



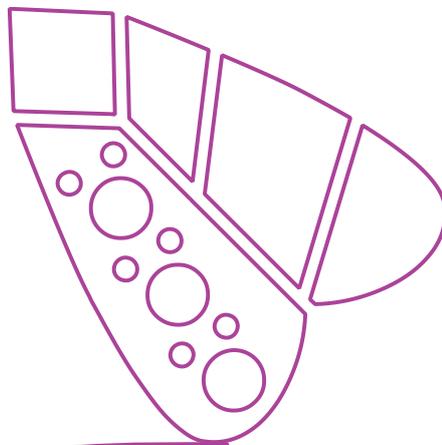
**ACT**  
Government

# ACT Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Strategy

Consultation draft

March 2024





### **Acknowledgement of Country**

The ACT Government acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the Canberra region and recognises any other people of families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. The ACT Government acknowledges and respects their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

### **Support services**

If you or someone close to you is in distress or immediate danger, please call 000.

No-one should feel they have to handle domestic, family or sexual violence on their own. There are support services in the ACT and nationally that can work with you to understand your situation, your options, and the actions you can take.

For a full list of services and support, visit the Community Services Directorate website at:  
[www.communityservices.act.gov.au/domestic-and-family-violence-support/list-of-services](http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/domestic-and-family-violence-support/list-of-services).

# Introduction

The ACT Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Strategy provides the ACT Government and its partners with the necessary strategic direction to prevent, address and respond to domestic, family and sexual violence in the Canberra community.

The ACT Government is committed to working in partnership with the community to prevent domestic, family and sexual violence, to hold perpetrators to account, and to ensure people impacted by domestic, family and sexual violence are effectively supported to stay safe and to heal.

The purpose of the ACT Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Strategy (the Strategy) is to outline the ACT years to support targeted and evidence-based investment. The Strategy should be considered alongside the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032 (the National Plan), which provides a shared understanding of the prevalence, drivers and impacts of gender-based violence in Australia. The Strategy supports the ACT's commitment to the National Plan.

The principles outlined in the Strategy are intended to underpin the design of all actions and activities across the focus areas of prevention, early intervention, response, and recovery and healing. They provide a framework for decision-making when considering new and existing initiatives to address domestic, family and sexual violence.

The ACT Government is committed to strong governance, evaluation and monitoring of Strategy outcomes, in alignment with the National Plan. The whole of the ACT Government will have responsibility for the Strategy, led by the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Coordinator General. An evaluation framework and performance measurement plan will be developed in collaboration with stakeholders.



# Outcomes

The Strategy identifies outcomes for each of the focus areas and these outcomes directly align with the 10-year outcomes set out in the Outcomes Framework under the National Plan. The outcomes identified for each focus area provide the link between what we are doing at the local level, what we seek to do in the future, and the desired result of those actions.

## Next steps

The next step is to work with the ACT community to identify actions that align with the Strategy and will deliver on the outcomes which support our commitment to addressing domestic, family and sexual violence.

This will inform the development of targeted and strategic actions to implement reform in line with identified priorities. The strategic actions will require a collective effort and be driven by close government and community sector partnerships to achieve a more effective domestic, family and sexual violence service system.

The ACT Government is committed to continued collaboration with victim-survivors, frontline service workers and others with expertise, community organisations, and the broader ACT community throughout the implementation of the Strategy.

## Understanding Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

Domestic and family violence is a pattern of behaviour within an intimate, family or kinship relationship. It occurs when a person exercises power and control over another person through coercive and abusive behaviours that are designed to intimidate, humiliate and isolate their victim. Domestic and family violence includes emotional, financial, physical, psychological, sexual and spiritual violence. It can have a devastating impact on a victim-survivor's sense of self, their autonomy and their identity, and their general wellbeing and safety. Coercive control is almost always an underpinning dynamic of family and domestic violence. Coercive control involves perpetrators exerting power and dominance over victim-survivors using patterns of abusive behaviours over time that create fear and deny liberty and autonomy.<sup>1</sup>

Sexual violence includes, but is not limited to, sexual assault, sexual abuse, rape, sexual harassment, stalking and image-based abuse. It occurs within intimate relationships, within families and between people who are dating, friends, acquaintances and strangers.

Domestic, family and sexual violence can be experienced by anyone, regardless of their age, gender, race, culture, socioeconomic status, ability or sexual orientation. However, there is clear evidence that domestic, family and sexual violence is gendered in terms of its perpetration, victimisation, frequency and impacts.

Research shows women are significantly more likely to be victims of domestic, family and sexual violence, and that 95% of people who have experienced this type of violence identified a man as the perpetrator<sup>ii</sup>.

In the ACT 26% of women have experienced physical or sexual violence, emotional abuse or economic abuse by a cohabiting partner since age 15<sup>iii</sup>. More broadly, 1 in 4 women in the ACT have experienced some form of sexual violence and 1 in 3 have experienced physical violence since age 15<sup>iv</sup>. Australia's largest national survey on the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ people indicates rates of domestic, family and sexual violence are even higher amongst gender diverse people<sup>v</sup>.

[Change the Story](#), a shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and children in Australia, outlines the gendered drivers of violence against women. They include, condoning of violence against women, men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life, rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity and male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control.

The ACT Government takes an intersectional approach to domestic, family and sexual violence recognising the gendered drivers of domestic, family and sexual violence intersect with other forms of discrimination and inequality. This means some groups experience higher rates of violence than others. Some groups may also face unique forms of violence, different barriers when seeking support, and require specific approaches to primary prevention and responses.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience domestic, family and sexual violence at higher rates than non-Indigenous people. The intersection of gender inequality, racism, the impacts of colonisation, including forced removal of children and intergenerational trauma, result in unique drivers and impacts of domestic, family and sexual violence, and unique barriers to receiving support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Initiatives need to be informed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices, and provide cultural safety and cultural healing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

Evidence indicates people with disability, people who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTIQ+ people and older people are also more likely to experience violence and to experience barriers in accessing support and safety. Understanding the unique experiences of domestic, family and sexual violence for different people and groups by ensuring the voices of victim-survivors from each group informs action taken to address violence is critical to success.

## Interactions with other priorities, strategies and plans

The ACT Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Strategy will complement and build on existing policies, strategies and plans to support a unified approach to the prevention and elimination of domestic, family and sexual violence in the ACT. These include:

- The *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032*, the **First Action Plan 2023-2027** and the **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2023-2025**: Overarching national policy framework guiding actions towards ending violence against women and children over the next 10 years.

- The **National Agreement on Closing the Gap**: The national agreement guiding work to overcome inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- **Listen. Take Action to Prevent, Believe and Heal 2021**: The ACT Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program providing recommendations to ACT Government to improve sexual assault response and services.
- The **ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019 – 2028**: An agreement between the ACT Government and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body to deliver real outcomes that improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Canberra.
- **We Don't Shoot Our Wounded**: A report outlining recommendations for addressing family violence informed by the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victim-survivors of family violence in the ACT.
- **Our Booris, Our Way**: A review undertaken to understand the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the systems designed to help them.
- The **ACT Women's Plan 2016-26**: The ACT Government's ongoing commitment and plan towards the full participation of women and girls in all aspects of society and which is critical to the wellbeing of the whole community.
- The **Disability Justice Strategy 2019–2029** : A 10 year plan to achieve equity and inclusion for people with disability in the justice system.
- The **Capital of Equality Strategy**: A Strategy outlining a long-term vision for Canberra to be the most LGBTIQ+ welcoming and inclusive city in Australia.
- The **Charter for Multiculturalism**: A charter which sets out principles for supporting diversity, inclusion and belonging in the ACT.
- **The Next Steps for Our Kids 2022-2030**: A strategy aimed at building a stronger, fairer and more effective service system to support children, young people and their families and carers.
- The **Best Start for Canberra's Children: The First 1000 Days Strategy**: A strategy guiding health and wellbeing policy for children from conception to 2 years of age.
- The **Future of Education Strategy**: A 10-year strategy for the ACT to guide all parts of the education system to support and deliver excellence and equity in educational outcomes for each and every child and young person.
- **Set up for Success: An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT**: A 10-year plan for early childhood education and care in the ACT.
- The **ACT Charter of Rights for Victims of Crime**: A charter which protects and promotes the rights of victims of crime when they engage with justice agencies in the criminal justice system.
- The **ACT Wellbeing Framework**: A Framework helping the ACT Government and community work in partnership to lift the quality of life of all Canberrans, particularly those with lower wellbeing than average.
- The **ACT Housing Strategy**: A Strategy provides a framework for government and the community to address the multiple factors that influence the supply and demand of housing.
- The **ACT Disability Health Strategy 2024-2033**: A plan to improve the health and wellbeing of all people with a disability and build a more accessible and inclusive healthcare system.
- The **ACT Aged Friendly City Plan 2020-2024**: A plan which provides a foundation for ongoing work to develop Canberra as an age-friendly city.

## Vision

All Canberrans live free from domestic, family and sexual violence and feel safe in their relationships, homes and communities.

When Canberrans do experience domestic, family and sexual violence, they are supported by an accessible, collaborative, integrated, and capable system.

## Principles

The following set of principles provide guidance to how we do our work to address domestic, family and sexual violence. They were developed in acknowledgement that addressing violence requires commitment and action from all levels of society. They provide a framework for decision-making when considering new and existing initiatives to address domestic, family and sexual violence.

### **1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination**

We work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and are respectful of their cultural needs and safety.

### **2. Gender equality**

We work to address gender inequality in all its forms and to address the gendered drivers of domestic, family and sexual violence.

### **3. Human Rights based**

Policies, programs and initiatives are designed and implemented within a human rights-based framework.

### **4. Intersectionality, inclusion and accessibility**

Policies, programs and initiatives are designed with, and accessible for, people from diverse population groups and people with intersecting needs and experiences including people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTIQ+ people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, children and young people and older people.

### **5. Collaboration and integration**

Systems, agencies and services collaborate to prevent violence, streamline service responses, keep perpetrators visible and enhance the safety of victim-survivors.

### **6. Victim-survivor lived experience is at the centre**

The diverse voices of victim-survivors are central to the development and design of policies, programs and initiatives.

### **7. Perpetrator accountability**

Systems, agencies and services work together to identify perpetrators, ensure perpetrators are kept visible and provide appropriate interventions to people who choose to use violence.

### **8. Evidence informed**

Policies, programs and initiatives will be based on the best evidence available including the experiences and of people impacted by domestic, family and sexual violence.

## Focus Areas

The focus areas presented in this Strategy reflect the domains in the *National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032*. The focus areas identify priorities for action and are evidence based, spanning the continuum of prevention, early intervention, response, and recovery and healing.

### 1. Prevention

Prevention involves stopping domestic, family and sexual violence from occurring by addressing the drivers of violence and the structures, systems and norms which condone it. Prevention requires a comprehensive approach, addressing the gendered drivers across all parts of society, and how different institutions and individuals interact with these. It is important prevention efforts are targeted to ensure good outcomes for the cohorts or groups at most risk.

### 2. Early intervention

Early intervention aims to identify and support people at risk of, or in the early stages of experiencing or perpetrating domestic, family and sexual violence in order to stop violence from escalating, protect victim-survivors from harm and prevent violence from reoccurring.

### 3. Response

Response refers to efforts and programs used to address existing domestic, family and sexual violence. Response should be person-centred, hold perpetrators to account and support victim-survivors in a trauma-informed and culturally appropriate way. Response includes supports for victim-survivors and interventions for perpetrators. The response system captures a range of services including crisis intervention, safety planning, medical care, police responses, the civil and criminal justice responses, family law systems, housing, child protection and perpetrator behaviour change programs. Responses which prevent the recurrence of violence are also referred to as tertiary prevention. To ensure it is appropriately person-centred, response efforts need to be integrated, coordinated and incorporate best practice.

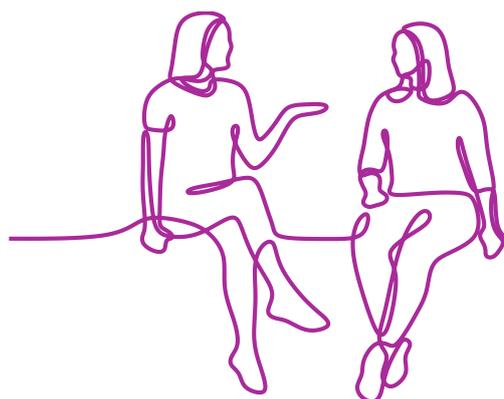
### 4. Recovery and healing

Recovery is an ongoing process that supports victim-survivors to be safe and healthy. Recovery includes understanding, acknowledging and addressing the short-term, long-term and lifelong impacts for victim-survivors. Recovery and healing focus on rebuilding a victim-survivor's life, processing experiences of trauma and achieving long-term health and wellbeing. For some victim-survivors this could look like re-building relationships, achieving economic independence, happiness and/or community and cultural connections and integration. It must be acknowledged that victim-survivors recover and heal in different ways, that recovery and healing is not a linear process and can occur alongside of early intervention and response interventions.

## Strategy on a page

Vision: All Canberrans live free from domestic, family and sexual violence and feel safe in their relationships, homes and communities.

Focus Area	Objective	Priorities
<b>Prevention</b>	Prevention involves stopping domestic, family and sexual violence from occurring by addressing the drivers of violence and the structures, systems and norms which condone it. Prevention requires a comprehensive approach, addressing the gendered drivers across all parts of society, and how different institutions and individuals interact with these. It is important prevention efforts are targeted to ensure good outcomes for the cohorts or groups at most risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a whole of ACT domestic, family and sexual violence prevention plan which builds and improves the ACT's prevention infrastructure.</li> <li>• Engage men and boys in prevention work including to shift gendered norms and cultures of masculinity.</li> <li>• Continuing to build the knowledge and skills of children and young people from early childhood through to young adults on safe, respectful and healthy relationships through implementation of best practice respectful relationships education in a phased, whole-of-setting approach.</li> <li>• Building knowledge and awareness in the community about the characteristics of coercive control.</li> <li>• Implementing culturally appropriate community education programs designed with, and accessible to diverse communities and groups.</li> </ul>
<b>Early Intervention</b>	Early intervention aims to identify and support people at risk of, or in the early stages of experiencing or perpetrating domestic, family and sexual violence in order to stop violence from escalating, protect victim-survivors from harm and prevent violence from reoccurring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing to build the capability and capacity of the ACT workforce to identify and respond to risk of domestic, family and sexual violence.</li> <li>• Identifying and delivering targeted interventions to address domestic, family and sexual violence risk factors in high-risk groups.</li> <li>• Enhancing mechanisms to identify and respond to people at risk of perpetrating domestic, family and sexual violence.</li> </ul>



## Response

Response refers to efforts and programs used to address existing domestic, family and sexual violence. Response should be person-centred, hold perpetrators to account and support victim-survivors in a trauma-informed and culturally appropriate way. Response includes supports for victim-survivors and interventions for perpetrators. The response system captures a range of services including crisis intervention, safety planning, medical care, police responses, the civil and criminal justice responses, family law systems, housing, child protection and perpetrator behaviour change programs.

- Ensuring perpetrators are kept in view and perpetrator responses are targeted, prioritise victim-survivor safety and prevent further violence.
- Fostering a strong, sustainable and capable domestic, family and sexual violence specialist sector.
- Continuing to develop and implement integrated and innovative responses, such as the Multi-Disciplinary Centre, to bring services together so victim-survivors experience responsive, coordinated, seamless supports which are inclusive of people with diverse identities, experiences and backgrounds.
- Ensuring justice responses are domestic, family and sexual violence informed, and there are alternative pathways outside the criminal justice system.

## Recovery and Healing

Recovery is an ongoing process that enables victim-survivors to be safe and healthy. Recovery includes understanding, acknowledging and addressing the short-term, long-term and lifelong impacts for victim-survivors.

- Embedding recovery and healing services in the Multi-Disciplinary Centre to provide dedicated pathways for victim-survivors, focusing on long-term recovery.
- Developing community-led recovery and healing supports which meet the needs of different communities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTIQ+ people and children and young people.



## Prevention

Prevention involves stopping domestic, family and sexual violence from occurring by addressing the drivers of violence and the structures, systems and norms which condone it. Prevention requires a comprehensive approach, addressing the gendered drivers across all parts of society, and how different institutions and individuals interact with these. It is important prevention efforts are targeted to ensure good outcomes for the cohorts or groups at most risk.

What we are already doing	Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing the ACT Women’s Plan 2016-2026 to advance gender equality in the ACT.</li> <li>• Implementing the Capital of Equality strategy to deliver equitable outcomes for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ+) people.</li> <li>• Developing an ACT Public Service Gender Equity Strategy to prevent and respond to workplace sexual harassment.</li> <li>• Reforming information sharing legislative changes to improve how agencies communicate with each other.</li> <li>• Establishing an ACT Domestic and Family Violence Review (Death Review) which reviews domestic and family violence deaths or incidents of serious harm, to understand how they happened and to identify system level improvements.</li> <li>• Delivering a government-led community consent education campaign and community-led consent education initiatives to improve understanding of consent and promote a safer, more socially connected community.</li> <li>• Collaborating with the Workplace Gender Equality Agency to develop ACT reporting on gender wage gaps and workforce gender equality approaches.</li> <li>• Investing in programs delivered by community partners which educate people about domestic, family and sexual violence, to raise awareness and provide counselling and social work services, particularly for at risk communities such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQ+ people, culturally and linguistically diverse people and people with a disability.</li> <li>• Building the capacity of community-based organisations to deliver prevention of sexual violence activities.</li> <li>• Establishing intersectional mechanisms to consult adult victim-survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence to improve service and system responses.</li> <li>• Implementing the Gender Equality in Schools initiative as a whole of system approach to respectful relationships education within ACT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a whole of ACT domestic, family and sexual violence prevention plan which includes building and improving the ACT’s prevention infrastructure.</li> <li>• Engage men and boys in prevention work including to shift gendered norms and cultures of masculinity.</li> <li>• Continuing to build the knowledge and skills of children and young people from early childhood through to young adults on safe, respectful and healthy relationships, through implementation of best practice respectful relationships education in a phased, whole-of-setting approach.</li> <li>• Building knowledge and awareness in the community about the characteristics of coercive control.</li> <li>• Implementing community education programs designed with, and accessible to diverse communities and groups.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workplaces are safe from all forms of gender-based violence and are actively preventing sexual harassment and discrimination.</li> <li>• Adults, children and young people recognise the behaviours that constitute gender-based violence and understand the long-term consequences.</li> <li>• People actively challenge damaging misconceptions about gender-based violence, such as victim-blaming and a lack of understanding of the meaning of consent.</li> <li>• People actively challenge attitudes and behaviours that enable violence including gendered stereotypes and norms, cisgenderism, heteronormativity, homophobia and transphobia.</li> <li>• Gender equality, positive relationships, and positive masculinities are promoted across the community.</li> <li>• Evidence informed, age appropriate, intersectional, and tailored prevention initiatives are embedded across key settings and digital spaces.</li> </ul>

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public schools and the Early Childhood Education and Care sector.

- Agencies have built the evidence-base for all diverse population groups and forms of violence and abuse, including sharing data appropriately to drive effective policy and investment.
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## Early Intervention

Early intervention aims to identify and support people at risk of or in the early stages of experiencing or perpetrating domestic, family and sexual violence in order to stop violence from escalating, protect victim-survivors from harm and prevent violence from reoccurring.

What we are already doing	Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Training and upskilling community sector and frontline service staff to identify and respond to early indicators of domestic, family and sexual violence.</li><li>• Implementing a Risk Assessment and Management Framework which assists professionals and services to assess an individual's risk of victimisation, harm lethality and escalation of violence and likelihood of perpetration, reoffending or escalation.</li><li>• Supporting early intervention for expecting parents and new families at risk of domestic and family violence to receive free legal support in health and family service settings.</li><li>• Enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focused early intervention through funding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led</li><li>• family-centred healing activities and yarning programs, which provide early intervention support.</li><li>• Establishing intensive support and accommodation programs for women and children who are under restrictive visas and at risk of experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence.</li><li>• Supporting targeted intervention programs for children and young people who have experienced domestic, family and sexual violence or have used violence themselves.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continuing to build the capacity of the ACT workforce to identify and respond to risk of domestic, family and sexual violence.</li><li>• Delivering targeted interventions to address domestic, family and sexual violence risk factors in high-risk groups.</li><li>• Enhancing mechanisms to identify and respond to people at risk of perpetrating domestic, family and sexual violence.</li></ul> <p><b>Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• People at risk of using violence are identified early and supported to access programs and services to change their behaviour.</li><li>• People using violence or at risk of using violence recognise their own harmful behaviours and are supported to change through effective, culturally appropriate, trauma-informed and evidence-based interventions.</li><li>• Adults, children and young people know how to respond or seek support when they, or someone they know, experience or witness domestic, family or sexual violence.</li><li>• Workforces access training and information to enable the effective delivery of timely, evidence-based, culturally safe and trauma-informed services.</li><li>• Workforce capability across systems and institutions is developed to recognise the drivers and signs of gender-based violence and to respond and refer appropriately.</li><li>• Sector and community capacity is developed to identify and support all people impacted by violence or at risk of violence.</li></ul>

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## Response

Response refers to efforts and programs used to address existing domestic, family and sexual violence. Response should be person-centred, hold perpetrators to account and support victim-survivors in a trauma-informed and culturally appropriate way. Response includes supports for victim-survivors and interventions for perpetrators. The response system captures a range of services including crisis intervention, safety planning, medical care, police responses, the civil and criminal justice responses, family law systems, housing, child protection and perpetrator behaviour change programs. Responses which prevent the recurrence of violence are also referred to as tertiary prevention. To ensure it is appropriately person-centred, response efforts need to be integrated, coordinated and incorporate best practice.

What we are already doing	Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing an ACT Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Review and Sexual Assault (Police) Review, to identify system level improvements.</li> <li>Continuing investment in the Room4Change program which supports men to reduce their use of violence.</li> <li>Establishing a Multi-Disciplinary Centre to provide responsive, coordinated and seamless support options for victim-survivors of sexual violence.</li> <li>Establishing the role of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors who will assist victim-survivors to navigate their support options.</li> <li>Providing emergency accommodation, crisis support, rental subsidies and wrap-around support services for people experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence.</li> <li>Supporting culturally appropriate response capability and capacity of frontline services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations through increased resources.</li> <li>Providing culturally appropriate responses to support people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities at risk of and subject to domestic, family and sexual violence.</li> <li>Supporting male-identifying victim survivors through investment in the Service Assisting Male Survivors of Sexual Assault and establishing a Men's Sexual Assault Forum.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring perpetrators are kept in view and perpetrator responses are targeted, prioritise victim-survivor safety and prevent further violence.</li> <li>Fostering a strong, sustainable and capable domestic, family and sexual violence specialist sector.</li> <li>Developing integrated and innovative responses which are inclusive of people with diverse identities, experiences and backgrounds.</li> <li>Ensuring justice responses are domestic, family and sexual violence informed, and there are alternative pathways outside the criminal justice system.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Services work together to provide integrated and tailored responses for all people impacted by violence, including people who choose to use violence.</li> <li>The criminal justice system correctly identifies people who use violence and ensures they face appropriate consequences and provides opportunities for rehabilitation where appropriate.</li> <li>The civil justice system correctly identifies victim-survivors requiring assistance to be safe.</li> <li>People who choose to use violence are held to account through the police and justice system, with services and justice systems working together to actively identify and manage risk.</li> <li>People impacted by violence have positive experiences and outcomes through the services and systems that respond to gender-based</li> </ul>

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violence, particularly the civil and criminal justice system.

- Alternative approaches to justice are victim-survivor-led, culturally appropriate and prioritise the safety of survivors first.
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## Recovery and Healing

Recovery is an ongoing process that supports victim-survivors to be safe and healthy. Recovery includes understanding, acknowledging and addressing the short-term, long-term and lifelong impacts for victim-survivors. Recovery and healing focus on rebuilding a victim-survivor's life, processing experiences of trauma and achieving long-term health and wellbeing. For some victim-survivors this could look like re-building relationships, achieving economic independence, happiness and/or community and cultural connections and integration. It must be acknowledged that victim-survivors recover and heal in different ways, that recovery and healing is not a linear process and can occur alongside of early intervention and response interventions.

What we are already doing	Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by supporting initiatives which assist in the process to heal trauma and will improve access of programs and safety to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children.</li><li>• Increasing access to therapeutic interventions and trauma counselling for children by investing in mobile services.</li><li>• Investing in community building initiatives which reconnect victim-survivors to their communities, provide access to counselling and support recovery.</li><li>• Establishing a pilot program to provide recovery and reconnection support for children and their mothers who have experienced domestic and family violence.</li><li>• Building community outreach programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who were formerly detainees of the Alexander Maconochie Centre who have experienced domestic and family violence.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Embedding recovery and healing services in the Multi-Disciplinary Centre to provide dedicated pathways for victim-survivors, focusing on long-term recovery.</li><li>• Developing community-led recovery supports which meet the needs of different communities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTIQ+ people and children and young people.</li></ul> <p><b>Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Within and across systems and institutions, integrated support is embedded to provide people impacted by violence with coordinated care and ongoing support to facilitate recovery and healing.</li><li>• People impacted by violence and abuse have access to timely and ongoing supports, services, resources, and opportunities to support their long-term recovery and healing.</li><li>• People impacted by violence have economic security and their social, cultural and economic needs are met, including being supported to access affordable, accessible and safe housing, from crisis accommodation to transitional and long-term housing.</li><li>• Primary care-givers impacted by violence have access to supports for their own well-being, in turn supporting them to nurture the child.</li></ul>

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## Glossary

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ACT workforce	ACT workforce refers to those who are sometimes in contact with victim-survivors or perpetrators of sexual violence and are required to deal with the impacts of sexual violence, despite it not being a significant focus of their role. Examples are police, nurses, teachers, disability support workers, community services and social workers, youth workers, and corrective services workers.
Cisgenderism	Cisgenderism (sometimes referred to as cisnormativity and cissexism) is a structural stigma that denies, ignores, and pathologises the trans experience and trans people – binary and non-binary. Cisgenderism positions expansive expressions of gender as a problem, ignores the validity of non-binary genders and seeks to enforce traditional gender roles and inequalities.
Domestic and Family Violence	Behaviour that controls or dominates a family member and causes them to fear for their own or another person’s safety or wellbeing. Violent or threatening behaviour, or any other form of behaviour that coerces or controls a family member or causes that family member to be fearful.
Evidence-based	Describes models, approaches or practices found to be effective through evaluation or peer reviewed research. Evidence is usually published and may be found in full or summarised in academic research documents, organisational reports, program evaluations, policy papers and submissions. There is a strong evidence base for strategies to prevent gender-based violence. As our understanding of what drives violence against women and children in different population groups and settings increases, the evidence base will continue to evolve.
Gender-based violence	Violence that is specifically ‘directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately’.
Heteronormativity	Heteronormativity includes a suite of cultural, legal and institutional practices that work to explicitly privilege relationships between ‘men’ and ‘women’ as the only ‘normal’ and ‘natural’ form of relationship.
Image-based abuse	When an intimate image or video is shared, or threatened to be shared, without the consent of the person shown. This includes images or videos that have been digitally altered.
Intergenerational trauma	A form of historical trauma transmitted across generations. Survivors of the initial experience who have not healed may pass on their trauma to further generations. In Australia, intergenerational trauma particularly affects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, especially the children, grandchildren and future generations of the Stolen Generation.
Intersectional approach	In the context of addressing violence against women and children, an intersectional approach recognises that the way women experience gender and inequality can be different based on a range of other cultural, individual, historical, environmental or structural factors including (but not limited to) race, age, geographic location, sexual orientation, ability or class. This approach also recognises that the drivers, dynamics and impacts of violence women experience can be compounded and magnified by their experience of other forms of oppression and inequality, resulting in some groups experiencing higher rates and/or more severe forms of violence, or facing barriers to support and safety that other women do not experience.

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LGBTIQ+	LGBTIQ+ is an umbrella term respectfully used to refer to the diversity of individuals that are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and/or queer. It is also intended to capture diverse sexualities and gender identities, including (but not limited to) people who are agender, non-binary, gender fluid, asexual and pansexual, as well as individuals who prefer to use specialised personal terms to describe their own sex, gender or sexuality.
Non-binary	An umbrella term for any number of gender identities that sit within, outside of, across or between the spectrum of the male and female binary. A non-binary person might identify as gender fluid, trans masculine, trans feminine, agender, bigender, etc.
Perpetrator	Refers to a person who commits an illegal, criminal or harmful act, including domestic, family or sexual violence.
Primary prevention	To reduce the incidence of the problem before it occurs.
Secondary prevention	To decrease the prevalence after early signs of the problem.
Sexual assault	Sexual assault is an act of a sexual nature carried out against a person's will through the use of physical force, intimidation or coercion, including any attempts to do this. This includes rape, attempted rape, aggravated sexual assault (assault with a weapon), indecent assault, penetration by objects, forced sexual activity that did not end in penetration and attempts to force a person into sexual activity. Note sexual assault occurs when a person is forced, coerced or tricked into sexual acts against their will or without their consent, including when they have withdrawn their consent.
Sexual harassment	An unwelcome sexual advance, unwelcome request for sexual favours or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated, where a reasonable person would anticipate that reaction in the circumstances.
Sexual violence	Sexual violence refers to sexual activity that happens without consent, when consent is withdrawn or when the person is unable to consent due to their age or other factors. It occurs any time a person participates in non-consensual sexual activity, such as sexual touching, a sexual act, sexual assault, sexual harassment and intimidation, or trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual violence can be non-physical and include unwanted sexualised comments, intrusive sexualised questions or harassment of a sexual nature. Forms of modern slavery, such as servitude, may involve sexual violence
Tertiary prevention	To intervene once the problem is already clearly evident and causing harm.
Trauma-informed	<p>Trauma-informed care and practice recognises the prevalence of trauma and its impacts on the emotional, psychological and social well-being of people and communities.</p> <p>Trauma-informed practice means integrating an understanding of past and current experiences of violence and trauma in all aspects of service delivery. The goal of trauma-informed systems is to avoid re-traumatising individuals and support safety, choice and control to promote healing.</p>
Transgender	An inclusive umbrella term that describes people whose gender is different to what was presumed for them at birth. Trans people may position 'being trans' as a history or experience, rather than an identity, and consider their gender identity as simply being female, male or a non-binary gender. Some trans people connect strongly with their trans

experience, whereas others do not. Processes of medical and legal gender affirmation may or may not be part of a trans person's life. Throughout this plan we use trans as the shorthand for trans and gender diverse people.

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Victim-survivor

People who have experienced domestic family or sexual violence. This term is understood to acknowledge the strength and resilience shown by people who have experienced or are currently living with violence.

People who have experienced violence have different preferences about how they would like to be identified and may choose to use 'victim' or 'survivor' separately, or another term altogether. Some people prefer to use 'people who experience, or are at risk of experiencing, violence'.

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<sup>i</sup> National Principles to Address Coercive Control in Family and Domestic Violence, 2022. [National Principles to Address Coercive Control in Family and Domestic Violence \(ag.gov.au\)](#)

<sup>ii</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021-22), Recorded Crime - Offenders, ABS Website

<sup>iii</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021-22), [Personal Safety, Australia](#)

<sup>iv</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021-22), [Personal Safety, Australia](#)

<sup>v</sup> Hill, Adam; Bourne, Adam; McNair, Ruth; Carman, Marina; Lyons, Anthony (2021): Private Lives 3: The health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ people in Australia. La Trobe. Report. <https://doi.org/10.26181/5f3380a0d048a>

