachers dismissing problem behaviours as normal or natural for either gender, and using gendered insults as a means of motivating behaviour change such as ‘do you want to gossip like a bunch of girls or just get this done?’ or ‘just be a man, get it together’.</p> </div> <p>Approaches to behaviour management should be informed by an understanding of how behaviour can be influenced by gender expectations, norms and stereotypes and staff should be supported with the skills and tools to respond appropriately to this.</p>	

Guidance C: Staff Code of Conduct

A Staff Code of Conduct clarifies what behaviours are acceptable and appropriate and applies to staff in the learning environment and during education events and activities, in their interactions with all members of the school community. As such, it is useful for schools to develop a Code of Conduct unique to their individual context and community. In contrast to an Equal Opportunity Policy, which prohibits discrimination, harassment, vilification or victimisation, a Code of Conduct takes a more proactive approach to the expected behaviour of staff. A Code of Conduct should be an active guide to decision making by providing examples to illustrate the ethical problems that staff might encounter and strategies for dealing with them.

A Code of Conduct:

- outlines the standards of behaviour set by your school
- reinforces your commitment to respectful interactions between staff and other members of the school community and effective conflict resolution
- communicates your school’s expectation that these standards will be met by all staff and how staff will be accountable for meeting these standards.

Victoria

All Victoria Department of Education staff are guided by the [Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees](#) and all Victorian teachers are guided by the [Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct](#).

Other states

To ensure your Code of Conduct promotes gender equality and respectful relationships, consider the following inclusions:

Section	Suggested addition and rationale for inclusion	Example clause
OUR COMMITMENT	Acknowledging the gendered nature of particular forms of discrimination, harassment and violence	
	<p>Many forms of gender-based discrimination, harassment or violence can be subtle or invisible. This means that perpetrators, victims and witnesses can normalise or trivialise harmful actions and words.</p> <p>Being clear about your commitment to gender equality ensures that employees know that gender-based discrimination and harassment is unacceptable and will be taken seriously at your school.</p>	<p>[Name of school] recognises the prevalence and impact of gender-based discrimination and harassment, and is committed to building a school culture that challenges the stereotypes, power differences and social norms that foster gender inequality.</p> <p>[Name of school] is committed to treating all members of the school community with dignity and respect regardless of their gender.</p>

Section	Suggested addition and rationale for inclusion	Example clause
OUR COMMITMENT	Commitment to preventing violence against women by promoting gender equality	
	<p>Gender inequality is evident throughout our society, and research suggests it is one of the key factors driving the prevalence of violence against women.⁹</p> <p>Making clear the link between the prevention of violence against women and gender equality is an important way of raising awareness and challenging inequitable norms, practices and attitudes.</p>	<p>[Name of school] recognises that gender inequality is one of the key factors driving the prevalence of violence against women in Australia.¹⁰</p> <p>[Name of school] is committed to building a school culture and structure that challenges the stereotypes, power differences and social norms that foster gender inequality as a way of contributing to the prevention of violence against women in our society.</p>
PROFESSIONAL AND APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR	Reference to gender equality in relation to ‘professional and appropriate’ behaviour	
	<p>It is important to specify what constitutes ‘professional’ and ‘appropriate’ behaviour with a Code of Conduct, rather than assuming the interpretation of these terms will be consistent among staff. For some staff, gender-based discrimination, harassment or violence may be invisible, normalised or seen as acceptable so providing a clear description and examples to staff is essential.</p>	<p>As part of [Name of school’s] commitment to professional and appropriate behaviour, actions and words that reinforce stereotypes, power differences and social norms that foster gender inequality will not be tolerated at [Name of school]. This includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using sexist, stereotyping or discriminatory language • making jokes that rely on gender stereotypes • accessing or sharing sexist or discriminatory materials at school, during school hours or using school property.
HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING	Commitment to the safety of staff experiencing domestic violence or family violence	
	<p>Given the prevalence of violence against women in our society,¹² it is reasonable to assume that staff members may experience domestic violence and family violence. It is important to ensure all staff know that the school will make efforts to ensure the safety and wellbeing at work of those who experience domestic violence and family violence.</p>	<p>[Name of school] will make all reasonable efforts to provide a safe workplace and school environment for staff experiencing domestic violence and family violence.</p>

⁹ For information on **violence against women in Australia** see: VicHealth (2011) [Preventing violence against women in Australia research summary](#).

¹⁰ For information on violence against women in Australia see: Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth (2015) [Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia](#).

Section	Suggested addition and rationale for inclusion	Example clause
USE OF SCHOOL RESOURCES	Explicitly prohibiting the use of school property to threaten, harass or abuse another person	
	<p>Given the prevalence of violence against women in Australia, it is reasonable to assume that some staff members may be perpetrators. Violence can take many forms and violent and controlling messages can be transmitted in various ways.</p> <p>A Code of Conduct should clearly prohibit the inappropriate use of school resources, both within the school and in interactions with those outside the school community (such as with intimate partners).</p>	<p>Any employee who threatens, harasses or abuses another person at, or from, the school will not be tolerated and such employees will be subject to disciplinary action according to [Name of school]'s existing policies and procedures. This includes employees who use workplace resources such as phones, fax machines, email, mail or other means to threaten or abuse another person.</p>
	Explicitly prohibiting accessing or sharing pornography	
	<p>Pornography communicates a range of complex messages about men, women, sex and power. The overwhelming majority of modern pornography portrays and reinforces gender stereotypes and condones violence against women.¹¹ It should be explicitly stated, rather than assumed, that using school resources to view, download or share pornography is unacceptable at all times.</p>	<p>Any employee who accesses or shares violent, sexist, discriminatory, harassing or otherwise offensive materials, including pornography, during school hours while on school premises or while using school property will be subject to disciplinary action according to [Name of school]'s existing policies and procedures.</p>
RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	Endorsing bystander action as a way to support the Code of Conduct	
	<p>Specifically including bystander action in your Code of Conduct will encourage staff to take constructive actions as part of their shared responsibility to eliminate sex discrimination and harassment.¹²</p>	<p>[Name of school] encourages all staff and students to report actions or behaviours that contravene our values, policies and Code of Conduct, and take appropriate bystander action to intervene safely and respectfully when they see or hear about sexist language, sex discrimination, sexual harassment or a potentially violent situation in the school community.</p>

¹¹ For more information on **pornography and young people** see the Brophy Foundation, Reality and Risk Project website (2014) [It's Time We Talked](#).

¹² For more information on **bystander action** see: VicHealth (2014) ['Stepping in': A bystander action toolkit to support equality and respect at work](#).

Further material

In addition to sources referenced in footnotes and the Victoria Department of Education and Training guidance, policy advice and templates referred to in this Toolkit, Our Watch acknowledges the following sources that informed the development of this material which may be useful for schools.

Australian Childhood Foundation (2010) *Making space for learning: Trauma informed practice in schools.*

Australian Childhood Foundation (2014) *Safe and secure: A trauma informed practice guide for understanding and responding to children and young people affected by family violence.*

Australian Education Union (2008) *Policy on gender equity.*

Australian Human Rights Commission (2014) *Ending workplace sexual harassment: A resource for small, medium and large employers.*

Australian Human Rights Commission (2014) *Fact sheet: Domestic and family violence – a workplace issue, a discrimination issue.*

Delaney, M. (2015) *Gender and education guidelines*, developed for the Association of Women Educators.

Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs – Gender Equity Taskforce and Reference Group (1997) *Gender equity: A framework for Australian schools.*

VicHealth (2009) Preventing violence against women: *A framework for action.*

Victoria Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2009) *Respectful Relationships Education: Violence prevention and Respectful Relationships Education in Victorian secondary schools.*

Women's Health Victoria (2012) *Everyone's business: A guide to developing workplace programs for the primary prevention of violence against women.*

Guidance D: Promoting Gender Equality in Curriculum Planning

Respectful Relationships Education supports us to recognise that every policy, practice and activity has the potential to promote gender equality and respectful relationships, however every policy, practice and activity can also reinforce existing stereotypes and gender inequality.

Teaching and learning – not only in the delivery of Respectful Relationships Education, but across all learning areas – is a core part of the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education. In your regular reviews of curriculum content use a gender lens across all year levels and learning areas to ensure gender equality is actively promoted and modelled.

Use the following questions to guide staff during curriculum planning to ensure gender equality and respect are actively promoted in all learning areas.

Key questions for curriculum planning

1. Do the examples and narratives used in your classes equally represent the experiences, knowledge, skills and aspirations of women and men?

Examples

- Make sure that men and women are represented equally as authors, artists, directors and protagonists of texts studied in English, media, drama, music and art.
 - Use narrative examples in maths and science that show women, men, girls and boys undertaking non-stereotypical tasks (such as *Penny was at footy training*, *Jack was cooking dinner*) or use gender neutral names and pronouns (such as *Sam was shopping*, *Ballet is their favourite sport*).
 - Include deliberate reference to women and men in non-stereotypical roles and highlight role models in these fields (such as male nurses and female doctors, women in STEM and construction, men in care roles and professions) during discussion or activities around careers and life goals.
2. Have you reviewed the examples and narratives used in your classes to ensure they do not unconsciously:
 - promote unequal power relations between women and men
 - perpetuate or reinforce harmful gender stereotypes
 - condone violence against women?

Examples

- In discussion about history, politics and society consciously include the stories and perspectives of women as well as men, as often women's role in historical and political accounts is absent.
- Where an act of violence, harassment or bullying is referred to in a text or discussed in reference to a current or historical event, pay attention to highlighting the perpetrator's responsibility for their actions and not placing blame on the victim.

- Where narratives and/or examples show characters conforming to traditional ideas of masculinity and/or femininity, make space for discussion with students about gender roles, norms and stereotypes and the impacts they have on the identity, attitudes and actions of the character.
3. Where appropriate, have you included examples, narratives or topics that explicitly encourage critical thinking about gender equality and challenge gender stereotypes?

Examples

- Use age-appropriate materials to encourage critical thinking and discussion about the media's representation of women, men, girls and boys. Ask questions like 'Do all girls/boys do/think/act like that? Do you think this represents you? Why/why not?'
- Integrate discussion of gender inequality into classes such as using the gender pay gap as a tool to teach statistics, or discussing the different ways women's and men's achievements in sport are celebrated and supported.

Glossary

A bystander is someone who sees or hears about an act of sexism, harassment, discrimination or any other form of inappropriate behaviour. People who witness inappropriate behaviour, but aren't involved in an incident (either as an instigator or a target), are increasingly recognised as having the potential to be powerful allies in challenging sexist or discriminatory behaviours and attitudes.

Drivers are the underlying causes that are required to create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality in public and private life, but which must always be considered in the context of other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage.

Domestic violence refers to acts of violence that occur in domestic settings between two people who are, or were, in an intimate relationship. It includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and financial abuse.⁴ See also family violence.

Emotional/psychological violence can include a range of controlling behaviours such as control of finances, isolation from family and friends, continual humiliation, threats against children or being threatened with injury or death.⁵

Family violence is a broader term than domestic violence, as it refers not only to violence between intimate partners but also to violence between family members.⁶ This includes for example, elder abuse and adolescent violence against parents. Family violence includes violent or threatening behaviour, or any other form of behaviour that coerces or controls a family member or causes that family member to be fearful.⁷ In Indigenous communities, family violence is often the preferred term as it encapsulates the broader issue of violence within extended families, kinship networks and community relationships, as well as intergenerational issues.⁸

Gender refers to the socially learnt roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for men and women; gender defines masculinity and femininity.⁹ Gender expectations vary between cultures and can change over time.¹⁰

Gender-based violence is usually used to explain violence against women, referring to violence that is specifically 'directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately'. However it is also useful to explain other forms of violence, in recognition that rigid, binary and hierarchical constructions of gender, sex and sexuality are also a driver of violence against people whose experience and/or identity does not conform to such binary definitions, including members of the lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer and intersex communities.¹¹ In Respectful Relationships Education, the term gender-based violence is often used as it is considered to better encompass the experiences of girls and young women than 'domestic violence' or 'violence against women'. The term encompasses the various forms of violence that girls and young women experience, such as dating violence, sexting and revenge porn, and is also inclusive and extends to violence experienced by the lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer and intersex communities.

Gender equality¹² involves equality of opportunity and equality of results. It includes the redistribution of resources and responsibilities between women and men and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures of gender inequality to achieve substantive equality. It is about recognising diversity and disadvantage to ensure equal outcomes for all¹³ and therefore often requires women-specific programs and policies to end existing inequalities.

Gender equity refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of rights, responsibilities and resources between women and men according to their respective needs.

Gender identity is a person's deeply held internal and individual sense of their gender¹⁴ in how they define themselves in relation to masculine and feminine characteristics.

Gender inequality is the unequal distribution of power, resources, opportunity and value afforded to women and men in a society due to prevailing gendered norms and structures.

Gender roles are the functions and responsibilities¹⁵ expected to be fulfilled by women and men, girls and boys within a given society.

Gender stereotyping is a form of sexism. Gender stereotypes are simplistic assumptions about the behaviours, attributes, skills, differences and roles of women and men. These attributes are often perceived as natural or innate but are more often the result of women and men being socialised in different ways. Gender stereotypes can be positive, for example 'women are naturally caring and nurturing' or negative, for example 'men can't communicate their emotions very well', but they are usually incorrect and based on generalised assumptions about how we believe people will act, what people are good at or what people will like and dislike, simply because of their gender.

Gender transformative approaches move beyond 'gender blind' or 'gender specific' approaches to encourage critical awareness of, and explicitly challenge, harmful gender roles, practices and norms, and shift the unequal distribution of power and resources between women and men.

Gendered drivers are the specific elements or expressions of gender inequality that are most strongly linked to violence against women. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality in public and private life. The gendered drivers are the underlying causes required to create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They must always be considered in the context of other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage.

Gendered norms consist of a set of dominant beliefs and rules of conduct which are determined by a society or social group in relation to the types of roles, interests, behaviours and contributions expected from girls and boys, women and men.

Gendered practices are the everyday practices, processes and behaviours undertaken at an individual/relationship level, organisational/institutional and societal level that reinforce and perpetuate gendered norms and structures.

Gendered structures are the laws and systemic mechanisms that organise and reinforce an unequal distribution of economic, social and political power and resources between women and men.

Intimate partner violence is any behaviour by a man or a woman within an intimate relationship (including current or past marriages, domestic partnerships, familial relations, or people who share accommodation) that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm to those in the relationship. This is the most common form of violence against women.¹⁶

Respectful relationships refer to relationships among intimate, romantic or dating partners characterised by non-violence, equality, mutual respect and consideration and trust.

Respectful Relationships Education is the holistic approach to school based, primary prevention of gender based violence. It uses the education system as a catalyst for generational and cultural change by engaging schools as both education institutions and as workplaces, to comprehensively address the drivers of gender based violence and to create a future free from such violence.

Settings are environments in which people live, work, learn, socialise and play.

Sex refers to the biological and physical characteristics used to define humans as female or male.

Sex discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than a person of the opposite sex would be treated in the same or similar circumstances. Direct discrimination (for example women and men doing the same job but receiving different pay) and indirect discrimination (for example a policy requirement that all managers must work full time) are both illegal in Australia.

Sexism is discrimination based on gender, and the attitudes, stereotypes and cultural elements that promote this discrimination.¹⁷

Sexual harassment is unwelcome or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, which could be expected to make a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment can be obvious or subtle, direct or indirect, physical or verbal, repeated or one off, and can be perpetrated by both women and men against people of the same or opposite sex. Men are most likely to perpetrate sexual harassment against both women and other men, and women are most likely to be the victims of sexual harassment.

Sexual violence is sexual activity that happens where consent is not obtained or freely given. It occurs any time a person is forced, coerced or manipulated into any unwanted sexual activity, such as touching, sexual harassment and intimidation, forced marriage, trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual assault and rape.

Social norms are rules of conduct and models of behaviour expected by a society or social group. They are grounded in the customs, traditions and value systems that develop over time in a society or social group.¹⁸

Socio-ecological model is a feature of public health and is used to demonstrate how violence is a product of multiple, interacting components and social factors.¹⁹ The model conceptualises how the

drivers of violence manifest across the personal, community and social level and illustrates the value of implementing multiple mutually-reinforcing strategies across these levels.

Violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or in private life.²⁰ This definition encompasses all forms of violence that women experience, including physical, sexual, emotional, cultural/spiritual, financial and others, that are gender-based. See also gender-based violence.

Violence prevention refers in Respectful Relationships Education to the primary prevention of gender-based violence. Primary prevention focuses on stopping gender-based violence before it occurs, rather than intervening once an incident has already happened. Primary prevention involves working with whole communities to address the attitudes, behaviours, norms and practices that drive gender-based violence.

Whole School approach refers in Respectful Relationships Education to providing students with multiple exposure to key messages across the curriculum and in different areas of the school and community. It involves engaging not just students, but school staff and the wider school community in the process of cultural change. For example, school staff, including non-teaching staff, might undergo professional learning and development around the drivers of gender-based violence and their role in prevention.

- ¹ Morgan, A. and Chadwick, H. (2009) *Key issues in domestic violence*, Summary paper, no. 7, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/rip/1-10/07.html>.
- ² Council of Australian Governments (2011) *National plan to reduce violence against women and their children 2010-2022*, p. 1, <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children-2010-2022>.
- ³ Morgan, A. and Chadwick, H. (2009). See note 1
- ⁴ Australian Law Reform Commission [ALRC] and New South Wales Law Reform Commission [NSWLRC] (2010) *Family violence: a national legal response: Final report, volume 1*, ALRC Report 114/NSWLRC Report 128, ALRC and NSWLRC, Sydney, p. 17, http://www.alrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/pdfs/publications/ALRC114_WholeReport.pdf.
- ⁵ Stanley, J., Tomison, A.M. and Pocock, J. (2003) *Child abuse and neglect in Indigenous Australian communities*, Child abuse prevention issues no. 19, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, <http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/issues/issues19/issues19.pdf>.
- ⁶ Australian Women's Health Network (2014) *Health and the primary prevention of violence against women position paper 2014*, http://www.gasgasgas.com.au/AWHN/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/172_AWHNHealthandThePrimaryPreventionofViolenceAgainstWomen2014.pdf.
- ⁷ World Health Organization (2015) *Gender*, Factsheet No. 403, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs403/en/>.
- ⁸ Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth (2015). See note 2.

- ⁹ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, opened for signature 1 March 1980, 1249 UNTS 13 (entered into force 3 September 1981) <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No 25, on Article 4, Paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, on Temporary Special Measures [3]-[14] <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HGRBodies/CEDAW/Pages/Recommendations.aspx>, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No 28 on the Core Obligations of States Parties under Article 2 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 47th session, UN Doc CEDAW/C/GC/28 (16 December 2010) ('General Recommendation 28'); Report on the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Thirtieth Session <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CEDAW/Pages/Recommendations.aspx>.
- ¹⁰ Australian Women's Health Network (2014). See note 6.
- ¹¹ Australian Human Rights Commission (2015) *Resilient individuals: Sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex rights*, National Consultation Report, https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/SOGII%20Rights%20Report%202015_Web_Version.pdf.
- ¹² World Health Organization (2015). See note 7
- ¹³ World Health Organization and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2010) *Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women: Taking action and generating evidence*, World Health Organization, Geneva, <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241564007/en/>.
- ¹⁴ Australian Women's Health Network (2014). See note 6.
- ¹⁵ VicHealth (2007) *Preventing violence before it occurs: A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria*, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne, <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/preventing-violence-before-it-occurs>.
- ¹⁶ Wall, L. (2013) *Issues in evaluation of complex social change programs for sexual assault prevention*, Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault, <http://www3.aifs.gov.au/acssa/pubs/issue/i14/i14.pdf>.
- ¹⁷ This definition derives from United Nations (1993) *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*, <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>, and in turn is used in Council of Australian Governments (2011) *National plan to reduce violence against women and their children 2010-2022*, <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children-2010-2022>.

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Step 5:

Evaluating and monitoring



Step 5 includes:

- understanding the essential elements of evaluation
- understanding the ethics of conducting evaluation
- understanding evaluation tools and further information

If you or someone you know needs support or information, call the National Sexual Assault Domestic Family Violence Counselling Line on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) or visit <http://www.1800respect.org.au>



Education
and Training

Step 5: Evaluating and monitoring

Introduction

Evaluation is a vital part of Respectful Relationships Education that should be considered at all times in your planning, implementation and research.

The right evaluation data informs planning and your implementation, giving you a sense of where your school is starting from, and where you might be heading. An effective whole school approach relies on building your action plan and messages in a deeper understanding of the different perceptions, experiences, history and levels of support of students, staff and families. As such, every school begins this work from a different starting point.

In time, evaluation data can provide valuable information on how your approach is benefitting different members of your school community, inform decisions on how to improve your approach and identify your successes. Any school based primary prevention strategy, including Respectful Relationships Education, should be continually reviewed and updated to ensure it reflects the needs and practices of young people, staff and the wider school community.

Cultural change in any organisation or setting takes time and you should expect that changes in culture, attitudes and behaviour will be gradual. It is also useful to view evaluation as a key component of learning and continual improvement, not as a burdensome activity solely conducted to identify weakness and deliver critique.

The essential elements for evaluation below will help you and your team in evaluating Respectful Relationships Education. Some evaluation tools are also introduced.

This is *not* a guide to developing a comprehensive impact evaluation, but aims to provide schools with practical tools to inform the planning and ongoing improvement of respectful relationships in your school community.

Essential elements for evaluation

There are a number of essential elements to consider in evaluating your approach to Respectful Relationships Education. Within your school there are already a range of tools that can support you to evaluate your actions, this includes looking at changing data trends such as student attendance, feedback through surveys, interviews and focus groups. When you're considering what to do it's always good to ask the following questions –

- What do you want to know?
- What's the best method to find that out?
- Who do you need to ask?
- What will you do with the information once you have it?

Measure violence-related variables

Respectful Relationships Education aims to address the underlying drivers of gender-based violence. At an individual level, this means shifting underlying attitudes, knowledge and skills, with the ultimate aim of eventually changing behaviour. Often we look at changes in knowledge of a topic, however Respectful Relationships Education is seeking bigger change. It is therefore important to consider each of the following elements:

- *Knowledge*: For many people, the first step in challenging gender-based violence is recognising what it looks like. Staff and students can be asked to identify what constitutes gender-based violence (including domestic violence and sexual assault), including a range of controlling behaviours and threats as well as physical and sexual violence.
- *Attitudes*: Individual attitudes, including attitudes on gender equality and gender-based violence, inform social norms and, ultimately, our behaviour. Social norms are the rules of conduct and models of behaviour expected by a society or social group. There are a range of questions that can measure student and staff attitudes to masculinity, femininity and gender roles as well as attitudes that condone, tolerate or excuse gender-based violence.
- *Skills*: Changing long term behaviour involves equipping students and staff with the practical skills to build their own safe and equal relationships and to recognise and respond to behaviour that is sexist or unhealthy. Students' skills and confidence in a number of areas can be assessed well before students have entered intimate relationships themselves.

For more information on the drivers of gender-based violence please refer to *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and children in Australia*.

Include behaviour change measures

Measuring reductions in the perpetration of gender-based violence is a complex and long term task – and likely to fall outside the ability of most schools. There is, however, strong evidence that Respectful Relationships Education can improve student behaviour generally, in terms of class

attendance, communication with other students and engagement with their teachers. Classroom teachers can track these changes by documenting their observations about shifts in student behaviour and interactions between staff and students.

Use standardised measures where possible

You don't need to reinvent the wheel! Researchers and evaluators have developed and tested a number of measures of individual level knowledge, attitudes and skills as well as the broader school culture. Using standardised questions allows schools to compare trends across different groups from year to year. For example, the student survey developed by Our Watch as part of the Respectful Relationships Education in Schools pilot was based on a number of standardised tools and has the potential to allow schools to compare their results to the broader Australian population. However it's best to use this school survey with external support.

Use pre-test and post-test design

Using the same data collection tool at the beginning and end of each annual cycle allows you to compare results over time. By using the same question and/ or data gathering method, you can track your progress which is important for monitoring both student outcomes and shifts in staff perceptions and experiences in their workplace.

Use findings and share feedback with your school community

Evaluation data can be a great way of confirming what you know, but can also uncover strengths and issues you may not be aware of. To maintain confidence in the process, it is essential that you communicate to your school community the findings and actions that are changed or developed as a result of your evaluation. Evaluation is at its best when it's a participatory process, and sharing findings can be a useful tool for engaging everyone, making them feel heard and included in the process. This is particularly important for staff, students, families or other community members who are asked to take part in surveys. Sharing findings with them builds awareness of the whole school approach and also assures participants that their contribution is taken seriously and school leaders are committed to action.

Ethics of conducting evaluation

There are a number of important standards for conducting evaluations including ethical requirements. Any school staff member undertaking or commissioning evaluation should be familiar with appropriate guidelines and allow time for ethical approval in project plans. Relevant guidelines include:

- Australian Evaluation Society (2013) *Guidelines for the ethical conduct of evaluations*
- National Health and Medical Research Council (2014) *Ethical considerations in quality assurance and evaluation activities*.

What will you do with your findings?

Before commencing any form of evaluation or research, the school needs to have a plan for sharing findings. This Toolkit supports schools to undertake their own internal evaluation and plan for the ongoing improvement of respectful relationships in their school community. Any research communicated externally, outside the school, may require additional approvals.

Whose approval is required to conduct the evaluation?

Contact the education department relevant to your school for advice. You may need their approval to communicate the evaluation findings outside the school.

Who will have access to the data?

It is strongly advised that schools ensure all information collected is de-identified to remove any information that could identify participants and is stored securely.

How will you ensure anonymity?

All evaluation activities that you conduct, particularly on sensitive topics such as gender-based violence and school culture, should maintain participant anonymity. This is for ethical reasons and to ensure that the responses from the school community are recorded honestly, without concern that participants will be identifiable. In practical terms, you should:

- conduct surveys online, anonymously distributed via a secure provider such as Survey Monkey
- ensure internet protocol (IP) and email addresses of online participants are not recorded
- ensure participants' names are not recorded
- remove identifiable information (for example, if a participant mentioned the names of other individuals or their role at the school) prior to data storage.

How will you ensure participants have voluntarily consented?

Participation in any form of data collection should be voluntary and all staff and students must be given the opportunity to opt-out of an evaluation activity if they do not wish to participate. It is important that participants receive a written, plain language explanation of the purpose(s) of the evaluation activity and how the findings from the evaluation will be used.

Evaluation tools

The Respectful Relationships Education in Schools pilot used a number of evaluation tools, which are introduced below. Tools with an asterisk are not included in this Toolkit. If you're interested in learning more about these tools, please email enquiries@ourwatch.org.au.

School culture survey*

WHAT?

The survey measures shifts in school culture, including staff perception of commitment to [gender equality](#) in school policies, programs, procedures and structures. It also measures staff awareness of the approach to [Respectful Relationships Education](#) taken in your school, including the understanding of the link between this work and the prevention of [gender-based violence](#).

WHY?

This is an opportunity for staff to give honest, anonymous feedback on how they perceive the school culture, across all areas of the school from the classroom to the staff room. You may find that there are areas of strength and areas of difficulty for some staff that you were not aware of. Regular assessment of school culture helps track progress and informs your planning for further improvements.

WHO?

All school staff.

HOW OFTEN?

Annual – it's best if you can align it with your annual planning cycle.

School gender equality assessment

WHAT?

School leaders use this tool to conduct an audit to inform the action plan they undertake to build an equitable and inclusive school culture.

WHY?

This tool provides practical and systematic checklists for the school leadership team to audit current activity, identifying gaps in the school's approach to [gender equality](#) and [respectful relationships](#). For more detail, please see [Step 4: Understanding where you are at](#), in particular [Template B: school gender equality assessment](#).

WHO?

School leadership and school wellbeing leaders.

HOW OFTEN?

Every 1-2 years.

Student knowledge, skills and attitudes survey (Year 8 and 9)*

WHAT?

The survey measures Year 8 and 9 students’:

- attitudes towards violence, gender and equality
- skills to engage in equal and respectful relationships (self-reported)
- knowledge on violence against women
- feedback on curriculum and activities.

WHY?

Using this survey before and after classes are delivered to students provides data to demonstrate the impacts of the Respectful Relationships curriculum in the whole school approach. This is essential data for demonstrating the benefit of these classes to students in addressing the underlying drivers of violence against women.

WHO?

The survey has only been tested for Year 8 and 9 students taking part in Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence. If you are working with other years using different Respectful Relationships curriculum and are interested in adapting this measure for your specific year, please contact enquiries@ourwatch.org.au.

HOW OFTEN?

Use with students before starting classes and immediately afterwards.

Staff curriculum reflection tool*

WHAT?

The tool collects feedback from staff delivering the curriculum on what worked, what didn’t work, and areas for improvement.

WHY?

This is valuable information for demonstrating the broader impact on classroom behaviour and relationships with students. This tool also provides more practical information about how classes were delivered and points to areas for improvement in future delivery.

WHO?

Staff delivering Respectful Relationships curriculum.

HOW OFTEN?

Throughout implementation of classes.

Suggested actions

- Build you and your school’s understanding of the essential elements of evaluation and the ethics of conducting evaluations.
- Ensure that the [Respectful Relationships Education](#) leadership team recognises the importance of integrating evaluation and monitoring throughout the annual cycle of [Respectful Relationships Education](#), including, planning, implementation and research.
- Ensure familiarity with the evaluation tools outlined above and consider their implementation within your school’s approach to evaluation.

Support resources

- [VicHealth: A concise guide to evaluating primary prevention projects.](#)
- [Workplace Gender Equality Agency: About gender equality for small business](#) – includes information to support you to undertake a simple gender analysis of your staff by reviewing your organisational chart or staff structure and identifying the ratio of male to female staff in total and in particular roles or departments.
- [Workplace Gender Equality Agency: Three step guide to fairer pay in your organisation](#) – includes information to undertake a simple gender pay equity audit by comparing the average salary earned by male staff and female staff.

Step 5 Checklist

You have completed Step 5 and are ready for [Step 6](#) if you have:

- ✓ Developed a strong shared understanding among key staff and leaders of the essential elements and ethical implications of evaluation.
- ✓ Ensured key staff and leaders are committed to integrating and responding to evaluation data throughout the annual cycle of [Respectful Relationships Education](#).

Step 6:

Reviewing and Repeating
the Annual Cycle



Glossary

A bystander is someone who sees or hears about an act of sexism, harassment, discrimination or any other form of inappropriate behaviour. People who witness inappropriate behaviour, but aren't involved in an incident (either as an instigator or a target), are increasingly recognised as having the potential to be powerful allies in challenging sexist or discriminatory behaviours and attitudes.

Drivers are the underlying causes that are required to create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality in public and private life, but which must always be considered in the context of other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage.

Domestic violence refers to acts of violence that occur in domestic settings between two people who are, or were, in an intimate relationship. It includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and financial abuse.¹ See also family violence.

Emotional/psychological violence can include a range of controlling behaviours such as control of finances, isolation from family and friends, continual humiliation, threats against children or being threatened with injury or death.²

Family violence is a broader term than domestic violence, as it refers not only to violence between intimate partners but also to violence between family members.³ This includes for example, elder abuse and adolescent violence against parents. Family violence includes violent or threatening behaviour, or any other form of behaviour that coerces or controls a family member or causes that family member to be fearful.⁴ In Indigenous communities, family violence is often the preferred term as it encapsulates the broader issue of violence within extended families, kinship networks and community relationships, as well as intergenerational issues.⁵

Gender refers to the socially learnt roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for men and women; gender defines masculinity and femininity.⁶ Gender expectations vary between cultures and can change over time.⁷

Gender-based violence is usually used to explain violence against women, referring to violence that is specifically 'directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately'. However it is also useful to explain other forms of violence, in recognition that rigid, binary and hierarchical constructions of gender, sex and sexuality are also a driver of violence against people whose experience and/or identity does not conform to such binary definitions, including members of the lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer and intersex communities.⁸ In Respectful Relationships Education, the term gender-based violence is often used as it is considered to better encompass the experiences of girls and young women than 'domestic violence' or 'violence against women'. The term encompasses the various forms of violence that girls and young women experience, such as dating violence, sexting and revenge porn, and is also inclusive and extends to violence experienced by the lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer and intersex communities.

Gender equality⁹ involves equality of opportunity and equality of results. It includes the redistribution of resources and responsibilities between women and men and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures of gender inequality to achieve substantive equality. It is about recognising diversity and disadvantage to ensure equal outcomes for all¹⁰ and therefore often requires women-specific programs and policies to end existing inequalities.

Gender equity refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of rights, responsibilities and resources between women and men according to their respective needs.

Gender identity is a person's deeply held internal and individual sense of their gender¹¹ in how they define themselves in relation to masculine and feminine characteristics.

Gender inequality is the unequal distribution of power, resources, opportunity and value afforded to women and men in a society due to prevailing gendered norms and structures.

Gender roles are the functions and responsibilities¹² expected to be fulfilled by women and men, girls and boys within a given society.

Gender stereotyping is a form of sexism. Gender stereotypes are simplistic assumptions about the behaviours, attributes, skills, differences and roles of women and men. These attributes are often perceived as natural or innate but are more often the result of women and men being socialised in different ways. Gender stereotypes can be positive, for example 'women are naturally caring and nurturing' or negative, for example 'men can't communicate their emotions very well', but they are usually incorrect and based on generalised assumptions about how we believe people will act, what people are good at or what people will like and dislike, simply because of their gender.

Gender transformative approaches move beyond 'gender blind' or 'gender specific' approaches to encourage critical awareness of, and explicitly challenge, harmful gender roles, practices and norms, and shift the unequal distribution of power and resources between women and men.

Gendered drivers are the specific elements or expressions of gender inequality that are most strongly linked to violence against women. They relate to the particular structures, norms and practices arising from gender inequality in public and private life. The gendered drivers are the underlying causes required to create the necessary conditions in which violence against women occurs. They must always be considered in the context of other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage.

Gendered norms consist of a set of dominant beliefs and rules of conduct which are determined by a society or social group in relation to the types of roles, interests, behaviours and contributions expected from girls and boys, women and men.

Gendered practices are the everyday practices, processes and behaviours undertaken at an individual/relationship level, organisational/institutional and societal level that reinforce and perpetuate gendered norms and structures.

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Respectful relationships refer to relationships among intimate, romantic or dating partners characterised by non-violence, equality, mutual respect and consideration and trust.

Respectful Relationships Education is the holistic approach to school based, primary prevention of gender based violence. It uses the education system as a catalyst for generational and cultural change by engaging schools as both education institutions and as workplaces, to comprehensively address the drivers of gender based violence and to create a future free from such violence.

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Sexual violence is sexual activity that happens where consent is not obtained or freely given. It occurs any time a person is forced, coerced or manipulated into any unwanted sexual activity, such as touching, sexual harassment and intimidation, forced marriage, trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual assault and rape.

Social norms are rules of conduct and models of behaviour expected by a society or social group. They are grounded in the customs, traditions and value systems that develop over time in a society or social group.¹⁵

Socio-ecological model is a feature of public health and is used to demonstrate how violence is a product of multiple, interacting components and social factors.¹⁶ The model conceptualises how the

drivers of violence manifest across the personal, community and social level and illustrates the value of implementing multiple mutually-reinforcing strategies across these levels.

Violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or in private life.¹⁷ This definition encompasses all forms of violence that women experience, including physical, sexual, emotional, cultural/spiritual, financial and others, that are gender-based. See also gender-based violence.

Violence prevention refers in Respectful Relationships Education to the primary prevention of gender-based violence. Primary prevention focuses on stopping gender-based violence before it occurs, rather than intervening once an incident has already happened. Primary prevention involves working with whole communities to address the attitudes, behaviours, norms and practices that drive gender-based violence.

Whole School approach refers in Respectful Relationships Education to providing students with multiple exposure to key messages across the curriculum and in different areas of the school and community. It involves engaging not just students, but school staff and the wider school community in the process of cultural change. For example, school staff, including non-teaching staff, might undergo professional learning and development around the drivers of gender-based violence and their role in prevention.

- ¹ Morgan, A. and Chadwick, H. (2009) *Key issues in domestic violence*, Summary paper, no. 7, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/rip/1-10/07.html>.
- ² Council of Australian Governments (2011) *National plan to reduce violence against women and their children 2010-2022*, p. 1, <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children-2010-2022>.
- ³ Morgan, A. and Chadwick, H. (2009). See note 1
- ⁴ Australian Law Reform Commission [ALRC] and New South Wales Law Reform Commission [NSWLRC] (2010) *Family violence: a national legal response: Final report, volume 1*, ALRC Report 114/NSWLRC Report 128, ALRC and NSWLRC, Sydney, p. 17, http://dpl/Books/2010/ALRC114-NSWLRC128_FamilyViolence.pdf.
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- ⁶ Australian Women's Health Network (2014) *Health and the primary prevention of violence against women position paper 2014*, http://www.gasgasgas.com.au/AWHN/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/172_AWHNHealthandThePrimaryPreventionofViolenceAgainstWomen2014.pdf.
- ⁷ World Health Organization (2015) *Gender*, Factsheet No. 403, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs403/en/>.
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- ¹⁰ Australian Women's Health Network (2014). See note 6.
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- ¹⁷ This definition derives from United Nations (1993) *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*, <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>, and in turn is used in Council of Australian Governments (2011) *National plan to reduce violence against women and their children 2010-2022*, <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children-2010-2022>.

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Step 6:

Reviewing and repeating the annual cycle



Step 3 includes:

- Reviewing and reflecting upon Respectful Relationships Education
- Repeating the annual cycle.

If you or someone you know needs support or information, call the National Sexual Assault Domestic Family Violence Counselling Line on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) or visit <http://www.1800respect.org.au>



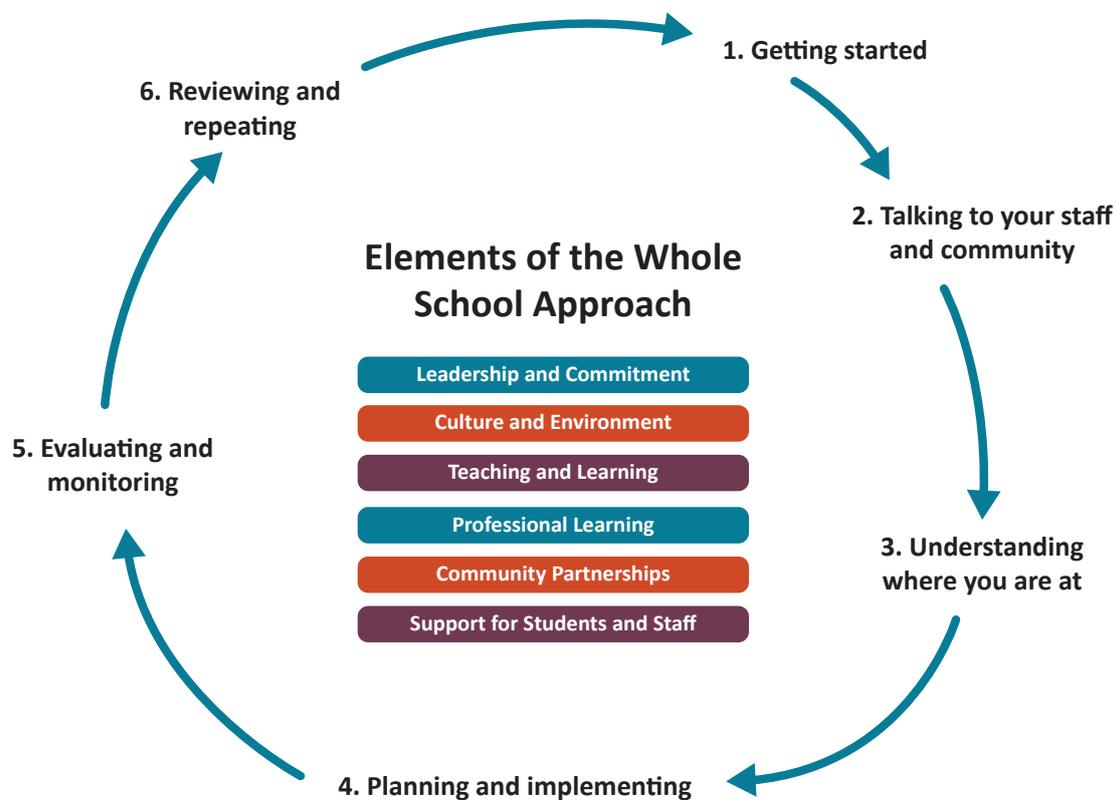
Education
and Training

Step 6: Reviewing and repeating the annual cycle

Getting started is hard, but with so many competing demands keeping up momentum can also be challenging! In a school and social environment that is always changing, it will take time for a culture of gender equality and respect to be embedded and sustained and to become a part of everyday business.

Recognising areas of need and implementing actions will become easier as promoting gender equality becomes embedded in your school policy, practice and culture. However, while it is important that your school ensures each step is covered each year, it is also important to assess (and celebrate!) progress you've made, consider lessons learnt, recognise additional knowledge, resources and support you might need, and identify areas to focus on.

Figure 1: Annual cycle for Respectful Relationships Education



Consider these tips when reviewing and repeating the Respectful Relationships Education annual cycle:

Keep talking

Communicating with staff and other members of the school community about your commitment to promoting gender equality should be a continual process. This includes not just keeping them up to date on progress and letting them know that you are accountable to them and continue to take this work seriously but consulting to gauge, adapt and integrate their views and ideas.

Reflect and learn from what you've tried

The primary prevention of gender-based violence is a relatively new field. While Respectful Relationships Education is informed by significant research and experience, there are many lessons still to be learnt about what works best. Every school has its own unique community and culture so strategies or techniques that work in one school may not work in another. Make space to reflect honestly on how things are going in your school and don't be afraid to identify areas or strategies that need improvement.

Celebrate successes, however small

Cultural change takes a long time and moves at a different pace among different settings, groups and age levels. For example, you may find that students are quick to agree to Respectful Relationships Education messages in the classroom, but struggle to apply them in their everyday lives; or that students readily promote gender equality but staff struggle to see any need for change in their teaching practice or interactions with others. It is important to use the positive examples that you see as models and celebrate these openly. This will help bring those who are less convinced 'on board' and also recognise the hard work of those who are driving culture change in your school.

Connect with others who support you

Connecting with organisations and individuals who are doing similar work, whether in person, online or via social media, will offer you support and opportunity for collaboration and can also equip you with new ideas, approaches, messages and mechanisms to make change. This includes of course sharing your learning and experiences with other schools in your community and networks.

Step 6 Checklist

You have completed Step 6 and are ready to return to Step 1 of the annual cycle if you have:

- ✓ Spent time with the Respectful Relationships Education leadership team to reflect upon how this process went, and what the successes and failures were.
- ✓ Considered if you have new members joining your school in the following year, how will they be inducted into this work.
- ✓ Revisited your implementation plan and considered the effectiveness of your priority actions and how you spaced them throughout your school year.
- ✓ Share your successes and your learning with the wider school community.

Return to Step 1:

[Getting started](#)



Glossary

A bystander is someone who sees or hears about an act of sexism, harassment, discrimination or any other form of inappropriate behaviour. People who witness inappropriate behaviour, but aren't involved in an incident (either as an instigator or a target), are increasingly recognised as having the potential to be powerful allies in challenging sexist or discriminatory behaviours and attitudes.

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- ⁵ Stanley, J., Tomison, A.M. and Pocock, J. (2003) *Child abuse and neglect in Indigenous Australian communities*, Child abuse prevention issues no. 19, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, <http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/issues/issues19/issues19.pdf>.
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Alternative text for Figures

Alternative text for Figure 1: Respectful Relationships Education Annual Cycle

Figure 1 depicts the annual cycle of Respectful Relationships education, with arrows connecting each step of the cycle as follows:

1. Getting started
2. Talking to your staff and community
3. Understanding where you are at
4. Planning and implementing
5. Evaluation and monitoring
6. Reviewing and repeating

In the center of the cycle, the six key elements of the Whole School Approach are listed:

Leadership and Commitment, Culture and Environment, Teaching and Learning, Professional Learning, Community Partnerships and Support for Staff and Students.

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List 1:

Resources to support the teaching of Respectful Relationships



This list includes:

- Resources to support delivery of general Respectful Relationships Curriculum
- Resources to support the delivery of Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence Unit 1
- Resources to support the delivery of Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence Unit 2

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Education
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List 1:

Resources to support the teaching of Respectful Relationships

Evidence-based age-appropriate Respectful Relationships curriculum is a key part of the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education and research shows that participatory, interactive teaching is essential for effective delivery. This may include the use of visual and interactive resources such as those suggested in this list.

One-off sessions are neither appropriate nor adequate for effective Respectful Relationships Education and **it is important that these resources are used to complement rather than replace evidence-based age-appropriate curriculum delivered by teachers who have received adequate training and support.**

This list has multiple resources, grouped according to key themes and topics that are useful for teachers to explore as part of Respectful Relationships Curriculum. Some of the resources are appropriate as background reading for staff only, and others you may consider sharing with your students to complement the delivery of Respectful Relationships curriculum.

Remember:

This resource list is intended as guidance only. The resources in this list are not approved or endorsed by Our Watch. It is at the discretion of schools and individual teachers which content they feel is appropriate to use with their students. Resources are current at January 2016.

Respectful Relationships Education versus Respectful Relationships curriculum

Respectful Relationships Education is the holistic approach to prevent gender-based violence in schools. Respectful Relationships curriculum is a part of Respectful Relationships Education and is the activity that happens in the classroom and is student focused. Evidence-based curriculum resource material that focuses on the links between gender, power and violence will support students to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes to engage in respectful relationships and to reject attitudes or behaviours that support gender-based violence.

If you are delivering the Victorian Department of Education and Training's Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence, there is a list of resources that corresponds with the specific units and sessions. Please note if you're in Victoria, to support delivery of respectful relationships curriculum across all years of schooling, the Victorian Department of Education and Training has developed a suite of resources for students in years Prep-12. These evidence-based resources will be made available in 2016.

Key websites

Our Watch www.ourwatch.org.au

Our Watch is the national foundation to prevent violence against women and their children. The website includes:

- [Respectful Relationships Education in Schools Evaluation Report](#)
- [Evidence Brief on Respectful Relationships Education](#)
- [Children and Young People Policy Brief](#)
- [Further information on young people's role in violence prevention](#)
- [Working in schools for violence prevention.](#)

The Line www.theline.org.au

The Line is a national behaviour change campaign for young women and men aged 12 to 20 years. It also supports parents, carers, teachers, educators and other influencers for young people. The website includes:

- [Resources and information for parents](#)
- [Resources and information for teachers.](#)

1. Resources by themes to support general Respectful Relationships Curriculum

Exploring violence against women, definitions, underlying drivers and impacts

Our Watch: Introduction – video introducing the issues of violence against women including prevalence and underlying drivers.

Let's change the story: Violence against women in Australia – video outlining key drivers of violence against women and focus of prevention efforts.

You can't undo violence. Know where to draw the line – video campaign, posters and information designed specifically for young people.

VicHealth 2013 National Community Attitudes to Violence against Women – animated infographic (2.5 minutes) summarising findings from 2014 survey on Australians' attitudes towards gender equality and violence against women.

The Outrage: teen dating violence and sexual assault – video of presentation at American high school, with good guidance for teachers on explaining the link between language, attitudes and violence.

Destroy the Joint: Counting the women campaign – website with regularly updated tally of women killed as a result of violence in Australia each year.

Violence against women starts with gender inequality – high resolution download of A3 poster from *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*.

Gippsland Women's Health Violence Prevention Posters – high resolution download of three posters that show the link between gender inequality and violence.

Everyday sexism – website with real life commentary on women's daily experiences of sexism, with potential examples to share with students.

Prominent men and institutions speaking out against violence against women

[Ken Lay on family violence – text of speech](#) by former Victorian Police Commissioner.

[Ken Lay on Why I'm Rising – One Billion Rising Melbourne](#) – video of former Victorian Police Commissioner talking about why he stands against violence against women.

[Chief of Army \(Lieutenant General David Morrison, AO\) on unacceptable behaviour](#) – video message from the Chief of Army to the Australian Army following allegations of unacceptable behaviour by Army members in 2013.

Gender, respect and relationships

[What is love?](#) – video of young women talking about what love means to them which may be useful to prompt strengths-based discussion and brainstorming among students.

[Relationship things](#) – website exploring what respectful relationships are through interactive tools that cover topics like gender equality, how to be respectful online and offline, how to communicate, and important information on safe sex and consent.

Gender-based expectations and stereotypes

[Like a girl](#) – video commercial from Always played during 2015 Superbowl (US) that challenges stereotype of what it is to be 'like a girl'.

[Like a girl – Unstoppable](#) – video follow up commercial about the way stereotypes limit girls.

[Inspire her mind](#) – video commercial from Verizon that challenges us to think deeper about the impact of stereotypes on girls and their pursuits in science and technology.

[Tony Porter: A call to men](#) – video of TED talk (11 minutes) that explores the impact of gender roles and stereotypes on boys and men. From 0.00 to 1.37 is a brief description of the qualities expected of boys and men which may be useful to prompt discussion among students.

[Sexism, Strength and Dominance: Masculinity in Disney Films](#) – video (7 minutes) demonstrating the stereotypes commonly portrayed in children's films.

[The Bechdel Test for women in movies](#) – video (2 minutes) introducing the Bechdel Test, a well-known three question 'test' that highlights the lack of representation of real women and their stories in film.

[Dreamworlds – Desire, Sex and Power in Music Videos](#) – video trailer (5 minutes) for documentary film that explores the impact of music videos on gender inequality and violence against women.

[Sext Up Kids \(Hyper sexualisation of girls\)](#) – video trailer (3 minutes) for documentary film that explores the hyper sexualisation of young girls.

[Sext Up Kids \(Hyper sexualisation of girls\)](#) – video of censored version of documentary film (approx. 37 minutes) adapted for use in high schools.

[Dove Campaign for real beauty – Evolution – Female](#) and [Dove Campaign for real beauty – Evolution – Male](#) – videos showing how make-up, styling and airbrushing perpetuate unrealistic body image and beauty standards for both men and women.

[Pantene Philippines: Labels against women](#) – video advertisement that challenges the way women and men are sometimes perceived differently for doing the same thing.

[Gender Bread Person](#) – educational graphic that helps to explain and explore sexuality and gender.

Speaking up

[Our Watch posters](#): Three free high resolution posters:

- [How to respond when a woman says she’s experienced violence](#)
- [How to respond when someone is being violent, aggressive or abusive towards their partner](#)
- [How to respond to sexist jokes and comments \(words only\).](#)

[VicHealth: Bystander action on preventing violence against women](#) – video (1.5 minute animated infographic) on the importance of bystander action to prevent violence against women.

[Sh*t guys say when they need to say something \(EXPLICIT LANGUAGE\)](#) – video animation of a group of Aussie guys chatting about stepping in to call out disrespectful behaviour.

Gender in the media

[Media Education Foundation](#) – multiple resources including videos about the representation of men and women in the media.

Victim blaming

Victim Blaming, Chapter from *Full Frontal Feminism* by Jessica Vallenti (2015) – chapter from book written for young women exploring victim blaming and how it is linked to the underlying drivers of violence against women. Chapter not available online. *Full Frontal Feminism* is published by Seal Press.

Pornography and sexuality

In the picture – website with resources that support secondary schools to address the influence of explicit sexual imagery.

Eroticising inequality – Maree Crabbe and David Corlett – article exploring the impact of pornography on young people’s sexuality.

Love and sex in the age of pornography – Australian documentary (approx. 1 hour) about the impact of pornography on young people’s sexuality. Copy can be purchased at It’s Time We Talked website www.itstimewetalked.com.au.

Violence, power, consent

The Line: Love is respect – video (47 seconds) showing multiple unhealthy behaviours displayed through phone call between boy and girlfriend.

Love Control – film (5 minutes) produced by Women’s Health in the North showing how quickly jealous and controlling behaviour can escalate into violence.

Tony Porter: A call to men – video of TED talk (11 minutes) with introduction to link between expectations of boys and men and violence against women.

The ‘Cup of Tea’ analogy (Clean version) – video animation (3 minutes) that equates consent for sex to drinking a cup of tea – funny and poignant.

Wanna have sex? (Consent 101) – video (6 minutes) from young American vlogger Laci Green with fun and funny description of what consent ‘looks like’.

Consent and the law

Victorian Legal Aid: [Consent and the law](#) – adaptation from Trusted Moments, a short film produced by the Legal Services Commission of South Australia as part of an early intervention strategy for the prevention of sexual assault.

[Sex, young people and the law – Resource Kit](#) – multiple resources from Victorian Legal Aid about helping young people to understand their legal rights and responsibilities and make informed decisions about sex and relationships.

[Articles by Moira Carmody](#) – articles that explore the idea of ethical sex and what that means for young people today, including discussion of pleasure and its role in equal respectful relationships.

North Country (2005) – film, a fictionalised account of the first major successful sexual harassment case in the United States.

2. Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence – Unit 1 (Year 8)

Session	Topic	Resource type	Details including link
1	Respect and relationships	Video	<p><u>What is love?</u> Young women talk about what love means to them. May be useful to prompt strengths-based discussion and brainstorming among students.</p>
2	Gender, respect and relationships	Website	<p><u>The Line</u> Respectful relationships website for young people that covers topics like relationships, gender, sex, bystander action, technology and communication.</p>
		Website	<p><u>Relationship things</u> Explores what respectful relationships are through interactive tools that cover topics like gender equality, how to be respectful online and offline, how to communicate, and important information on safe sex and consent.</p>
3 & 4	The power of expectations & gender positioning	Video	<p><u>Like a girl</u> Commercial from Always played during 2015 Superbowl (US) that challenges stereotype of what it is to be 'like a girl'.</p> <p><u>Like a girl – Unstoppable</u> Follow up commercial about the way stereotypes limit girls.</p> <p><u>Australian Government 'respect' campaign</u> Campaign materials created through the COAG Respect campaign on the impact of stereotypes and their connection to violence against women.</p> <p><u>Inspire her mind</u> Commercial from Verizon that challenges us to think deeper about the impact of stereotypes on girls and their pursuits in science and technology.</p> <p><u>Tony Porter: A call to men</u> TED talk (11 minutes) that explores the impact of gender roles and stereotypes on boys and men. From 0.00 to 1.37 is a brief description of the qualities expected of boys and men which may be useful to prompt discussion among students.</p>

Session	Topic	Resource type	Details including link
3 & 4 (cont.)	The power of expectations & gender positioning	Infographic	<u>Gender Bread Person</u> Educational graphic that helps to explain and explore sexuality and gender.
		Video	<u>Sexism, Strength and Dominance: Masculinity in Disney Films</u> Video (7 minutes) demonstrating the stereotypes commonly portrayed in children’s films.
		Video	<u>The Bechdel Test for women in movies</u> Video (2 minutes) that introduces the Bechdel Test, a well-known three question ‘test’ that highlights the lack of representation of real women and their stories in film.
		Video	<u>Dreamworlds – Desire, Sex and Power in Music Videos – Trailer</u> Trailer (5 minutes) for documentary film that explores the impact of music videos on gender inequality and gender-based violence.
		Video	<u>Sext Up Kids (Hyper sexualisation of girls) – Trailer</u> Trailer (3 minutes) for documentary film that explores the hyper sexualisation of young girls. <u>Sext Up Kids (Hyper sexualisation of girls) – Adapted</u> Censored version of documentary (approx. 37 minutes) adapted for use in high schools.
		Video	<u>Dove Campaign for real beauty – Evolution – Female</u> <u>Dove Campaign for real beauty – Evolution – Male</u> Videos that show how make-up, styling and airbrushing perpetuate unrealistic body image and beauty standards for both men and women.
		Video	<u>Pantene Philippines: Labels against women</u> Advertisement that challenges the way women and men are sometimes perceived differently for doing the same thing.
5	Safe spaces in our school	NA	No audiovisual resources to note.
6	Mapping gender based violence in our school	NA	No audiovisual resources to note.
	What is sexual harassment?	Film	<u>Film: North Country (2005)</u> A fictionalised account of the first major successful sexual harassment case in the United States.

Session	Topic	Resource type	Details including link
7	Developing respectful practices	Video	<u>What is love?</u> Young women talk about what love means to them. May be useful to prompt strengths-based discussion and brainstorming among students.
8	Helping a friend	NA	No audiovisual resources to note.
	Taking a stand	Video	<u>VicHealth – Bystander action on preventing violence against women</u> Video (1.5 minute animated infographic) on the importance of bystander action to prevent gender-based violence.
		Video	<u>Sh*t guys say when they need to say something</u> EXPLICIT LANGUAGE. Animation of a group of Aussie guys chatting about stepping in to call out disrespectful behaviour.

3. Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence – Unit 2 (Year 9)

Session	Topic	Resource type	Details including link
1	Getting a position on gender, respect and relationships	NA	No audiovisual resources to note.
2	Affirmations, put downs, importance of verbal and non-verbal communication	Video	<p><u>The Line – Interactive Videos: Slut or what? / Facebook Feud</u> Two videos each 1 minute, useful prompt to start discussion among students.</p> <p><u>The Outrage: teen dating violence and sexual assault</u> Video of presentation at American high school, with good guidance for teachers on explaining the link between language and attitudes and violence.</p>
		Website	<p><u>Relationship things</u> Explores what respectful relationships are through interactive tools that cover topics like gender equality, how to be respectful online and offline, how to communicate, and important information on safe sex and consent.</p>
3	Perspectives in sexual intimacy	NA	No audiovisual resources to note.
4	Defining violence, power, consent (Zoe & Sam)	Video	<p><u>The Line: Love is respect</u> Video (47 seconds) showing multiple unhealthy behaviours displayed through phone call between boy and girlfriend.</p>
		Video	<p><u>Love Control</u> A short film produced by Women’s Health in the North (Victoria) showing how quickly jealous and controlling behaviour can escalate into violence.</p>
		Video	<p><u>Tony Porter: A call to men</u> TED talk (11 minutes) with introduction to link between expectations of boys and men and gender-based violence.</p>
		Video	<p><u>The ‘Cup of Tea’ analogy (Clean version)</u> Funny and poignant animation (3 minutes) that equates consent for sex to drinking a cup of tea.</p>
		Video	<p><u>Wanna have sex? (Consent 101)</u> Video (6 minutes) from young American vlogger Laci Green. Fun and funny description of what consent ‘looks like’.</p>

Session	Topic	Resource type	Details including link
5	Consent and the law	Video	<u>Consent and the law – Victorian Legal Aid</u> Adaptation from Trusted Moments, a short film produced by the Legal Services Commission of South Australia as part of an early intervention strategy for the prevention of sexual assault.
		Website	<u>Sex, young people and the law – Resource Kit</u> Multiple resources from Victorian Legal Aid about helping young people to understand their legal rights and responsibilities and make informed decisions about sex and relationships.
6	Barriers and enablers to consent	Video	<u>It’s time we talked: Porn, sex and consent clips</u> Videos (1 minute) of young people’s perspective on porn, sex and consent.
	Bystander intervention case studies	Video	<u>The Line – Interactive Videos: Consent</u> Animated video (1 minute) about consent.
	Aggression as a part of communication	NA	No audiovisual resources to note.
7	Changing community attitudes to violence against women	Video	<u>VicHealth 2013 National Community Attitudes to Violence against Women</u> Animated infographic (2.5 minutes) summarising findings from 2014 survey on Australians’ attitudes towards gender equality and violence against women.
	What’s the harm in it?	NA	No audiovisual resources to note.
	Stepping out against gender-based violence	Video, website	<u>You can’t undo violence. Know where to draw the line.</u> Video campaign, posters and information designed for specifically for young people.
8	Respectful negotiation of conflict	NA	No audiovisual resources to note.

ourwatch.org.au

List 2:

Visual resources for Respectful Relationships Education



This list includes:

- Visual resources for staff
- Visual resources for students

If you or someone you know needs support or information, call the National Sexual Assault Domestic Family Violence Counselling Line on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) or visit <http://www.1800respect.org.au>



Education
and Training

List 2:

Visual resources for Respectful Relationships Education

Introduction

Visual resources such as posters, infographics and images are vital tools and resources for students, teachers and schools in Respectful Relationships Education.

This list has posters, images and infographics that you can print and display in your school in areas such as staff rooms, classrooms, hallways and common areas.

You may want to display these resources or use them as ideas to develop your own visuals. It is also important to ensure that all other school communication materials promote diversity, equality and respect and do not reinforce gender roles and stereotypes. See [Step 3: Understanding where you are at](#) and the [Template B: School gender equality assessment](#) to learn more.

The list has two sections:

- Resources for staff are visual resources to display in areas that staff occupy. Some of these may not be appropriate for students and are more focused on the school as a workplace promoting equality and respect.
- Resources for students are visual resources to display in areas that students occupy. Many of these are focused on promoting and supporting young people to critique and promote respect and equality.

In each section key themes or topic headings are followed by a brief description of why this area is important to address. Links to one or more examples are provided to give ideas about visual resources that may be displayed.

It is at the discretion of schools which content they feel is appropriate to display in staff and student areas. Schools should consider copyright laws where deciding on appropriate images to publish and disseminate.

Remember:

This resource list is intended as guidance only. The links and resources in this list are not approved or endorsed by Our Watch. It is at the discretion of schools and individual teachers which content they feel is appropriate to use with their students. All links to further information are current at June 2016.

1. Resources for staff

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment remains prevalent in Australia. It is important to be clear about what constitutes harassment and send a message to all staff that it is unacceptable in your workplace.

Example

- [Australian Human Rights Commission: ‘Know the Line’ campaign.](#)

Link between gender equality and violence against women

Jokes and discrimination are often dismissed as unimportant. Showing how they lead to women’s lower status and a culture that accepts violence against women can be a powerful tool to address gender inequality.

Examples

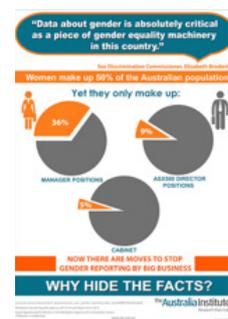
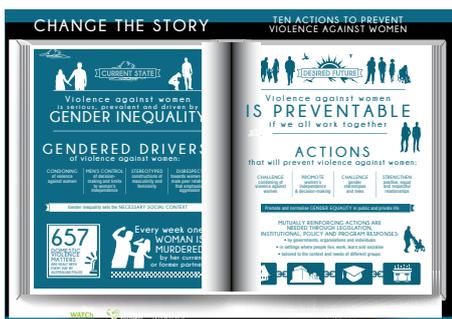
- [Gippsland Women’s Health: Poster campaign](#)
- [Our Watch: Change the story: Violence against women and gender equality infographic.](#)

Gender inequality in the workplace

Sharing everyday examples of sexism and discrimination highlights the gender inequality that needs to be recognised and addressed to prevent gender-based violence.

Examples

- [Workplace Gender Equality Agency: Education industry summary](#)
- [The Australia Institute: Women’s super and Why hide the facts?](#)



Violence against women statistics

Ensuring staff are aware of the prevalence and severity of violence against women increases awareness of the issue and impetus to work to address it.

Examples

- [Daily Life: 'Shine a light' campaign](#) – infographic in body of article
- [Destroy the Joint: 'Counting dead women' Facebook page](#) – updates the number of women killed on a regular basis.

Impact of sexism on young girls and women

It can be difficult to see the ways that stereotypes, sexism and structural gender inequality affect the choices and attitudes of young women and girls. Sharing this information with staff encourages them to be proactive in countering these trends.

Example

- [Sydney Morning Herald: Sexism's toll](#) [using data from Plan Australia] – infographic in body of article.

Encouragement to take action as a bystander

Social norms have a significant impact on what individuals see as acceptable attitudes and behaviours. Sending a clear message to staff that your school supports bystander action encourages staff to speak up when they see something they disagree with and affirms your commitment to a work environment in which gender equality is promoted.

Example

- Our Watch: [Speak Out and Act](#) posters.

SEXISM'S TOLL
 Survey of 1000 young women and girls on sexism in Australia

- 1% or less wanted a career in politics
- 75% or more had received a sexist comment
- 50% said sexism affected their career path
- 37% said sexism affected the subjects they studied at school or uni
- 33% or more said it would be easier to get dream job if they were male
- 30% often saw advertising that made them uncomfortable
- 28% often heard a politician, sportsperson or public figure make a sexist remark

Speak Out and Act

Speak Out & Act #OnOurWatch

ONE woman is killed almost every week by her current or former partner in Australia

- 31 in Australia have been killed in violent circumstances during 2015
- Nine in ten domestic violence victims experienced abuse by a male offender
- Only 51.8% of domestic violence victims reported their most recent incident to the police
- 94% of rape victims & 84% of other sexual crime victims are women
- 40.3% of victims were husband/factor de facto with the offender
- 32.7% were ex-boyfriend/ex-wife/de facto with the offender
- 73.0% of abuse occurred in the victim's home
- 11.7% in the home of a friend or relative
- Top three reasons for NOT reporting to police:
 1. Fear of further violence
 2. Embarrassment/shame
 3. Perception that the incident was too trivial/unimportant
- Victims were less likely to report if they were pregnant or experienced more than five previous incidents of abuse

DAILY LIFE #ShineALight

2. Resources for students

Gender inequality facts and statistics

Increasing student awareness of the various impacts of gender inequality increases understanding of the issue and impetus to work to address it.

Examples

- [Australian Human Rights Commission: Face the facts gender equality 2014](#) – full page infographic on page 3 of pdf
- [Victoria Brown: Gender equality – Enough said](#)
- [UN Women: Women in the media](#)
- The Representation Project: [Cause and effect](#).

Messages in support of gender equality

Using the messages and voices of different individuals and organisations to support respectful relationships will support work to build a culture of gender equality in the school.

Examples

- Lieutenant General David Morrison AO: [The standard you walk past...](#)
- Lulastick and the Hippyshake: [Gender equality is not a women's issue, it's a human issue...](#)
- Emma Watson: 'He for She' speech at the United Nations ([here](#) or [here](#))
- Unknown: [It is a person's job to respect another person](#)
- Always: [Like a girl: Unstoppable campaign](#) – stills.

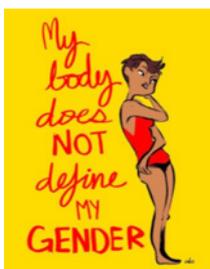


Sexual assault awareness and prevention

Where it is age-appropriate, it is important to reinforce messages to prevent violence and sexual assault among students, especially as data shows many young Australians hold violence supportive attitudes. **It is vital that these messages reinforce the responsibility of the perpetrator not to assault another person rather than putting the onus on the victim to avoid assault.**

Examples

- The Line: [You can't undo violence campaign](#)
- Sexual Assault Voices of Edmonton: [It's not sex when she doesn't want it campaign](#)
- Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Assault: Only Yes means Yes ([here](#) or [here](#))
- [No more](#) (US).



Promoting women and girls in sport

Role modelling through sports is a powerful way to promote gender equality in our community. Research shows that significantly fewer girls than boys participate in physical activity and/or organised sports. This is due to a variety of factors and often the 'drop off' in girls' involvement in sports occurs in adolescence. Schools can help to counter this trend by promoting female sports role models and valuing women's and girls' participation and achievement in sport.

Examples

- Sport England: 'This girl can' campaign, with alternative link to this campaign: [here](#) – stills and video
- ESPN: [National Girls and Women in Sports Day](#)
- Always: [Like a girl](#) campaign – still and video.

Gender diversity

Challenging the traditional concept of sex being synonymous with gender sends a strong message to students that they do not have to fit gender stereotypes.

- Daniel Arzola: If you say you respect me, but I can't have the same rights as you, then you don't respect me
- Unknown: My body does not define my gender
- Unknown: Gender is less like this and more like this.

Promoting women's and girls' leadership

The dearth of women in leaders in our society requires us to actively promote women's leadership as one of many strategies to achieve gender equality.

Examples

- The girl declaration
- Female leaders – infographic
- Some women are born leaders
- Making the world fit women
- Promoting women's achievements, such as The reconstructionists.



**I DON'T SAY
MAN UP
BECAUSE IT SUGGESTS
THAT WOMEN CAN'T
BE COURAGEOUS**



Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)

One way to bridge the persistent gender pay gap is to support girls to enter fields that are traditionally male-dominated. Women are currently underrepresented in the fields of science, technology, engineering and maths so it is important to encourage their ongoing participation in these fields.

Examples

- Celebrities making science ‘cool’, such as [Mayim Bialik](#) (Big Bang Theory)
- [Fast facts on women in STEM](#)
- [Science Centre of IOWA Pinterest page](#), including [Women of STEM](#)
- [Edutopia: Girls in science](#) – scroll down for list of resources.

The power of language

Raising awareness of the meaning of sexist, as well as racist, homophobic and transphobic, words and phrases and challenging their use is a key way to encourage young people to think critically about language and the way it can be used for power and privilege.

Examples

- Duke University: Student athlete campaign – [I don’t say...](#)
- Pacific Lutheran University: Diversity campaign – [My language my choice](#)
- Terre de Femmes campaign: [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

Challenging male stereotypes

In addition to these topics it is important to promote and value men’s involvement in traditionally ‘feminised’ work (both paid and unpaid) and activities to both staff and students. Many men regularly undertake these roles and activities, however this is often largely invisible in society and the media. Promoting these roles and activities helps to break down stereotypes and challenges the way these roles and activities are valued by our society. There are no current poster campaigns to promote this but you may come across some images that support this.

Examples

- Promoting careers including images of male nurses, childcare workers, cleaners and personal carers
- Using images of men as unpaid carers, such as men cooking at home, men playing with or reading to their children, and men doing grocery shopping
- Promoting the involvement of men and boys in dance and netball and valuing achievements in these sports as highly as other male dominated sports.

ourwatch.org.au

Template A: School Public Commitment Statement

<SCHOOL NAME> is committed to implementing a whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education.

We recognise that our school is more than a space for young people to learn. Our school is a workplace where all staff deserve to feel respected, safe and valued. Schools, like ours, are also important hubs in the community and we have the opportunity to lead, influence and contribute to healthy community culture.

As part of this commitment:

- Our principal will actively promote gender equality and speak out against gender-based violence.
- Our school will provide:
 - professional learning for leadership staff for the planning and implementation of the whole school approach to promote respectful relationships and gender equality
 - professional learning for teachers delivering Respectful Relationships curriculum in the classroom
 - professional learning for all school staff on gender equality, the prevention of gender-based violence and Respectful Relationships Education.
- Our school will undertake a thorough assessment and planning process to identify gaps and limitations in existing culture, policies and practices in gender equality.
- Our school will create mechanisms for staff feedback on gender equality in the workplace.
- Our school will identify, resource and implement key actions to promote gender equality and prevent gender-based violence.
- Our school will engage with external experts for advice and support in promoting gender equality and respectful relationships among staff and students.
- Our school will build partnerships with expert family violence services to increase school capacity to respond to students and staff who experience, witness or perpetrate gender-based violence.
- Our school commits to continual improvement and evaluation of Respectful Relationships Education.

Signed:

(Principal)

Date:

Template B: School gender equality assessment

The template is designed as a guide for discussion and reflection among the team leading Respectful Relationships Education in your school. The presence of senior school leadership on this team will ensure that this assessment has the most impact possible.

This template has six sections based on the six elements of the whole school approach:

1. School culture and environment
2. Leadership and commitment
3. Professional learning strategy
4. Teaching and learning
5. Community partnerships
6. Support for students and staff.

Figure 1: The Whole School approach



Adapted from Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence, Department of Education and Training (2014).

Each section has an introduction and then a series of statements for you to answer 'yes' or 'no'. While you're discussing each statement jot down in the comment section any comments, concerns or actions you would like to undertake to address the needs or gaps identified.

Remember, this template is not designed to externally assess your performance; it helps you to highlight conscious and unconscious gender bias and identify areas that may need to be

strengthened.

Before starting here are some things to consider:

- Having a facilitator or critical friend with expertise in gender equality, in particular in the workplace, will support and strengthen the process. We recommend you contact your [local women's health organisation](#) who can direct you to an experienced facilitator in your region.
- While this can be used any time of year, it may be best to schedule this early in Term 4 so that it can feed directly into your planning for the coming year.
- You can work through this template in total or you can select aspects to work through at different stages or with different teams of staff.
- [Step 4: Planning and Implementing](#) contains a template for an implementation plan which connects to this activity. It might be useful to read the implementation plan before starting your school gender equality assessment.

1. School culture and environment

This section includes assessing:

- school ethos, vision and values
- internal and external communications
- school environment and facilities.

Introduction

Schools are more than a space for young people to learn. The school is an important hub in the community and has the opportunity to lead, influence and contribute to healthy community culture. It is also a workplace where all staff deserve to feel respected, safe and valued.

A school culture that clearly shows commitment to gender equality and respectful relationships is essential to creating a supportive environment to prevent gender-based violence. Commitment to these values, demonstrated by staff and students alike, is essential for developing and maintaining school structures, policies and procedures that promote equality and respect. The positive messages of Respectful Relationships Education can be supported and amplified by regular conversations, commitments and actions so that respect and equality are modelled throughout the school community.

As a school you will already be required to have certain policies in place, most likely set by your department of education. Embedding a culture of gender equality means going beyond these requirements to ensure commitments to promote respectful attitudes, norms, behaviours and practices are also embedded in school policies and procedures – beyond just the minimum.

Figure 2: Our school is...

Our school is:



It is particularly important to recognise the culture, structures and supports that exist in the school as a workplace. Inequality and discrimination exist everywhere in our society – including schools and communities – and need to be challenged wherever we see them. Equality of opportunities and outcomes for female and male employees is essential to ensuring a strong culture of gender equality in your school and to promoting and modelling that culture for students.

For Respectful Relationships Education, you will need to consult with staff, identify and eliminate conscious and unconscious gender discrimination, and provide equal opportunities for all. Part of this work includes recognising that gender-based violence and harassment is prevalent in our society and working to ensure this is recognised in the workplace and your school. This is important because workplaces are such influential parts of our lives and because:

- violence, even when occurring in private, can impact on the wellbeing of those who experience, witnesses and perpetrate it
- the school has a legal responsibility as an employer to create a safe work environment
- workplace cultures that promote wellbeing, respect and equality are more productive.

School ethos, vision and values

Commitment to these values, demonstrated by staff and students alike, is essential for supporting the development and maintenance of school structures, policies and procedures that promote equality and respect.

School ethos, vision and values	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
1.1 Our school values statement includes a focus on gender equality and respectful relationships among all members of the school community.			
1.2 We have mechanisms in place to ensure that our staff and students model school values on gender equality and respectful relationships.			
1.3 Our School Strategic Plan includes at least one goal (and associated targets and key improvement strategies) that focus on increasing gender equality and supporting respectful relationships relevant to both staff and students.			

Communications	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
<p>1.4 We produce and disseminate material relevant to both staff and students which indicates our commitment to gender equality and respectful relationships.</p>			
<p>1.5 We regularly review our communications materials (including our school website, school newsletter, orientation, enrolment and parent information materials) to ensure they do not unconsciously promote gender inequality or gender stereotypes or use language that promotes inequality or stereotypes.</p>			
<p>1.6 We provide practical information to staff and students and skill them to take bystander action, promote gender equality and support victims of sexism, harassment, discrimination or gender-based violence.</p>			
<p>1.7 We look for opportunities to promote messages and themes of gender equality and respect in extracurricular activities and school events such as sporting events, carnivals, school musicals, school discos and formals and we ensure extracurricular activities do not promote negative gender stereotypes.</p>			
<p>1.8 We have communication materials visible in the school for staff and students indicating our commitment to gender equality and respectful relationships.</p>			
<p>1.9 We prohibit material being placed or distributed in our school that is sexist, discriminatory or which stereotypes women or men.</p>			

School environment and facilities

The workplace environment reflects your school's commitment to gender equality to prevent gender-based violence and communicates to employees, the school community and the public that your school is committed to gender equality. It is important to consider the messages shared in the school environment and to ensure that facilities are appropriate to the needs of women and men.

Environment and facilities	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
1.10 We undertake regular assessments of the physical school environment to ensure that female and male staff and students have equality of access and use of all school facilities and areas including the school yard, computer labs, library, sports areas and facilities and all indoor areas.			
1.11 We offer or are able to refer to childcare facilities for our staff.			
1.12 Women have access to appropriate private breastfeeding facilities at our school, including storage and equipment cleaning facilities for expressing milk.			

2. Leadership and commitment

This section includes assessing:

- governance and leadership
- planning, monitoring and coordination
- school policies and procedures.

Introduction

The commitment of your school's leadership is essential to the success of Respectful Relationships Education in your school.

Effective strategies to promote gender equality and respectful relationships among staff and students require a whole school approach. To successfully implement systems, policies and procedures to promote gender equality and respectful relationships through a whole school approach, your school leadership team and other senior staff must actively promote this work, as well as providing support to ensure that all school staff can help create a safe, equitable and respectful school environment.

Good engagement comes from communicating with your staff and students on this issue. It is best if your commitment to respectful relationships is displayed publicly (see Template A) and is visible through varied communication channels. Communication materials can help staff and the public become aware of your school's commitment to creating school culture which promotes gender equality and respectful relationships.

Communication materials that present information on gender, respect and violence against women in an informative and accessible way can have a positive impact on family and community engagement as well as contribute to changing negative attitudes on equality, gender and violence.

Governance and leadership

Effective strategies to promote gender equality and respectful relationships among staff and students require a whole school approach. To successfully implement systems, policies and procedures to ensure these activities are successful, it is imperative that the school leadership team and other senior staff actively promote this work and provide support to ensure that all school staff create a safe, equitable and respectful school environment.

Governance and leadership	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
2.1 Our school leaders demonstrate the skills and confidence required to plan and embed a whole school approach to gender equality and respectful relationships.			
2.2 Our school allocates financial and staffing resources to the promotion of gender equality and respectful relationships.			
2.3 Our school leaders take responsibility for planning and implementing activities to			

promote gender equality and respectful relationships.			
2.4 Our school leaders, including the principal, actively promote gender equality and respectful relationships and regularly express commitment to these issues.			
2.5 Our school has a process for the early identification of staff with leadership potential which addresses the specific barriers women face in becoming leaders.			

Planning, monitoring and coordination

Having systems for planning and monitoring helps ensure that activities to promote gender equality and prevent gender-based violence are carefully designed and align with best practice and government policy. These systems and procedures also help ensure implementation of key actions is supported through regular feedback about achievements and areas for development.

Planning, monitoring and coordination	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
2.6 We allocate a senior member of staff responsibility to ensure that activities on gender equality and respectful relationships are coordinated in our school.			
2.6 We ensure data and information we collect is disaggregated by gender to support our school to better understand how we need to address gender equality.			
2.8 We conduct regular surveys with staff, students and families on safety, gender equality, respectful relationships, discrimination and harassment.			
2.9 We incorporate key issues and actions identified using surveys or this assessment tool annually into our school planning process.			

School policies and procedures

Effective activity to promote gender equality to prevent gender-based violence is assisted by policies and procedures which support and guide the work of the school, staff and students. While schools are required by state and federal equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation to have particular policies in place, embedding a culture of gender equality requires going beyond these requirements to ensure commitments to promote respectful attitudes, norms, behaviours and practices are also embedded in school policies and procedures.

School policies and procedures	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
2.10 We have a gender equality and/or equal opportunity policy and procedure for staff and students.			
2.11 We have a sexual harassment policy and procedure, including a clearly articulated complaints process, for staff and students.			
2.12 We include a statement on preventing gender-based violence in our equal opportunity or gender equality policy.			
2.13 We have procedures to respond effectively to staff and students who have witnessed, experienced or perpetrated gender-based violence (physical, verbal, emotional or technological). This includes disclosures that are not within mandatory reporting requirements.			
2.14 Our Student Engagement Policy includes a clear statement about our commitment to promoting gender equality and respectful relationships.			
2.15 Our Staff Code of Conduct includes a clear statement that all employees and students will be treated with dignity and respect regardless of their sex, gender identity, socioeconomic status, cultural background, sexual orientation or level of ability.			
2.16 Our policies are accessible, visible, disseminated and regularly promoted to staff and students.			
2.17 We provide training to staff on relevant policies when updated and as part of the induction process.			

3. Professional learning strategy

This section includes assessing:

- professional development and capacity building.

Introduction

Teachers and other school staff are focused on the wellbeing and social development of their students. This is one of the many reasons that they are best placed to lead Respectful Relationships Education and deliver Respectful Relationships curriculum. However evaluations have shown that even the most experienced teachers can feel uncomfortable discussing gender, sex and power without professional learning and ongoing support and advice.

In order to design, implement, monitor and evaluate activity to promote gender equality and prevent gender-based violence, a skilled, committed and supported workforce is required. Professional development is critical to ensuring that schools can develop this capacity within their workforce. As such, staff who deliver Respectful Relationships curriculum will need to be supported through ongoing professional learning, peer support (including communities of practice) and connections to specialist support services.

An effective whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education requires the engagement of all staff in the school, and must extend beyond the classroom to further support gender analysis as part of your school's operations. It is vital that all staff receive adequate professional learning that develops their awareness and skills to respond to disclosures of gender-based violence and integrate gender equality into the curriculum across all key learning areas, alongside a leadership-focused professional learning strategy for key staff including the principal and the leadership team. Review the issues below to help plan professional learning and development for your staff and to ensure that they also promote gender equality and actively encourage women's leadership.

Professional development and capacity building	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
<p>3.1 We have mechanisms in place to ensure that staff have adequate support and supervision when undertaking activities to promote gender equality and respectful relationships including supporting disclosures from staff, students and the wider community.</p>			
<p>3.2 Our relevant teaching staff are trained to deliver Respectful Relationships curriculum to students.</p>			
<p>3.3 Our staff professional learning development strategy is regularly reviewed to ensure female and male staff have equal access to and participate equally in all professional development.</p>			
<p>3.4 Our staff receive adequate training on responding to and referring to disclosures and incidents of violence from staff and students, aligned with school policies and procedures.</p>			
<p>3.5 Our leadership staff receive training on their roles and responsibility to promote gender equality and respectful relationships through their leadership roles.</p>			

4. Teaching and learning

This section includes assessing:

- teaching and learning practices.

Introduction

Respectful Relationships curriculum, the activity that happens in the classroom and is student focused, is a core part of any whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education. Evidence-based curriculum resources that focus on the links between gender, power and violence will support students to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes to engage in respectful relationships and to reject attitudes or behaviours that support gender-based violence and gender stereotypes.

Quality Respectful Relationships education should consist of multiple sessions delivered by trained educators. For example, [Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence](#) recommends trained teachers deliver eight sessions per year in Year 8 and 9 and six sessions in Year 10.

As well as the Respectful Relationships curriculum, a whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education should promote gender equality and respect across all learning areas. This will also support the capability and confidence of all teachers to engage students in understanding and discussing gender inequality as it relates to their learning area.

Teaching and learning – not only the formal curriculum, but how it is implemented and by whom – is a core part of a whole school approach. Regularly reviewing curriculum materials, teaching allocation and practices to ensure they promote equality and respect will ensure that messages students receive as part of the formal curriculum are reinforced through teaching practices and in other areas of the classroom.

Teaching and learning	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
4.1 Our staff use language that is equitable and respectful and does not unconsciously promote gender stereotypes or gender inequality.			
4.2 Our school regularly reviews curriculum content across key learning areas to ensure equal representation of the range of experiences, knowledge, skills and aspirations of females and males.			
4.3 Our school ensures that teacher allocation (classes or subjects) actively promotes gender equality and challenges gender stereotypes.			
4.4 Our school uses evidence-based curriculum that promotes gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence.			
4.5 Our school challenges disruptive and dominating student behaviour in a framework that understands gender equality. For example, a male student is not allowed to misbehave through excuses such as 'boys will be boys'.			

5. Community partnerships

This section includes assessing:

- school community partnerships.

Introduction

Respectful Relationships Education is most effective when members of the school community are supportive and hear and deliver consistent messages about gender equality and respectful relationships in all aspects of their life. As such, a core part of the whole school approach is engaging the wider community, including response and specialist community organisations and student's families.

Strong relationships with members of your school community, including families and local women's organisations, will support you in promoting gender equality and supporting any staff, student or community member that discloses experiences of violence. Ensuring that families are partners in learning and are equipped to support the messages you give your students will have a positive impact on activities designed to promote equality and respect.

Responding to disclosures of gender-based violence

As Respectful Relationships Education increases the awareness of what constitutes gender-based violence and creates safe spaces for discussion of these issues, it commonly results in staff and students disclosing, perhaps for the first time, their own experiences of gender-based violence, whether as a victim/survivor or perpetrator. While this may seem alarming or concerning, it is a sign that you're on the right track with your Respectful Relationships Education approach. It is important to ensure that, if and when this happens, you and your school can do all they can to support the individual.

Strengthening your links and partnerships with your local services and organisations that respond to gender-based violence, and ensuring that this information is known by all students and staff, sends a clear message about how seriously your school takes the primary prevention of gender-based violence by ensuring that everyone is aware of your local response services. It is important to also ensure that the Respectful Relationships Education leadership team has regular contact and meetings with these organisations. You will find more about support for staff and student in the following section.

Engaging families and carers

Families and carers should be recognised as key partners in Respectful Relationships Education and equipped to model respectful relationships and provide messages about gender, violence and gender equality that are consistent with what students are hearing at school. It is important for each school to determine what messages the families and carers in their school community will connect with to ensure Respectful Relationships Education is supported.

For some schools, this will consist of providing information to families and carers about Respectful Relationships Education and how it forms part of core personal development curriculum and is linked to national or state curriculum. For other schools, it may include hosting information nights, consulting representative councils or advisory groups or sharing information with families and carers through existing communication platforms.

Given families and carers are engaged in other settings in the community, such as workplaces, sporting clubs, local government and health services, linking in with other community organisations can support the delivery of key Respectful Relationships Education messages to families and carers.

Reinforcing messages in the community

Given families, teachers and young people play many diverse roles in the community, it is important that schools connect and work collaboratively with multiple organisations and groups. There is strong community support for preventing gender-based violence. Connecting with organisations in your community working on this complex issue can be a great way for students, families and staff to hear respectful relationships messages. This may mean supporting the campaigns and activities of local government, working alongside sporting clubs and community organisations or engaging directly with primary prevention and gender equality specialists to ensure your staff have the support they need to promote gender equality in and out of the classroom.

School community partnerships	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
5.1 We provide all members of our school community including families, the school council and community partners with information on their role in supporting our approach to gender equality and respectful relationships.			
5.2 We undertake joint activities focused on gender equality and respectful relationships with other organisations in the wider school community including other local schools, sports clubs, youth services, local governments or community health centres.			
5.3 We actively facilitate and promote staff participation in events focusing on preventing gender-based violence and promoting gender equality.			
5.4 We engage families as active supporters of gender equality and violence prevention in our school, where possible.			

6. Support for staff and students

This section includes assessing:

- support for staff and students.

Introduction

Schools have an established duty of care to support students and staff experiencing violence. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff and students, it is essential you and your school understand the prevalence of gender-based violence and the high likelihood that members of your school community may experience, witness or perpetrate it. While the focus of Respectful Relationships Education is on primary prevention, as part of a duty of care and a 'do no harm' principle you will need to consider how to respond to disclosures of violence.

It is important to consider the impact gender-based violence can have on the workplace. Violence, even when occurring in private, can impact the wellbeing of those who experience, witness and perpetrate it, and the school has a legal responsibility as an employer to create a safe work environment.

It is vital that school leaders feel confident in their ability to respond appropriately, safely and effectively to disclosures and have the connections they need to refer staff and students where necessary. This means having clear policies and procedures in place that include legislative and departmental responsibilities and respond to best practice knowledge from specialist services.

You can do this by developing strong relationships with organisations in your community that specialise in responding to gender-based violence, as well as department of education staff who can support you to understand local referral networks and systems and to develop policies and procedures for your school that genuinely support the person disclosing.

Support for staff and students	Yes	No	Comments to consider in developing actions
6.1 We have partnerships with local community organisations with expertise in gender equality and violence prevention.			
6.2 We have partnerships with local community organisations with expertise in responding to gender-based violence.			
6.3 We have sought relevant support from gender and family violence organisations for technical advice, input into policies and procedures on response and referral and training opportunities for all staff on responding to violence and gender equality as needed.			
6.4 We are confident that we have clear and well understood policies and protocols on how staff should respond to disclosures from staff and students.			
6.5 We are confident that our staff feel capable and competent to respond to disclosures from staff and students.			

Template C: Implementation Plan

1. School culture and environment

Suggested actions

- Increase your school's understanding of gender equality issues in the workplace and strategies to challenge unconscious bias and structural inequality.
- Strengthen your policies and procedures to promote gender equality in school structures and norms, including drafting a school gender equality policy and disseminate to staff.
- Ensure strong shared understanding among staff of Respectful Relationships Education.
- Speak publicly about the school's commitment to gender equality and respectful relationships, including displaying your school commitment statement in Step 1: Getting Started.
- Use visual communications to promote gender equality throughout the school including your school commitment statement.
- Create a position description to focus on promoting gender equality for the prevention of gender-based violence in your school.
- Undertake an audit of school communication messages in newsletters and website information and ensure both female and male achievements are promoted.

Support resources

The following material will support you in this work.

- [Template A: School Commitment Statement](#)
- [Template D: Gender Equality Policy](#)
- [Guidance A: Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment Policy](#)
- [Guidance B: Student Engagement Policy](#)
- [Guidance C: Staff Code of Conduct](#)
- [List 1: Visual resources for Respectful Relationships Education](#)

Other resources

- [Workplace Gender Equality Agency: About gender equality for small business](#)
- [Workplace Gender Equality Agency: e-learning module – What is workplace gender equality?](#)

2. Leadership and commitment

Suggested actions

- Prompt discussion among staff about key gender issues.
- Talk to staff about the impact of gender roles, norms and stereotypes in the classroom.
- Include gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence on the staff meeting agenda.
- Encourage critical thinking among staff about language and the impact of sexist words and phrases.
- Ensure that goals on gender equality are included in annual and strategic planning.
- Engage in reflection and a progress assessment of the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education on an annual basis.

Support resources

- [The Line: Are you a gender equitable teacher?](#)
- [The Line: Discussing gender and stereotypes with students](#)
- [The Line: Promoting gender equality in the classroom](#)
- [Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence](#)

3. Professional learning strategy

Suggested actions

- Get in touch with your department of education to see what professional learning and training is available for you and your staff for Respectful Relationships Education.
- Increase the awareness and understanding among all staff of the links between gender inequality and gender-based violence and the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education.
- Develop the skills of all staff to integrate gender equality into the curriculum across all key learning areas.
- Ensure all staff receive professional learning on appropriately responding to disclosures of violence or discrimination and know the processes to refer students and fellow staff for further support.

Support resources

- [The Line: Are you a gender equitable teacher?](#)
- [The Line: Discussing gender and stereotypes with students](#)
- [The Line: Promoting gender equality in the classroom](#)
- [Australian Women's Health Network: National List of Women's Health Organisations](#)
- [1800 RESPECT: Services and Support Map](#)

4. Teaching and learning

Suggested actions

- Support staff to deliver evidence-based Respectful Relationships curriculum resource material such as [Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out Against Gender Based Violence](#).
- Work to ensure students receive messages as part of the formal curriculum that is reinforced through teaching practices and in other areas of the classroom.
- Ask students to undertake a gender audit of a school extracurricular activity (musical, formal, sporting event). Ask what they could do to ensure these events promote gender equality and challenge negative stereotypes.
- Undertake a review of teaching topics and resources to ensure that they are gender equitable and do not condone violence or promote negative gender stereotypes.
- In your curriculum planning process, encourage your staff to develop the skills to integrate gender equality across all learning areas. Encourage discussion and questions on each other about how they can improve in this area.
- Discuss how to be a gender-equitable teacher in staff meetings.

Support resources

- [List 1: Resources to support Respectful Relationships Curriculum](#)
- [Guidance D: Promoting Gender Equality in Curriculum Planning](#)
- [Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out against Gender-based Violence](#)
- [Our Watch: Evidence Brief on Respectful Relationships Education in Schools](#)
- [The Line: Are you a gender equitable teacher?](#)
- [The Line: Promoting gender equality in the classroom](#)
- [The Line: Managing student behaviour – What's gender got to do with it?](#)

Implementation plan: Teaching and learning

Key improvement <i>Strategies and significant projects</i>	What <i>Activities and programs to progress the key improvement strategies</i>	How <i>Budget, equipment, IT, learning time, learning space</i>	Who <i>Individuals or teams responsible for implementation</i>	When <i>Start and anticipated end dates to track progress</i>	Achievement milestones <i>Changes in practice or behaviours</i>

5. Community partnerships

Suggested actions

- Understand and assess your key community partnerships.
- Strengthen relationships with partners that specialise in the promotion of gender equality and can support work to prevent gender-based violence in your school.
- Engage with other organisations to ensure coordination of strategies and messages and support work in your school, and to gain further gender equality expertise to support the implementation of a whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education.
- Engage with local government as local governments are playing an increasing role in promoting gender equality and have a good overview of the work of other community organisations.
- Share information with parents and carers about links to national or state level curriculum.
- Identify key strategies for engaging families in a whole school approach to Respectful Relationships Education. For instance, theme a school carnival around gender equality, challenging traditional stereotypes, and actively engage families in the running of this event.

Support resources

- [Victorian Department of Education: Evidence and benefits of partnership](#)
- [Victorian Department of Education: Stakeholder Engagement Framework](#)
- [VicHealth: The Partnership Analysis Tool](#)
- Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth: [Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia](#)
- [Australian Women's Health Network: National List of Women's Health Organisations](#) – connect with women's health organisations who specialise in promoting gender equality
- [National Legal Aid](#) – links to state based legal aid commissions who may have programs to support staff to understand and present legal information to students, staff and families.

6. Support for staff and students

Suggested actions

- Connect with staff in the department of education who are responsible for providing advice about responding to family violence.
- Connect with specialist services in your local area, including family violence service providers to ensure staff know where to refer staff and how to respond to disclosures of violence.

Support resources

- [1800 RESPECT: Services and Support Map](#)
- [Australian Women's Health Network: National List of Women's Health Organisations](#)

Template D: Gender Equality Policy

This template policy is designed to be a sample only. Adapting it to your context, guided by consultation with your team, can help you create a safe and inclusive school and workplace where all staff and students, regardless of gender, have equity of opportunity and outcomes.

Introduction

[Name of school] is committed to creating a school community where all staff and students are equally respected and valued and enjoy equity of both opportunity and outcomes.

[Name of school] recognises that gender inequality has the potential to limit and impact negatively on the safety, education, employment, family lives and opportunities of staff and students, particularly women and girls, in the immediate and long term.

Under the *Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010* all organisations have a *positive duty* to take proactive steps to prevent discriminatory practices.¹ [Name of school] recognises the prevalence and impact of gender-based discrimination and harassment, and is committed to building a school culture that challenges the stereotypes, power differences and social norms that foster gender inequality.

[Name of school] recognises that gender inequality is both structural and individual; this means it is not only the result of individual attitudes and actions, but also of biases in structures, systems, policies and processes throughout our community.

Girls and boys, women and men are subject to gendered stereotypes and expectations about how they should behave, think and act. These gendered stereotypes and expectations contribute to gender inequality by assigning unequal value, status and power to women and men. These expectations are reinforced by structures, systems, norms and cultures that often privilege the knowledge, rights, perspectives and skills of males over females.

Gender inequality can be both a cause and a consequence of direct and indirect discrimination. This discrimination is sometimes the result of unconscious bias which is when our behaviours, choices and practices are shaped by underlying assumptions and attitudes without us realising. Gender inequality is evident throughout our society, and research suggests it is one of the key factors driving the prevalence of gender-based violence.²

[Name of school] recognises that schools are vital spaces in our community to promote gender equality and prevent violence against women. Every policy, practice and activity has the potential to reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes and gendered inequality.

On behalf of the whole school community, the principal, the School Council and the Student Representative Council support this policy.

¹ Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (2011) *Positive duty: Know your responsibilities*, <http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/index.php/our-resources-and-publications/know-your-responsibilities-brochures/item/133-positive-duty-know-your-responsibilities-aug-2011>.

² Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth (2015) *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*, Our Watch, Melbourne.

Our commitments

[Name of school], as an education institution and an employer, is committed to promoting **gender equality** and to ensuring equality of opportunity and outcomes for all staff and students.

Gender equality involves equality of opportunity and equality of results. It includes the redistribution of resources and responsibilities between women and men and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures of gender inequality to achieve substantive equality. It is about recognising diversity and disadvantage to ensure equal outcomes for all and therefore often requires women-specific programs and policies to end existing inequalities.

[Name of school] will ensure that all staff, students and school policies, procedures, systems and structures actively promote gender equality and seek to expose and redress gender inequities.

School culture and environment

At [Name of school] all students and staff are responsible for promoting gender equality and modelling respectful relationships. All staff and students will be held accountable if they use language and/or demonstrate behaviour that:

- promotes unequal power relations between women and men
- perpetuates harmful gender stereotypes
- condones violence against women.

For example: Unacceptable behaviour includes accessing or sharing sexist or discriminatory materials at school, during school hours or using school property, using sexist, stereotyping or discriminatory language, dismissing acts of gender-based violence as trivial, making jokes that rely on gender stereotypes, and victim blaming when discussing gender-based violence.

Promoting gender equality and modelling respectful relationships is just as important for staff as it is for students.

[Name of school] will work to ensure all staff feel respected, safe and valued in the workplace, and will take proactive measures to prevent and eliminate gender discrimination and provide equal opportunities for all staff. This will include promoting gender equality in school leadership, ensuring processes and policies are free of bias, and supporting all staff to balance work and family commitments.

For example: Commitments include actively supporting and/or mentoring female staff, reviewing recruitment and professional processes to eliminate unconscious gender bias, facilitating flexible work arrangements and family leave in line with department guidelines, and providing private breastfeeding facilities.

[Name of school] will support staff who experience domestic/family violence or sexual assault including by making reasonable efforts to grant appropriate leave, adjust work assignments or accommodate requests for flexible work hours.