

Promoting Equal and Respectful  
Relationships in Faith Communities:  
a Manual and Tool Kit  
*working together to prevent  
violence against women  
before it occurs*



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The Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships Project a  
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Further copies of this manual can be obtained from Darebin  
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## Why do we need this manual and resource kit?

This manual and tool kit is designed to assist faith communities in taking a *primary prevention* approach to the issue of violence against women.

Violence against women is now recognised as one of the leading public health and human rights issue of our time. It is estimated that in Australia one in three women will experience some type of intimate partner abuse at some stage in their life. Putting an end to this violence requires action from all sectors of our society – including faith communities.

Until recently, the focus of our efforts to end violence against women was on assisting current victims of abuse, raising awareness about the prevalence of abuse, and providing better training and resources for those working directly with the people involved. But we need to do more. We need to find ways to *prevent the violence before it occurs*. This is known as *primary prevention*.

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## Who is this manual for?

This manual is designed specifically as a resource for those in leadership who want to encourage their faith community to become proactive in preventing violence against women.

Of course, different faith communities have different styles of leadership – some are more formal (ordained), others more informal – and the leadership that drives this change will vary from one faith community to another. What is important is that a responsible person champions the cause and utilises whatever influence they have to create an environment of positive change.

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## How to use this manual

This manual is divided into three parts: an introductory section, a program section and a tools section.

The introductory section gives a more detailed overview of the purpose and structure of the manual

The program section consists of 10 steps, each with suggested actions and connected tools. (These are explained more fully in the introductory section.)

Finally there are the tools themselves, which are arranged into: fact sheets, resource lists, survey and audit tools, and 'Taking action' tools. (These are also explained more fully in the introductory section.)

Please note: All attempts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the details contained in this manual and resource kit at the time of publication (February 2012). This manual has been designed for users in Melbourne, Australia, so the information contained is specific to this location.

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# Section 1

## Introductory Information

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# Introductory information

## Why do we need a manual on preventing violence against women?

Violence against women is now recognised as one of the leading human rights issues of our time, with global research indicating that it is prevalent in every community and every culture. It has an enormous impact on women and their children, eroding their mental, physical, emotional and financial wellbeing.

Until recently, our response to the epidemic of violence against women was to care for the women affected, campaign for justice in our legal systems, improve access to support, raise awareness, and encourage men to take responsibility for their actions.

These actions all address the symptoms and outcomes of violence against women, but don't address the deeper reasons why this violence exists.

While violence against women tends to happen in private, it is by no means a private issue. By seeing it as a public issue, we can isolate the larger social factors that contribute to it and then work towards changing them.

These factors (determinants) have been identified as:

- unequal power relations between men and women
- rigid gender stereotyping of women and men
- tolerance of violence in the popular culture.

If we can change these factors, we can begin to minimise, or even eliminate altogether, violence against women. This is not a quick fix. It will require a strong and lengthy commitment from all sections of the community – but it can be done.

## Why should preventing violence concern faith communities?

The strength of any faith community is dependent on the health and well being of its members. A healthy membership is one where everyone feels energised. They feel connected to each other and the vision and goals of the community.

Violence against women works powerfully against the concept of a healthy membership and undermines the strength of our faith communities. It limits the capacity of female members to effectively contribute to the life of the community and damages the social cohesion necessary to form a strong, unified team.

As our world progresses and new technologies open the world up and allow us greater access and insight to other cultures, we are all being constantly challenged to strive for greater equality between women and men. We must reinforce our commitment to the human rights principles which pave the way to peace and prosperity. Faith communities cannot ignore this challenge or be slow to 'skill up', or we will become more and more alienated from the lives of the very people we want to welcome into our communities.

A commitment to promoting equal and respectful relationships and preventing violence against women is a commitment to growing a stronger, healthier and more vital faith community – one that has a deep sense of integrity, and which people are excited to belong to.

## What are the benefits to the members of faith communities?

The spiritual search is a search to connect – to connect with the divine presence, to connect with a larger vision and purpose, and to connect with other people of faith. Connecting requires respect and safety, and when these are lacking, the spiritual dimensions of people's lives are affected. When we embrace the principles of preventing violence against women, all our members – women and men – will benefit, because these principles are the same ones that create a stronger environment for spiritual growth.

Of course, within every faith community there will be women, men and children already affected by violence, as well as those at potential risk for violence. When we speak up about these issues, and when we begin to promote equal and respectful relationships, we provide an opportunity for these members to address the issues that are causing so much pain in their lives.

All of us are on a journey toward greater wholeness. The inequality between women and men that contributes to violence against women is a significant impediment to this wholeness. When we bring this reconciliation to our lives, we all benefit – within our faith communities and within society as a whole.

## What are the most important ways for faith communities to be involved?

### Raising awareness and knowing how to respond to disclosures

Globally, faith communities have become more active in recognising and responding to domestic violence. Initiatives have been created to raise awareness of the prevalence of this violence, and to train clergy and pastors in how best to respond to disclosures of domestic violence.

In Melbourne, a recent example has been the *'Promoting Peace in Families Project'* which was a partnership between the City of Casey, the Casey Pastors Network, and the Cardinia Casey Community Health Service. Internationally, the FaithTrust Institute in America is a high-profile, multi-faith organisation with the specific goal of equipping faith communities with an awareness of violence against women within their communities, and ways to be more active in implementing policies and practices to eliminate this violence.

While recognising that this is an issue that affects all faith communities, it is also clear that responding to the challenge of violence against women is not a one-size-fits-all proposition. Developing approaches specific to particular faiths is an important part of the larger response that is needed. The Melbourne-based Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence has developed a range of resources and training that is specific to the Jewish context, including its culture and sacred texts. Likewise, the Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights works to provide appropriate resources on violence against women for the Muslim community.

### Ensuring the safety of women and their children

Within the faith sector it is very common for the formal leader to offer spiritual leadership, organisation leadership, and pastoral (caring) leadership. This focusing of different leadership tasks in the one person creates challenges for ensuring the safety of women and their children within faith communities, particularly in the case of domestic violence in which both victim and perpetrator may be members of the same community. Great skill is required on the part of the leader to be aware of the potential for using either the spiritual or organisational authority of their role to inhibit or conflict the pastoral authority of their role. **It will nearly always be more suitable for pastoral responses to domestic violence within a faith setting to be handled by a suitable trained person other than the formal leader, and even someone outside of the faith community in which the parties are normally members.** It is for this reason that the most important role that faith communities can play in preventing violence against women is to focus on primary prevention initiatives.

### Focusing on primary prevention

Nationally and internationally, there is a growing awareness that faith communities are a significant setting for primary prevention of violence against women. Faith communities still play a significant role in society and continue to be a source of information and teaching about value and ethics. Their focus on wellbeing and pastoral care creates a natural link to the goals of health promotion and primary prevention. At the same time, faith communities are also recognised as one of the many places where the move toward greater gender equity has been slow.

Internationally, California's Center for Domestic Peace is working on primary prevention with their Transforming Communities: Technical Assistance, Training and Resource Centre. In Melbourne, the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne has endorsed a strategic policy on preventing violence against women which has a specific primary prevention focus and this policy is currently being implemented.

Encouraging faith communities to promote equal and respectful relationships is a crucial part of the larger, community-wide goal of promoting equity as a means to eliminating violence against women. The Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships Project, based in the northern suburbs of Melbourne from 2007 – 2011, has been involved in this work by developing programs and resources, of which this manual and tool kit is one example.

# How to use this manual and tool kit

This user-friendly manual and resource kit has been specifically tailored for a range of faith communities. It's not a 'one size fits all' approach – it acknowledges the different views and resources of various communities and offers resources in keeping with those views.

It includes a 10-step program designed to guide faith communities through a process of deepening commitment to the primary prevention of violence against women. Within each of the 10 steps, there are three levels of response – educate, investigate, participate – and a set of suggested actions which are matched to a range of tools.

## Let's look at it in a little more depth:

### The program

The topics covered in the program have been identified as the most relevant for faith communities who want to commit to the promotion of equal and respectful relationships. The steps build on incremental knowledge: step one takes the approach that a faith community is completely new to this work, all the way up to step 10 which ends with the assumption that a faith community is now committed long-term to working to end violence against women.

Although the steps will make more sense if worked through sequentially, they can also be used individually. A full list of the program's 10 steps in the program can be found on page 7. Each step includes an introduction and overall aim.









### The levels within the program's steps

Within each of the 10 steps, there are three levels of response: educate, investigate and participate. Each level has its own suggested actions, and the levels are designed to be worked through sequentially.

- *Educate* actions inform your faith community about the content of each step.
- *Investigate* actions help them explore the issues at a deeper level.
- *Participate* actions are about getting on with the task!

## The tools

These are arranged into four sets:

Tool	Fact sheets	Resource lists	Survey and audit tools	'Taking action' tools
	Basic information on a variety of relevant topics.	Organisations, publications and websites where you can obtain further information.	Resources to help you explore what's happening within your own faith community.	Resources to help you start implementing your own activities for preventing violence against women.
<b>Icon</b> <i>Used on each tool within each resource set for easy identification</i>				
<b>Symbol</b> <i>Used on the Action and Resources tables in each Step</i>				

You'll find links between the resource tools and the program actions so it's easy to cross-reference!

## Different ways to use the manual and resource kit

This manual contains a dynamic variety of resources, so you can create your own method of working with it. Some of the options are:

Work through each step in its entirety, eg Step 1 Educate actions, then Step 1 Investigate actions, then Step 1 Participate actions, before moving on to Step 2.

Work across the same level across a number of steps, eg Step 1 Educate actions, then Step 2 Educate actions, then Step 3 Educate actions.

If one of the suggested actions in a step is something your faith community is already doing, use it as a springboard for further work at each level within that step.

Choose a resource tool, particularly from the 'Taking action' set, that you think might be easy to work with and use it as a starting point to doing further work within that step.

If your faith community has already begun to do some work in this area, you could review the steps and levels and choose areas where your existing actions need to be strengthened.

Try to get people from your faith community to undertake a number of actions from different steps at the same time. Choose ones that complement each other.

There is no right or wrong way to use this manual. The most important thing is that each faith community engages with this work at a level that acknowledges where they are starting from, the resources they have to apply to this work, and the outcomes they want to achieve.

Set your own pace. Your faith community may take a year to engage with one level of one step, or it may cover all 10 steps in that same amount of time. Regardless, what is important is that all faith communities make a start somewhere and then, having made a start, keep on going. The flexibility of this manual and resource kit makes this possible.

## A word about different faith traditions

This manual and resource kit has been developed as part of the work of the Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships (NIRR) Project. The NIRR Project, a partnership between VicHealth and Darebin City Council, has worked with Interfaith Networks in the northern regions of Melbourne to explore strategies for building the capacity of faith communities to promote respectful relationships.

A key finding of the NIRR Project was the limitations of doing this work in an interfaith context, where there can be significant differences in approaches to issues of gender, authority and theology. For various reasons, and despite efforts otherwise, those involved in the support and development of the NIRR Project and its resources tended to be from the Christian tradition, and it is likely that this focus has had an impact on those resources, including this manual and tool kit. Users of this kit are encouraged to be mindful of this, and to adapt material to be more suitable for their own faith tradition if this seems appropriate.

# Glossary of frequently used terms

## Prevention of Violence Against Women (PVAW)

**Violence against women** ‘any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring on public or private life’. (Taken from the United Nations’ *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women* 1993.)

**Intimate partner violence** Violence that occurs between two people who are in an intimate (sexual) relationship. This includes husband and wife, de facto relationships and same-sex relationships.

**Domestic/Family violence** Domestic violence and family violence are terms which point to the social setting of violence, i.e. within a domestic or family situation. While often used to refer to *intimate partner violence*, it can also include violence between other family members (eg between siblings, or between parent and child) or between non-related people living in a domestic situation.

## Gender and equity and gender equality

**Gender equity** Gender equity means fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits, power, resources and responsibilities between women and men. The concept recognizes that women and men have different needs, power and access to resources, and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies that imbalance between the sexes.

**Gender equality** Gender equality means the absence of discrimination on the basis of a person’s sex in opportunities, allocation of resources or benefits, and access to services. Gender equality is an outcome of applying gender equity.

## Health promotion

**Public health** Public health refers to the theory and practice of protecting and improving health at a population level. It can include such things as preventive medicine, health education, control of communicable diseases, application of sanitary measures and monitoring of environmental hazards.

**Determinants of health** Determinants of health (also known as *social determinants*) are those factors identified as determining the outcome of an aspect of health. Determinants can be physical situations (such as polluted water) or community attitudes (such as sexism towards women).

## The Prevention Continuum

**Primary prevention** Refers to policies and practices designed to prevent a poor health outcome *before it occurs*. Changing community attitudes about gender stereotyping is a *primary prevention* strategy to prevent violence against women.

**Secondary prevention** Refers to policies and practices designed to prevent health worsening *as it is occurring*. Provision of safe houses for women and children is a *secondary prevention* strategy to prevent violence against women.

**Tertiary prevention** Refers to policies and practices designed to prevent poor health outcomes from *recurring*. Counselling and other support services for women are *tertiary prevention* strategies to prevent violence against women.

## Sex and gender

**Sex** Sex refers to a person’s biological characteristics, which are usually described as either male or female. Some people may have biological characteristics which are not clearly male or female (usually referred to as intersex) and other people choose not to identify as either male or female.

**Gender** Gender refers to the non-biological characteristics and expectations that are assigned to the sexes by society and culture. The way each person interacts with these characteristics and expectations determines their gender identity and expression, which will not necessarily be the same as that person’s sex. Some individuals and cultures do not distinguish between sex and gender.

**Gender roles** The expectations constructed by societies and cultures about the patterns of behaviour, both private and public, which are appropriate to the male and female gender. Some individuals and cultures may also believe that these roles are intrinsic to the sexes.

## Faith

**Faith communities** Refers to any community or organisation of people who share the same religious faith. A faith community may be a single group of people (eg a parish) or multiple groups of people within a larger community (eg a diocese with a number of parishes).

**Faith leaders** People within a faith community who are in positions of authority and decision-making. These may include authorised (ordained) leaders such as clergy or imams, or non-authorised (lay) leaders.

# Section 2

## Program Steps

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- P08 ▶ **Step 1**  
Respectful relationships are healthy relationships  
*Promoting better well-being for women and men*
  - P09 ▶ **Step 2**  
Faith communities can make a difference  
*Why we should promote respectful relationships and say NO to violence*
  - P10 ▶ **Step 3**  
Prevention is better than cure  
*The role of primary prevention in ending violence against women*
  - P11 ▶ **Step 4**  
Equality and freedom create harmony  
*Why gender equity matters in preventing violence against women*
  - P12 ▶ **Step 5**  
Violence is never the answer  
*Challenging the role of violence in our lives and in our community*
  - P13 ▶ **Step 6**  
Inclusive communities are safe communities  
*Ensuring that all people are welcomed and valued*
  - P14 ▶ **Step 7**  
Encouraging relationships of respect  
*What we can do to promote healthy relationships*
  - P15 ▶ **Step 8**  
Men are part of the solution  
*Why men need to be involved in preventing violence against women*
  - P16 ▶ **Step 9**  
Being advocates in the community  
*Faith communities making a difference*
  - P17 ▶ **Step 10**  
How to make the changes stick  
*Ensuring our commitment is more than skin deep*

# Step 1

## Equal and Respectful relationships are healthy relationships

### *Promoting better well-being for women and men*

#### Aim

To introduce your faith community to the issue of violence against women, its significance as a public health issue, and the theme of equal and respectful relationships.

#### Introduction

All of us want to be as healthy as we can, and we want our loved ones to be healthy too. We know there are things we can do to improve our well-being, such as exercise, a good diet and a balanced lifestyle. We also know there are things that contribute to poor health, such as smoking and obesity. For women, a major contributor to poor health is the violence they experience from past or present intimate partners. Improving the health of women involves changing the factors that lead to this violence. Promoting equal and respectful relationships is one way we can all make a difference to the health of women and girls in our society, including the ones that are closest to us. Doing so will create healthier conditions for men as well.

Actions	Resources
<b>Educate</b> Provide information about violence against women, including impact on women and children, cost to the community, types of violence. <hr/> Introduce the theme of respectful relationships <hr/> Ensure leadership is informed on responding to disclosures	<b>ACT 1</b> Poster presentations
	<b>ACT 2</b> Fact Sheets/newsletters
	<b>ACT 3</b> Sermons/addresses
	<b>FAC 1</b> Information and stats on VAW
	<b>FAC 2</b> Responding to disclosures
	<b>FAC 9</b> Understanding the different types of abuse
<b>Investigate</b> What do your faith community members know about violence against women? <hr/> What services exist in your community to support women and prevent violence?	<b>SUR 1</b> Member survey – knowledge about VAW
	<b>SUR 6</b> Community survey
<b>Participate</b> Encourage leadership to be informed about these issues <hr/> Inform relevant community groups of your interest and commitment to respectful relationships	<b>ACT 20</b> Peer mentoring program for leaders
	<b>ACT 9</b> Developing Partnerships



Fact sheets



Resource lists



'Taking action' tools



Survey and audit tools

# Step 2

## Faith communities can make a difference

### *Why we should promote equal and respectful relationships and say NO to violence*

#### Aim

Becoming a faith community that is committed to the prevention of violence against women.

#### Introduction

Violence against women is a sad reality of cultures around the world. Changing the values and attitudes that contribute to this violence requires a holistic approach that involves governments, business, social and religious institutions and individuals. Faith communities are a vital part of this approach. They are an important source of guidance and discussion on interpersonal relationships, peace, respect, compassion, ethics and morality. Faith communities are often involved directly in caring for people affected by family violence. Prevention of violence *before* it occurs (also known as primary prevention) is an important aspect of this care that is often neglected. All faiths want violence against women to end, but faith communities have not always been places of gender equity. A health promotion approach is a helpful way for faith communities to examine their own values and start the journey of change to a healthier world for all people.

	Actions	Resources
<b>Educate</b>	Provide information on why the involvement of faith communities is important for encouraging equal and respectful relationships	<b>ACT 1</b> Poster presentations
		<b>ACT 2</b> Fact Sheets/newsletters
		<b>ACT 3</b> Sermons/addresses
		<b>FAC 3</b> What faith communities are already doing
<b>Investigate</b>	Does your faith community have a policy on respectful relationships and violence against women?	<b>FAC 3</b> What faith communities are already doing
	Does your faith tradition have a policy on respectful relationships and violence against women?	<b>RES 8</b> Faith-based PVAW organisations
	What do other faith traditions have to say about respectful relationships and violence against women?	
<b>Participate</b>	Sign up to relevant newsletters	<b>RES 12</b> PVAW organisations
	Develop a policy on dealing with family violence in your faith community	<b>RES 8</b> Faith-based PVAW organisations
	Appoint an accredited family violence support person	<b>ACT 4</b> Developing a FV policy
	Develop a declaration to say NO to violence in your faith community	<b>ACT 6</b> Training family violence support people
		<b>ACT 5</b> Developing a declaration

# Step 3

## Prevention is better than cure

### *The role of primary prevention in ending violence against women*

#### Aim

To practise primary prevention within your faith community as a means to preventing violence against women and promoting respectful relationships.

#### Introduction

We all know how hard it can be to change some aspect of our behaviour. Willpower alone is often not enough. We need to understand what drives our behaviour so we can change the conditions that cause these patterns to continue. We also need the support and encouragement of friends, colleagues and family. The same is true of the changes we want to see in our broader society. If we want there to be less violence against women and girls, we need to understand the factors that drive the violence (the determinants), and promote values and activities that can influence those drivers to change. This is called primary prevention. The opposite of violent relationships are respectful relationships, and preventing violence means promoting equal and respectful relationships.

	Actions	Resources
<b>Educate</b>	Provide information on what is meant by 'primary prevention'	<b>ACT 1</b> Poster presentations
	Provide information on the determinants of violence against women	<b>ACT 2</b> Fact Sheets/newsletters
		<b>ACT 3</b> Sermons/addresses
		<b>FAC 4</b> What is primary prevention
		<b>FAC 5</b> Understanding the determinants of violence against women
<b>Investigate</b>	What other sort of primary prevention activities are our members already involved in?	<b>FAC 4</b> What is primary prevention
	In what ways does primary prevention connect with the beliefs of our faith tradition?	<b>RES 8</b> Faith-based PVAW organisations
<b>Participate</b>	Develop a policy for your faith community on the prevention of violence against women	<b>ACT 7</b> Developing a PVAW Policy
	Encourage your members to do training on prevention of violence against women	<b>RES 1</b> PVAW training opportunities



Fact sheets



Resource lists



'Taking action' tools



Survey and audit tools

# Step 4

## Equality and freedom create harmony

### *Why gender equity matters in preventing violence against women*

#### Aim

To develop a commitment to gender equity and equality within your faith community in the prevention of violence against women.

#### Introduction

It is apparent from the news we hear every day that people across our world experience vastly different outcomes in their lives. Some of this is due to the environment they are born into and grow up in. Some is due to unavoidable accidents or disease. But much is due to imbalances of power and equality that favour some people at the expense of others. Globally, the inequity and inequality between women and men remains one of the most significant imbalances of power. Evidence shows that where there is greater inequity, there is greater likelihood of violence against women. Preventing violence means changing the way we structure relationships between women and men to create greater equity and equality.

	Actions	Resources
<b>Educate</b>	Provide information on what we mean by sex and gender	<b>ACT 1</b> Poster presentations
	Provide information on the experience and impact of gender roles and stereotypes	<b>ACT 2</b> Fact sheets/newsletters
	Provide information on the way power inequality operates within relationships	<b>ACT 3</b> Sermons/addresses
		<b>RES 2</b> Faith and gender resources
		<b>RES 3</b> Women's organisations and groups
		<b>ACT 8</b> 'Let's talk about gender'
	<b>Investigate</b>	What does our faith tradition teach about gender and inequity?
What have members of our faith community experienced on matters of gender and inequality?		<b>SUR 2</b> Member survey on faith and gender
In what ways does our faith community promote and/or discourage gender equity?		<b>SUR 4</b> Gender audit
<b>Participate</b>	Develop a policy for your faith community on equality	<b>RES 2</b> Faith and gender resources
	Develop a policy on gender language in worship	<b>RES 3</b> Women's organisations and groups
	Engage with local women's groups	<b>FAC 10</b> Guidelines for inclusive language
	Volunteer with local women's refuges/safe houses	<b>ACT 12</b> Encouraging women in leadership

# Step 5

## Violence is never the answer

### *Challenging the role of violence in our lives and in our community*

#### Aim

To promote your faith community as one that challenges the role of violence in unhealthy relationships.

#### Introduction

One of the sad realities of our world is the violence done by humans to each other. This violence takes many forms: physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, psychological, financial, spiritual and more. Unfortunately, evidence shows that women bear the greater brunt of this violence, mostly from current or former intimate partners. Not only do they experience greater incidences of violence, but this violence often has far more severe consequences, including death. Violence, and the threat of it, is most often used to exert power and control over others. Evidence shows that where violence remains unchallenged there is a greater likelihood of violence toward women. Preventing violence means challenging the place of violence and power in our lives, particularly in the lives of men.

	Actions	Resources
<b>Educate</b>	Provide information on the nature of family violence	<b>FAC 9</b> Understanding the different types of abuse
	Provide information on the way violence features in the lives of men	<b>ACT 1</b> Poster presentations
		<b>ACT 2</b> Fact sheets/newsletters
		<b>ACT 3</b> Sermons/addresses
		<b>RES 4</b> Faith and violence resources
		<b>ACT 10</b> Film night
<b>Investigate</b>	What does our faith tradition teach about violence?	<b>RES 4</b> Faith and violence resources
	What experience have members of our faith community had with violence?	<b>SUR 7</b> Member survey on faith and violence
	In what ways does our faith community promote and/or discourage violence?	
<b>Participate</b>	Develop a domestic violence policy for your faith community	<b>ACT 4</b> Developing a domestic violence policy
	Develop an anti-bullying policy	<b>ACT 11</b> Developing a violence/bullying policy
	Engage with Week Without Violence activities in your area	<b>FAC 7</b> Engaging with White Ribbon activities
	Engage with White Ribbon activities in your area	<b>FAC 8</b> Engaging with 'Week Without Violence' activities

**FAC 1** Fact sheets

**RES 1** Resource lists

**SUR 1** 'Taking action' tools

**ACT 1** Survey and audit tools

# Step 6

## Inclusive communities are safe communities

### *Ensuring that all people are welcomed and valued*

#### Aim

Develop a commitment to inclusivity, including women and girls, in your faith community.

#### Introduction

We all need a place to belong; a place where we are accepted for who we are, where our skills and talents are appreciated and where we feel safe. There are many different versions of these places – some of us find them in our families, some in our place of work, some with friends, and others in a faith community. Despite these places, there are still people in our society who have no safe place to belong – not even in their family. For such people, faith communities have often provided a place of belonging in a lonely world. When faith communities include and welcome all people they are also being a model in the community – of the power of belonging, and the importance of inclusivity.

	Actions	Resources
<b>Educate</b>	Provide information on the importance of inclusivity and what this looks like	<b>ACT 1</b> Poster presentations
	Provide information on the value of welcoming in the promotion of inclusivity	<b>ACT 2</b> Fact sheets/newsletters
	Provide information on developing safe and inclusive facilities	<b>ACT 3</b> Sermons/addresses
		<b>FAC 6</b> What inclusivity looks like
		<b>ACT 14</b> Making a visible commitment to inclusivity
<b>Investigate</b>	Are we a welcoming and inclusive community?	<b>FAC 6</b> What inclusivity looks like
	Are our facilities inclusive and safe for all?	<b>SUR 4</b> Gender audit
		<b>SUR 5</b> Facilities audit
		<b>ACT 14</b> Making a visible commitment to inclusivity
<b>Participate</b>	Develop programs for mentoring women and girls	<b>FAC 10</b> Guidelines for inclusive worship
	Develop a policy for your faith community on welcoming	<b>RES 3</b> Women's organisations
	Encourage women in, or interested in, leadership positions	<b>ACT 13</b> Mentoring women and girls
	Engage with local women's groups and services	<b>ACT 15</b> Appointing a welcoming officer

# Step 7

## Encouraging relationships of respect

### *What we can do to promote healthy relationships*

#### Aim

To be a faith community that promotes healthy relationship skills as part of the promotion of equal and respectful relationships.

#### Introduction

Most of us spend many years at school learning a range of skills that will equip us to navigate our way through life. But there are some skills that we don't necessarily learn at school, particularly those referred to as 'emotional intelligence'. We may pick up these skills as we observe family members, teachers, or other types of mentors. But in other instances, what we see happening may be less helpful. We know what an unhealthy relationship looks like, but aren't quite as clear about how to describe a healthy one! Focusing attention on the skills, behaviours and attitudes that are essential to healthy relating is an important way that faith communities can promote equal and respectful relationships.

Actions	Resources
<b>Educate</b> Provide information on relationship skills Provide information on relationships support services	<b>ACT 1</b> Poster presentation
	<b>ACT 2</b> Fact sheets/newsletters
	<b>ACT 3</b> Sermons/addresses
	<b>FAC 12</b> Healthy relationships
	<b>RES 5</b> Relationship support organisations
	<b>RES 9</b> Faith and relationships resources
<b>Investigate</b> What does our faith tradition teach about healthy relationships? What do other faith traditions teach about healthy relationships? What local services exist to support relationships?	<b>FAC 12</b> Healthy relationships
	<b>RES 9</b> Faith and relationships resources
	<b>SUR 8</b> Member survey on healthy relationships
<b>Participate</b> Develop a code of conduct for your faith community Encourage community members to care for their relationships Include relationship skills and understanding of PVAW in marriage preparation	<b>ACT 16</b> Developing a code of conduct
	<b>RES 5</b> Relationship support organisations
	<b>ACT 17</b> Respectful relationship training
	<b>RES 6</b> Respectful relationships material for youth

**FAC 1** Fact sheets

**RES 1** Resource lists

**SUR 1** 'Taking action' tools

**ACT 1** Survey and audit tools

# Step 8

## Men are part of the solution

### *Why men need to be involved in preventing violence against women*

#### Aim

To engage the men in your faith community in the prevention of violence against women.

#### Introduction

Although we sometimes forget it, none of us are self-sufficient. We are all part of a range of networks and relationships in which our varying needs are met, and in which we play our part in supporting others. Just because men perpetrate most of the violence that women experience does not mean that most men are violent, or that men should not be part of the work of ending this violence. Indeed, it is hard to see how we will ever prevent violence against women unless men take responsibility for themselves and the men around them. Encouraging men to reflect deeply on what it means to be men and, where necessary, to making significant changes to long-held attitudes and patterns of behaviour, is a vital way that faith communities can be involved in preventing violence against women.

	Actions	Resources
<b>Educate</b>	Provide information on the role of men in the prevention of violence against women	<b>ACT 1</b> Poster presentation
	Provide information on different approaches to masculinity	<b>ACT 2</b> Fact sheet/newsletters
		<b>ACT 3</b> Sermons/addresses
		<b>RES 7</b> Men's organisations
		<b>RES 2</b> Faith and gender resources
		<b>FAC 7</b> Understanding White Ribbon
<b>Investigate</b>	What role do the men in our faith community want to play in preventing violence against women?	<b>SUR 3</b> Member survey – men and respectful relationships
	What does our faith tradition say about the role of men?	<b>SUR 7</b> Member survey – faith and violence
		<b>RES 2</b> Faith and gender resources
<b>Participate</b>	Encourage men to be involved in the White Ribbon Campaign	<b>FAC 7</b> Understanding White Ribbon
	Form a men's discussion group	<b>RES 7</b> Men's organisations
	Engage in partnerships with local men's organisations	<b>ACT 8</b> Let's talk about gender
		<b>ACT 10</b> Film night
		<b>ACT 9</b> Developing partnerships

# Step 9

## Being advocates in the community

### *Faith communities making a difference*

#### Aim

To be a faith community that is active in the community to prevent violence against women.

#### Introduction

It is often said that our western society is rejecting religion and that faith communities are losing their social significance. Yet surveys suggest that most people continue to search for a spiritual essence in their lives, a deeper sense of well-being, and a sense of meaning and belonging. Faith communities have a deep reservoir of wisdom about this spirituality, but can sometimes struggle to share it with a broader audience in a way that speaks to them. Being advocates in the community for respectful relationships is a significant way that faith communities can share the wisdom of spirituality in a relevant and inspiring way.

Actions		Resources	
<b>Educate</b>	Provide information on what is already happening in the community	<b>ACT 1</b>	Poster presentation
	Provide examples on faith-based advocacy programs	<b>ACT 2</b>	Fact sheets/newsletters
		<b>ACT 3</b>	Sermons/addresses
		<b>RES 8</b>	Faith-based VAW & PVAW organisations
		<b>RES 10</b>	Legislation and policy
		<b>RES 12</b>	VAW & PVAW organisations
<b>Investigate</b>	What opportunities exist to form local partnerships in preventing violence against women?	<b>SUR 6</b>	Community audit
<b>Participate</b>	Engage with neighbouring faith communities to develop advocacy programs	<b>RES 11</b>	Interfaith organisations
	Develop a program to raise awareness of violence against women in your community	<b>ACT 9</b>	Developing partnerships



Fact sheets



Resource lists



'Taking action' tools



Survey and audit tools

# Step 10

## How to make the changes stick

### *Ensuring our commitment is more than skin deep*

#### Aim

To make promoting equal and respectful relationships an intrinsic part of all that happens in your faith community.

#### Introduction

How often have we heard the phrase, ‘All talk and no action’?! Let’s face it, some of us find it easier than others to take the initiative to instigate new activities, and some activities are easier than others to put into place. When those new initiatives are about complex and significant change, it can be particularly difficult to know how to translate good ideas into great actions. But it can be done! Take the time to develop a strategy that sets out, step-by-step, what needs to be done. Have a clear action plan, listing what you want to achieve, how you are going to achieve it, the resources you will need, and who else will be involved. Violence against women is not going to change overnight, but if each of us is committed to a prevention-focused strategy – no matter how small – together we *can* make a difference.

	Actions	Resources
<b>Educate</b>	Provide examples of policies and action plans	<b>ACT 1</b> Poster presentation
	Provide information on the evidence-based work being done locally and globally	<b>ACT 2</b> Fact sheets/newsletters
		<b>ACT 3</b> Sermons/addresses
		<b>ACT 7</b> Developing a PVAW Policy
		<b>FAC 3</b> What faith communities are already doing
<b>Investigate</b>	What policies do we need to ensure that primary prevention is embedded in all we do?	<b>RES 4</b> Developing a domestic violence policy
		<b>ACT 7</b> Developing a PVAW Policy
		<b>ACT 11</b> Developing a policy on bullying
		<b>ACT 16</b> Developing a code of conduct
		<b>ACT 19</b> Developing policy around contributing factors
<b>Participate</b>	Develop an action plan for long-term primary prevention	<b>FAC 11</b> Embedding PVAW liturgically
	Ensure that personnel involved are adequately trained	<b>ACT 18</b> Developing an action plan
		<b>RES 1</b> Primary prevention and PVAW training options



# Section 3

## The Tools

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**These are arranged into four sets:**

- P21** ▶ **Fact sheets**  
Basic information on a variety of relevant topics.
- P37** ▶ **Resource lists**  
Organisations, publications and websites where you can obtain further information.
- P53** ▶ **Survey and audit tools**  
Resources to help you explore what's happening within your own faith community.
- P65** ▶ **'Taking action' tools**  
Resources to help you start implementing your own activities for preventing violence against women.



# Fact Sheets

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- P22 ▶ **Fact sheet 1:** Information and statistics on violence against women
- P23 ▶ **Fact sheet 2:** How to respond to disclosures
- P24 ▶ **Fact sheet 3:** What faith communities are already doing
- P26 ▶ **Fact sheet 4:** What is primary prevention
- P28 ▶ **Fact sheet 5:** The determinants of violence against women
- P29 ▶ **Fact sheet 6:** What inclusivity looks like
- P30 ▶ **Fact sheet 7:** Understanding White Ribbon
- P31 ▶ **Fact sheet 8:** Understanding Week Without Violence and 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence
- P32 ▶ **Fact sheet 9:** Understanding police and courts
- P33 ▶ **Fact sheet 10:** Guidelines for inclusive worship
- P34 ▶ **Fact sheet 11:** Liturgical calendar tool
- P35 ▶ **Fact sheet 12:** Healthy relationships



# Fact sheet 1

## *Information and statistics on violence against women*

### Purpose

To provide basic information on the prevalence, nature and impact of violence against women

### Linked to

Step 1/Educate

*The information below comes from 'Responsible Reporting Guidelines for Journalists' and is available at [www.evas.org.au](http://www.evas.org.au) (Eliminating Violence Against Women Media Awards)*

- Intimate partner violence is responsible for more ill-health and premature death in Victorian women under 45 than any other well-known risk factor, including high blood pressure, obesity and smoking. 59% of the health impact experienced by women is anxiety and depression.
- At an individual level, the most consistent predictor of the use of violence among men is their agreement with sexist, patriarchal, and/or sexually hostile attitudes.
- More than one in three Australian women (34%) who have had an intimate partner has experienced violence from a partner or ex-partner.
- Of all physical assaults against women, 74.9% occurred in the home by a man they knew. 31% of women who experienced physical violence in the last 12 months were assaulted by a current and/or ex-partner, compared to 4.4% of men.
- A woman is killed in Australia almost every week by a partner or ex-partner.
- Women and girls constitute the majority of reported victims of family and sexual violence to Victoria Police. 77% of reported family violence victims and 89% of reported rape victims are women and girls.
- Nationally, only 19% of women who experienced sexual assault by a male perpetrator and 36% of women who experienced physical assault by a male perpetrator reported to police.
- An estimated one in four children has witnessed domestic violence.
- Violence against women and their children cost the Australian economy \$13.6 billion in 2009; \$3.4 billion for Victoria.
- One in five people do not believe that 'controlling a partner by denying them money' is a form of domestic violence.
- 34 % of the general community mistakenly believe that rape occurs because of men 'not being able to control their need for sex'.
- In Victoria during 2009-2010 there were 35,720 incidents where Victoria Police submitted family incidents reports.
- More than half all intimate partner homicides have a recorded history of prior police involvement.
- Of the 4,378 sexual assaults reported to Victoria Police in 2008-2009, 62% were for children, and most of these were perpetrated against girls.
- For every woman whose experience of violence can be prevented, \$20,766 can be saved.
- More than half of people believe that a woman could leave a violent relationship if she really wanted to.

Further statistics are generally available from the organisations listed in resource list 12



# Fact sheet 2

## *How to respond to disclosures of domestic violence*

### Purpose

To provide basic guidance for faith leaders on best practice in responding to disclosures of domestic violence

### Linked to

Step 1/Educate

### Responding to women's disclosures of violence

- Find a safe place to talk.
- Have someone else present (excluding the perpetrator of the violence) – if this is acceptable to the victim.
- Allow time for the person to talk.
- Listen to what she has to say – and take it seriously.
- Believe her. Her description of the abuse is probably only the tip of the iceberg.
- Give priority to her immediate safety.
- Empower her to make her own decisions.
- Support and respect her choices. Even if she initially chooses to return to the abuser, it is her choice. She has the most information about how to survive. However, if there are children involved their safety must come first.
- Give her information about relevant support agencies and, if appropriate, offer to contact the agency on her behalf. Do so in her presence or offer a safe and private place from which she can contact the relevant agency.
- Do not offer counselling – refer her to those who are properly trained in this area.
- Reassure her that this is not her fault, she doesn't deserve this treatment and it is not God's will for her.
- Let her know that what the abuser has done is wrong and completely unacceptable.
- Protect her confidentiality.

An excellent resource for faith leaders on how to respond to family violence is 'Will my Rabbi believe me? Will he understand?', published and available from the Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence.

### Important contact numbers

#### **Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service**

1800 015 188

#### **Men's Referral Service**

1800 065 973

#### **Sexual Assault Crisis Line**

1800 806 292

#### **Kids Helpline**

1800 55 1800

**Numerous services exist in the community to provide the appropriate professional care for women who have experienced violence. Advising your members to make use of these services is the best way that faith communities can ensure the safety of women experiencing violence. It is not expected, nor appropriate, that this level of professional counselling be provided within the faith community.**



# Fact sheet 3

## *What faith communities are already doing*

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### Purpose

To provide examples of existing and promising work being done by faith communities in the prevention of violence against women

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### Linked to

Step 2/Educate, Step 2/Investigate

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#### Anglican Diocese of Melbourne Strategic Policy for the Prevention of Violence Against Women

In 2011, the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne endorsed a Strategic Policy on the Prevention of Violence Against Women. This policy is being implemented in 2012 and seeks to involve all parishes and agencies of the diocese in developing a primary prevention approach to violence against women. The policy, and a related discussion paper, can both be downloaded from this website: [www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/ServingCommunity/src/Pages/Prevention-of-Violence-Against-Women.aspx](http://www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/ServingCommunity/src/Pages/Prevention-of-Violence-Against-Women.aspx)

#### Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights

[www.ausmuslimwomenscentre.org.au](http://www.ausmuslimwomenscentre.org.au)

Based in Melbourne, AMWCHR works to advance the rights and status of Muslim women in Australia. They have published a number of excellent resources on Islam and violence against women, and also run training programs for service providers working with Muslim women.

#### Faith Trust Institute

[www.faithtrustinstitute.org](http://www.faithtrustinstitute.org)

FaithTrust Institute is a national [US], multi-faith, multicultural training and education organisation with global reach, working to end sexual and domestic violence. It offers a wide range of services and resources, including training, consulting and educational materials, providing communities and advocates with the tools and knowledge they need to address the religious and cultural issues related to abuse.

#### Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence

[www.jewishtaskforce.com.au](http://www.jewishtaskforce.com.au)

JTAFV has been active in the Melbourne community for the past 16 years, organising and facilitating education and awareness programs delivered by local and international experts in the fields of family violence and sexual assault. It provides training for Rabbis and a telephone support service.

#### One Man Can

[www.genderjustice.org.za/onemancan](http://www.genderjustice.org.za/onemancan)

South Africa's One Man Can campaign supports the efforts of men and boys to end domestic and sexual violence and encourages them to nurture healthy, equitable relationships with women. It has actively worked with faith communities and their leaders in promoting respectful relationships.

#### Promoting Peace in Families Project

[www.caseyconnect.net.au/promotingpeace](http://www.caseyconnect.net.au/promotingpeace)

This project (which has now concluded) was a family violence prevention initiative, devised as a partnership between the City of Casey, the Casey Pastors Network and the Cardinia Casey Community Health Service. Information from the project can be found at the above website.

#### Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationship Project (NIRR)

[www.darebin.vic.gov.au](http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au)

Based in the northern suburbs of Melbourne, the NIRR project (now concluded) worked with faith leaders and their communities to raise awareness of prevention of violence against women, and to develop programs and resources to assist in this process. These resources are available on the NIRR page at the Darebin City Council website listed above.

### **Religions for Peace**

[www.religionsforpeace.org/initiatives/women](http://www.religionsforpeace.org/initiatives/women)

The Women's Mobilization Program of Religions for Peace has been internationally active in the area of prevention of violence against women and has produced a number of useful resources, including toolkits and manuals.

### **Transforming Communities: Technical Assistance, Training and Resource Centre**

[www.transformingcommunities.org](http://www.transformingcommunities.org)

TC-TAT is a national (U.S.) technical assistance, training and resource centre that advances the fight against violence against women and related forms of abuse, including domestic violence, sexual assault, teen dating violence and gender-based bullying. Although not a faith-based organisation, it has worked extensively with faith communities and has produced some excellent resources.

### **We Will Speak Out**

[www.wewillspeakout.org](http://www.wewillspeakout.org)

We Will Speak Out is a recent international coalition of like-minded church groups, international aid agencies and an alliance of Christians who are committed to working to end sexual violence in communities around the world.



# Fact sheet 4

## *What is primary prevention?*

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### Purpose

To explain the difference between primary, secondary and tertiary prevention.

### Linked to

Step 3/Educate, Step 3/Investigate

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### What is primary prevention?

Activities to prevent and respond to violence against women are most commonly described by a three-part classification, arranged according to when they come into play in relation to the cycle of violence:

#### Before the problem starts

##### Primary prevention

Primary prevention refers to activities that are put into place in order to prevent sexual violence before it has occurred.

#### Once the problem has begun

##### Secondary prevention

Secondary prevention refers to immediate responses after violence has occurred. These responses deal with the short-term consequences of violence. They respond to those at risk and aim to prevent the problem from occurring or progressing.

#### Responding afterwards

##### Tertiary prevention

Tertiary prevention refers to long-term responses required to deal with the lasting consequences of violence. They aim to minimise its impact and prevent further perpetration and victimisation.

### Primary prevention

Primary prevention strategies are implemented before the problem occurs. In relation to violence by boys and men against girls and women, primary prevention strategies aim to lessen the likelihood of boys and men using violence or girls and women suffering violence in the first place. They are successful when the first instance of sexual violence is prevented.

Primary prevention strategies seek to remove the causes or 'determinants' of sexual violence, to prevent the development of risk factors associated with violence, and/or to enhance the factors protective against violence.

For example, prevention efforts may address rape-supportive attitudes and norms through public information and awareness campaigns in mass media or in particular contexts such as sports and workplaces, education programs, or 'edutainment'. They may address gender inequalities and patriarchal power relations through policies promoting gender equality, skills training in respectful relationships, or community development and the mobilisation of women's and men's networks for change.

**Primary prevention is the most appropriate way that faith communities can be involved in preventing violence against women.**

## Secondary prevention

Secondary prevention focuses on early identification and intervention, targeting those individuals at high risk for either perpetration or victimisation and working to reduce the likelihood of their further or subsequent engagement in or subjection to violence. Secondary prevention aims 'to identify the problem before it becomes evident and to intervene as soon as possible to prevent the problem from occurring or progressing'. It is intended to reverse progress towards sexual violence and to reduce its impact. For example, activities may focus on reducing opportunities for sexual violence by supporting the men who are at risk of perpetrating violence. Secondary prevention efforts are successful 'when victims stop being victimized (eg by leaving violent relationships) or perpetrators stop being violent'.

## Tertiary prevention

Tertiary prevention is centred on responding to the aftermath of sexual violence. Activities focus on responding to or treating the problem by minimising the impact of violence, restoring health and safety, and preventing further victimisation and perpetration.

Mostly, these activities include: crisis care, counselling and advocacy; referral for victims and survivors of sexual violence; efforts to prevent additional abuse; and criminal justice and counselling responses to perpetrators of violence aimed at punishment, rehabilitation, and the prevention of further violent behaviour.

Tertiary responses also contribute indirectly to prevention. For example, when community members perceive that the criminal justice system intervenes in and punishes domestic violence, they are also more likely to have supportive attitudes towards victims and towards legal responses to violence.

**Adapted from material available from the White Ribbon Foundation.**



# Fact sheet 5

## *The determinants of violence against women*

### Purpose

To provide information on the key determinants of violence against women

### Linked to

Step 3/Educate

Research in Australia and around the world indicates that there are three particular contributing factors that determine the extent of violence against women. These are:

#### Unequal power relations between men and women

This refers to the way that power (influence and control) does not operate equally between men and women. In particular, there has been a tendency for men to assume the greater power over relationship elements such as decision making, finances and sexual intimacy among other things.

#### Having rigid views about gender

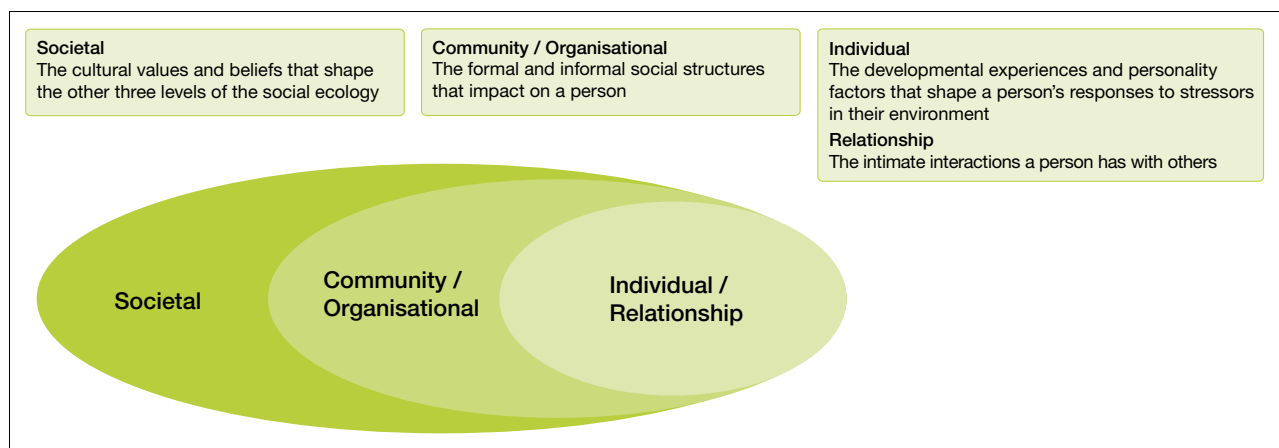
This refers to our beliefs and expectations of what is appropriate behaviour for males and females. This can include attitudes to occupations, domestic roles, leisure activities, even the way one is expected to dress. For example, we might think it's appropriate for a woman to be a hairdresser, but not a bricklayer. Rigid gender stereotyping is connected to the tendency to understand gender in biological terms rather social terms. (See the glossary on page 6 for more information.)

#### Broader cultures of violence

This refers to the way that violence, particularly male violence, is accepted, or even encouraged, in our society. This acceptance is evident in its treatment in the media, its treatment in law, and the way it's perceived to be a 'natural' feature of masculinity.

Each of these determinants operates within a complex dynamic of social interactions. You can see unequal power relations between men and women within actual intimate relationships, as well as within formal organisations and in the broader society. Our beliefs and actions around inequality in our personal relationships may be supported and justified by the beliefs held by organisations we are part of, which in turn are reinforced by the larger social norms as they are expressed in such things as legislation. This interplay of forces is referred to as the 'ecological approach to understanding health promotion'. See the diagram below.

**An important resource on this topic is 'Preventing violence before it occurs: a framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria', published by VicHealth in 2007.**





# Fact sheet 6

## *What inclusivity looks like*

### Purpose

To explain what is meant by the term 'inclusivity'

### Linked to

Step 6/Educate and Step 6/Investigate

#### **Inclusivity is not tolerance. It is not a passive acceptance of difference.**

Inclusivity is an active process of ensuring that all people are included in the life of your faith community, and that nobody is excluded.

Inclusivity is an acknowledgment of the diversity that is at the heart of human existence and experience. This diversity includes people of differing gender, age, racial, cultural and religious background, sexual identity, language, physical and mental ability.

Inclusivity can include attending to any of the following sorts of issues:

- Ensuring the active involvement of women in your community
  - Making sure there is appropriate access and facilities for people with disabilities.
  - Providing materials in formats that are appropriate for people with disabilities.
  - Providing materials in languages other than English, or whatever is the first language of your community.
  - Ensuring that the diversity of your community is represented in leaderships roles.
  - Investigating whether there are any practices that make some people in your community feel excluded. For instance, social events that don't cater for families with children might be making families in your community feel excluded.
  - Using visual images in your published material that adequately represent the diversity of your community.
- Providing an appropriate welcoming process for new members. This would include resources to help them understand your community's norms and rules.
  - Developing and publicising a grievance process by which members can raise concerns about non-inclusive practices.
  - Ensuring that all people within your community have opportunities to express their opinions and beliefs.
  - Ensuring that opinions and beliefs are not expressed in ways that will be offensive to other members.
  - Maintaining a safe environment by attending to such things as external lighting, electrical equipment, locks on toilet doors etc.



# Fact sheet 7

## *Understanding White Ribbon*

### Purpose

To explain the history and purpose of the White Ribbon Campaign

### Linked to

Step 5/Participate, Step 8/Participate

### What is the White Ribbon Campaign?

In Australia, one in three women will be assaulted or abused in her lifetime. These women are our mothers, our girlfriends, our wives, our daughters, our colleagues and our friends. How have we allowed this to occur? Not only is it unacceptable for this violence to take place, it is unacceptable that we allow certain behaviours and attitudes to go unchallenged.

Some of us experience violence firsthand. Others hear stories of violence against women. Others observe it or look on from afar. The worst part? We remain silent. If we are to move our society forward and prevent violence against women from occurring, we must speak out. We must take action to challenge attitudes and behaviours. We must not remain silent.

The White Ribbon Campaign is a national violence prevention campaign, and it is unique in that it aims to raise awareness among Australian men and boys about the roles they can play to prevent violence against women. The campaign calls for men across Australia to speak out and take an oath. An oath swearing never to commit, excuse or remain silent about violence against women. The campaign culminates on White Ribbon Day (25 November) each year, when men and women across Australia are called to wear a white ribbon or wristband as a visual symbol of their commitment and oath. In swearing and wearing a white ribbon, men and boys can act as positive role models and advocates for change by challenging behaviours and attitudes that have allowed violence against women to occur.

The White Ribbon Campaign in Australia is led by more than 1000 White Ribbon Ambassadors. Ambassadors are men who are leaders in their careers, sporting code or communities and who actively support the White Ribbon Campaign, and encourage other men and boys to become aware of, and engaged in, the campaign. Women also support and expand the campaign through their networks, workplaces and community organisations, as White Ribbon Champions.

### Why the White Ribbon?

In 1999, the United Nations General Assembly declared November 25 the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (IDEVAW) and the White Ribbon has become the symbol for the day. Wearing a white ribbon or wristband on or around White Ribbon Day lets others know that you are against violence against women. Selling ribbons or wristbands shows that your school, workplace or community is committed to ending violence against women. Selling ribbons and wristbands is also an easy way to add a fundraising element to your corporate or community events.

Everyone can show their commitment to ending violence against women by wearing a white ribbon. Proceeds from purchasing a White Ribbon go towards changing community attitudes through high-impact awareness campaigns.

### The history of the White Ribbon Campaign

White Ribbon Day was created by a group of Canadian men in 1991 on the second anniversary of one man's massacre of fourteen women in Montreal. They began the White Ribbon Campaign to urge men to speak out against violence against women. By 1999, the United Nations General Assembly declared November 25 the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (IDEVAW). In 2003, the Australian branch of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, now called UN Women) began a partnership with men and men's organisations to make this a national campaign. Today hundreds of thousands of white ribbons are worn by men and women across Australia.

*Taken from the White Ribbon Australia website*

### White Ribbon Australia

02 9045 8444

[www.whiteribbon.org.au](http://www.whiteribbon.org.au)



# Fact sheet 8

## *Understanding Week Without Violence and 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence*

### Purpose

To explain the history and purpose of the Week Without Violence

### Linked to

Step 5/Participate

#### What is Week Without Violence?

Week Without Violence was started by the YWCA in the 1990s and has since spread to over 100 countries around the world, where it's celebrated in the third week of October each year. It is a social marketing campaign that raises awareness of violence against women by calling for a week without such violence. Around the world, different activities are held to promote the week, with an emphasis on women's experience of violence, the impact that it has on their lives, and the impact on children and families. The week is also an opportunity to celebrate the resilience of women who survive domestic violence, and to promote organisations that seek to support women and their health. These organisations include women's health networks, domestic violence networks, sexual assault support centres, women's refuges, and women's support networks.

For more information on how to get involved in the Week Without Violence, contact your local Domestic Violence Network or council. You can also find related events listings online.

#### Why the Clothesline Project?

A popular activity that has developed as part of Week Without Violence, especially in the north of Melbourne, has been the Clothesline Project. This project aims to raise awareness of domestic violence by equating it with the laundry that we hang on our clotheslines – our private lives on display. The project encourages women to paint white t-shirts with messages that arise in some way from their experience of domestic violence, either personally or in the lives of other women. The t-shirts are then put on display in public locations such as shopping centres, libraries, local government offices and shops.

#### The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence

The **16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence** is an international campaign originating from the first Women's Global Leadership Institute sponsored by the Center for Women's Global Leadership in 1991.

Participants chose the dates, November 25, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and December 10, International Human Rights Day, in order to symbolically link violence against women and human rights and to emphasize that such violence is a violation of human rights.

The 16 Days Campaign has been used as an organizing strategy by individuals and groups around the world to call for the elimination of all forms of violence against women by:

- raising awareness about gender-based violence as a human rights issue at the local, national, regional and international levels
- strengthening local work around violence against women
- establishing a clear link between local and international work to end violence against women
- providing a forum in which organizers can develop and share new and effective strategies
- demonstrating the solidarity of women around the world organizing against violence against women
- creating tools to pressure governments to implement promises made to eliminate violence against women

The period also includes:

- 1st December - World AIDS Day
- 3rd December - International Day of the Disabled
- 6th December - Montreal Massacre Anniversary

**6th December** commemorates the deaths of 14 young female engineering students who were shot dead at Montreal University in Canada in 1989. The gunman opened fire in two classrooms and the cafeteria after ordering 48 men in the room to leave. Before opening fire, the gunman shouted "You're all a bunch of feminists, and I hate feminists!"

**10th December** celebrates the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed in 1948. Article 2 of the Declaration proclaims "everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration without distinction of any kind such as race, colour, sex....."

This action played a vital role at the 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights in recognising violence against women as a human rights violation.



# Fact sheet 9

## *Understanding the different types of abuse*

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### Purpose

To emphasize that domestic violence is not just about physical and sexual abuse.

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### Linked to

Step 1/Educate, Step 5/Educate

#### Types of domestic violence

#### Physical

Hitting; punching; dragging by hair; choking; burning; slapping; pinching; stabbing; pushing/shoving; restraining; tying up; gagging; physical intimidation; standing over/intruding personal space; threatened with gun/other weapons; damage to possessions/property; dragged out of bed in the middle of night to perform tasks, eg housework; denying medication or over-medicating; putting something out of reach of a person with disability.

#### Social

Being prevented from studying or advancing self/skills; denigration/putdowns in social situations; public humiliation; isolation by behaving obnoxiously in front of friends and family, thus driving them away; interfering with car to control movements; being prevented from having contact with friends and family; home imprisonment; being denied access to phone use (locked service) or having phone calls monitored (eg STD calls on bill); threats to 'out' a gay woman; preventing a woman from attending medical appointments on her own.

#### Sexual

Coerced sexual activities, eg forced to perform humiliating acts; forced to have sex with/in front of others; rape with objects; forced to wear degrading clothes; forced to be constantly sexually available regardless of mood or health; being raped while asleep; mutilation of genitals/breasts; sexual harassment; forced sterilisation, abortion or pregnancy.

#### Financial

Controlling all finances and denying access to money; coercion to sign contracts without being an equal partner or fully informed; gambling all money and assets, leaving family destitute; overzealous scrutiny of expenditures; dragging out family court proceedings in order to force all funds to be spent in legal costs; forced to hand over own wage; incurring debts then disappearing to leave the debts to be paid by the partner left behind.

#### Spiritual

Undermining spiritual beliefs/practices; use of spiritual/religious rituals to abuse; denial of access to religious practices/networks; use of brainwashing and control within some cults; forced participation in a religion; forced ritual participation.

#### Emotional

Yelling abuse; name calling; mind games; undermining parenting skills; criticising beliefs; criticising abilities; put downs; emotional withdrawal at times of need; silent treatment; threats to kill/harm/suicide; harming/killing pets; use of anger to control; excessive controlling jealousy; preventing from studying; destroying books, notes, essays; stalking/harassing.

*Based on material taken from, "Responding to Family Violence and Abuse: an Independent Living Approach", Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres*



# Fact sheet 10

## *Guidelines for inclusive language*

### Purpose

To provide information on how our language can be used to foster inclusivity

### Linked to

Step 4/Participate, Step 6/Participate

#### Why use inclusive language?

All human beings, regardless of gender, race, age or attitude, are made in God's image, loved by God, and offered God's salvation. In our faith communities, we recognize that God breaks down barriers among people and between people and God. We are called to witness to this reality and take action ourselves to break down barriers.

Inclusiveness in our life together means that no one is left out or excluded from the chance to participate in leadership, decision-making or other aspects of our faith life. Inclusiveness in our language means that we will expand our images of God in order to break down barriers between God and God's people. The language in faith communities, and the imagery it reveals, needs to proclaim the message of God's love for every human being.

#### Tips on how to use inclusive language

##### Use language and illustrations that offer parity.

Examples: 'men and women' instead of 'men and ladies (or gals or girls)'; 'husband and wife' instead of 'man and wife';

##### Avoid male-only terms, pronouns and images.

Examples: 'people' instead of 'men'; 'humankind' instead of 'mankind'; 'sons and daughters (or children)' instead of 'sons'; 'chairperson (or chair)' instead of 'chairman'; 'when I became an adult' instead of 'when I became a man.'

##### Use images that are not pejorative for persons of colour.

Examples: 'washed clean' instead of 'washed white'; 'lies' instead of 'white lies'; 'discriminated against/excluded' instead of 'blacklisted'; 'the presence of evil' instead of 'the darkness of evil.'

##### Use images that are not pejorative for people with disabilities or that make assumptions about them.

Examples: 'person in a wheelchair' instead of 'person confined to a wheelchair'; 'person with a disability' instead of 'crippled'; 'persons with leprosy' instead of 'lepers'; 'All who are able may stand' instead of 'All stand.'

#### Use male and female or gender-neutral language for God.

Examples: 'God in God's wisdom' instead of 'God in his wisdom'; 'Creator God' instead of 'Father God'; 'Our Creator' or 'Our Father and Mother' instead of 'Our Father.'

#### Avoiding stereotypes.

Examples: blacks as being poor or always the people in need; women as being weak or auxiliary to the work of the church; old people as being infirm, doddering, or not useful; young people as being rash or important only as the future of the church.

#### Avoiding defining women only in relation to men.

Examples: 'two couples' instead of 'two men and their wives'; 'immigrants and their children' instead of 'immigrants and their wives and children.'

#### Avoiding referring to the gender, marital status, race, age, or ability of persons unless it is specifically relevant to the story.

Examples: 'pastor' instead of 'black pastor (or woman pastor)'; 'John, a representative from First Church' instead of 'John, a blind man from First Church.'

*Adapted from material originating from the Ohio Conference – United Church of Christ*



# Fact sheet 11

## *Embedding prevention of violence against women liturgically*

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### Purpose

To indicate some of the ways that prevention of violence against women themes can be incorporated into a faith community's worship cycle.

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### Linked to

Step 10/Participate

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#### Why link prevention to the cycle of worship?

Worship is at the heart of most faith communities. What happens at worship sets the tone and ethos of the faith community. Most faith communities have a pattern of worship or spiritual practice that incorporates celebrations of specific events at specific times of the year. These events can be used as vehicles to promote messages about respectful relationships, equality and saying no to violence.

#### Which themes and dates are available?

Relevant celebrations in your faith community might include ones that:

- Commemorate religious women
- Celebrate our hope for peace
- Commemorate historic acts of liberation from slavery or oppression
- Celebrate divine love

As well as these religious dates, there are a range of other dates in the social year which could be incorporated into the worship life of your faith community. These include:

- International Women's Day – March 8
- Harmony Day – 21 March
- World Health Day – April 7
- Mother's Day – first Sunday in May
- International Day of Families – May 15
- NAIDOC Week – First full week of July
- Father's Day – second Sunday in September
- International Day of Peace – September 21
- Week Without Violence – third week in October
- Reclaim the night – last Friday in October
- White Ribbon Day – 25 November
- International Human Rights Day – 10 December
- 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence – 25 November – 10 December



# Fact sheet 12

## *What healthy relationships look like*

### Purpose

To provide information about healthy relationships

### Linked to

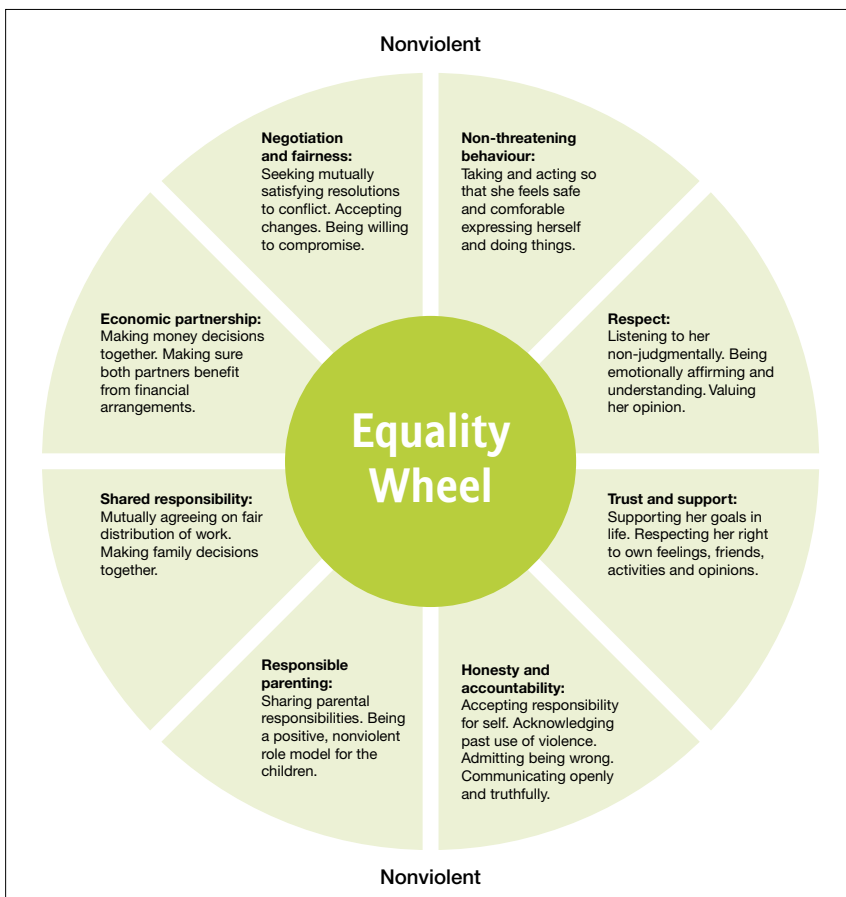
Step 7/Educate, Step 7/Investigate

Because of their personal experiences, many people are overly familiar with what an unhealthy relationship looks like, but less familiar with the opposite – a healthy relationship.

The following list provides a brief description of a healthy relationship. The Equality Wheel below gives a more comprehensive visual representation. Both examples can be used to assist your faith community in understanding and discussing the nature of healthy relationships.

### What makes a healthy relationship?

- You make decisions together
- It's okay to disagree with each other
- You cooperate with each other
- You both have other friendships, family and activities in your life
- You feel comfortable and safe with your partner
- There is mutual respect
- Communication is open and honest
- Intimacy is pleasant for both
- There is NO abuse or violence



Developed by:  
Domestic Abuse Intervention Project  
[www.theduluthmodel.org](http://www.theduluthmodel.org)



# Resource Lists

- 
- P38 ▶ **Resource List 1:** Primary prevention and PVAW training options
  - P39 ▶ **Resource List 2:** Faith and gender resources
  - P40 ▶ **Resource List 3:** Women's organisations and groups
  - P41 ▶ **Resource List 4:** Faith and violence resources
  - P42 ▶ **Resource List 5:** Relationship support organisations
  - P44 ▶ **Resource List 6:** Respectful relationships material for youth
  - P45 ▶ **Resource List 7:** Men's organisations and groups
  - P46 ▶ **Resource List 8:** Faith-based VAW and PVAW organisations
  - P47 ▶ **Resource List 9:** Faith and relationships resources
  - P48 ▶ **Resource List 10:** Legislation and policy
  - P49 ▶ **Resource List 11:** Interfaith organisations
  - P50 ▶ **Resource List 12:** VAW and PVAW organisations



# Resource list 1

## *Primary prevention and prevention of violence against women training options*

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### Purpose

To emphasise why should we access training in primary prevention and prevention of violence against women

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### Linked to

Step 3/Participate, Step 10/Participate

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Because most of us are involved in relationships and experience what it means to be male or female on a daily basis, we can easily assume that we understand the issues involved in preventing violence against women. However, this is not necessarily the case. There is a growing amount of new knowledge, research and practices emerging in the field of primary prevention of violence against women. It is therefore important that any faith personnel becoming involved in these areas, such as a Member Support /Pastoral Care Officer (see Taking Action Tool 6) receive appropriate training.

### Training options (Please note, most of these require payment.)

#### Primary prevention of violence against women

Short course for preventing violence against women: Addressing the Social and Economic Determinants of Mental and Physical Health.

#### **VicHealth**

[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au)

#### Understanding primary prevention

Participation for Health short course: addressing social and economic determinants of mental and physical health.

#### **VicHealth**

[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au)

#### Understanding gender and gender analysis

Women's Health in the North have developed programs to assist in further understanding of these issues – see Resource sheet 12

#### Responding to domestic violence

Both Berry Street and Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria run programs that can assist with understanding how best to respond to disclosures of violence. See Resource sheet 12.

#### Other

Many of the organisations listed on Resource Sheets 3, 5, 7 & 12 will be able to assist with training for your faith personnel.



# Resource list 2

## *Locating faith and gender resources*

### Purpose

To assist faith communities in finding relevant resources, specific to their faith tradition, on women and gender issues

### Linked to

Step 4/Educate, Step 4/Investigate, Step 8/Educate, Step 8/Investigate

### Introduction

It is not possible or appropriate for this manual and resource kit to be a comprehensive list of resources on specific topics for specific faith traditions. Instead, this tool offers some suggested guidelines on how to locate resources that will be useful in the area of women and gender issues.

### Why do we need resources on gender and women from a faith perspective?

Religious attitudes to human sexuality and the meaning of gender have, until very recently, played a large role in shaping our cultural and social understanding of gender and the role of women. Over the last century these cultural and social understandings have undergone significant change in many places, but faith traditions have not always found it easy to embrace these changes. Despite this, there have been scholars and other writers in all traditions who have sought to embrace new ideas about women and gender within their faith context. These resources are important tools that can be used within faith communities to stimulate conversation and change.

### What about sacred texts?

All faith traditions have some form of sacred text which is understood to express divine truth and wisdom. Different traditions assign different values to these texts. In some traditions they are the sole source of divine wisdom; in others they may be the most important, but not only, source of divine wisdom. In some traditions there is little or no contextual interpretation of the sacred texts, in others there is considerable interpretation.

These variations exist within each faith tradition as well. Generally, when sacred texts are used with little contextual interpretation and as the sole source of divine wisdom, there is a danger that they can be used to justify beliefs or actions which are contrary to contemporary principles of human rights, or indeed to other elements of religious belief. This has particularly been the experience of women within faith traditions.

Resources which explore ways to engage with and interpret sacred texts in a contemporary context are important tools for faith communities who wish to promote respectful relationships.

### Guidelines for locating faith resources

- Look for resources that have been written by women. With both male and female authors, try and find out what else they have written so you can assess their general perspective.
- Lean towards resources that are contemporary, i.e. in last ten years. Older resources that are regularly cited by recent authors are an important exception.
- Find official documents of significant organisations, such as universities, peak faith bodies or national and international bodies such as the United Nations.
- Locate resources that have been published by progressive and pro-women faith organisations.
- Look for resources that offer a careful analysis of both sides of a topic rather than a one-sided opinion.
- Track down resources where the authors are prepared to offer a constructive critique of their own faith tradition.
- Find resources that explore new and contextual ways of understanding sacred texts.
- Although the internet is a bounty of resources, take care to assess the integrity of what you are reading.

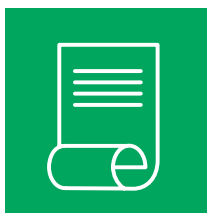
### Some sample resources

*Advancing Towards the Equality of Women and Men*  
Institute for Studies in Global Prosperity in collaboration with the Baha'i International Community, 2009.

*Secular Authorities Need to Ensure They Win Fights with Zealots over the Rights of Women*, Leslie Cannold, *The Age*, Monday 2 Jan 2012.

*Losing My Religion for Equality*, Jimmy Carter, 2009.

*Created in God's Image – from Hierarchy to Partnership*  
A church manual for gender awareness and leadership development. Geneva: World Communion of Reformed Churches, 2003.



# Resource List 3

## *Women's organisations and groups*

### Purpose

To provide information about important women's organisations and groups

### Linked to

Step 4/Educate, Step 4/Participate, Step 6/Participate

#### The Queen Victoria Women's Centre

8668 8100 | [www.qvwc.org.au](http://www.qvwc.org.au)

Respecting the diversity of women, the Queen Victoria Women's Centre provides access to information, education and recreation in a supportive environment which encourages enterprise and independence for all women, by women.

#### Victorian Women's Trust

9642 0422 | [www.vwt.org.au](http://www.vwt.org.au)

Victorian Women's Trust invests in women and girls for positive social change. They research issues which affect their lives and work in key areas ranging from violence prevention to environmental sustainability. They advocate for reforms that improve conditions for women and girls and make sure the public record better reflects their contribution and impact.

#### WIRE (Women's Information and Referral Exchange)

1300 134 130 | [www.wire.org.au](http://www.wire.org.au)

WIRE provides Victorian women with free and confidential support, information and referrals on any issues. They have a Telephone Support Service, a Women's Information Centre and an email support service.

#### Women's Health East

8873 3700 | [www.whe.org.au](http://www.whe.org.au)

Women's Health East is a regional women's health promotion agency working across the eastern metropolitan region of Melbourne to improve the health and wellbeing of girls and women.

#### Women's Health in the North

9484 1666 | [www.whin.org.au](http://www.whin.org.au)

The work of Women's Health In the North (WHIN) aims to strengthen women's health and wellbeing, with a strategic focus on preventing violence against women, sexual and reproductive rights, economic participation and, more recently, the impact of climate change on women.

#### Women's Health Victoria

9662 3755 | <http://whv.org.au>

Women's Health Victoria is a state-wide women's health promotion, information and advocacy organisation. They work with health professionals and policy makers to influence and inform health policy and services for women.

#### Women's Health West

9689 9588 | [www.whwest.org.au](http://www.whwest.org.au)

Women's Health West is committed to improving equity and justice for women in Melbourne's diverse western region. We support individual women and communities, and work collaboratively with government and other agencies across the West and state-wide.

#### Women's Legal Service Victoria

9642 0877 | [www.communitylaw.org.au/clc\\_women](http://www.communitylaw.org.au/clc_women)

Women's Legal Service Victoria (WLSV) is a state-wide legal service for women, specialising in relationship breakdown and violence against women. WLSV provides face-to-face legal services, including court representation, telephone legal advice and referral, legal education, and law reform activities on issues affecting women and their legal rights.

#### YWCA Victoria

8341 8700 | [www.ywca.net](http://www.ywca.net)

YWCA Victoria is part of the World YWCA, a global network of women leading change in 125 countries worldwide. They are affiliated with the World YWCA through YWCA Australia, joining 14 other affiliated local associations and a number of local groups around the country.



# Resource list 4

## *Faith and violence resources*

### Purpose

To assist faith communities in finding relevant resources, specific to their faith tradition, on violence.

### Linked to

Step 5/Educate, Step 5/Investigate

### Introduction

It is not possible or appropriate for this manual and resource kit to be a comprehensive list of resources on specific topics for specific faith traditions. Instead, this tool offers some suggested guidelines on how to locate resources that will be useful in the area of violence.

### Why do we need resources on violence from a faith perspective?

Tolerant attitudes towards violence have been identified as one of the key determinants of violence against women. Faith traditions have a mixed history when it comes to violence. Although all faith traditions have a strong commitment to peace, they also all have a history of using and/or condoning violence in certain contexts. One of these contexts has been violence against women. This ambivalent history has often clouded and muted the faith response to violence. Resources that examine this mixed history and offer a contemporary approach to the condemnation of violence are important tools for faith communities who want to challenge attitudes of tolerance towards violence.

### What about sacred texts?

Please refer to Resource list 2.

### Guidelines for locating faith resources

Please refer to Resource list 2

### Some sample resources

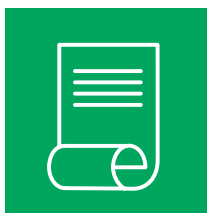
*Faith and Violence: Christian Teaching and Christian Practice.* Thomas Merton, Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968

*Beyond Legal Reforms: Culture and Capacity in the Eradication of Violence Against Women and Girls.* Baha'i International Community, September 2006.

*Religion and Domestic Violence:* information and resources, prepared by National Resource Centre on Domestic Violence, a project of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Pennsylvania: NRCDV, 2007.

*Restoring Dignity.* A toolkit for religious communities to end violence against women. New York: World Conference of Religions for Peace Women's Mobilization Program, 2009.

*Responding to Domestic Violence: Faith Leader Handbook.* Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service, 2007.



# Resource list 5

## *Relationship support organisations*

### Purpose

To have a list of organisations providing relationships counselling and other forms of assistance to the maintenance of healthy relationships

### Linked to

Step 7/Educate, Step 7/Participate

**Important: the safety of women and their children should always be considered when referring individuals or couples to any of the services listed below.**

#### Relationships Australia Victoria

1300 364 277 | <http://relationships victoria.com.au>  
450 Burke Road, Camberwell, VIC, 3124

Relationships Australia provides relationship support to people regardless of age, religion, gender, cultural or economic background and offer services through various office locations throughout Victoria.

#### LifeWorks Relationship Counselling & Education Services

(03) 8650 6200 | [www.lifeworks.com.au](http://www.lifeworks.com.au)  
Level 4, 255 Bourke St, Melbourne, VIC, 3000

LifeWorks Relationship Counselling and Education Services provide counselling, family dispute resolution, mediation and education for individuals, couples, families, children and adolescents.

#### Centacare Catholic Family Services Melbourne

(03) 9287 5555 | [www.centacaremelbourne.org.au](http://www.centacaremelbourne.org.au)  
PO Box 196, East Melbourne, VIC, 8002

Centacare Catholic Family Services works on behalf of the Archdiocese in Melbourne to provide programs and services to assist families and individuals in the development of strong and healthy relationships, and encourage connectedness within communities.

#### Crisis Support Services

(03) 8371 2800 | [www.crisissupport.org.au](http://www.crisissupport.org.au)  
PO Box 2335, Footscray, VIC, 3011

Crisis Support Services Inc. (CSS) is Australia's leading professional telephone counselling and training provider. Operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week, CSS is accredited by the American Association of Suicidology in counselling and suicide prevention, and has a 50-year history of helping people in crisis. CSS manages more than 10 professional help lines, including Mensline Australia, the Victorian Suicide Helpline and the beyondblue Information Line.

#### Drummond Street Relationship Centre

(03) 9663 6733 | [www.dsrmc.org.au](http://www.dsrmc.org.au)  
195 Drummond St, Carlton, VIC, 3053

Drummond Street Relationship Centre is a non-denominational non-government organisation which provides relationship counselling and group work to people from diverse backgrounds. They also offer an education and training service on all aspects of relationship work, including family relationship counselling, education and training, same-sex programs and a Separated Dads program.

#### Eastern Access Community Health (EACH)

(03) 9871 1800 | [www.each.com.au](http://www.each.com.au)  
46 Warrandyte Rd, Ringwood, VIC, 3134

Eastern Access Community Health (EACH) delivers a range of community health services that improve the physical, mental and social well-being of individuals, families and communities in Melbourne's eastern suburbs.

### Family Life

(03) 9598 2133 | [www.familylife.com.au](http://www.familylife.com.au)  
197 Bluff Rd, Sandringham, VIC, 3191

Family Life is a community-owned and managed family and youth service agency responding to the needs of people who are experiencing stress and are at risk of family breakdown. Services are primarily provided to people in the southern suburbs of Melbourne, Australia.

### Family Mediation Centre

(03) 9556 5333  
[www.mediation.com.au](http://www.mediation.com.au)  
PO Box 2131, Moorabbin, VIC, 3189

The Family Mediation Centre provides workplace and family mediation as well as family law mediation and conciliation, post-separation parenting courses and relationship counselling.

### Family Relationships Institute (RELATEWELL)

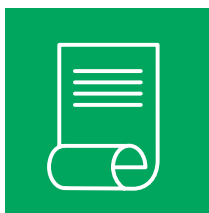
(03) 9354 8854 | [www.relatewell.org.au](http://www.relatewell.org.au)  
21 Bell Street, Coburg, VIC, 3058

Family Relationships Institute Inc (RELATEWELL) is a non-profit organisation providing significant life-stage transition opportunities for individuals, couples and families to achieve enhanced relationship skills.

### South East Region Migrant Resource Centre

(03) 9706 8933 | [www.sermrc.org.au](http://www.sermrc.org.au)  
314 Thomas St, Dandenong, VIC, 3175

The South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre is a non-profit, community-based agency that provides services to all migrants and refugees living in the south-eastern region of Melbourne, covering the City of Greater Dandenong, City of Casey, Shire of Cardinia and surrounding areas.



# Resource list 6

## *Respectful relationships materials for young people*

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### Purpose

To provide a list of resources for young people relating to respectful Relationships, and family violence

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### Linked to

Step 7/Educate

See Resource Sheets 3, 7 and 12 for details of the organisations listed below.

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### General resources

*Something Not Right at Home?* Available from the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria

### For girls and young women

*Relationships: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly.* Available from the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria

*Love Control.* Available from Women's Health in the North

### For boys and young men

*Sex, Love and Other Stuff.* Available from the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria

*Be the Hero.* Available from the Victorian Women's Trust



# Resource list 7

## *Men's organisations, groups and resources*

### Purpose

To provide a list of organisations that can offer advice and assistance for men

### Linked to

Step 8/Educate, Step 8/Participate

#### Be the Hero

9642 0422 | [www.bethehero.com.au](http://www.bethehero.com.au)

Be the Hero is a violence prevention program designed for use with young men. Their website has a number of good resources that can be used in a variety of situations.

#### beyondblue

1300 22 4636 | [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

beyondblue is a national organisation that aims to build a society that understands and responds to the personal and social impact of depression, works actively to prevent it, and improves the quality of life for everyone affected.

#### Family Relationships Centres and Family Relationships Online – an Australian Government initiative

1800 050 321 | [www.familyrelationships.gov.au](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au)

Family Relationships Online provides all families (whether together or separated) with access to information about family relationship issues, from improving relationships to dispute resolution. It also allows families to find out about services that can help them manage relationship issues, including agreeing on arrangements for children after parents separate.

#### LifeWorks Relationship Counselling & Education Services

(03) 8650 6200 | [www.lifeworks.com.au](http://www.lifeworks.com.au)

LifeWorks Relationship Counselling and Education Services provides counselling, family dispute resolution, mediation and education for individuals, couples, families, children and adolescents.

#### Men and Relationship Counselling

1300 88 45 22 | [www.menandrelationships.com.au](http://www.menandrelationships.com.au)

With six locations in Melbourne, Men and Relationships Counselling provides a safe and supportive environment. Experienced psychologists and counsellors can help with marriage counselling, depression, stress, anxiety, anger, grief, trauma, addiction, other mental health and career issues.

#### Men's Evolvement Network

03 9410 9342 | [www.mensevolvementnetwork.com.au](http://www.mensevolvementnetwork.com.au)

Men's Evolvement Network (MEN) is a counselling and personal development service for men dealing with the challenges of life in a complex world of work, relationships and moral choices. MEN is for men who want to grow in their life roles, whether they are fathers, partners, mentors or citizens of the world.

#### Mensline Australia

1300 78 99 78 | [www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au)

MensLine Australia is a unique telephone and online support, information and referral service, helping men to deal with relationship problems in a practical and effective way. The Mensline website also has access to a great list of service providers.

#### No To Violence

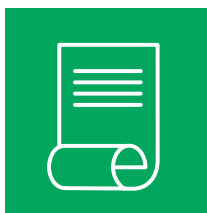
03 9428 3536 | [www.ntv.org.au](http://www.ntv.org.au)

No To Violence (NTV), the Male Family Violence Prevention Association, is the Victorian body of organisations and individuals working with men to end their violence and abuse against family members.

#### Relationships Australia

1300 364 277 | [www.relationshipsvictoria.com](http://www.relationshipsvictoria.com)

Relationships Australia is a leading provider of relationship support services for individuals, families and communities. We aim to support all people in Australia to achieve positive and respectful relationships.



# Resource list 8

## *Faith-based women's organisations and prevention of violence against women organisations*

### Purpose

To enable faith communities to access organisations skilled in dealing with issues to do with women and preventing violence against women.

### Linked to

Step 2/Investigate, Step 3/ Investigate, Step 9/Educate

The following list is a selection of some relevant organisations. Other faith-specific organisations will be known within those faith traditions.

#### Australian organisations

##### **Australian Church Women Inc**

[www.acwnational.org.au](http://www.acwnational.org.au)

Australian Church Women Inc. (ACW) is an umbrella organisation of Christian church women's groups throughout Australia which aims to provide opportunities for women from different denominations to worship, study and serve the community together.

##### **Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights**

[www.ausmuslimwomenscentre.org.au](http://www.ausmuslimwomenscentre.org.au)

The AMWCHR works to advance the rights and status of Muslim women in Australia. They have published a number of excellent resources on Islam and violence against women, and run training programs for service providers working with Muslim women.

##### **Hindu Women's Council of Australia**

[www.hinducouncil.com.au/hinduwomencouncil.html](http://www.hinducouncil.com.au/hinduwomencouncil.html)

The Hindu Women's Council of Australia Ltd. is an umbrella organisation representing the interest of all Hindu women living in Australia, irrespective of their caste or country of origin. It operates as a subsidiary of the Hindu Council of Australia.

##### **Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence**

[www.jewishtaskforce.com.au](http://www.jewishtaskforce.com.au)

The JTAfV has been active in the community for the past 16 years, organising and facilitating education and awareness programs delivered by local and international experts in the fields of family violence and sexual assault. It provides training for Rabbis and a telephone support service.

#### International organisations

##### **Baha'i International Community Office for the Advancement of Women**

<http://bic.org/advancement-of-women>

For sixty years, the Bahá'í International Community's United Nations Office has worked for women's advancement and gender equality, through its participation and contributions to the session of the Commission on the Status of Women, through strengthening the UN's gender mechanisms and through supporting the programs and implementation efforts of its national affiliates.

##### **FaithTrust Institute**

[www.faithtrustinstitute.org](http://www.faithtrustinstitute.org)

FaithTrust Institute is a national [US], multi-faith, multicultural training and education organisation with global reach, working to end sexual and domestic violence. It offers a wide range of services and resources, including training, consulting and educational materials, and providing communities and advocates with the skills to address the religious and cultural issues related to abuse.

##### **We Will Speak Out**

[www.wewillspeakout.org](http://www.wewillspeakout.org)

We Will Speak Out is a recent coalition of like-minded church groups, international aid agencies and an alliance of Christians who have committed to seeing the end of sexual violence across communities around the world.



# Resource list 9

## *Faith and respectful relationships resources*

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### Purpose

To assist faith communities in locating relevant, faith-specific resources on respectful relationships

### Linked to

Step 7/Educate, Step 7/Investigate

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### Introduction

It's not possible or appropriate for this manual and resource kit to be a comprehensive list of resources on specific topics for specific faith traditions. Instead, this tool offers some suggested guidelines on how to locate resources that will be useful in addressing the issue of violence.

### Why do we need resources on respectful relationships from a faith perspective?

Promoting respectful relationships is an integral part of preventing violence against women. Respectful relationships are ones where there is equality, trust – and no violence. Because of the patriarchal history of many of our faith traditions, these qualities have not always been strongly emphasised in the teachings on relationships that have been offered within our faith communities. Resources that offer a strong message on the qualities of healthy and respectful relationships are therefore an important resource for faith communities who wish to promote such relationships.

### What about sacred texts?

Please refer to Resource List 2.

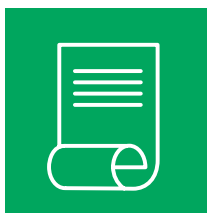
### Guidelines for locating faith resources

Please refer to Resource List 2

### Some sample resources

*Created in God's Image – From Hegemony to Partnership. A church manual on men as partners: promoting positive masculinities.* Geneva: World Communion of Reformed Churches, 2010.

*I Thought I Was One of the Good Guys: Erasing Old Masculinity's Tapes.* Stephen Glaude. Published in *VoiceMale: Changing Men in Changing Times*, Spring 2009



# Resource list 10

## *Guide to relevant legislation and policy*

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### Purpose

To provide faith communities with a guide to relevant international, national and state policy and legislation regarding the prevention of violence against women.

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### Linked to

Step 9/Educate

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The following are significant documents intrinsic to the work of preventing violence against women throughout global and national societies.

#### International

Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979. [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw)

Declaration of the Elimination of Violence Against Women, General Assembly resolution 48/104 of 20 December 1993, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland [www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm](http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm)

Beijing Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995.

[www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform)

#### National

National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women: including the first three-year action plan, Commonwealth of Australia, 2011

The Family Law Legislation Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Bill 2011

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1996

#### State (Victoria)

A Right to Respect: Victoria's Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women, Office of Women's Policy, State of Victoria, 2009

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Children Youth and Family Act 2005

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005

Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

Family Violence Protection Act 2008

Equal Opportunity Act 2010



# Resource list 11

## *Interfaith organisations*

### Purpose

To provide information about local and state-based interfaith organisations

### Linked to

Step 9/Participate

#### Local interfaith groups

Most local government areas in Melbourne have interfaith networks, which are often facilitated by the local council. Contact your local council to see if there's an interfaith network in your area. Alternatively, the Faith Communities Council of Victoria, listed below, has some useful links.

#### **COMMON – Centre of Melbourne's Multi-faith & Others Network**

[www.commonaustralia.com](http://www.commonaustralia.com)

COMMON is a community of people from a variety of ethnic, religious and faith groups, who come together to create understanding, unity, harmony and peace at a grass-roots level within the wider community.

#### **Faith Communities Council of Victoria**

9650 4511 | [www.faithvictoria.org.au](http://www.faithvictoria.org.au)

The FCCV was created to contribute to the harmony of the Victorian community by promoting positive relations between people of different faiths, as well as greater public knowledge and understanding of the teachings, customs and practices of Victoria's diverse faith traditions.

#### **Northern Interfaith Intercultural Network (NIIN)**

[www.niin.org.au](http://www.niin.org.au)

NIIN was established in 2011 and aims to develop and sustain dialogue and cooperation between different faiths and cultures in the northern region of Melbourne.

#### **The Interfaith Centre of Melbourne**

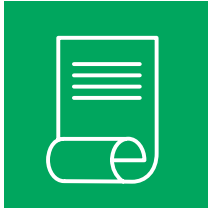
9650 7163 | [www.interfaithcentre.org.au](http://www.interfaithcentre.org.au)

The Interfaith Centre of Melbourne recognises and celebrates the unity that is found in our diversity, that is, the unity of human values which are found at the ethical core of each faith. These values include peace, love, non-violence, right action, truth and respect for the human family. It recognises the differences between faiths, and the sensitivity and skill required to bring about successful interfaith encounters and dialogue.

#### **Victorian Council of Churches**

9650 4511 | [www.vcc.org.au](http://www.vcc.org.au)

The Victorian Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



# Resource list 12

## *Organisations for the prevention of violence against women*

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### Purpose

To provide information about organisations that are involved with the prevention of violence against women.

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### Linked to

Step 2/Participate, Step 9/Educate

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#### **Australian Domestic & Family Violence Clearinghouse**

02 9385 2990 | [www.austdvclearinghouse.unsw.edu.au](http://www.austdvclearinghouse.unsw.edu.au)

The Clearinghouse is a national organisation providing information about domestic and family violence issues and practice. The primary goal of the Clearinghouse is to prevent domestic and family violence by supporting specialist and generalist service providers, government agencies, researchers, advocates and activists.

#### **Berry Street**

03 9429 9266 | [www.berrystreet.org.au](http://www.berrystreet.org.au)

Berry Street has a focus on supporting families, particularly those in vulnerable situations, and assisting them in providing the best possible environment for children and young people to grow and mature. Berry Street is based at a number of sites and runs a range of services.

#### **Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria**

9486 9866 | [www.dvrcv.org.au](http://www.dvrcv.org.au)

DVRCV aims to prevent family violence and promote respectful relationships by leading debate, promoting social changes, and strengthening the community and service system response to violence against women and their children, from primary prevention to recovery.

#### **Local government-based domestic violence networks**

Most local councils support regional domestic violence networks, some of whom are involved in primary prevention. Contact your local council for more information.

#### **Multicultural Centre for Women's Health**

9418 0999 | [www.mcwh.com.au](http://www.mcwh.com.au)

Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (MCWH) is a women's health organisation which is committed to improving the health of immigrant and refugee women around Australia.

#### **No To Violence**

03 9428 3536 | [www.ntv.org.au](http://www.ntv.org.au)

No To Violence (NTV), the Male Family Violence Prevention Association, is the Victorian state-wide body of organisations and individuals working with men to end their violence and abuse against family members.

#### **Primary Care Partnerships**

[www.health.vic.gov.au/pcps](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/pcps)

Primary Care Partnerships (PCPs) are local partnerships made up of a diverse range of member agencies. All PCPs include hospitals, community health, local government and divisions of general practice as core members of the partnerships. Other types of agencies such as area mental health, drug treatment and disability services are also members of PCPs. The partners can also be specific to local issues and needs. Many have begun to have an active program in prevention of violence against women. For details about your local PCP, check out the website above.

#### **VicHealth**

9667 1333 | [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au)

The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, best known as VicHealth, works in partnership with organisations, communities and individuals to make health a central part of daily life. A major program of the work of VicHealth is the prevention of violence against women.

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## **White Ribbon – see fact sheet 7**

### **Women’s Health East**

8873 3700 | [www.whe.org.au](http://www.whe.org.au)

Women’s Health East is a regional women’s health promotion agency that covers the eastern metropolitan region of Melbourne, working to improve the health and wellbeing of girls and women.

### **Women’s Health in the North**

9484 1666 | [www.whin.org.au](http://www.whin.org.au)

The work of Women’s Health In the North (WHIN) aims to strengthen women’s health and wellbeing, with a strategic focus on preventing violence against women, sexual and reproductive rights, economic participation and, more recently, the impact of climate change on women.

### **Women’s Health West**

9689 9588 | [www.whwest.org.au](http://www.whwest.org.au)

Women’s Health West is committed to improving equity and justice for women in Melbourne’s diverse western region. They support individual women and communities, and work collaboratively with government and other agencies across the West and statewide.



# Survey and Audit Tools

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- P54 ▶ **Survey & audit tools 1:** Member survey  
*What does your faith community know about VAW?*
  - P56 ▶ **Survey & audit tools 2:** Member survey  
*What does your faith community think about gender and faith?*
  - P57 ▶ **Survey & audit tools 3:** Member survey  
*What do the men in your faith community believe about respectful relationships?*
  - P58 ▶ **Survey & audit tools 4:** Gender audit
  - P60 ▶ **Survey & audit tools 5:** Facilities audit tool
  - P61 ▶ **Survey & audit tools 6:** Community audit  
*Violence against women services*
  - P62 ▶ **Survey & audit tools 7:** Member survey  
*What does your faith community think about violence and faith?*
  - P63 ▶ **Survey & audit tools 8:** Member survey  
*What does your faith community think about healthy relationships?*



# Survey & audit tools 1

## *Member survey – What does your faith community know about violence against women?*

### Purpose

To assist the faith community and its leadership in exploring what the community currently knows and understands about violence against women.

### Linked to

Step 1/Investigate

## Introduction to Survey tools

### Why do a survey?

Promoting respectful relationships is a process of change. To enable a group, such as a faith community, to go through a process of change, we need to see where we are at the outset – what attitudes we have in common and where we differ, what we know and what we don't know. Surveys are a useful way to establish this kind of information. Surveys are also an important way for members of a faith community to know that their opinions are valued and heard, which helps them know that they belong.

### What do you want to find out?

It is important to be clear from the very beginning what the aim of your survey is. The clearer you are about what you want to get out of it, the more useful it will be.

### What type of information are you after?

In surveys, it's important to be clear about what type of information you're hoping to glean. Surveys can generate two kinds of information: quantitative and qualitative.

Quantitative refers to *numbers* of things, eg how many of your members know a certain fact, or how many have had a particular experience. Qualitative refers to differences of ideas or attitudes, eg what do they think is meant by a certain term, or what they think are the causes of an issue.

Surveys can include both quantitative and qualitative components. Quantitative questions will usually be answered by a single response (yes/no, always/sometimes/never) and qualitative questions will usually be answered by a written comment.

### Who do you ask?

Who you ask will depend on the type of information you are after. If you want *quantitative* information you will need to ask a large number of people, such as your whole community, or all of a section of your community, such as everyone under a certain age. If you want *qualitative* information you might just ask a few people. Just remember that who you ask will affect the nature of your results.

### Different ways of doing surveys

What type of survey you do will depend on the type of information you are after. Here are some options.

#### Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a good option if you want to ask a variety of questions (qualitative and quantitative). They can be distributed as a hard (paper) copy or via an online system, such as Survey Monkey ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)). Online systems have the advantage of being able to collate the responses for you.

#### Focus groups

A focus group gathers mostly qualitative information by gathering a group of people and using questions to generate a conversation. It is important to be clear about the information you are after to avoid the conversation straying into irrelevant areas.

#### Interviews

Interviews are one-on-one conversations that generate qualitative information. They provide an opportunity to gather more in-depth information about specific issues.

## What makes a good survey question?

**Rule 1** Use correct spelling, punctuation and grammar style.

**Rule 2** Use specific questions, eg ‘Did you read a newspaper yesterday?’ rather than ‘Did you read a newspaper?’.

**Rule 3** Avoid using technical terms and jargon, unless the survey is directed towards a specific professional group of respondents who would be familiar with such terminology.

**Rule 4** Avoid questions that do not have a single answer, eg ‘Do you like to walk and ride to school?’. If someone likes to walk, but does not like to cycle, they can’t answer the question in a precise way.

**Rule 5** Avoid negative phrasing, eg ‘Should the school not be improved?’. This can lead to confusion and cost more effort to answer the question correctly.

**Rule 6** Avoid words and expressions with multiple meanings.

**Rule 7** Avoid stereotyping, offensive and emotionally-loaded language

## Collating and analysing the results

In most cases, collating the responses to your survey should be a straightforward task of simply transferring the received results onto a spreadsheet. This will give you a clear view of the totals for each question for quantitative surveys and a list of responses for qualitative surveys.

A more detailed analysis will require a more complex collation of results. For instance, you may want to know whether the men in your faith community gave different answers to the women in your faith community, and this will require collating the responses separately.

## Things to remember

**Confidentiality.** When conducting any sort of survey, it is vital that respondents are confident that their responses will be treated as confidential information. To assist with this you should:

- Not ask for a person’s name unless there is an important reason to do so. If there is a reason, make sure this is understood by the respondent
- Only ask for identifying information (such as age or sex) if it pertains specifically to your survey results
- Inform the respondents of how the information is to be collated, reported and stored
- Ensure that the results of the survey are reported in a way that does not identify any respondents

- Destroy the survey forms once you have finished collating all the information. If the forms need to be kept for any future use, ensure they are kept in a safe place where they can only be accessed by the appropriate person
- Report back. It is always important that there is some sort of report made of any survey that is undertaken so that the respondents know that the information they gave has been used. It may not be appropriate to circulate a detailed report, in which case you can prepare a summary of the report for wider distribution.

## Sample questions for this topic: What does your faith community know about violence against women?

Although there is a growing awareness in our community of violence against women, there remains a large amount of misconceptions about both its prevalence and cause. This is sometimes particularly true in faith communities, where there can be a presumption that ‘that sort of thing doesn’t happen here’. The following are examples of different styles of questions for this topic. Use the facts sheets – particularly 1,3,5,6 and 11 – to compile other questions.

### Questions asking for a true/false/I don’t know response:

As many men are hurt by domestic violence as women.  
(False)

One in three women experience domestic violence at some time in their life  
(True)

Violence against women is a personal issue, not a public issue.  
(False)

Violence against women only happens in poor areas.  
(False)

An important contributing factor to violence against women is inequality.  
(True)

### Questions asking for a yes/no/I don’t know response

Are you aware of friends or family who have experienced domestic violence?

Do you know of someone in this faith community who has experienced domestic violence?

Do you think this faith community should be active in preventing violence against women?



# Survey & audit tools 2

## *Member survey – What does your faith community think about gender and faith?*

### Purpose

To assist the faith community and its leadership in exploring community attitudes to the connection between faith and gender.

### Linked to

Step 4/Investigate

**IMPORTANT – Please see ‘Introduction to survey tools’ in Survey and audit tool 1**

#### **Sample questions for this topic: What does your faith community think about gender and faith?**

We know that one of the primary contributing factors to violence against women is unequal power relationships between men and women, and rigid approaches to gender roles. Faith communities have often had a particular approach to this issue based on ideas about the gendered nature of God and the ordering of creation. The suggested questions for this survey explore these issues. Use the resources on resource list 2 to compile other questions.

**The following have all been designed as yes/no/I don’t know questions**

- Do you believe that women and men are valued equally in our faith community?
- Are there roles in our faith community that you think women are unable to take on?
- In our faith community, is God more often referred to using male pronouns and imagery?
- Are men treated differently to women in our faith community?
- Does our faith community actively ensure that women’s opinions are sought when making decisions?
- Do you believe the sacred texts of our faith community contribute to gender inequality?
- Are women allowed and encouraged to make a contribution to the theological teaching in our faith community?
- Does our faith community have different expectations about how women should behave compared to men?
- When referring to people in prayers, music and other forms of worship, does our faith community tend to use male pronouns?
- Does our faith community have actions in place to ensure that women are treated with equity?



# Survey & audit tool 3

## *Member Survey – What do the men in your faith community believe about gender equality and respectful relationships?*

### Purpose

To assist men in your faith community to examine their attitudes towards gender equality and respectful relationships.

### Linked to

Step 8/Investigate

**IMPORTANT – Please see ‘Introduction to survey tools’ in survey and audit tool 1**

#### **Sample questions for this topic: What do the men in your faith community believe about gender equality and respectful relationships?**

Preventing violence against women involves promoting respectful relationships. This involves promoting equality between women and men, which in turn involves encouraging men to examine, and perhaps change, their attitudes. The questions in this survey encourage men to do some thinking about issues of gender. Refer to the fact sheets for ideas for further questions, particularly facts sheets 1, 5, 6 and 12.

#### **The following have all been designed as agree/don’t know/disagree questions**

- If I have a female partner, I expect to always earn more than her.
- Most men are tempted to lash out at their female partner every now and then.
- My faith tradition teaches that it is better if men are in leadership roles.
- It is always better that the mother stays at home when children are very young.
- I would be comfortable if my faith community had a female leader.
- It is OK if a man occasionally pressures his partner into having sex.
- I mostly think of God as being a male.
- Men and women are equal, but they have different roles to play in life.
- I think women tend to have it easier in this world than men.
- Women are better than men at doing housework.



# Survey & audit tools 4

## *Gender audit of your faith community*

### Purpose

To enable your faith community to measure its commitment to gender equity

### Linked to

Step 4/Investigate, Step 6/Investigate

### What is a gender audit?

An audit is a type of measure. It can be used to answer questions such as, ‘How many items do we have in stock?’, or ‘How many of our employees have completed safety training?’. A gender audit is a way of measuring the extent to which gender equity is practiced by an organisation.

### Why do a gender audit?

Most faith communities have a particular set of beliefs and attitudes about the nature of masculinity and femininity and the roles of women and men. These beliefs and attitudes have often been in place for a long time. Consequently, they feel familiar and comfortable and can go unexamined by the community. A gender audit is a way of bringing attention to the impact that these beliefs and attitudes have on the way the faith community operates.

### Who should do the audit?

An audit should be done by those people who are most involved in all facets of the organisation’s activities and governance. This will normally be the leadership team, but could also include a selection of your organisation’s members as well. Audits can also be done as an exercise, either by different sections of the community or by the community as a whole. The following gender audit has been designed with leadership teams in mind, but it could just as easily be completed by the members of your community. This may provide further information about the way gender equity is practiced in your faith community.

### How to use the gender audit

The following gender audit contains questions arranged in six sections. All questions are answered either yes or no. When you have completed the audit, add up the number of yes and no answers. The scale at the end of the audit provides a suggested analysis of your result.

### Gender audit for faith communities

#### Section 1: Awareness

1.	Our members know that our faith community is committed to gender equity.	YES	NO
2.	The topic of gender – what it means to be male or female – is regularly covered in sermons and addresses here.	YES	NO
3.	There is information available at our faith community for women and men who want to get help because of domestic violence.	YES	NO
4.	Our faith community has participated in the White Ribbon campaign.	YES	NO
5.	We have posters and other material on display promoting respectful relationships.	YES	NO
6.	Our members know who to speak to if they are concerned about how they, or another member, is being treated.	YES	NO

#### Section 2: Organisational ethos

7.	In our faith community, we encourage our members to look at their beliefs from different perspectives.	YES	NO
8.	Our members do not expect the men in our faith community to make all the important decisions.	YES	NO
9.	At meetings and other events here, women always do some of the speaking.	YES	NO
10.	You almost always see men and women in our faith community working together at the same task.	YES	NO
11.	We have written policies concerning how to promote gender equity in our faith community.	YES	NO
12.	There are no set ideas in our faith community about how men and women should behave, dress, or express themselves.	YES	NO

### Section 3: Communication and language

13. Our faith community uses a variety of terms and imagery to describe God, including non-masculine terms.	YES	NO
14. We regularly use contemporary prayers and songs in our worship.	YES	NO
15. Our policies and other written documents are written in inclusive language (eg not using 'he' to refer to women and men)	YES	NO
16. We always make sure that any photographs or pictures we use in our publications include both women and men.	YES	NO
17. The lives of women past and present are regularly used as examples of people of strong faith and character.	YES	NO
18. Our faith community has a policy to guide the way our language promotes gender equity and respectful relationships.	YES	NO

### Section 4: Safety

19. We conduct a regular audit of our facilities to make sure they are welcoming and safe for women and children.	YES	NO
20. Our faith community has appointed a Member Support Officer who is a referral point for any member's concerns.	YES	NO
21. We have a policy on responding to any complaints about discrimination or harassment.	YES	NO
22. The women in our faith community feel safe around our buildings at any time, day or night.	YES	NO
23. We have a Code of Conduct that sets out our expectations of how we treat each other and encourage respectfulness.	YES	NO

### Section 5: Programs and participation

24. Our faith community has activities that are of interest to both women and men.	YES	NO
25. At important meetings and other events, we always provide a child-minding service so parents can attend the meeting.	YES	NO
26. We make sure that social events and activities are run at times that are suitable for both women and men.	YES	NO
27. There are baby change tables at our facilities and they are accessible to men and women.	YES	NO
28. We run seminars and discussions that explore topics such as gender equity, gender roles and respectful relationships.	YES	NO

### Section 6: Leadership

29. Our faith community actively encourages women to be involved in leadership.	YES	NO
30. We have a program in place to mentor women for leadership.	YES	NO
31. At all our public events, including worship, we ensure there are women amongst the officials in charge.	YES	NO
32. Our faith community has a policy to ensure that all our committees include female members.	YES	NO
33. Because women cannot be official (ordained) leaders in our faith tradition, we provide specific opportunities for the opinions of our female members to be sought and heard.	YES	NO

#### If you answered 'yes' to:

- 24 or more questions – You are strongly committed to gender equity
- 16 to 23 questions – You are working well at gender equity
- 10 to 15 questions – You have only just begun to practice gender equity
- Less than 10 questions – You need to make a start with gender equity



# Survey & audit tools 5

## *Facilities audit of your faith community*

### Purpose

To enable your faith community to see how accessible your facilities are for all members, particularly women and girls.

### Linked to

Step 6/Investigate

### Introduction

#### Why is it important to improve access to facilities?

Our facilities are where we gather for worship, where meetings and social activities are often held and where our community's achievements are displayed and celebrated. They say a lot about the character and values of our community and provide an important first impression to our members, both old and new.

A welcoming community is one where all members, regardless of their gender, feel comfortable and safe. It is also a place where equipment and facilities are shared willingly by everyone.

Improving access for women and girls involves taking a closer look at the physical environment of our facilities and the rules (written and unwritten) for accessing them.

The following checklist provides a simple way to assess the inclusivity of your facilities.

#### These questions have been designed to illicit a yes or no answer

- Do you have an adequate number of female and male toilets?
- Is there adequate privacy in the entrance to the toilets? Many women and girls prefer privacy.
- Is there clear signage for men's and women's toilets?
- Are the toilets kept clean and tidy?
- Is there a sanitary disposal bin in the women's toilet?
- Do posters and other visual images show women and girls as well as men and boys?
- Do notice-boards and other displays have messages about expected standards of behaviour?
- Do notice-boards and other displays have messages that make it clear your community condemns violence?
- Do you monitor outside groups that use your facilities to ensure that there is no inappropriate behaviour, eg parties that encourage binge drinking, strippers or potentially offensive comedians?
- Is any graffiti that are offensive or derogatory towards women and girls promptly removed?
- Are there 'help cards', posters or other useful information displayed in the toilets that advertise support lines for women if they've experienced harassment or abuse, and for men who need help to stop their violent behaviour?
- Are there messages displayed about responsible drinking?
- Is the lighting in the car park adequate to ensure members' safety?
- Are the facilities generally kept tidy and clean?
- Is there the capacity for members to make suggestions, eg a suggestion box?



# Survey & audit tools 6

*What is happening in your community to prevent violence against women?*

## Purpose

To enable your faith community to be informed about the primary prevention work that is happening locally.

## Linked to

Step 1/Investigate, Step 9/investigate

### Why do an survey of local primary prevention work?

Promoting respectful relationships requires the efforts of a whole community. As we all work together to change attitudes to gender and violence, we strengthen the message and build an interconnected commitment to preventing violence against women. Faith communities are part of this network, so it's important that we know what else is going on. This simple community audit is an easy way to compile this information and find out more.

### Community survey – Preventing violence against women

Using the internet, phone books and other local guides, try to find out the following:

Which local government area are you in?

If you have access to the internet, search your local council's website under 'Preventing violence against women' (if you're not online, phone directly and ask). Now try to locate one of the following staff to find out what they are doing: Preventing Violence Against Women Officer, Health Promotion Officer, Safety Officer, Community Development Officer, Human Rights Officer, Equity and Diversity Officer.

Some local councils also have White Ribbon Day committees. You can also search via [www.lgpvaw.net.au](http://www.lgpvaw.net.au).

Is there a Women's Health organisation in your area? (See also resource list 12). Most are involved with programs to prevent violence against women.

Which is your local Primary Care Partnership (PCP)? Find out at [www.health.vic.gov.au/pcps](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/pcps). Many PCPs have a Health Promotion Officer who may be doing work in preventing violence against women.

Are there other women's organisations in your area? (see also resource list 3)

Are there local branches of Welfare Agencies in your area? Eg Anglicare, Bapcare, MissionAustralia, Catholic Social Services Australia, Brotherhood of St Laurence, UnitingCare, Hanover Welfare Services, etc?

Are there any men's organisations in your area? (see also resource list 7). Some of these may be active in programs for preventing violence against women.

Is there a local White Ribbon Day community group? Find out by contacting [www.whiteribbon.org.au](http://www.whiteribbon.org.au) (02 9045 8444).

Don't forget to find out whether any other local faith communities are also working in this area. (See also resource list 11)



# Survey & audit tools 7

## *Member survey – What does your faith community believe about faith and violence?*

### Purpose

To assist your faith community and its leaders to explore your attitudes towards faith and violence.

### Linked to

Step 5/Investigate, Step 8/Investigate

**IMPORTANT – Please see ‘Introduction to survey tools’ in survey and audit tool 1**

#### **Sample questions for this topic: What does your faith community believe about faith and violence?**

Research has shown that in situations where violence is commonly accepted, or even encouraged, there are higher rates of violence against women. Changing our attitudes towards violence, particularly male violence, is therefore an important element of preventing violence against women. The suggested questions in this survey will help your community to explore its attitudes around violence. For further question ideas see Fact Sheets 1, 5, 7, 8, and Resource List 4.

**The following have all been designed as true/false/don’t know questions**

- There are many stories of a violent nature in the sacred texts of our faith community.
- Our faith community does not tolerate violence of any type.
- In our faith community, it is accepted that men are more violent than women.
- Sometimes people of faith will need to use violence to defend their beliefs.
- There are male bullies in our faith community who are not called to account for their behaviour.
- Our faith community is comfortable using language that describes God as being angry or powerful or controlling.
- There are women in our faith community whose male partners yell at them a lot.
- There have been teaching sessions in our faith community on standing up against violence.
- Our faith community has been involved with campaigns to say NO to violence against women.



# Survey & audit tools 8

## *Member survey – What does your faith community understand about healthy relationships?*

### Purpose

To assist your faith community and its leaders to explore attitudes and knowledge about healthy relationships.

### Linked to

Step 7/Investigate

**IMPORTANT – Please see ‘Introduction to survey tools’ in survey and audit tool 1**

### Sample questions for this topic: What does your faith community understand about healthy relationships?

Sometimes it can seem easier to describe the symptoms of an unhealthy relationship than to describe the characteristics of a healthy one. The questions in this survey are designed to prompt some thought about what we mean by a ‘healthy’ relationship.

They have been designed for use in focus groups:

- What words or phrases come to mind when you hear the term ‘healthy relationship’?
- Think of a relationship you know of that you consider to be a positive example of a healthy relationship. What are the features of this relationship that stand out to you?
- How would you characterise communication in a healthy relationship?
- Does conflict exist in a healthy relationship? If so, how might it be handled?
- What are some of the personal attributes that each person brings to a healthy relationship?
- What beliefs and practices of our faith tradition are particularly helpful in developing healthy relationships?
- List five attitudes or behaviours that you believe are the most important in maintaining a healthy relationship.



# ‘Taking action’ tools

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- P66 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 1: Poster presentation
- P67 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 2: Fact sheets/newsletters
- P68 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 3: Sermons/addresses
- P69 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 4: Developing a domestic violence policy
- P70 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 5: Developing a declaration
- P71 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 6: Training domestic violence support people
- P72 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 7: Developing a PVAW policy (Anglican example)
- P73 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 8: ‘Let’s talk about gender’ conversation
- P74 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 9: Developing partnerships
- P75 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 10: Film night
- P77 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 11: Developing a policy on bullying
- P78 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 12: Encouraging women in leadership tool
- P79 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 13: Mentoring women and girls tool
- P80 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 14: Making a visible commitment to inclusivity
- P81 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 15: Appointing a welcoming officer
- P82 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 16: Developing a code of conduct
- P83 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 17: Respectful relationship training
- P84 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 18: Developing an action plan
- P85 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 19: Developing policy around contributing factors
- P86 ▶ ‘Taking action’ tool 20: Peer mentoring program



# ‘Taking action’ tool 1

## *Poster presentation*

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### Purpose

To encourage the use of posters to provide information and raise awareness of promoting respectful relationships

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### Linked to

Steps 1 – 10/Educate

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#### Why raise awareness of this issue?

One of the most simple, yet important, aspects of primary prevention is raising community awareness of the issue of concern. This is particularly important in the case of violence against women. Because it is a subject that is both highly personal and highly confronting, our community tends to avoid dealing with it in any sort of public way, whether that be in mass media, in schools, or in our faith communities. Of course, this avoidance doesn't make the reality of family violence go away. Change can only begin when we acknowledge that there is a problem in the first place. Raising awareness is a way of doing this.

#### Why use posters?

A poster can be an effective way of displaying either a simple message or a larger amount of information. If the poster is left up over a period of time, the message is reinforced. Posters also allow people to obtain information in a relatively private way.

#### Things to consider when designing a poster

Posters can be created using MS PowerPoint, MS Publisher or other desktop publishing tools and then printed at a local print shop, such as Officeworks. Some questions to keep in mind are:

Where will it go, and therefore how large should it be?

What will be the main eye-catching feature of the poster?

What is the primary message you want people to take from the poster?

Is the font large enough to read at a distance?

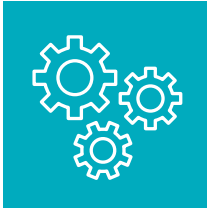
Is there too much information?

Is it relevant and sensitive to the context it will be used in?

#### Resources

There's a lot of content online about designing posters! A lot of it relates mostly to scientific posters, but there are many other helpful sites. Many of the organisations listed in the resource lists may also have examples of appropriate posters that can be adapted.

**Remember!** When making any sort of presentation on family violence, it's possible that it will lead to someone seeking help. It's vital that the main help lines and contacts are included on your poster and are easily readable. See Fact Sheet 2 for this information. It might also be useful to produce a fact sheet containing more detailed information on where to turn to for assistance. Fact sheets 3, 5, 7 and 12 will be useful for this.



# 'Taking action' tool 2

## *Facts sheets and newsletter inserts*

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### Purpose

To encourage the use of facts sheet and newsletter inserts as a method of education and raising awareness.

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### Linked to

Steps 1 –10/Educate

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#### Education and raising awareness

Because primary prevention is about changing long-standing attitudes and behaviours, the actions we take will need to be performed repeatedly over long periods of time if they are to become second nature. Marketing experts know it takes more than one glance for a brand name to sink in. Even well established brands need to keep up their advertising profile. The same is true of primary prevention messages. One way of doing this is to provide a regular fact sheet, or have a regular insert or article in your community's newsletter.

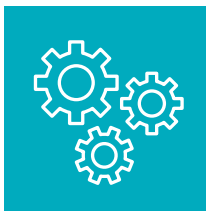
#### Fact sheets/newsletter inserts

Most faith communities have some kind of bulletin board, as well as some sort of regular newsletter or pamphlet. These are great platforms for information about the issues surrounding violence against women, and what can be done to prevent it. By providing a series of facts sheets or newsletter inserts, more detailed information can be presented over time than could be easily done once-off.

#### Resources

A number of organisations have produced fact sheets that can be used or, with permission, adapted for your local situation. Here are some suggestions:

- White Ribbon Day Australia has produced a series of 14 fact sheets. These can be accessed in the Resources section of [www.whiteribbonday.org.au](http://www.whiteribbonday.org.au).
- Women's Health in the West has a range of publications, including fact sheets, many free to download. Go to the 'family violence support' section of [www.whwest.org.au](http://www.whwest.org.au).
- The GLOVE Project (Gender, Local Governance, and Violence Prevention) produced four fact sheets which may be of use. These can be accessed at [www.abp.unimelb.edu.au/research/funded/glove](http://www.abp.unimelb.edu.au/research/funded/glove).
- The United Nations campaign UNiTE to End Violence Against Women, has a range of publications, including fact sheets, that can be accessed in the Resources section of [www.un.org/en/women/endviolence](http://www.un.org/en/women/endviolence).
- The Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research has produced some excellent fact sheets which can be accessed in the Resources section of [www.noviolence.com.au/](http://www.noviolence.com.au/)



# ‘Taking action’ tool 3

## *Sermons and addresses*

### Purpose

To encourage the use of sermons and other teaching occasions as opportunities to raise awareness about the prevention of violence against women.

### Linked to

Steps 1 – 10/Educate

### Why is making use of sermons and addresses important?

In most faith communities, there is some component of the worship or other devotional activity which involves the delivery of a message from one of the leaders of that community. It may be called a sermon, a message, a homily, an address or a teaching. It is often connected to the reading and interpretation of sacred texts.

Because of the authority of the leader within the faith community, these teaching occasions carry a significant influence and impact, so it is vital that the content of that message in relation to prevention of violence against women is clear and unambiguous. This includes such things as acknowledging that violence is **never** acceptable, and that women should never be **blamed** for the violence they receive. Care should be taken, not just with teaching directly on the topic of preventing violence against women, but also on related topics such as marriage, family, culture and violence, masculinity and femininity, and human rights.

### Are there any resources to assist?

Every faith leader and every faith tradition has a very different way of preparing and delivering their teaching, making it impossible to provide a simple set of resources. However, the fact sheets and resource tools within this manual should be considered a primary resource for compiling teachings directly concerned with prevention of violence against women.

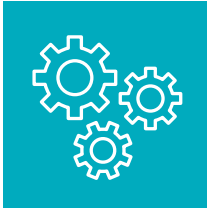
### When should a specific teaching be delivered?

When to deliver an address specifically on preventing violence against women will depend on many factors. Fact sheet 11 gives some suggestions for making use of a liturgical framework for the delivery of these messages. ‘Taking action’ tool 19, (Developing an action plan) will also help you make decisions about timing. Pastoral considerations come into play as well. A message will have particular impact if it is delivered at a time when the faith community is aware of a relevant pastoral situation.

### What else should I be aware of?

Whenever any specific and public mention is made about prevention of violence against women, it’s possible it will empower a member of your faith community to speak to you or another leader about their own experiences. Faith leaders should be prepared for this eventuality. Fact sheet 2 (How to respond to disclosures) and resource lists 3,5,7, and 12 are also of value in this regard.

**Numerous services exist in the community to provide the appropriate professional care for women who have experienced violence. Advising your members to make use of these services is the best way that faith communities can ensure the safety of women experiencing violence. It is not expected, nor appropriate, that this level of professional counselling be provided within the faith community.**



# 'Taking action' tool 4

## *Developing a domestic violence policy*

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### Purpose

To encourage your community to develop its own domestic violence policy

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### Linked to

Step 2/Participate, Step 5/Participate, Step 10/Investigate

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#### What is the purpose of a domestic violence policy?

An important first step in preventing violence against women is to acknowledge that the violence exists, and that it happens in all areas of society. Faith communities have sometimes struggled to make this acknowledgment, wanting to believe that their community is immune to it. Unfortunately, this is not the case. A domestic violence policy is an important way for faith communities to both acknowledge the seriousness of this issue, and be prepared to respond to incidents of violence occurring in their own community. A domestic violence policy does this by setting out the values of the community regarding domestic violence, and the protocols that will be used when community members are affected by it.

#### What should a domestic violence policy include?

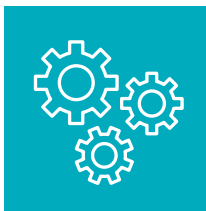
There are a number of important components to a DV policy. These include:

- A statement describing the purpose of the policy
- A statement acknowledging that domestic violence occurs within faith communities (see fact sheet 1)
- A description of domestic violence (see fact sheet 9)
- A statement describing the faith community's values in relation to domestic violence, particularly that such violence is never acceptable, and that it cannot be justified on any religious grounds
- The protocols to be used when an incidence of domestic violence is disclosed. These protocols should include: the initial response to a disclosure (see fact sheet 2); communication and confidentiality within the community; care of the person making the disclosure; arrangements for the ongoing safety of the woman (and children) involved; accountability expected of the perpetrator;
- A description of circumstances in which referral to police will be required
- Training requirements for personnel involved in the implementation of the protocols in this policy
- Information and contact details for relevant support services

#### Where can I find samples of domestic violence policies?

Currently, there are very few faith communities with DV policies. A useful resource for developing a DV policy is *Will My Rabbi Believe Me? Will He Understand?*, published by the Jewish Taskforce on Family Violence (see resource list 8).

There are many examples of workplace DV policies online. Simply do a search for 'domestic violence policy examples'. Alternatively, the Australian Domestic & Family Violence Clearinghouse can provide assistance (see resource list 12).



# ‘Taking action’ tool 5

## *Developing a declaration*

### Purpose

To encourage faith communities to develop a declaration affirming their commitment to respectful relationships and saying NO to violence

### Linked to

Step 2/Participate

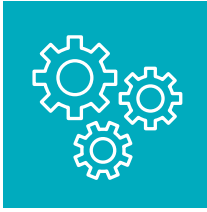
#### Why develop a declaration?

Primary prevention is about preventing violence before it actually has a chance to happen. This means changing the factors that contribute towards violence. An important step in implementing change within a community is to reach a mutual agreement about the importance of that change and the values being aimed for. While there may be differing individual levels of commitment, the very existence of an agreed statement of the values creates a reference point which can be returned to at times of uncertainty. The process of reaching that level of agreement is also important as it opens doors to genuine conversation, and from this conversation a real passion for change can arise.

Communal declarations are a useful process of coming to, and affirming, a common mind on a particular subject. They have been used in a variety of situations and often to great effect. Once finished, they can be signed and displayed as a permanent reminder of a particular value held by that community. Developing a declaration is usually done in a workshop setting.

#### How to develop a declaration

- a. The leadership team agrees to the process and sets time for the workshop session(s).
- b. Session times and purpose are advertised, and community members are encouraged to sign up and attend.
- c. Community members are given some information prior to the workshop. They might be asked to prepare by considering the following:
  1. What is it that we want to declare?
    - What is being promoted?
    - What is being rejected or disapproved?
  2. What are the elements that we all agree to?
    - Definition of family violence
    - Family violence is a gendered crime (i.e. recognising all family violence, but acknowledging that most violence is perpetrated against women)
  3. What is the commitment by signing the declaration?
    - What are we all committing to together?
    - What actions are we promising to take?
- d. It usually helps to have some examples of declarations and a rough framework of wording to begin with.
- e. A skilled facilitator will be required to steer the workshop through the process. The three basic questions (listed under point c above) are a useful way of working, but the facilitator may have their own process.
- f. The actual signing of the declaration may take place at a different time than the workshop, giving the opportunity for people who weren't at the workshop to sign.
- g. Once completed and signed, it is important that the declaration be displayed as a visible reminder of the community's values it declares.



# 'Taking action' tool 6

## *Appointing a Member Support/Pastoral Care Officer*

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### Purpose

To provide information on the development of Member Support/ Pastoral Care Officers

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### Linked to

Step 2 Participate

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### Why have a Member Support/Pastoral Care Officer?

In many faith communities, the official leadership (ordained people) are invested with a large amount of authority. They are involved in teaching about the faith, caring for the community as a whole, and caring for individual members. This puts the leader in a very powerful position in relation to the community members. All violence against women involves an abuse of power. It's therefore important that women disclosing experiences of violence are not fearful of further misuse of power. Consequently the official leader may not always be the best person for the woman to speak to regarding domestic violence. This is particularly the case if the leader is male. It is therefore important that there is an alternative person in your faith community who can provide support where necessary.

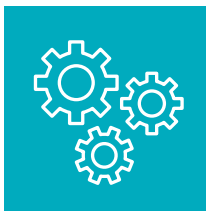
### What does a Member Support/Pastoral Care Officer do?

A Member Support/Pastoral Care Officer is the first point of contact in your faith community for any enquiries, concerns or complaints around harassment, abuse and other inappropriate behaviour. The Officer supports community members by:

- Listening and acting as a sounding board
- Clarifying basic points and concerns
- Referring members to the relevant policies, such as Codes of Conduct, Bullying Policy and Domestic Violence Policy
- Explaining the complaint process and options available in your faith community
- Liaising with the leadership team as appropriate
- Discussing any relevant laws and the right to complain to external agencies (eg to the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission)
- Offering to provide details for counselling or other referrals if appropriate or requested
- Monitoring and following up on the enquiry or complaint

### Training for Member Support/Pastoral Care Officers

It is important that those taking on this role are appropriately trained. Many faith traditions will have their own training options for these types of roles. For other options, including more specific training, refer to resource sheet 1.



# ‘Taking action’ tool 7

## *Developing a prevention of violence against women policy*

### Purpose

To encourage your faith community to develop a policy on prevention of violence against women

### Linked to

Step 3/Participate, Step 10/Investigate

### What is this policy for?

A Prevention of Violence Against Women (PVAW) policy encapsulates the objectives of this manual, which is to encourage faith communities to be committed to *primary prevention* of violence against women (see fact sheet 4). By having a PVAW policy, a faith community is acknowledging to itself and the wider community the importance of preventing violence *before* it occurs and it is committing itself to being engaged with this task. A PVAW policy provides a framework for the faith community to work within and engage with the suggested actions included in this manual.

### What should a PVAW policy include?

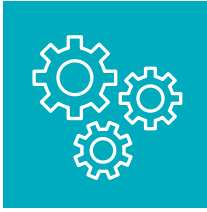
A PVAW policy should include the following:

- A statement describing the values of the faith community in relation to violence against women, particularly that such violence is never acceptable, that it cannot be justified on religious grounds, and of the essential equality between women and men
- A statement describing what is meant by violence against women, including the different types of violence (see fact sheet 9)
- A statement describing what is meant by primary prevention (See fact sheet 4)
- A statement describing the determinants of violence against women (see fact sheet 5)
- A list of ways the faith community can respond to the presence of those determinants within its own practices and attitudes
- A statement describing what the faith community hopes to achieve by these responses
- A timeline for making these responses, and for reviewing the policy

### Do you need assistance in developing this policy?

The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne developed a Diocesan-wide Strategic Policy in 2011 and began implementing this in 2012. A copy of the policy can be found under the ‘Social Responsibilities Committee’ section of [www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/ServingCommunity/src/Pages/Prevention-of-Violence-Against-Women.aspx](http://www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/ServingCommunity/src/Pages/Prevention-of-Violence-Against-Women.aspx)

More information about primary prevention and the determinants of violence against women can be obtained from VicHealth (see resource list 12) and information about PVAW policies at government level can be accessed via the information in resource sheet 10.



# ‘Taking action’ tool 8

## *‘Let’s talk about gender’ conversation*

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### Purpose

To encourage faith communities to facilitate conversations on the issue of gender and gender roles

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### Linked to

Step 4 / Educate, Step 8 / Participate

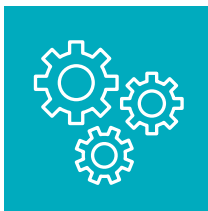
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#### Why talk about gender?

Global research has consistently found that violence against women is linked to our attitudes towards gender and gender roles. Preventing violence against women is about changing these attitudes, particularly by encouraging a less rigid approach to gender roles and by developing more equal ways for women and men to relate to each other. Although social expectations about gender have undergone major changes in many parts of our world, all of us are still affected by our own experiences, beliefs and ideas about what it means to be male and female. Encouraging conversations about gender is therefore an important part of promoting respectful relationships in our faith communities.

#### Hints and guidelines for a conversation about gender

- We all know that conversations generally flow more freely when they are lubricated with drinks and snacks, so arrange to have some there.
- It’s easier to get a conversation started if there is a common input to begin with. A recent article in a newspaper or magazine might be a useful resource to ask people to read before they come to the conversation. Any number of interesting articles can also be found online; alternatively, you could conduct a survey of your faith community members (see survey and audit tool 2) and use the results of this as starting point.
- Gender is a very personal part of all our lives, so set some ground rules for the conversation, such as respecting each other’s opinions, not criticizing other people’s experiences, maintaining confidentiality, etc. It’s also helpful to state how long the conversation is expected to go for.
- The glossary in the first section of this manual may be a useful resource to have on hand, particularly when discussing the difference between sex and gender.
- Having some questions ready is always a good idea. Try to phrase them so you get more than a simple ‘yes or no’ answer.
- Facilitate the conversation with care. Try to strike a balance between letting it flow in energetic directions, but bring it back on course if it starts to stray too far off topic.
- As part of an ongoing commitment to primary prevention, the conversation could conclude by asking the participants where they would like to take the conversation to from here. Has it stimulated any ideas for action or any topics for further discussion?



# ‘Taking action’ tool 9

## *Developing partnerships*

### Purpose

To encourage faith communities to form partnerships with local organisations in the development of activities

### Linked to

Step 1/Participate, Step 8/Participate, Step 9/Participate

#### Why develop partnerships?

Promoting respectful relationships can involve small, simple steps, or large, demanding ones. One way to increase the scope and reach of your activities is to form partnerships with other local organisations. Partnerships can lend a greater breadth of expertise to the activities, plus they can give extra promotional force and credibility to your activities, which is particularly useful if you are seeking funding.

#### What partnering possibilities exist?

There is no end of organisations in the community that could be engaged as partners in the prevention of violence against women. Don't be afraid to think outside the box! For starters, consider the following:

#### Other local faith communities

A good place to begin is with the other faith communities in your area. Prevention of violence against women is a powerful issue which you could do some shared activity around.

#### Faith-based networks

Many faith communities have extended networks around particular issues, such as social justice or women's issues. These networks may be interested in working with a local faith community.

#### Interfaith networks

There are interfaith networks in most local areas – see resource list 11.

#### Violence against women networks

See resource list 12.

#### Men and violence networks/organisations

See resource list 7.

#### Local government

Many local governments are now becoming actively involved in the prevention of violence against women. Check the LGPVAW website ([www.lgpvaw.net.au](http://www.lgpvaw.net.au)) for details in your area.

#### Service groups

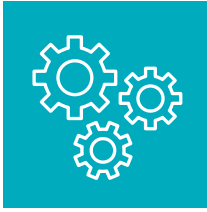
These groups, such as Rotary, Lions, etc, are often keen to partner with other local groups for specific projects. *Soroptimists* is a lesser known but important women's service group that has a particular focus on issues concerning women. Find out more at [www.soroptimist.org](http://www.soroptimist.org).

#### Welfare agencies

Many welfare agencies, such as Anglicare, Good Shepherd, etc, have local offices which can be approached to develop some local partnerships around specific projects.

#### Schools

Schools are often looking for practical projects that tie in with their educational programs.



# 'Taking action' tool 10

## *Film night*

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### Purpose

Arrange a film night as a way of stimulating conversation on violence against women

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### Linked to

Step 5/Educate, Step 8/Participate

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### Why host a film discussion night?

Most people enjoy seeing films. Movies have become one of the major avenues of storytelling in Western society, and a good film, like a good story, can have a major impact on a person's life. Because a number of people can watch a film at the same time, they have the ability to stimulate conversation and raise awareness in a larger setting. By using the film as the topic of conversation, difficult subjects, such as violence against women, can be talked about in ways that do not necessarily involve confronting personal details

### Hints and guidelines for a film discussion night

On the following pages, you'll find a list of suggested films which should be readily available from local DVD shops or online. When you advertise your film night, clearly state that there will be a discussion afterwards, what that discussion will be about and roughly how long it's expected to go for. It may be helpful to cater the discussion with some refreshments. Keep this manual handy during the discussion so you can refer to the fact sheets and glossary as needed.

### Sample discussion questions

In what ways was violence against women a part of the storyline in this film?

What was the affect of this violence on the women in the film?  
What was the affect on the men?

How was the domestic violence portrayed in the film? What are the different forms that violence can take? (You can refer to the Power and Control wheel here – session 3: resource 3)

What did the film suggest about the causes of violence against women? Do you agree with these ideas?

Were there any attempts to prevent the violence? If so, what was the outcome of these actions?

Did the film have anything to say about the larger social issues around violence against women?

Are there any things in your own life that you might do differently as a result of watching this film?

### Suggested Films

#### North Country

Director: Niki Car  
Country: USA 2005

Plot: A semi-fictionalised account of a group of female miner workers who win a landmark sexual harassment case.

#### The Promise

Director: Bethany Rooney  
Country: USA 1999

Plot: Based on a true story. A woman seeks justice after discovering that her sister was murdered by her abusive husband.

#### Nil by Mouth

Director: Gary Oldman  
Country: UK 1997

Plot: Set in working-class London, this film looks at the life of the rough and violent Raymond, and his effect on the life of his family.

#### Sleeping with the Devil

Director: William A. Graham  
Country: USA, 1997

Plot: After a wealthy man helps out a poor woman, the couple eventually get married. But when the woman attempts to leave the marriage, her husband tries to murder her. This is a true story based on the book of the same title.

#### Once Were Warriors

Director: Lee Tamahori  
Country: NZ, 1994

Plot: Set in Auckland, New Zealand, this film follows the lives of the Heke family. Jake Heke is a violent man who beats his wife frequently when he's drunk. The movie follows several weeks in the life of this family, showing Jake's frequent violent outbursts and the effect of his behaviour.

**What's Love Got to Do With It?**

Director: Brian Gibson

Country: USA, 1993

Plot: Chronicles the career of Tina Turner, from the time she met musician-songwriter Ike Turner, to her abusive marriage to him, to her eventual solo career in the early 1980's.

**Sleeping with the Enemy**

Director: Joseph Rubin

Country: USA, 1991

Plot: Laura and Martin have been married for four years, but Martin is abusive and Laura is living her life in constant fear. In an escape attempt, she stages her own death and flees to a new town and new identity. But when Martin finds out, he will stop at nothing to find and kill her.

**The Colour Purple**

Director: Stephen Spielberg

Country: USA, 1985

Plot: This film follows the life of Celie, a young black girl growing up in the early 1900s. The film starts with a 14-year-old Celie who is pregnant by her father. The film chronicles the next 30 years of her difficult life.

**Boxing Helena (1993)**

Director: Jennifer Chambers Lynch

Plot: A top surgeon is still besotted with a beautiful ex-girlfriend. He tries to convince her that they need each other, but she has other ideas. Then a gruesome accident leaves her at his mercy. This film is bizarre, perhaps sick at times, ending abruptly with a twist.

**Crimes of the Heart (1986)**

Director: Bruce Beresford

Plot: Three sisters with vastly different lives reunite after Babe, the youngest sister, has just shot her husband.

**Enough (2002)**

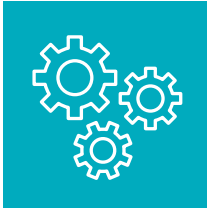
Director: Michael Apted

Plot: A blue-collar beauty marries a hot-tempered philanderer, and then spends her life in nomadic flight from his hot-tempered brutality. Knowing she must face the inevitable showdown, she turns to self-defence courses for empowerment.

**Fried Green Tomatoes (1991)**

Director: Jon Avnet

Plot: Evelyn Couch meets Ninny Threadgoode, an outgoing old woman who tells her the story of Ildgie Threadgoode, a young woman in 1920s Alabama. Through Ildgie's inspiring life, Evelyn learns to be more assertive. Central to the tale is the case of the missing batterer.



# 'Taking action' tool 11

## *Developing a policy on bullying*

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### Purpose

To promote respectful relationships by having a policy on bullying

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### Linked to

Step 5/Participate, Step 10/Investigate

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#### Why do we need a policy on bullying?

Respectful relationships between men and women are one aspect of the broader ideal of respectful relationships between all people. One of the fundamental ways in which relationships fail to be respectful is when there is bullying. Developing a policy for your faith community on bullying gives a powerful message that you are concerned with promoting relationships of respect.

#### What is bullying?

Bullying is an abuse of formal or informal power. It is actions or verbal comments that have detrimental effect on the wellbeing or performance of staff, clients, volunteers, or constituents of an organisation. It may be perpetrated by an individual or a group of people (mobbing). Bullying is generally behaviour that is unwelcome and humiliating. Bullying may occur as a one-off, or be repeated over time.

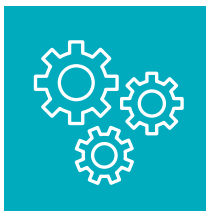
#### What should a bullying policy include?

- A definition of bullying, such as the above
- A descriptive list of actions that are understood to constitute bullying, as well as those that do not
- A protocol to be followed to make a complaint of bullying, including what support will be given to the person making the complaint, and who the complaint should be made to
- A protocol to be followed to respond to a complaint of bullying, including what support will be given to the person accused of bullying, and who will investigate the complaint
- An explanation of what action will be taken against those found guilty of bullying
- A list of expectations (training and behaviour) of those who are involved in receiving and investigating complaints of bullying
- Reference to any relevant external guidelines or protocols, eg. where a faith tradition has a state or national bullying policy

#### Where can I find examples of bullying policies?

Check with the head office of your faith community for bullying policies specific to your faith tradition.

An internet search on 'bullying policy for churches' will turn up a number of examples that can be adapted for your local use.



# ‘Taking action’ tool 12

## *Encouraging women in leadership*

### Purpose

To provide suggestions on how to encourage more women to be involved in leadership positions in your faith community

### Linked to

Step 4/Participate

#### Why do we need to encourage women in leadership?

As with other areas of life, women and girls can significantly contribute to all areas of the life of faith. To ensure faith communities have access to the widest range of skills, experience and opinions, it is important that women and girls are well represented in leadership positions.

Women and girls already have many of the skills required to be leaders including:

- a willingness to dedicate time and energy to make a difference
- a passion for their faith
- a commitment to making improvements.

There are a range of practical actions that faith communities can undertake to increase the representation of women and girls in leadership positions:

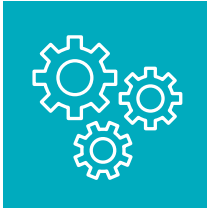
- Actively recruit women and girls to management committee positions.
- Survey your membership to find out about their skills and if they'd be interested in taking on a leadership role.
- Initiate discussions with women and girls who show an interest in, or potential to be in, leadership positions.
- Use a column in your newsletter to encourage the women and girls to get involved.
- Use inclusive language when you recruit for volunteers.
- Actively consider a quota or target for women on management committees (i.e. a number or percentage that your community can work towards achieving).
- Mentor women and girls. Mentoring can help them set goals and develop their confidence, skills and knowledge. See ‘Taking action’ tool 13.
- Put women and girls forward to undertake training opportunities, including accredited ones offered by your faith community.

- Provide opportunities for networking and peer support.
- Promote the achievements of women and girls – eg put photos and coverage in your organisation’s newsletter or on its website. Contact your local newspaper to write a story about the achievement.

Take action against any discrimination or harassment of women and girls (This discrimination and harassment should not be tolerated. Not only is this against the law, but it may also deny them opportunities and damage their confidence. Discrimination is not always obvious.)

- Make sure women can participate by scheduling meetings at a time convenient for parents and care-givers. Provide child-care if possible.

*Adapted from Everyone Wins ([www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/everyonewins](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/everyonewins))*



# 'Taking action' tool 13

## *Mentoring women and girls*

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### Purpose

Suggestions for encouraging mentoring of women and girls in your faith community

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### Linked to

Step 6/Participate

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#### What is mentoring?

Mentoring revolves around a relationship where a person with specific knowledge and experience provides guidance and support to a less experienced person.

#### Why do women and girls need mentors?

All people involved in faith communities – regardless of gender – can benefit from having a mentor. However, the specific barriers women can face in pursuing leadership positions in faith communities are different for men.

For example, women are still generally responsible for childcare and can have less time available to juggle home, work and leadership responsibilities. Sometimes community members may hold obstructive views about women in leadership. For these reasons, mentoring is particularly important in increasing women's self-confidence, assisting in establishing networks and supporting leadership development.

#### What can you do?

Consider setting up a mentoring system in your faith community. Here's how:

- Make sure that mentors include both men and women as they offer different skills and perspectives. Consider matching men with women given that males often hold power and influence in leadership positions and may offer opportunities for women to build their networks.
- Understand that older female mentors can create an environment that is comfortable for the younger generation of women.
- Offer both informal and formal mentoring. Formal mentoring can appear daunting and imply time commitments that might not be achievable. Don't underestimate the value of mentors simply catching up for a quick coffee or keeping in phone contact with their mentees.
- Support women to develop and join networks. Consider establishing a women's group or foundation to help women connect with, and learn from, other women who are in leadership positions.

*Adapted from Everyone Wins ([www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/everyonewins](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/everyonewins))*



# ‘Taking action’ tool 14

## *Making a visible commitment to inclusivity*

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### Purpose

To provide suggestions on how to visually reflect the aims of inclusivity and equality in your faith community

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### Linked to

Step 6/Educate, Step 6/Investigate

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#### Why is it important to make your commitment visible?

It’s said that ‘a picture is worth a thousand words’, which is a handy reminder to make sure that the values expressed in your policies and practices are also expressed visually.

Your faith community may have a commitment to inclusivity, but this may not be reflected in the images used in your publications, posters or newsletters. Review these images critically. Do they reflect the diversity of your faith community? Or do they appear one-sided?

It’s also important that decisions that are made about policy and practice in this realm are clearly communicated to your faith community so they know which aims and values you are striving for.

Another way that we can make a visible commitment to inclusivity is through the messages we present to the broader community, such as in local papers or other public relations exercises.

#### What can you do?

There are lots of things your faith community could do. Consider some of the following:

Display posters and other visual images that reflect the diversity in your faith community.

Make regular announcements and messages about respect, responsibility and appropriate behaviour.

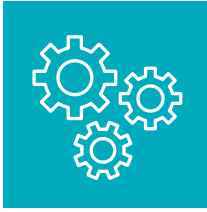
Display posters and images that promote respect, such as an ‘Everyone can expect respect at this faith community’ poster.

Become actively involved in social marketing campaigns such as White Ribbon Day, Week Without Violence and Harmony Day.

Ensure that photos and images used in your publications reflect the diversity in your community.

Take steps to promote equality in your leadership team – See ‘Taking action’ tool 12.

Ensure that policies supporting equality and inclusivity are well publicised and readily available for people to read.



# 'Taking action' tool 15

## *Appointing a Welcoming Officer*

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### Purpose

To encourage faith communities to appoint a Welcoming Officer as a way of modelling respectful relationships

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### Linked to

Step 6/Participate

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#### Why should your faith community have a Welcoming Officer?

Joining a faith community for the first time can be both exciting and overwhelming. The role of a Welcoming Officer is to greet new members and their families and help them settle into the community. By being proactive in this task, the faith community is modelling respectful relationships and inclusivity. A Welcoming Officer also provides a point of reference for any inquiries that new members may have about policies and practices.

Undertaking this role requires the ability to know when to offer help and when to step back. A Welcoming Officer needs to provide support without putting pressure on new members and their families or making them feel as though they stand out from other members.

#### What should a Welcoming Officer do?

Here are some ideas for the role of a Welcoming Officer:

- Provide information about the faith community, eg an information pack with a welcoming message from the leadership, names and contact details of committee members, and copies of any relevant policies and guidelines.
- Be available to new members and their families to answer any questions and help with practical issues such as meeting times, car parking and access or getting involved in activities.
- Ask members if they have any special needs, perhaps related to diet, cultural needs, or access considerations.
- Make sure that new members, their partners, families or friends are invited to social events and other activities.
- Let new members and their families know that they can contact the Welcoming Officer any time they need support.



# ‘Taking action’ tool 16

## *Developing a Code of Conduct*

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### Purpose

To assist faith communities in developing a Code of Conduct for its members

### Linked to

Step 7/Participate, Step 10/Investigate

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#### Why have a Code of Conduct for your faith community?

Respectful and appropriate behaviour is not something that we know by instinct. It’s something we learn through social interactions within our families, schools, faith communities and other settings. Encouraging appropriate behaviour within our faith communities is part of the way we promote respectful relationships. A Code of Conduct creates clear expectations about the type of behaviour we wish to encourage.

#### What is a Code of Conduct?

A Code of Conduct is a list of behaviours which provides a clear boundary between what is appropriate conduct and what is not. Many faith traditions already have Codes of Conduct for their ordained leadership and other paid staff. A Code of Conduct for the whole faith community is a similar tool.

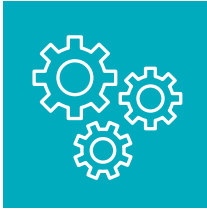
#### What should a Code of Conduct cover?

A Code of Conduct should specify what is expected of all members of a faith community with regard to issues such as:

- care and protection of minors in the faith community
- use of alcohol
- use of drugs
- inclusion of every person regardless of their gender
- creation and maintenance of a safe physical environment
- protection from sexual harassment or intimidation
- opportunities for all people to participate fully in the faith community and develop to their full potential
- respect for each other
- elimination of violent and abusive behaviour
- responsibilities of particular roles within the faith community

#### Where can I find examples of Codes of Conduct?

There are many examples of Codes of Conduct online. Alternatively, if your faith tradition has a code for its leadership and personnel, you may be able to adapt this for a wider use in your faith community. Many businesses now have Codes of Conduct, and some of these might also be appropriate to adapt.



# ‘Taking action’ tool 17

## *Respectful relationship training*

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### Purpose

To encourage faith communities to promote respectful relationships and appropriate relationship training opportunities

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### Linked to

Step 7/Participate

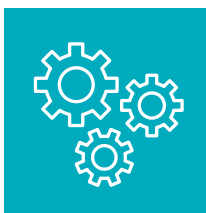
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#### Why provide relationship training?

Relationships – between friends, partners, family members, colleagues, in social clubs and in faith communities – are at the heart of our existence. Yet, it still tends to be assumed that the skills we need to keep these relationships healthy and respectful will come naturally to us. Unfortunately, this is not the experience for most of us. We fall out with friends, families divide into factions; there are people at work we avoid. If we are to promote respectful relationships between men and women, we need to consider the larger picture of our relationships and ensure that we are promoting respectfulness for all our relationships.

#### What can faith communities do?

- Provide information on where community members can access relationship support and training (see resource list 5).
- Develop programs for couples and families using professional relationship counsellors (see resource list 5).
- Encourage discussion groups on topics such as emotional intelligence, friendship and respectful relationships.
- Develop a Code of Conduct (see ‘Taking action’ tool 16) that spells out expectations of behaviour during meetings and other events.
- Include teaching and ideas about respectful relationship in sermons and addresses (see fact sheet 12).
- Include sessions on respectful relationships in pre-marriage preparation courses (see fact sheet 12).
- Encourage community members to be involved in marriage enrichment courses.



# ‘Taking action’ tool 18

## *Developing an action plan to promote respectful relationships*

### Purpose

To encourage faith communities to develop an action plan for committing to primary prevention

### Linked to

Step 10/Participate

### Developing goals and objectives – a sample strategic plan

Faith communities are moving more and more towards a greater level of planning and review. Strategic plans are a relatively simple tool by which an organisation can be clear about the direction it is moving in, the objectives it wishes to achieve, and the actions that it will do to achieve those objectives. There are many different ways to write a strategic plan. Here’s a sample of what yours could look like:

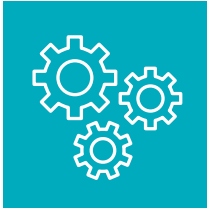
<b>Context</b>	Prevention of violence against women in faith communities	
<b>Goal</b>	To decrease violence against women in our faith community and beyond by implementing evidence-based primary prevention activities within our faith community	
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Objective 1</b> Promote respectful relationships as an ongoing element of all our activities. <i>To be reviewed by {date}.</i>	<b>Objective 2</b> Promote gender equity within our faith community. <i>To be reviewed by {date}.</i>
<b>Actions</b>	a Develop and display one poster promoting respectful relationships by {date}. b Invite a White Ribbon Ambassador to address breakfast meeting of between 15 and 20 community members on {date}. c Purchase 50 sets of White Ribbon ribbons and bracelets to sell during November. d Develop a policy for our faith community by {date} on how to respond to any observations of family violence between members of our faith community.	a Develop a declaration by {date} on saying no to violence. It should be signed by as many members of our faith community as possible and displayed at the entrance of our facility. b Arrange a forum by {date} for the men in our community on the topic of ‘Being male in the 21st century’. c Arrange a consultation by {date} with the female members of our community on the topic, ‘What can we do to make our faith community more welcoming for women?’ d Organise film night for week of White Ribbon Day (November 25).
<b>Partners</b>	Invite neighbouring faith community to share in resources.	Invite local Domestic Violence Network to be involved.

The **context** is the larger picture in which you are developing this strategic plan.

The **goal** represents the long term benefits of the changes that you want to see happen.

The **objectives** represent the intermediate outcomes that you are looking for. Notice that they include a date at which they are to be reviewed.

The **actions** are the steps you will take to achieve the objectives. Notice that they contain, where practicable, specific elements that can be measured, including dates to be achieved by. This is in line with the SMART process – **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, **T**imescale.



# ‘Taking action’ tool 19

## *Developing policies and practices around contributing factors*

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### Purpose

To encourage your faith community to have policies and practices that support the promotion of respectful relationships

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### Linked to

Step 10/Investigate

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#### Why have these supporting policies and practices in place?

Research has shown that the significant determinants for violence against women are gender inequality, rigid gender roles, and tolerance of violence (see fact sheet 5). But we know that there are also a range of other factors that can exacerbate the situations even further – factors like drug use or isolation. Faith communities that are committed to promoting respectful relationships may wish to explore the ways in which they can have an impact on these other factors by the development of appropriate policy and practices. This broader-ranging approach will not only benefit the prevention of violence against women, but other sections of the community who may be struggling with issues stemming from these contributing factors.

#### Which factors are important to address?

##### **Alc.ohol and illicit drug use**

Many faith communities already have clear expectations around the use of alcohol and illicit drugs. Developing a specific policy can further strengthen these expectations.

##### **Social isolation and limited access to support**

Women who are isolated and unable to access appropriate support are at higher risk of violence. Faith communities are in an ideal position to develop programs which can address social isolation and improve access to support. A monthly lunch for people living on their own, or provision of volunteers to take people to appointments are simple examples of such programs.

##### **Relationship and marital conflict**

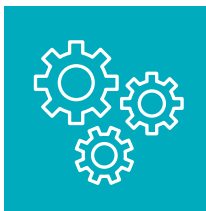
All relationships need support at some stage of their journey. Faith communities are already involved in relationships through the provision of marriage ceremonies, and many also provide pre-marriage preparation courses. These courses can easily be expanded to include information on violence against women and other related topics. Faith communities can also be a conduit for information about relationship counselling and other forms of relationship support. Note that it is important that all relationship counselling be undertaken by those who are trained to do so.

##### **Parenting and family support**

The skills we need as parents and family members cannot be taken for granted. Many people do not necessarily have opportunities to learn or improve these skills, or to get the support they need when things become difficult. Faith communities can liaise with professionals to provide these opportunities.

##### **Media and communication technology**

Contemporary media and communication technology, including the internet and social networking sites, can often be a challenge to promoting respectful relationships. Faith communities can have an influence on these technologies by promoting appropriate expectations about their use within the faith community and beyond.



# ‘Taking action’ tool 20

## *Peer mentoring program for leaders*

### Purpose

To encourage faith leaders to engage in peer mentoring to increase their understanding of primary prevention and violence against women.

### Linked to

Step 1/Participate

### Why peer mentoring?

Peer mentoring is a way for two people in the same professional field to work together to increase their knowledge and understanding. In contrast to other types of professional development, peer mentoring focuses on the role the professional relationship brings to the development process. Through this relationship, participants can engage with the topic under consideration at a deeper and potentially more personal level. Peer mentoring is therefore particularly useful when the topic at hand is one that has elements that may be personally challenging or confronting.

It's not necessary in peer mentoring that the mentor is 'well ahead' of the mentee in understanding the topic. The role of the mentor is principally to take responsibility for the process, including setting meeting times, sourcing materials, following up on further questions and monitoring the process generally. It is expected that both mentor and mentee will be in a learning environment.

### What does peer mentoring look like?

Some mentoring arrangements are more informal and are based simply on a commitment to meet on a regular basis and discuss area of professional concerns. Other arrangements are more formal and include a decision to meet over a specific period of time and to cover a particular topic. It is suggested that for this topic of violence against women, a more formal approach is appropriate.

### What resources are there?

The Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships (NIRR) Project Peer Mentoring Program involves six conversations on a set series of topics. For each topic there are reading resources and questions for discussion, contained in a participant's folder. This folder also contains suggestions for actions, similar to the ones in this manual. The NIRR Peer Mentoring Program can be done over six months with one conversation a month, or it can be compacted into a shorter period if desired.

### Do I need any training to run the Peer Mentoring Program?

No special training is needed, however an understanding of prevention of violence against women is recommended. See Resource List 1 for training options. A guide for mentors using the Peer Mentoring Program is available. A small group of people who trialled the program are also available for advice.

### Where do I get the NIRR Peer Mentoring Program?

A PDF copy of the program can be downloaded from the Darebin City Council website at [www.darebin.vic.gov.au](http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au), or the website of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne at [www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/ServingCommunity/src/Pages/Prevention-of-Violence-Against-Women.aspx](http://www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/ServingCommunity/src/Pages/Prevention-of-Violence-Against-Women.aspx) Also available at this site is the Mentor's Guide, and the list of previous participants in the trial phase of the Program.



