

A Right to Respect

Victoria's Plan to Prevent Violence against Women 2010-2020

CASE STUDY

Workplaces

Working Together Against Violence

Women's Health Victoria has partnered with a major trucking and logistics organisation to develop programs and policies aimed at preventing violence against women and promoting respectful relationships in the workplace and home.

Funded under VicHealth's *Respect, Responsibility and Equality Program*, the Working Together Against Violence project is producing a series of training sessions across the organisation and also developing and promoting an innovative workplace resource kit. The kit will include various tools and systems that promote safe workplace behaviour and will be transferable to other organisations.

A final report on the project will include a training module and implementation plan. It will illustrate the process of a specialist agency engaging a mainstream workplace in primary prevention and provide a resource for similar activities in the future.

The project was recently awarded a Certificate of Merit at the 2009 Australian Institute of Criminology's Crime and Violence Prevention Awards.

Women's Health Victoria www.whv.org.au

CASE STUDY

Sports and Recreation

Respect and Responsibility

In 2005 the Australian Football League (AFL), in partnership with VicHealth, launched an industry wide response to addressing violence against women through the introduction of its *Respect and Responsibility Policy*.

Since then, under the national program, the AFL has developed standards of excellence for delivering training and education programs for players at the elite, state and draftee levels and has introduced a respectful workplace behaviour program for their executive and staff. In addition the AFL continues to play an active role in the White Ribbon campaign by encouraging men from across business, government and the community to become actively engaged in preventing violence against women.

Australian Football League www.afl.com.au

Fair Game: Respect Matters

At the community level, a program called *Fair Game: Respect Matters* is being trialled across 42 local senior and junior clubs throughout Victoria's Northern Football League. *Fair Game: Respect Matters* is a program committed to cultural change where the focus is on building football club environments that are safe, supportive and inclusive of women and girls. AFL Victoria is leading the project in partnership with La Trobe University, with funding support from VicHealth. The implementation of *Fair Game: Respect Matters* includes nominating club-based 'drivers' who identify where the club can improve their physical facilities, their policies, their codes of conduct, and their approach to mentoring and encouraging women and girls to participate equally in the game, both on and off the field.

AFL Victoria www.aflvic.com.au

CASE STUDY

Education and Training

Sexual Assault Prevention Program for Secondary Schools (SAPPSS)

The CASA House *Sexual Assault Prevention Program for Secondary Schools (SAPPSS)* takes a whole-of-school, long-term approach to primary prevention. The program aims to reduce the incidence of sexual assault in school communities and build the capacity of schools to respond to sexual assault.

SAPPSS aims to effect long-term cultural shifts across the school community with a clear focus on collaboration between schools and agencies and ongoing evaluation. *SAPPSS* includes components to address staff training and professional development, student curriculum, school policy and procedures and, more recently, the development of Peer Educators.

Funded by VicHealth, the Peer Educator project was piloted in 2007–2009 to develop opportunities for senior students to take leadership on issues of gender-based violence. Early evaluation has suggested that through their experience of training and taking a leadership role, young people are more likely to encourage respectful behaviours among their peers.

Overall evaluation of *SAPPSS* has shown that positive changes in young people's knowledge and skills in respectful relationships are best supported by a whole-of-school, long-term approach involving teachers, support staff and school leaders. *SAPPSS* is now established in the curriculum and policies of several Victorian secondary schools and enables school staff to take ownership of the delivery and development of the program.

CASA House (Centre Against Sexual Assault)

Royal Women's Hospital www.casahouse.com.au

CASE STUDY

Local Government, Health and Community Services

Local councils leading prevention

Maribyrnong City Council is building on the Maribyrnong Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan 2007-2008 to address the determinants of violence across its core business. Their *Respect and Equity: Preventing Violence Against Women* project takes an integrated approach by strengthening activity within Council and raising awareness of the issue within the general community. It is funded by VicHealth's *Respect, Responsibility and Equality Program* and involves integrating violence prevention into the core business of local government. Maribyrnong Council will also play an active role in providing leadership and mentoring opportunities for other local governments within their region.

Maribyrnong City Council www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au

The *Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships Project*, coordinated by Darebin City Council, is working with faith leaders and their communities, neighbouring councils and other organisations to undertake a range of activities designed to prevent violence against women before it occurs. Funded under VicHealth's *Respect, Responsibility and Equality Program*, this three-year project aims to increase the capacity of faith leaders, organisations and communities to undertake primary prevention work and promote respectful relationships between women and men within their faith groups and in the broader community.

Darebin City Council www.darebin.vic.gov.au

The *Promoting Peace in Families* project is an innovative partnership between the City of Casey, the Cardinia Casey Community Health Service and the Casey Pastors Network. The project provides education for senior ministry leaders to identify, respond to and prevent family violence. The key strategy is to increase the skills of leaders to intervene effectively with victims and perpetrators, to educate congregations and the broader community about unacceptable behaviours and attitudes and to promote healthy relationships. *Promoting Peace in Families* is funded by the Federal Attorney-General's National Community Crime Prevention Program and is a 2009 Australian Institute of Criminology Crime and Violence Prevention Award winner.

Casey City Council www.caseyconnect.net.au/promotingpeace

Women's health services taking action

Several women's health services are actively involved in regional initiatives and local partnerships to support primary prevention. These services have been highly successful in building local momentum, creating strong partnerships and providing expertise on issues of violence against women.

Their initiatives include conferences, local community walks against violence, school-based programs, regional prevention strategies and cross-sector activities. Case studies from metropolitan and regional women's health services are described in detail in *A Right to Respect: Victoria's Plan to Prevent Violence against Women 2010–2020*.

Women's Health Services www.whv.org.au

CASE STUDY

Media, Arts and Popular Culture

Building an Evidence Base: Media Reporting of Violence against Women

The University of Melbourne is exploring the coverage of violence against women in newspapers. The project, funded by VicHealth, will review the state of knowledge, both nationally and internationally, on the ways in which violence against women is represented in news media and the media's role in influencing community attitudes towards violence against women.

Research will also be undertaken first hand, through examining Australian daily metropolitan newspapers, to explore how media attention can both challenge and reinforce misconceptions about victims, perpetrators and incidents of rape and domestic homicide.

Melbourne University and VicHealth
www.vichealth.vic.gov.au

www.women.vic.gov.au

A Right to Respect

Victoria's Plan to Prevent Violence against Women 2010-2020

Violence against women - the issue

Violence against women is prevalent, serious and preventable. It has a profound and devastating effect on women, children, young people, families and whole communities. Most violence against women occurs in the home or in private, and is perpetrated by a man known to them, usually a partner or ex-partner. The evidence is compelling:

- More than half of Australian women (57%) have experienced a form of physical or sexual violence since the age of 16.
- 77% of reported family violence victims are women and girls.
- 92% of reported rape victims are women and girls.
- Women are at least three times more likely to be victims of intimate partner violence than men.
- Intimate partner violence – including physical, emotional and sexual violence – is the leading contributor to death, disability and ill-health in Victorian women aged 15-44.
- Apart from the immeasurable cost to those affected, violence against women and their children cost the Australian economy \$13.6 billion in 2009 including \$3.4 billion in Victoria alone.

Research shows the profound and long-term toll violence takes on women's health, on families and communities, and on society in general.

Building a prevention plan on a sound evidence base

In 2007 the Victorian Government commissioned VicHealth to review the evidence on existing prevention programs and strategies. The outcome was a comprehensive framework *Preventing Violence before It Occurs – A Framework and Background Paper to Guide the Primary Prevention of Violence against Women in Victoria*. VicHealth found broad international agreement that the key drivers of violence against women were:

- unequal power relations between women and men
- adherence to rigid gender stereotypes
- broader cultures of violence.

The recommendation was that a statewide prevention plan be developed to address these factors through mutually reinforcing strategies at societal, community and individual levels, and in various community settings.

About the plan

A Right to Respect: Victoria's Plan to Prevent Violence against Women 2010-2020 addresses the underlying causes of violence against women and it reflects the Victorian Government's commitment that all women have a right to live free from violence.

The plan was developed in close consultation with representatives from local government, education, sport, media, arts and popular culture, workplaces and community settings and is a coordinated, long-term and whole-of-community framework for action to change the culture in which violence occurs.

A Right to Respect is the world's first systematic, sustained and cross-sectoral policy to build skills, attitudes and cultural values that reject violence against women.

Vision

Victorian communities, cultures and organisations are non-violent and gender equitable.

Relationships are respectful and non-discriminatory.

Goal 1 A significant reduction in violence against women

Goal 2 Non-violent and non-discriminatory social norms

Goal 3 Gender-equitable, safe and inclusive communities and organisations

Goal 4 Equal and respectful relationships between women and men

Strategies and actions

Building on the VicHealth assessment of the most effective areas for prevention, *A Right to Respect* includes strategies and actions across five key settings:

- Education and Training**
- Local Government, Health and Community Services**
- Sports and Recreation**
- Workplaces**
- Media, Arts and Popular Culture.**

Implementation of the plan

A Right to Respect will improve, expand and embed work that currently exists to prevent violence against women. It will do this in three stages over a realistic, 10-year timeframe:

- Stage 1:** Build models of good practice, pilot new initiatives and develop toolkits and resources.
- Stage 2:** Facilitate the expansion of these models across settings and communities.
- Stage 3:** Incorporate prevention into policies, procedures and practice at different levels of government and across the settings.

Because actions in these settings will engage a range of government departments and agencies, an interdepartmental committee will guide the plan's implementation.

Immediate actions

A range of immediate actions have been identified in the Plan, to be undertaken in 2010, including:

- developing and implementing the Respectful Relationships Education in Schools initiative to help school students build the skills they need to create healthy, equitable relationships
- supporting sports women and men to act as ambassadors for the prevention of violence against women, such as through the White Ribbon program or in working with other players at the community and elite club level
- working with peak organisations and other bodies to develop and implement good practice models across a range of workplaces and sporting codes
- researching the role of information and communication technologies in the prevention of violence against women
- supporting the current development of Indigenous cultural competency guidelines for mainstream services
- providing support for the coordination of White Ribbon Day activities
- developing a comprehensive performance monitoring framework
- assisting women from diverse backgrounds to be involved in leadership roles.



The ultimate aim of this plan is to end the fear and violence that too many women live with today. We want every woman in Victoria to feel safe in her community, in her workplace, and in her home.

Maxine Morand
Minister for Women's Affairs