



How your workplace can break the cycle of family violence

WHY TAKING IMMEDIATE ACTION WILL SAVE AUSTRALIAN LIVES



Change tomorrow.

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Introduction

Family violence in Australia has reached a point where one woman a week and one man a month are killed by a current or former partner (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2018). Together, we need to change this.

It's difficult to know where to begin, but your organisation, big or small, can do a lot to help change the statistics that affect us all. Since the age of 15, one in six women and one in 16 men have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a current or previous partner. When it comes to emotional abuse, the statistics are even higher – one in four women and one in six men (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2018).

Domestic violence expert, Abby Newman (2019) says, "When you think about the word violence you think physical violence, but a lot of survivors say, 'I wish he'd just hit me.' Because being voiceless, not having choice, and not having the ability to be who you are is probably one of the worst experiences of violence."

The effects of family violence are nothing short of devastating and collective action needs to be taken. Whether you have experienced it directly or know someone who has; we are all affected by family and domestic violence because we are all part of a community that is negatively impacted by it. It's with this paper that we are looking to raise awareness and build a collective understanding and intolerance for behaviours and attitudes that perpetrate violence. We want to show you that there is an effective way to reach perpetrators and people experiencing domestic violence. It's possible within your workplace.

"Our work here is centred on inspiring workplaces to take immediate action. In these spaces people have the power to build cultures that become part of the solution to help break the cycle of family violence" (Newman 2019).

While we know that economic independence can help people who are experiencing family violence, it's not a finite solution. Modified cultural norms are essential as well as education and empowerment. The workplace is often a place where these elements can come together and make a lasting impact, especially for individuals who are experiencing family violence. "Work can help people define themselves and can help to break the cycle of control, giving people self-esteem, self-confidence, and a sense of belonging," says Renae Lowry (2019), Executive General Manager at MatchWorks.

"When we are faced with a statistic that sees one woman every week lose her life, it's imperative that we take action and do everything we can to make change – you can do this in your workplace tomorrow. It's a problem that needs us to act, act now, and act together" (Lowry 2019).

What really is family and domestic violence?

There have been many attempts to succinctly define family and domestic violence; however, it is an issue that needs to consider many intersections as well as the broader social context of all violence. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare defines domestic violence as a subset of family violence, stating that, "It refers to violent behaviour between current or former intimate partners – typically, where one partner tries to exert power and control over the other, usually through fear" (2018). The word 'family', says Newman (2019), broadens the definition of who could be the perpetrator and survivor.

While the statistics for family violence are shockingly high in Australia, Newman says that people impacted by family violence are often experiencing reporting barriers based on the perceptions of what actually constitutes family violence and what doesn't. "Family violence is the leading cause of death and disability for women aged between 15 and 44 ... yet, it is under-researched and underreported; therefore, a lot of the statistics are potentially out of whack. It can be difficult for survivors to actually recognise that they're going through family violence; we so often think of just physical violence, yet people are experiencing other forms of violence like psychological abuse, emotional abuse, and financial abuse" (Newman 2019).

The skewed narrowing of family violence can often come from the media and permeate our wider social thinking. Lowry says that there is often a temptation to think that domestic violence only affects those of the lower socioeconomic status. This is such a myth, says Lowry. You can walk past any door, in any street, and there could be people impacted by family violence (2019).

"A 2012 Australian study found that the majority of media reports of violence against women portrayed violence as *random acts perpetrated and experienced by individuals with problems* instead of as a part of a broader pattern in society" (Morgan & Politoff 2012). These kinds of mass representations need to be changed in order to increase the awareness of family violence and make reporting more accessible. And, these conversations can begin in your workplace.

The urgency for change

As family violence is the leading cause of death for women aged 15 to 44, Newman describes what that statistic actually means, "The reality is, the most likely way I am going to die as a single woman in this age bracket is by taking a male partner." And, this area of violence is still experiencing under-reporting. As discussed above, narrow ideas of what constitutes family violence is one factor that contributes to under-reporting; shame is another one. "No one wants to be identified as a survivor, or identifying their partner as perpetrating family violence. Those sorts of things really carry shame. So, when we ask survivors if they've experienced family violence, they might say no for a collection of reasons" (Newman 2019).

Statistically, it takes a woman up to seven attempts to leave an abusive relationship, during which time her health is seriously impacted. "Mental health conditions were the largest contributor to the burden [of disease] due to physical/sexual intimate partner violence, with anxiety disorders making up the

greatest proportion (35%), followed by depressive disorders (32%)” (Ayre et al. 2016). The effects of family violence permeate a person’s health far beyond the moment in time. There can also be cases where people who are living in domestic violence situations are blamed for the violence they have experienced.

Newman paints the picture of accepted societal blaming in the form of silence. “We often don’t hold vigils for women who are murdered by their partners in their own homes because there’s still a part of our community that might ask the question, ‘Well why didn’t she just leave if it’s that tough?’ We never ask the question, ‘Why does he do that?’, and that’s the change that we need to make from blaming a person who is experiencing family violence, even when we don’t intend to blame, even when we don’t actually realise that we’re putting a responsibility for her on her” (2019). Newman goes on to say that the reason a woman may stay in a violent family is complex and could include the fact that she will be 30% more likely to end up dead if she chooses to leave. That is a frightening statistic for anyone, let alone those who have been controlled for a long period of time.

Family violence – whether it’s expressed as physical, sexual, or emotional – is never confined to the perpetrator and the person experiencing the violence. Effects of family violence are ricocheted throughout the home and the community, with children being the most vulnerable ones experiencing harmful outcomes. “... qualitative research has shown that children exposed to family, domestic, and sexual violence can experience long-term effects on their development and have increased risk of mental health issues, and behavioural and learning difficulties” (Campo 2015). This is resulting in children being placed in out-of-home care and, family and domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness in Australia – 72,000 women, 34,000 children, and 9,000 men reported family and domestic violence as the cause or, contributing cause, to their homelessness in 2016-17 (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2018).

With children involved, the cycle of violence is statistically more likely to continue. The Australian Bureau of Statistics reported that 2.1 million women and almost 900,000 men witnessed violence towards their mother by a partner, and nearly 820,000 women and men witnessed violence towards their father, before the age of 15. “People who, as children, witnessed partner violence against their parents were 2-4 times as likely to experience partner violence themselves (as adults) as people who had not” (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2018).

There is an urgency for change, to stop the cycles of family violence in Australia. Newman also points out that there is also an urgency for more research into how best to support perpetrators and people who are experiencing family violence from diverse backgrounds and cultures. As this paper continues, intersectionality becomes a focus, as we narrow in on three vulnerable groups – people with disabilities, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The risk of family violence is higher for women and men within these groups and it is important that information is specific to the challenges they face.

Why it's important for workplaces to take action

With an issue of this magnitude, it can often feel daunting to find a place to start; a way to contribute, to change the statistics and the outcomes for people living in a domestic violence situation. As Renae Lowry says, "...Family violence can happen to anyone, and we need to change the conversation from 'it's out there', to 'it's everywhere'" (2019). From this point of acknowledgement, we can begin to recognise that we need to move beyond discussion and towards action. A physical place that is recognised to improve the outcome for people impacted by family violence is the workplace. Having employment and then having this workplace actively involved in creating an environment of change for people experiencing family violence, can make a significant difference. And, women who are employed seek more help than those who are isolated outside of the workforce (Dalal 2011).

On the flip side of this, fewer than half of people who witness violence, sexism, or discrimination in social or workplace contexts reported that they would say or do something in response (Our Watch 2015). This needs to change. We need to speak up, support people living in family violence situations, and act as advocates for their survival.

There is also the financial impact for businesses. "In 2015-16, the financial cost of violence against women and their children in Australia was estimated at \$22 billion" (KPMG 2016). When related directly to a workplace, the financial impact comes from lost productivity, absenteeism, and high staff turnover. We know that workplaces can make a positive contribution to this issue and even a small change can make a lasting difference.

"A 5% reduction in family violence would prevent 6000 new cases of violence-related injury, illness and disability. It would save \$38 million in health sector costs and \$333 million in productivity costs over time" (KPMG 2016).

The UN has strongly recommended economic empowerment as part of the solution (Dalal 2011), but this alone cannot protect people from family violence. As mentioned previously, economic independence is just one part of the solution which also includes education, modified cultural norms, and gender equality as we know that rigid ideas about gender roles can drive family violence. When a workplace is able to become a space that challenges the norms of someone's often controlled home environment, they are able to define themselves in the wider context of the world and this can help break the cycle of control within a family violence situation. Work gives people self-esteem, self-confidence, and a sense of belonging.

"Work places are often a safe place for people but we need to remember that family violence will still follow them, that we're connected by phones, we're connected by text messages, we're connected by people showing up at workplaces" (Newman 2019). Newman goes on to identify signs that someone experiencing family violence is still being controlled while at work: "It might look like you've got someone who's on their phone 24/7, not performing well at their job, or someone who starts to take constant sick leave" (Newman 2019).

The first way in which we can all make a contribution towards change is with our own behaviours and thoughts around workplace norms. We need to call out some of the overt behaviours because these ideas become the norm and reinforce a perpetrator's sense of entitlement and can even justify their use of family violence" (Newman 2019).

What workplaces can do to save lives

Yes, our behaviours and our attitudes are powerful and, as per the example above, they can directly contribute to the reinforcement of entitlement, or they can challenge behaviours and hold a mirror up to harmful attitudes. We need to ensure that gender bias behaviours and attitudes are not tolerated, and staff need to be educated about what controlling behaviour and family violence actually is. This is key because, as Lowry states, if a perpetrator experienced family violence in their home as a child, they may be unaware of the cycle of control that they are now continuing (2019). Workplaces can help perpetrators to identify this and stop the problem earlier.

Understanding a person's challenges within a family violence situation is essential in fostering a space of safety and support. This means understanding why they may be distracted, why they're not performing and why they may need to take time off work.

"They're [women are] very capable so they will survive and survive and survive, and they will maintain their jobs in the face of some pretty extreme behaviours. They'll keep raising their children and get them to school, and then come to work and cover up black eyes with makeup - there's a whole range of women doing very creative things to cover up for some pretty serious stuff going on. It's normally only when it gets to breaking point that we find out. When they can no longer sustain that balancing act, and it breaks them ... some of the time, people don't even know that what they're experiencing is not okay" (Lowry 2019).

While Newman states that there isn't a white knight solution where we ride in and save people (2019), from a place of understanding, there are practical ways in which a workplace can break the cycle of family violence, help more people to leave a violent situation, and help people to survive.

Workplace strategies

We understand that it can be difficult to find a place to begin when working towards change. First, we need to acknowledge the magnitude of this issue, which we have spent time discussing at length. Now, it's time to talk about some strategies that you can implement - some that you can start today and others that will take time to adopt. Your willingness is paramount in breaking the cycle of family violence in Australia.

1. Support via workplace policy

There are some key ways that your workplace can ensure that all staff are aware of the potential signs of family violence and the best ways to handle the situation. Clear policies can also shape a culture of intolerance towards family violence. Some things you can champion in your workplace are:

- The provision of flexible work arrangements
- The development of clear policies and procedures around family violence
- Awareness training for all managers and education programs for staff
- Have trained contact officers available within your organisation
- Workplace safety plans for managers to keep staff safe in the workplace
- Free access to counsellors to provide specialised support
- Flyers about where to access support can be placed on the back of toilet doors
- If you're in a position to do so, you should ensure that paid family violence leave is included in staff contracts; you can also advocate for this change in your place of work.

2. Run family violence training sessions for your staff

Delivering family violence sessions to employees will give your staff the skills and confidence to effectively manage family violence issues as they arise in the workplace. See Appendix A for more details about how to access family violence training for your workplace.

3. Address gender inequality in the workplace

Examples of gender inequality in the workplace include unequal pay, diminished responsibilities, discrimination due to pregnancy and/or caring responsibilities, sexual harassment, and relationship status discrimination. So, what can you do? Think about examples of gender inequality in your workplace and start looking at content that addresses gender inequality. Here are some examples you can watch and read today:

- Being a man in the workplace: <https://youtu.be/8eSj1jnmD3Q>
- Have a look at the genU fact sheet 'Gender Inequality in the Workplace', which has strategies for managers and can be found in Appendix B

4. Share videos with staff and colleagues about control

Lowry says that the easiest thing workplaces can do is to show videos to staff in a group setting. "It's such a simple exercise, just a couple of minutes to educate staff about how control works." (Lowry 2019). A video example is:

- Love Control: <https://youtu.be/GCP4pIKci-Q>

5. Be observant and check in with staff

Newman says that we need to be aware of the signs of family violence and ask the question: "*Are you safe at home?*" A yes answer may mean yes or may mean that the person is just not comfortable to disclose right now (2019).

"If you receive a response like that but still suspect violence in the home, you can say: *'I understand family violence, I respect your safety and I also respect your ability to make decisions.'*" (Newman 2019).

6. Believe the person when they disclose

It takes enormous courage to disclose family violence due to the sense of shame. When a person confides in you or a team member, it is critical that this person is believed and their trauma is not diminished. Newman says that disclosures have to be led by the person experiencing family violence. And while someone may tell you about their experience, they may not want you to do something about it. It's possible that they have fear in disclosure, thinking that if they tell someone, maybe then things will happen that they can't control and they're not ready for (2019).

"Most people don't want someone to take over and fix it for them. They want to be empowered. The best thing you can do is link them into the right services" (Lowry 2019). However, Lowry is quick to clarify that sometimes safety is going to trump what a person wants and you will need specialist family violence services to get support (2019).

7. Can you support the person impacted by violence to relocate?

While this is not possible for all workplaces, if you do have operations in other states, you can make staff aware that moving to other locations is a possibility. This can help a person to begin to see a pathway towards physical safety.

8. Acknowledge International Day for the Elimination of Violence against women and International Day of Human Rights

You can host workplace events as part of your commitment to ending all forms of violence occurring in families and communities. Remind those impacted by family violence that support is available to them. Including these days in your company calendar reinforces company values and highlights future work that needs to be done in this area.

The impact of change ripples across Australia

When we think about changing the trajectory of family violence statistics in Australia, of course the person's survival is the driving motivation. There are, however, benefits that go beyond individuals and the interception of cyclical family violence. In addition to the \$22 billion financial cost estimated by KPMG (2016), the social impact of change can mean that people who were once experiencing family violence are now able to make positive contributions to their community. This helps create a safer, fairer, happier, and healthier community.

Then there's productivity. Effectively addressing family violence in the workplace can overcome a range of common costs and impacts to productivity. Staff performance and productivity will increase; staff turnover and absenteeism will decrease; and organisations can hold up a reputation that says family

violence, blaming the person experiencing violence, gender biases, and staying ignorant to the cycles of abuse are not tolerated.

Breaking the cycle

In order to break the cycle of family violence, small steps can make a significant difference. For people who are currently experiencing family violence, there are avenues of change that you can access.

"You'll always be defined by the worst possible behaviour you accept...the smallest of actions can matter and can make a difference" (Lowry 2019). As discussed earlier, small actions, such as not accepting gender inequality in your workplace, can create the space for change. From the point of view of the person experiencing family violence, even small steps can seem harder to broach and are often cased in nuanced layers of controlling behaviours, but there can be ways to break the cycle of violence.

- **Direct employees to support services including support groups**

There are many organisations doing great work to see a change in family and domestic violence cases in Australia. We have compiled a list of organisations that can support you and your efforts within the workplace. See Appendix A.

- **Access family violence training for your staff**

Family violence training for staff will help them understand and recognise the signs of family violence in the workplace. It will also offer tools and strategies to help staff feel more confident to address the issue.

- **Tap in to financial support services**

Financial control is often a way that family violence is perpetrated and fuelled. While financial independence can take time, and there are complexities around financial control, being able to tackle debts and other financial issues can help to break the cycle of violence.

- **Sharing stories gives others hope**

Lowry says that hearing a story from a survivor can be one of the most powerful tools in creating hope for a person experiencing family violence. "I don't think many people grow up thinking they were going to live with domestic violence. But, hearing a story of how that evolutionary process can start, and equally end, can give other people hope. They may think, 'okay, I don't deserve this, this is not okay ... if she got out of it then I can learn from her story and start to make that journey out myself'" (Lowry 2019). Raising the profile of survivors, and of those who don't survive, can help to break the cycle of violence.

Intersections of violence

Some groups of people are at greater risk of family, domestic, and sexual violence. In particular, Indigenous women, young women, pregnant women, women separating from their partners, women with disabilities, and women experiencing financial hardship are all groups that are statistically more likely to experience violence (Our Watch 2015). Then there are women and men who experience abuse or witness domestic violence before the age of 15. When certain behaviours are normalised in a home setting, there is a greater risk of these behaviours and attitudes becoming cyclical.

In this paper, we shine a light on three vulnerable groups to show the ways in which family violence can affect people differently – there is not one expression of violence that can be placed on every person or survivor. With an understanding of these intersections, we can know how to speak about and advocate for change.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are 3.1 times more likely to experience family violence than the national statistics, 11 times more likely to die, and 32 times more likely to be hospitalised and experience significant health impacts due to family violence (Our Watch 2018). It is important to note that violence is not part of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and violence against Indigenous women is perpetrated by men from many different cultural backgrounds. Data suggests that violence against Indigenous women in remote areas is more likely to be perpetrated by Indigenous men and violence in urban areas is more likely to be perpetrated by non-Indigenous men (Our Watch 2018).

“Violence against women is not an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander problem. Nor should Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people bear sole responsibility for addressing it. It is an Australian problem, and it is perpetrated by men of all cultural backgrounds” (Our Watch 2015).

What can we do?

In order to prevent violence and start breaking the cycles of family violence in Indigenous cultures and communities, work needs to be done to recognise the ongoing impacts of colonisation, heal the impacts of intergenerational trauma, and strengthen culture and identity. We also all need to use our voices and act to challenge the condoning of violence in Indigenous communities, address racial inequalities, support Indigenous women into leadership and decision-making roles, and amend discriminatory policies and practices. While not everyone has access to change policies, everyone can challenge gender stereotypes, challenge racism in all its forms, and engage and challenge harmful and pro-violence ideas about masculinity and relationships. This is how we can be part of the change in a very effective way.

Prevention strategies also need to address drinking cultures among all groups of men that emphasise aggression and disrespect for women, as well as drinking cultures among non-Indigenous men that involve racism and disrespect for Indigenous women. “Colonisation introduced alcohol to disrupted, displaced and traumatised communities. It was used as a coping mechanism but we need to introduce strategies to address the underlying reasons for harmful alcohol use ... Alcohol is a contributing factor and often a trigger for violence, but it is not the cause” (Our Watch 2015).

Culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

Approximately one third of Australia’s population is born overseas and 20 percent of Australians have at least one parent born overseas (Murdolo & Quiazon 2016). This diversity in culture and language means that conversations about privilege and power, especially if communicated by Anglo-Australian men or women, may not resonate with immigrant and refugee men or women.

“Violence against women takes place in the intersections of systems of power and oppression. Women experience violence differently depending on their circumstances ... women marginalised by age,

culture, ethnicity, sexual identity and visa status are more vulnerable to violence and are less likely to have the resources to report it" (Murdolo & Quiazon 2016). Newman says that for culturally and linguistically diverse women; on top of immigration, visas, residency status, and language barriers; their cultural understanding of family violence from their home country can be vastly different. There can also be a fear of police and justice services which puts the breaks on reporting violence (2019).

What can we do?

When we speak about stopping the cycle of family abuse for culturally and linguistically diverse families, we need to acknowledge the additional vulnerabilities and barriers women are facing. Dr. Adele Murdolo and Dr. Regina Quiazon also state that there needs to be an understanding around the fact that notion of gender equality and the idea of social and cultural change can mean vastly different things for men from immigrant and refugee communities compared to Australian born men. And men have a positive role to play in being part of the solution by challenging ideas of masculinity and manhood (2016).

Global human rights and social justice perspectives should be part of the conversations to immigrant and refugee men. This can ensure that men are working together towards a common aim, one that has an ethical and political stance of which they can be proud. From here, it is important to place emphasis on the positive community, family, and social relationships that flow from gender equality. Putting men at the centre of this allows them to be active agents and facilitators of change.

People with disability

The United Nations Human Rights Council defines people with a disability as having long-term physical, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis of others (2012). Women with disability experience a very high rate of domestic violence. The perpetrators of this violence can come from carers, parents, or other family members as well as spouses (Lowry 2019). It can be physical and psychological violence as well as neglect; withholding medication and assistive devices, refusal of caregivers to assist with daily living such as bathing or eating, verbal abuse and ridicule, and controlling behaviours are just some examples of abusive behaviour (UN Human Rights Council 2012).

When women and men with disability are being abused, they experience barriers to reporting which can mean that the violence continues. "Reporting family violence for women with disabilities often means changing their entire care set-up" (Newman 2019). There can be difficulties in making and getting care plans, and when the plan involves a perpetrator who's in a carer position, they will have access to all funding and control over a person's care. This can mean that the abuse can restrict a person's mobility, medication, and communication.

When communication is restricted, it can be difficult to identify an abusive environment. "Quite often it gets put down to behavioural issues that's associated with a disability, when actually that behaviour is in response to abuse" (Lowry 2019). Communication barriers experienced by persons with sensory disabilities can also lead them to being targeted in the belief that they will not be able to complain. Furthermore, a lack of sex education of women with disabilities contributes to sexual violence committed against them - they may be unable to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate/abusive behaviours (UN Human Rights Council 2012).

What can we do?

It's important to understand all of the additional vulnerabilities and barriers to reporting that people with disability face; this means that the community and support organisations need to be aware and ready to act on behalf of people with disability. Disability organisations can work together to develop policies and programs, and staff working with people with disability may need additional education to ensure that they know the signs to look out for so that they can be part of the identification process. Some of the things we need to be aware of are:

- People with disability experiencing family violence may have their medication used as a way to control them – restrictions of medication or being over-medicated can occur
- People may not have access to communication aids
- They may not have access to their own finances and are therefore controlled financially
- Emotional reactions or unusual injuries may be explained as part of disability when abuse is actually occurring

The work you do today is making a difference

One of the most important takeaways from this document is that you can make a difference. With such shocking statistics surrounding this complex issue, it can feel like your workplace efforts will be inadequate against the insurmountable change required. This simply isn't true. We know that the workplace brings together key elements that have the power to contribute to lasting change, for an individual experiencing family or domestic violence and for the issue as an Australian priority. Education, empowerment, belonging, modified cultural norms, and economic independence; the spaces you create within your organisation can build cultures that help to break the cycle of family violence.

As we said earlier, just a 5% reduction in family violence will save lives. 6,000 cases of violence-related injury, illness, and disability will be prevented with this seemingly small shift (KPMG 2016). Your workplace can have this kind of impact as you prioritise the strategies we have outlined in this document and become an ally against family violence.

"It's important to do anything we can to influence a reduction in the death rates amongst women who are experiencing domestic violence ... the workplace can be a concentrated centre for change and that's why we're putting so much focus on it. Even simple shifts in regards to acceptable language can make all the difference" (Lowry 2019).

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Appendix A: Support services

These organisations are working to support you. For people who are experiencing family violence, for survivors, for those who are working break the cycle of family violence, and for advocates towards change.

1300 Respect

1800respect.org.au/

Call 1800 737 732

Confidential information, counselling, and support service. This organisation is open 24 hours to support people impacted by sexual assault, domestic or family violence, and abuse

Relationships Australia

relationships.org.au/

Call 1300 364 277

Supporting people to achieve positive and respectful relationships.

Lifeline

lifeline.org.au/

Call 13 11 14

A 24-hour phone crisis support and suicide prevention service.

MensLine Australia

mensline.org.au

Call 1300 789 978

A 24-hour phone and online support and referral service for men with family and relationship issues.

Kids Helpline

kidshelpline.com.au

Call 1800 55 1800

Phone, email, and web chat counselling for young people aged 5-25.

Local GP

The employee's local GP can provide links to specialist support services in their local area.

Employee Assistance Program

Many workplaces offer a confidential counselling service to their employees to support their wellbeing in the workplace and in their personal lives.

genU Family Violence Training

Call 1300 582 687

Email training@genu.org.au

genU Training can deliver Family Violence Training in your workplace.

National Relay Service

Call 1800 555 677

For people who are deaf, hard of hearing and/or have a speech impairment.

Translating and Interpreting Service

Call 13 14 50

For people who speak another language and require assistance accessing services.

Appendix B: Gender Inequality in the workplace



GENDER INEQUALITY IN THE WORK PLACE

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

This is what gender inequality looks like in the work place

Unequal pay

Diminished Responsibilities

Exclusion from conversations

Discrimination due to pregnancy/
caring responsibilities

Discrimination due to the need
for flexible hours

Sexual Harassment

Glass ceilings

Positional bias

Outdated views

Relationship status discrimination

Appearance

Additional unpaid duties



SUPPORTS & REFERRALS

- genU family violence policy
- Contact officer details
- Helpful Resources



REFERENCES

Being a Man in the Workplace VIDEO

As/Is (2016, March 16).
Being a Man in the Workplace.
(Video file). Retrieved from:
<https://youtu.be/8eSj1jnmD3Q>

What am I being asked to do?

Your manager will lead a team discussion about this topic in an upcoming meeting.
To help prepare for that meeting here are some things you can do.

- Read through the information and facts.
- Watch the video **Being a Man in the Workplace** (6 minutes 11 seconds).
What examples of gender inequality and workplace discrimination did you notice?
- Think about what you want our workplace culture to be like?

When you discuss this topic it will be helpful to challenge your own thinking and participate without judgement.



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GENDER INEQUALITY IN THE WORK PLACE

STATISTICS



ONE IN FIVE Australians were **SEXUALLY HARASSED** in the workplace in the last 12 months.

In the last year, almost

ONE IN FOUR WOMEN & **ONE IN SIX MEN** were sexually harassed at work.



ONE IN TWO PEOPLE who have been in the workforce in the past **FIVE YEARS** have been exposed to workplace sexual harassment, either as a victim themselves, or as a bystander

ONE IN TWO EMPLOYEES

surveyed by White Ribbon consider it acceptable to tell a sexist joke in the workplace.



IN **69%**

OF CASES, witnesses to workplace sexual harassment

DID NOT TRY TO INTERVENE.



94%

OF EMPLOYEES AGREE

employers should take a leadership role in educating their workforce about respectful relationships between men and women.

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GENDER INEQUALITY IN THE WORK PLACE

HELP FOR MANAGERS

What am I asking my team to do?

- Read and think about this speak OUT before the team discussion
- Have a discussion about speak OUT together
- Watch the video as a group if possible



MANAGER SUPPORTS & REFERRALS

- Contact officers
- EAP / Benestar

Thought provoking questions to ask – with potential answers and references

Q: How does gender inequality effect both men and women in the work place?

You could talk about the use of gendered language and how this may negatively influence women from taking higher positions.

Q: What can we do in our work place to shift culture?

Be mindful of the allocation of menial tasks, think about the conversations around the work place, think about questions asked in the recruitment process.

Q: How might the use of gendered language be holding women back in the work place?

- Think about the statistic that women make up 68% of primary carers, 70% of primary un-paid carers for children, 58% of unpaid carers for the elderly, people with a disability and people with a long-term health issue.
- What does this mean for carers of our clients and their financial outcomes?

Q: When you watched the video Being a Man in the Workplace (6 minutes 11 seconds):

- What did you notice about assumptions relating to image, job titles, menial tasks?
- Why was it so difficult for the man to report what was happening?
- Why was it so difficult for the boss to understand it?
- What was the response to the report? Why is this the case? (remember that it is easier to remove one person than create a culture shift).

Questions your team might ask – with answers and references

Q: What about guys? They are always asked to move the heavy stuff, how is that fair? What if they did that the other way around?

HOW DO I RESPOND?

Gender roles are bad for both men and women and can result in significant disadvantage to the types of work men may access. For example: caring or childcare.

Ask the men in the group to give feedback about what people might say if they are (or can imagine) in a caring role.

- Do working conditions for men allow for them to be carers? For example: leave arrangements and paternity leave.



REFERENCES

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Retrieved from: <https://youtu.be/8eSj1jnmD3Q>



HOW YOUR WORKPLACE CAN BREAK THE CYCLE OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

Why taking immediate action will save Australian lives.

Published November 2019

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