

Preventing Family Violence in Moreland Strategy 2016–2020



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Mayor's foreword

I am proud to present the *Preventing Family Violence in Moreland Strategy 2016–2020*. This strategy will provide the framework for Council and its community partners to create a respectful, safe and inclusive place for everyone in our community.

Council's strategy acknowledges the seriousness and prevalence of family violence in our community. Over the last five years, the number of family violence incidents in Moreland reported to police has increased by 94 per cent.

Women make-up the majority of victims of family violence. We also know that children are directly affected by the family violence that happens in their homes, with 27 per cent of reported incidents in Moreland in 2014–15 being witnessed by children.

All of us have a role to play to prevent violence against women and family violence. Research into the causes of family violence demonstrates that we can help by reducing gender inequality – that is, the unequal treatment of a person based on their gender.

The role of local government in promoting gender equality and preventing family violence within their municipalities is now widely acknowledged, most recently in the *Royal Commission into Family Violence Report and Recommendations*, as well as Australia's first national framework to prevent violence against women, *Change the Story – a shared framework for the prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*.

Over the last four years, Council has been focussed on developing projects to promote community safety and address family violence. In 2014, we funded the Active Fathers Project aimed at strengthening families at the early stages of parenthood. In the subsequent year, we provided funding to improve access to housing for those escaping violence in the home through the Preventing Homelessness Grant. A community safety leadership committee of expert organisations and individuals was also convened to advise and guide Council's approach.

Council's *Preventing Family Violence in Moreland Strategy 2016–2020* acknowledges the local leadership as well as the partnerships required to create the culture change that is needed. Council has been fortunate to have the support of committed community partners over the last ten years and our new strategy will provide opportunities for new community partners to join this important effort.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'S. Ratnam'.

Cr Samantha Ratnam

Mayor of Moreland

Executive summary

Moreland City Council has a strong commitment to promoting gender equality and preventing and responding to family violence through Council's services, programs and advocacy.

The Preventing Family Violence in Moreland Strategy 2016–2020 provides a framework for Council actions, which acknowledges Council's local leadership and builds on the past achievements of Council and its partners under the 1998 Statement of Commitment to Women, the *Moreland Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2011–2015* and other relevant Council policies.

Council's strategy acknowledges the seriousness and prevalence of family violence in the community and that women are the majority of victims.

Council acknowledges that addressing family violence requires a whole-of-community response and seeks to engage committed partners to achieve long-term positive outcomes for: children, young people, older people and people with a disability, women and girls, men and the community. Two key documents, recently released, inform Council's approach: *Change the Story*, the first Australian framework for the prevention of violence against women and their children, and the *Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence Report and Recommendations*.

Council's strategy promotes actions to:

- Prevent family violence before it occurs.
- Support Moreland residents experiencing family violence.



Vision

Moreland City Council will work in partnership with the community to create a respectful, safe and inclusive place for women, children and families.

We will do this through:

- Local leadership, advocacy, capacity building and partnerships to promote women's and girls' participation in public and private spheres; fostering gender equity in our organisation and services; and
- Creating inclusive and safe community settings.

Family violence describes any violent, threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour where a family member hurts a person or causes fear.

Purpose

The purpose of the *Preventing Family Violence in Moreland Strategy 2016–2020* is to provide a framework for Council actions, which acknowledges Council’s local leadership role guided by the *Statement of Commitment to Women (1998)*, the *Moreland Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2011–2015* and other relevant Council policies.

Key achievements by Council and its partners over the last five years include:

- Moreland Council has been an active participant and partner in Northern Region networks and helped shape the agenda regarding family violence prevention at local government level by actively supporting the development and implementation of the regional *Building A Respectful Community Preventing Violence against Women Strategy for the Northern Metro Region 2011–2016* coordinated by Women’s Health in the North.
- Moreland Council provides strong organisational support for employees experiencing family violence, including a *Workplace Family Violence Policy*, developed in 2007 and a Family Violence Clause in the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, incorporated in 2012.
- Moreland Council was one of the first local governments nationally to be accredited as a White Ribbon Workplace in 2013, reflecting Council’s organisational leadership in relation to family violence support for employees, participation in the national White Ribbon campaign and working with local partners to address and prevent family violence through convening the Moreland Family Violence Network.
- Council’s annual Honouring Women in Moreland Awards, which celebrate the significant achievements of women and girls in the Moreland community, have had strong community backing and celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2013.
- Council has made available two substantial grants to facilitate innovation and local leadership in addressing or preventing family violence. The Active Fathers’ Project (2014–2017) is a capacity building project involving Council’s Maternal and Child Health Service to engage fathers in the early years and become a father-inclusive service. The Preventing Homelessness Grant (2016–2017) will support Moreland women at risk of homelessness due to family violence.

**One woman in three
has experienced
physical violence since
the age of 15.**

Legislative and policy context

Gender equality and reducing violence against women are at the core of a number of international and national human rights and anti-discrimination legislation, including the:

- UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) from 1983;
- UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women from 1993; and the
- Australian *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*.

Locally, Council's *Human Rights Policy 2016–2026* provides the overarching framework for delivering accessible, equitable and inclusive programs, services and decision making processes. Other key policies at national, state and municipal level include:

- National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2020;

- State Government commitment from 30 March 2016 to implement all 227 recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence Report and Recommendations;
- Moreland Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013 – 2017; and
- Moreland 2025 Community Vision.

Legislation and policy details are provided in Appendix 1.

Framework for Council action

The aim of Council's *Preventing Family Violence in Moreland Strategy 2016–2020* is to prevent family violence before it occurs as well as to support members of the Moreland community who are experiencing family violence.

Council's approach is informed by the prevalence and impact of family violence in the community as well as Australia's first national framework to prevent violence against women, *Change the Story: a shared framework for the prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia* (Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth 2015).¹

Impact and Prevalence of Family Violence

Family violence describes any violent, threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour where a family member hurts a person or causes fear. Family violence tends to be committed by people in positions of relative power within a relationship against more vulnerable individuals with the consequence that women, children, older adults and people with disability are at higher risk of such abuse.

The abuse can occur in all types of relationships, including young couples, older couples, older people or people with a disability and their carers, same sex relationships and heterosexual relationships.

Family violence is predominantly, but not exclusively, perpetrated by men against women and children as the Australian data below shows:²

- Women are three times more likely than men to experience violence at the hands of a partner;
- A woman dies at the hands of a current or former partner almost every week;
- One woman in three has experienced physical violence since the age of 15;
- One woman in five has experienced sexual violence;
- One woman in four experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner; and

- More than half of the women who experienced violence had children in their care when the violence occurred.

Research identifies increased vulnerability to family violence for the following population groups:

- young women;
- pregnant women;
- children;
- women with disabilities;
- Indigenous women;
- women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) communities; and
- older people.

Individuals are complex and shaped by interactions between different personal attributes such as ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, age, disability, migration status and religion. An intersectional approach enables us to understand the connections between structures that shape diverse populations. It also enables a more effective and efficient responses than a 'one-size fits all' approach for solving social inequities (*Moreland Human Rights Policy 2016–2026*).

Further details are provided in **Appendix 2**.

Moreland Statistics

A total of 1,663 family violence incidents were reported to Victoria Police in Moreland in 2014–2015. Women were the majority of victims (73%) and men were the majority of perpetrators (77%).

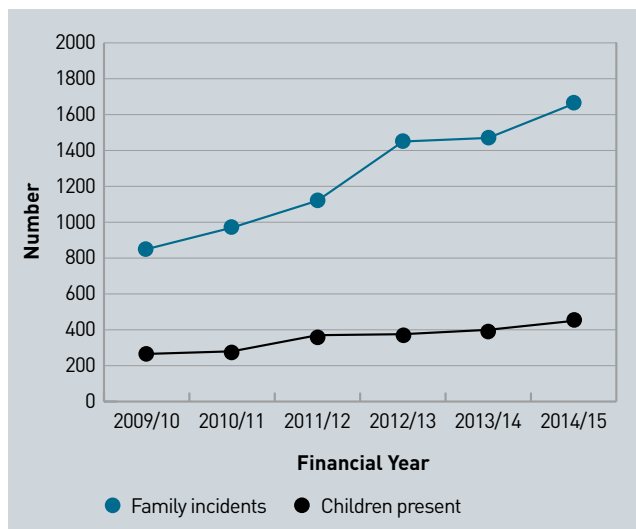
Over the last five years the number of family violence incidents reported to Victoria Police almost doubled (increased by 94%), up from 856 reported family violence incidents in 2009–2010. Children were present in 27% of reported incidents in 2014–15 and 31% of reported incidents in 2009–2010.³

1 Our Watch, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) and VicHealth (2015): 'Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia'. <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/getmedia/1462998c-c32b-4772-ad02-cbf359e0d8e6/Change-the-story-framework-prevent-violence-women-children.pdf.aspx>

2 Our Watch, the national Foundation to Prevent Violence Against Women and Children: 'Understanding Violence – Facts and Figures'. The link provides details of the facts' sources <http://www.ourwatch.org.au/Understanding-Violence/Facts-and-figures>

3 Crime Statistics Agency (CSA) – Family Incidents to 2014/15– Table 3 – and Victoria Police Family Incidents Reports 2009/10-2013/14 <http://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/home/crime+statistics/year+ending+30+june+2015/family+incidents> http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPageandMedia_ID=72311

Family violence incidents in Moreland 2009–2015



Source: Victoria Police (2009/10–2013/14) and Crime Statistics Agency (2014/15)

It is widely acknowledged that many women experiencing family violence do not report this to police, therefore this data is likely to underestimate the prevalence of family violence in the Moreland community (Women's Health in the North 2016).⁴

Change the Story Prevention Framework

Council's *Preventing Family Violence in Moreland Strategy 2016-2020* promotes actions to respond to as well as prevent family violence.

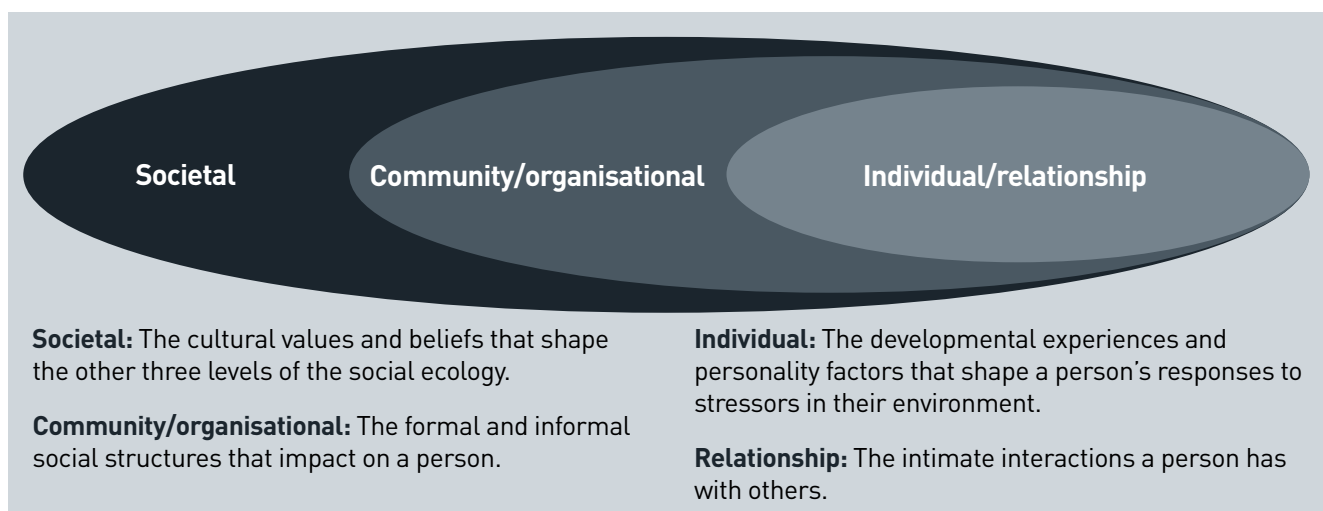
Council's approach is informed by *Change the Story: a shared framework for the prevention of violence against women and their children*. This framework acknowledges that a comprehensive approach must involve a continuum of interdependent and interlinked strategies, where prevention efforts are integrated with early intervention and response initiatives. Thus, Council's strategy promotes:

- Primary prevention initiatives that address the drivers of violence;
- Early intervention (or so called secondary prevention) targeting individuals and groups who exhibit early signs of perpetrating violent behaviour or of being subject to violence; and
- Crisis intervention (or so called tertiary prevention) implemented after violence has occurred with the aim to respond to the violence and its consequences and to ensure that it does not occur again or escalate.

Prevention engages people and communities through the many different environments where they live, work, learn, socialise and play. These environments are called 'settings'. Effective prevention requires the coordinated efforts of multiple stakeholders, including national, state and local governments; professionals working in these settings and the people/communities to engage. An overview of key settings and their rationale is provided in Appendix 3.

Gender inequality is recognised as the underlying cause of violence against women and the socio-ecological model below provides an overview of the mechanisms through structures, social norms, and practices that maintain and reinforce gender inequality and violence against women at different levels, including individual/relationships, organisational/community and institutional/systems/society.

Socio-ecological model of violence against women



Source: Women's Health in the North adapted from CHANGE 1999; HEISE 1998; World Health Organization 2002

⁴ Women's Health in the North: 'Violence against Women Factsheet 2014–2015 – Moreland' <http://www.whin.org.au/images/PDFs/FViolence/FV Factsheets2014to2015/FV%20Factsheet%2015%20-%20Moreland.pdf>

Outcomes

The *Change the Story* framework acknowledges the distinctive role of local government due to their capacity to respond to local concerns, lead prevention activities with the support of partners, support people at different life stages and engage diverse and hard to reach groups through Council services.

The outcomes that the *Preventing Family Violence in Moreland Strategy 2016-2020* aims to achieve require a whole-of-Council and whole-of-community effort. The

six outcome areas and key action areas reflect current work and service relationships. They also provide an opportunity for new partners to become involved.

Consultations regarding an implementation plan involving key Council business units and community partners will confirm actions, responsibilities, budget requirements, timelines and measures for achieving each outcome. Where funding beyond the existing budget is required external funding sources will be explored.

Outcome 1: Children

Outcome 2: Young people

Outcome 3: Older people and people with disability

Outcome 4: Women and girls

Outcome 5: Men

Outcome 6: Community

Outcome 1: Children

Children grow up in homes and communities that are equitable, respectful and free from violence and abuse.

Key Settings	Key Council Units	Key Community Partners
Education and care for children Sport, recreation, social and leisure spaces	Library Services Leisure Services Open Space Branch Social Policy and Early Years Branch	Aquatic and Leisure Centres Child care centres and kindergartens Merri Health Partners in Prevention Network Primary Schools Sport Clubs Victorian Department of Education and Training Victorian Department of Health and Human Services

Key Action Areas

1. Promote father-inclusive early years services that engage men as carers as well as equal and respectful partners at home.
2. Enhance opportunities for children and their parents to participate in activities and programs that foster positive personal identities and challenge gender stereotypes and inequality in early years, school and recreation settings.
3. Facilitate early years services, schools and family violence support services working together to address children's needs.

Outcome 2: Young people

Young people feel confident and supported to engage in respectful relationships and equal opportunities.

Key Settings	Key Council Units	Key Community Partners
Secondary schools, universities, TAFEs and other tertiary education institutions Sport, recreation, social and leisure spaces	Youth and Leisure Branch Open Space Branch	Aquatic and Leisure Centres Merri Health Local Learning Network Partners in Prevention Network Secondary schools Sport clubs Victorian Department of Education and Training

Key Action Areas

1. Continue to support young people through the Oxygen Project to create safe, respectful and inclusive spaces in the municipality.
2. Continue to support young people through the Oxygen Project to become aware, articulate and actively participate in addressing their key concerns, including family violence.
3. Facilitate youth services and family violence support services working together to respond to the needs of youth experiencing family violence.

Outcome 3: Older people and people with disability

Older people and people with disability live in homes and communities that are respectful and free from violence and abuse.

Key Settings	Key Council Units	Key Community Partners
Health, family and community services	Aged and Social Support Branch Community Development and Social Policy Unit	Merri Health Moreland Family Violence Network Seniors Rights Victoria Women with Disabilities Victoria

Key Action Areas

1. Ensure that older people and people with disability have an understanding of family violence and receive assistance required in accessing support services.
2. Promote awareness of the support needs of older people and people with disability in relation to family violence.

Outcome 4: Women and girls

Women and girls feel safe and supported in their homes and communities and experience no barriers in social, economic and political participation.

Key Settings	Key Council Units	Key Community Partners
Health, family and community services Sport, recreation, social and leisure spaces Workplaces, corporations and employee organisations	Community Development and Social Policy Economic Development Human Resources Moreland Executive Group Youth and Leisure Branch	Aquatic and Leisure Centres Merri Health Moreland Family Violence Network Municipal Association of Victoria Sport Clubs Women's Health in the North

Key Action Areas

1. Continue to enhance women's and girls' participation in active sports.
2. Continue to promote women's and girls' participation and leadership in the community and local decision-making.
3. Facilitate strong and responsive support services.
4. Support services to enhance access to safe housing options for women and children to prevent homelessness.
5. Demonstrate continued organisational commitment and leadership to advance equal participation and supporting employees experiencing family violence.

Outcome 5: Men

Men feel confident and supported as carers and respectful partners at home and benefit from social networks that foster positive personal identities.

Key Settings	Key Council Units	Key Community Partners
Education and care for children Health, family and community services Sport, recreation, social and leisure spaces Workplaces, corporations and employee organisations	Human Resources Moreland Executive Group Social Policy and Early Years Branch Youth and Leisure Branch White Ribbon Action Team	Aquatic and Leisure Centres Child Care Centres and Kindergartens Merri Health Neighbourhood Houses Sport Clubs Victorian Department of Education and Training White Ribbon Australia

Key Action Areas

1. Support men as carers and respectful partners in early years settings.
2. Increase opportunities for men that foster social connections, positive personal identities and challenge gender stereotypes and roles in recreation and community settings.
3. Demonstrate continued organisational commitment and leadership in advancing equal participation and engaging men in promoting gender equality and preventing violence against women.

Outcome 6: Community

Moreland's diverse communities have an understanding of the prevalence and impact of family violence and are supported to take action.

Key Settings	Key Council Units	Key Community Partners
Arts Faith-based contexts Health, family and community services Public spaces, transport, infrastructure and facilities Popular culture, advertising and entertainment	Community Development and Social Policy Social Support Services	Merri Health Moreland Family Violence Network Neighbourhood Houses White Ribbon Australia Women's Health in the North

Key Action Areas

1. Support community groups that have identified family violence as a concern to develop and implement targeted activities to address and prevent the issue.

Strategy implementation and review

An implementation plan will be developed in consultation with key Council business units and community partners to confirm actions, responsibilities, timelines, budget requirements and outcome measures. Where funding beyond the existing budget is required, external funding sources will be explored.

The implementation plan will include types of action identified in the *Change the Story* framework, as proven or promising techniques to promote primary prevention, such as:

- direct participation programs
- community strengthening
- organisational development
- communications and social marketing; and
- civil society advocacy.

Council is committed to learning through ongoing monitoring and a formal evaluation at the end of the strategy's lifetime to review outcomes and issues for future consideration.

Over the last five years the number of family violence incidents reported to Victoria Police almost doubled.

Key definitions

Elder abuse

The Victorian Government has adopted the following definition by the Australian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (ANPEA):

Any act occurring within a relationship where there is an implication of trust which results in harm to an older person. Abuse may be physical, sexual, financial, psychological, social and/or neglect.

Equality, Equity and Equitable

Equality affirms that all human beings are born free and equal, having the same rights and are entitled to the same level of respect (*Moreland Human Rights Policy 2016–2026*).

Equity means that Council services and programs should deliver outcomes for diverse communities on par with those that all members of our community can expect to receive.

Equitable describes an environment that fosters fairness and justice.

Family violence

Section 5 of the Victorian *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* defines family violence as:

- (a) Behaviour by a person towards a family member of that person if that behaviour:
 - (i) is physically or sexually abusive; or
 - (ii) is emotionally or psychologically abusive; or
 - (iii) is economically abusive; or
 - (iv) is threatening; or
 - (v) is coercive; or
 - (vi) in any other way controls or dominates the family member and causes that family member to feel fear for the safety or wellbeing of that family member or another person; or
- (b) Behaviour by a person that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of, behaviour referred to in paragraph (a).

More than half of the women who experienced violence had children in their care when the violence occurred.

Gender

The socially learnt roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for men and women; gender defines masculinity and femininity. Gender expectations vary between cultures and can change over time. (Change the Story, p. 61)

Gender equality

Gender equality involves equality of opportunity and equality of results. It includes the redistribution of resources and responsibilities between men and women and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures of gender inequality to achieve substantive equality. It is about recognising diversity and disadvantage to ensure equal outcomes for all and therefore often requires women-specific programs and policies to end existing inequalities. (Change the Story, p. 61)

Prevention

Three types of prevention can be distinguished (VicHealth 2007)⁵:

Primary prevention strategies seek to prevent violence before it occurs. Interventions can be delivered to the whole population (universal) or to particular groups that are at higher risk of using or experiencing violence in the future (targeted or selective). Some primary prevention strategies focus on changing behaviour and/or building the knowledge and skills of individuals. However, the structural, cultural and societal contexts in which violence occurs are also very important targets for primary prevention. Strategies that do not have a particular focus on violence against women, but address its underlying causes (such as gender inequality and poverty) are also primary prevention strategies.

Early intervention (or secondary prevention) is targeted at individuals and groups who exhibit early signs of perpetrating violent behaviour or of being subject to violence. Early intervention strategies can be aimed at changing behaviours or increasing the skills of individuals and groups.

Crisis Intervention (or tertiary prevention) implemented after violence has occurred with the aim to respond to the violence and its consequences and to ensure that it does not occur again or escalate. Strategies may involve support and treatment for women and children who are affected by violence and for men who use violence.

Violence against women

The United Nations defines violence against women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.” (UN 1993)

5 VicHealth (2007): ‘Preventing violence before it occurs: A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria’ <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/preventing-violence-before-it-occurs>



Selected references

Municipal Association of Victoria (2012): *Prevention of Violence against Women Leadership Statement.*

Our Watch, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) and VicHealth (2015): *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia.*

Royal Commission into Family Violence (29 March 2016): *Report and Recommendations.*

VicHealth (2007): *Preventing violence before it occurs: A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria.*

Women's Health in the North (2016): *Violence against Women Factsheet 2014–2015 – Moreland.*

Women's Health In the North (2011): *Building a Respectful Community Preventing Violence Against Women – A Strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne 2011–2016.*

Appendix 1

Legislative and policy context

A wide range of legislation and policies provide the foundation for Council's *Preventing Family Violence in Moreland Strategy 2016–2020* as the table below shows.

International Legislation:

UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1983

UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1993.

National and State Legislation:

Sex Discrimination Act 1984

Victorian Family Violence Protection Act 2008

Council Policies	Region/State Policies	National Policies
<p><i>Council Plan 2013–2017</i></p> <p><i>Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013–2017</i></p> <p><i>Moreland Human Rights Policy 2016–2026</i></p> <p><i>Moreland 2025 Community Vision</i></p> <p><i>Active Women and Girls in Moreland Strategy 2009</i></p> <p><i>Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2014–2018</i></p> <p><i>Domestic Animal Management Plan 2013–2017</i></p> <p><i>Early Years Strategy 2016–2020</i></p> <p><i>The Oxygen Project Phase Two – Report and Action Plan 2015–2018</i></p>	<p>State Government</p> <p><i>Royal Commission into Family Violence Report and Recommendations, March 2016</i></p> <p><i>Gender Equality Strategy (in development)</i></p> <p>Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families – Towards a safer future for Indigenous families and communities 10 year plan</p> <p>State</p> <p><i>Municipal Association of Victoria Prevention of Violence Against Women Leadership Statement</i></p> <p>Northern Region</p> <p><i>Building A Respectful Community Preventing Violence Against Women Strategy 2011–2016</i></p>	<p>Federal Government</p> <p><i>National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022</i></p> <p>National</p> <p><i>Change the Story – A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia</i></p>

Key documents include:

- The 1993 *UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women* recognises violence against women as a violation of human rights and manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women and established a framework for government action. In 1999 the UN General Assembly designated 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.
- The *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022* was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and released in February 2011. The Plan aims to bring together Australian governments, community organisations and individuals to reduce violence against women and their children.
- The Victorian Government has committed to implementing all 227 recommendations of the *Royal Commission into Family Violence Report and Recommendations* released on 29 March 2016. A number of the recommendations relate to primary prevention, including strengthening prevention practice and evaluation, leadership and governance as well as funding.
- For almost two decades Moreland Council's *Statement of Commitment to Women* from 1998 has provided the framework for Council actions to promote women's participation in the community and in local decision-making, enhance women's health and safety, support women's financial independence and celebrate women's achievements.
- Moreland Council was the one of the first local governments in Victoria to develop a family violence prevention strategy, the *Addressing Family Violence in Moreland Strategy 2006–2009*. This Strategy was replaced by the *Moreland Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2011–2015* five years ago.
- The *Moreland Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013–2017* includes key outcome 3.7.9 'People feel safer in the community and at home' including strategies that provide leadership preventing violence against women by promoting gender equity, equality and respectful relationships as well as promoting safe, respectful and equitable communities, workplaces and public environments.
- The *Human Rights Policy 2016–2026* includes a commitment to equal opportunities for women and girls to fully participate at all levels of decision making in the community and to foster an environment which advances participation of women and girls in political, economic, cultural, educational and personal spheres.

**Gender inequality
is recognised as the
underlying cause
of violence against
women**

Appendix 2

Vulnerable groups

Research has identified increased vulnerability to family violence for:

Young Women:

The rate of women who had experienced violence in the previous 12 months was more than twice as high for 18 to 24-year-olds than for all women – 13% compared to 5.3% (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2013).⁶

Pregnant Women:

Women are at greater risk of experiencing violence from an intimate partner during pregnancy and post partum. If domestic and family violence already exists, it is likely to increase in severity during pregnancy (Australian Institute of Family Studies 2015).⁷

Children:

Exposure to domestic and family violence can affect children's cognitive development and behaviour, schooling and mental and physical wellbeing. It is also the leading cause of homelessness for children.

Empirical evidence about the extent to which children are exposed to domestic and family violence and the negative effect this has on their development is reflected in legislation such as the Victorian *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*, which includes behaviour by a person that causes a child to hear, witness or be otherwise exposed to the effects of family violence behaviours in the Act's definition of family violence.

There is also the issue of co- occurrence, where children growing up with family violence at home are also more likely to experience other forms of child abuse, such as sexual, physical and emotional abuse/maltreatment (Australian Institute of Family Studies 2015).⁸

Women with Disabilities:

Women and girls with disabilities are twice as likely as women and girls without disabilities to experience violence throughout their lives. Over one-third of women with disabilities experienced some form of intimate partner violence. The most common forms of violence reported were psychological, physical, controlling behaviour and economic abuse (Women with Disabilities Victoria 2014).⁹

Indigenous Women:

Victorian-based studies have identified that Indigenous women experience rates of family violence between 5 and 45 times higher than non-Indigenous women. This higher prevalence of violence is understood to be the result of social and economic marginalisation, historical impacts of colonisation and disruption to Indigenous culture and identity (VicHealth 2007).

The identification of family and family culture in Indigenous communities is broader and more complex than in non-Indigenous families and the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* includes a definition of a relative as a person who, "under Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander tradition or contemporary social practice, is the person's relative".

The Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families: towards a safer future for Indigenous families and communities 10 year plan was written by Indigenous community representatives from across the state, Indigenous organisations and senior representatives from government departments to guide, inform and direct their joint efforts to reduce Indigenous family violence.

6 ABS 2012 Personal Safety Survey: 'Demographics of those who have experienced violence'. <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4906.0Chapter4002012>

7 Monica Campo 2015: 'Domestic and family violence in pregnancy and early parenthood – overview and emerging interventions'. Child Family Community Australia CFCA Practitioner Resource, December 2015, Australian Institute of Family Studies. <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/domestic-and-family-violence-pregnancy-and-early-parenthood>

8 Monica Campo 2015: 'Children's exposure to domestic and family violence – Key issues and responses'. Child Family Community Australia CFCA Practitioner Resource. CFCA Paper No. 36, December 2015, Australian Institute of Family Studies. <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/childrens-exposure-domestic-and-family-violence>

9 Women with Disabilities Victoria (2014): 'Position statement – Violence against women with disabilities'. [http://www.wdv.org.au/documents/WDV%20Violence%20Position%20Paper%20\(web%20version\).pdf](http://www.wdv.org.au/documents/WDV%20Violence%20Position%20Paper%20(web%20version).pdf)

Women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds:

Women from a culturally and linguistically diverse background who experience family violence are particularly vulnerable due to limited access to culturally appropriate services, language difficulties, lack of familiarity with service systems and their rights. They may also experience grief related to experiences of torture and trauma, alienation from culture and community due to immigration and mistrust of authorities including police. Further, the women may experience issues of stigma associated with family violence, a lack of family and community support and access to financial resources and fear of deportation (InTouch 2014).¹⁰

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) Communities:

There is limited statistical data on the prevalence of family violence in these communities but the available data suggests that the rate of intimate partner violence is similar or even higher than in the general community. This is of concern considering that LGBTIQ people also experience higher rates of violence, harassment and discrimination in the wider community and that they may be less likely to seek support due to a lack of appropriate services as well as distrust of police and support services due to discrimination (Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria 2015).¹¹

Older People:

Australian research indicates that approximately 2% to 6% of people aged 60 years and over may experience abuse (Seniors Rights Victoria).¹² There is no prevalence data for Victoria, however a study of clients that received advice from Seniors Rights Victoria between 2012 and 2014 indicates that over sixty per cent of older people reported at least one abusive matter. Financial abuse and psychological/emotional abuse were the most common types of elder abuse reported. Over 90 per cent of alleged perpetrators were related to the older person or in a de facto relationship and men were more likely to be the perpetrators for all kinds of abuse (financial, psychological or emotional, physical, social and sexual). Women were more likely to be victims – the total number of older women reporting abuse was approximately 2.5 times higher than for older men (National Ageing Research Institute 2015).¹³

10 InTouch, Multicultural Centre against Family Violence (2014): 'Submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration Inquiry into Domestic Violence in Australia', August 2014, Submission 138 http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Finance_and_Public_Administration/Domestic_Violence/Submissions

11 Kate O'Halloran, 2015: 'Family violence in an LGBTIQ Context'. DVRCV Advocate Edition 2 Spring/ Summer 2015: <http://www.dvrcv.org.au/sites/default/files/Family-violence-in-an-LGBTIQ-context-Kate-OHalloran.pdf>

12 Seniors Rights Victoria (2015): 'Submission to the Royal Commission into Family Violence, June 2015. <http://seniorsrights.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/SRVs-submission-to-the-RCFV1.pdf>

13 National Ageing Research Institute in partnership with Seniors Rights Victoria (2015): 'Profile of elder abuse in Victoria – Analysis of data about people seeking help from Seniors Rights Victoria, SUMMARY REPORT June 2015. http://seniorsrights.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Summary-Report_Profile-of-Elder-Abuse-in-Victoria_Final.pdf

Appendix 3

Key prevention settings

Change the Story, the shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children by Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth (2015) identified the following key settings to drive change whose significant potential for impact is supported by practice and/or evidence.

Setting/Sector	Rationale
Education and care for children and young people: Includes childcare, kindergartens/ preschools, primary and secondary schools	Schools and education centres play an important role in the socialisation and cognitive and emotional development of children and young people.
Universities, TAFEs and other tertiary education institutions: Includes academic, vocational and training environments	Activity in this setting can directly influence people during the transition from school to work or career change. These institutions are also organisations through which social norms can be shaped and changed and gender segregation of the future workforce be reduced.
Workplaces, corporations and employee organisations: Includes industry, employer networks, unions, employment agencies, public and private sectors	These environments provide significant opportunity to reach large populations, including men. Through activity to influence aspects of organisational culture, work environment and practices, there is strong potential to shape social norms and relationships. Organisations can derive direct benefits from this activity.
Sports, recreation, social and leisure spaces: Includes local and regional clubs, professional institutions, state and national associations and the organisations providing services and facilities to them. Also includes social and leisure spaces, licensed venues and facilities	These settings provide an opportunity to reach large groups and communities, including young men. These contexts exert a powerful influence on gender relations as they impact on attitudes, behaviours and social norms. Sports leaders can also be influential as community champions and ambassadors.
Arts: Includes community networks and professional organisations across the creative industries, including visual and performing arts, film and literature.	The arts are a valuable medium for exploring and challenging social norms and also encouraging community participation.

Setting/Sector	Rationale
Health, family and community services: Includes hospitals, community health, family support and relationships centres, settlement and migrant resource centres, maternal and child health, pre- and antenatal care, primary health, mental health and other social services.	<p>Many agencies in this setting have a long-standing history in leading community development and cross-sector initiatives.</p> <p>As they provide direct services across the population, they have strong potential to influence individuals and communities. Health and social service programs can provide an important means of reaching groups that are outside other settings, for example, young people outside the education system, first-time parents and newly arrived migrants and refugees.</p>
Faith-based contexts: Includes places, networks and associations that are brought together on the basis of faith, religion or belief.	<p>These environments are a powerful influence on social norms and beliefs and their leaders can play a key role in building respectful relationships. Organisations in this sphere can also affect individuals and communities through the delivery of programs and services.</p>
Media: Includes industries and organisations that deliver media in all its forms – print, television, radio and social media.	<p>The media has an important role to play as it has wide reach and has a significant influence in shaping and maintaining social norms. Media organisations themselves may also have potential to develop into workplaces that actively support equal and respectful relationships.</p>
Popular culture, advertising and entertainment: Refers to the variety of industries, mediums and corporations that contribute to popular culture and shape consumer choices and behaviours.	<p>The organisations and leaders in this setting have strong potential to contribute to the development of more positive social norms while also meeting their own goals. Some activity may be led by industry whereas others will involve partnerships with government and community. In this setting there is also potential to address the influence of pornography on social norms relating to gender and relationships across society.</p>
Public spaces, transport, infrastructure and facilities: Includes the wide range of industries and sectors that influence the development and use of public environments and resources in our society.	<p>Local, State and Federal Governments have a particular role to play as well as the communities and organisations that contribute to planning and development. Consideration of equality and diversity during planning and development can have a significant bearing on the extent of women's economic, social and civic participation and also on access to facilities, transport and public spaces.</p>



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Moreland Language Link

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Tiếng Việt	9280 1915		9280 1919