

Strategic Plan 2019–2024

**Our
WATCH**
End violence against
Women And Their Children

Acknowledgment of Country

Our Watch acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land across Australia on which we work and live. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present, and future, and we value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and knowledge.

Acknowledgments

Our Watch acknowledges the support of its government members:

- Australian Government
- Victorian Government
- Northern Territory Government
- Government of South Australia
- Tasmanian Government
- Queensland Government
- ACT Government
- Government of Western Australia
- NSW Government

Our Watch acknowledges the victims and survivors of violence and those who work to keep women and their children safe.

Strategic Plan 2019–2024

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Foreword

Our Watch is a national leader of primary prevention of violence against women and their children.

Our vision is an Australia where women and their children live free from all forms of violence.

To achieve this vision, we must challenge the historically entrenched beliefs and behaviours that drive violence against women, and the social, political and economic structures, practices and systems that support it. Put simply, we must stop violence before it starts.

This change is possible, and it is that possibility of change that drives us.

In 2014, we articulated our 20-year picture of success and published our first five-year plan. Today, we reflect on those five years and outline our strategic plan for 2019—2024.

In the last five years, we sought to break new ground. Our success has propelled Our Watch into the Australian landscape as a trusted national organisation.

Our achievements have been possible through the unified action of many diverse people, organisations and institutions.

That is why, as we outline our strategic goals and objectives, we accept full accountability for our work *and* we acknowledge we cannot, should not, and will not achieve success on our own.

This plan does not represent radical change, as much as a clarification of how we will deliver our vision. To do this, we must embrace our role as a national leader of primary prevention of violence against women.

We will lead the national conversation, drive innovation and new knowledge, share trusted evidence-based tools and resources, connect those working in the sector, provide advice to governments on policy and practice, and share our learning on the international stage.

We will consolidate our relationships, approach and resources, and innovate to support nationwide partnerships and improvements that benefit the whole sector and all women.

In this strategic plan, we articulate national indicators of success that we believe all Australians can work towards. These will not be achieved by Our Watch alone, but by the many stakeholders and partners across Australia that are working to prevent violence against women.

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Our Watch will contribute to these long-term objectives by focusing on four strategic goals, based on the themes of evidence, action, leadership and sustainability. This strategic plan defines the five-year outcomes that we will use to measure our success.

We are proud of the progress Australia has made in the last five years, and driven by the initial positive response to our work.

However, there is still much to be done. There is a long way to go before we achieve an Australia that is free of gendered violence.

The good news is that this violence is preventable. It is not easy — it may take generations. It will require a multi-layered approach in all the settings where we live, work, learn and play. This is the vital work of Our Watch.

As we look towards our next five years and beyond, our challenge may be great, but our resolve is unwavering.



***Natasha Stott Despoja AO,
Chair***



***Patty Kinnersly,
CEO***

Our beginnings

Our Watch was formed by the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments in 2013 as a response to the Council of Australian Governments' First Action Plan under the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022* (the National Plan).

Today, operating under the Fourth Action Plan (2019–2022), our membership has grown to include every state and territory in Australia.

In the last five years, the visibility of the issue of violence against women, in the Australian media, and in public and political debate, has risen significantly.

In the global context, the rapid rise of the #metoo movement has drawn unprecedented attention to the systemic nature of violence experienced by women.

This public awareness and interest deepened an understanding of the issue, and also increased demands for, and expectations of, social and political action. These shifts have provided new opportunities for Our Watch and others to present a case for action. At the same time, the increased public profile of violence against women, and the calls to respond to, and prevent it, has produced a noticeable public backlash from those who object to a gendered framing of the issue.

In 2015, Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth launched *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*. This provided an evidence base for those working to prevent violence to draw on. We also produced a number of additional tools and resources. As momentum on the issue of violence against women has grown, followed by an interest in increasing specific prevention efforts, the need to address workforce development issues has increased.

All governments across Australia committed to the Third Action Plan of the National Plan, which includes endorsing *Change the story* as the national framework for primary prevention.

In Victoria, the findings of the Royal Commission into Family Violence, and the state government's response to its recommendations, as well as its unprecedented commitment to funding, have created significant opportunities to improve and expand prevention policy and programming.

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The 2015 *Not Now, Not Ever* report of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland has driven the development of some new prevention activities, partnerships and commitments.

Over this time, Our Watch has grown in size, which has enabled us to expand our activities and extend our reach across the country.

We have worked with governments, the prevention workforce, leaders across a wide range of settings, and the national media. This has raised the profile of prevention in the public conversation and promoted a deeper understanding of the evidence base for how violence against women can be prevented.

These factors, including the social, cultural, political and economic environment we operate in, have influenced our work and what Our Watch has achieved.

We have worked with governments, the prevention workforce, leaders across a wide range of settings, and the national media.

Our Watch is committed to an intersectional approach to preventing violence against women. It is central to our work because gender inequality can never be considered in isolation from the other intersecting forms of systemic social, political and economic discrimination and disadvantage that characterise our society such as racism, ableism, homophobia and transphobia. Such intersecting factors affect the relative influence of gender inequality, gendered drivers and reinforcing factors in any given context. Conversely, they afford privilege and access to power to some over others. Adopting this intersectional approach is necessary to ensure we understand and address the different circumstances, structures and systems that men and women are engaged in and how these differences shape patterns of violence against women so that we are working to prevent violence against all women in Australia.

Our achievements

Over the last five years, Our Watch has worked – in partnership and collaboration – to lay the foundation for a national focus on primary prevention of violence against women and their children. Marking these key achievements allows us to build on our progress as we fulfill our goals and work towards our vision.

Evidence and Policy

Our Watch has developed a range of evidence-based tools, policies, resources and standards that continue to support the work of governments, practitioners and other key stakeholders, including:

- *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children*, which is a world first for a consistent and integrated national approach
- *Counting on change: A guide to prevention monitoring*, which lays out population-level progress measures for policy-makers, researchers, and other stakeholders
- *Changing the picture: A national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children*, which is a solutions-focused resource addressing the many complex drivers of this violence.

In *Change the story*, Our Watch committed to “promote broader social equality and address structural discrimination and disadvantage”. As part of deepening our intersectional approach, we have continued to build the evidence base about the dynamics and drivers of violence in specific population groups responding to the complex intersections between different forms of discrimination and disadvantage, power and privilege.

Through a number of nation-leading pilots, we are building the evidence base on what works to prevent violence against women. We have translated evidence into accessible resources and capacity building activities including *Putting the prevention of violence against women into practice: How to Change the story*.

Action and Communication

We have driven innovation through developing approaches, designs and models for prevention practice including:

- the Victorian Respectful Relationships Education in Schools pilot
- the Queensland and Victorian Respectful Relationships Education in Primary Schools pilot
- the development of Workplace Equality and Respect
- partnerships with the Australian Football League, National Rugby League, Rugby Australia, Netball Australia and Football Federation Australia and the development of Equality and Respect in Sport

- the National Media Engagement program
- the commencement of the partnership with Universities Australia and Victorian Government on Respect and Equality in Australian Universities
- Prevention in Action in our Communities

Our Watch has developed ground-breaking national social marketing campaigns that work directly to change the harmful social norms that contribute to violence. Campaigns include:

- *The Line* — encouraging young people to have healthy and respectful relationships
- *No Excuse for Abuse* — highlighting non-physical forms of violence
- *Doing Nothing Does Harm* – encouraging people to take action when they see disrespect towards women

Our Watch has developed resources for Australian journalists, including the Media Making Change website. Our partnership with the Walkley Foundation has created the Our Watch Award to reward and recognise excellence in journalism that contributes to a deeper understanding of violence against women, its drivers and prevention. In 2019, we ran the inaugural Our Watch Fellowship program for journalists, created in collaboration with the Walkley Foundation.

Leadership

In this time, we have helped to build the essential infrastructure of a prevention workforce around the country. We have established our reputation for good work and our status as a national leader is solidifying. Through our work, we have an emerging international reputation.

We have established productive relationships with governments and politicians, and we've built foundation partnerships in key settings with organisations that have significant reach into the community and a diverse range of population groups, and with individuals who can make a difference. We have demonstrated a deep commitment to embedding intersectionality into our primary prevention work.

Sustainability

In five years, we have created internal processes that ensure efficiency, and amplify skills and knowledge. We have attracted some of the nation's best staff and sought skilled and experienced leaders for our board. Our Watch continues to be a well-run and well-governed organisation with a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Our journey

2013

- Establishment of the Foundation to Prevent Violence Against Women and their Children.

2014

- Change of name and official launch as Our Watch.
- First Our Watch Ambassadors appointed.
- Commencement of National Media Engagement project.

2015

- *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia* published.
- Pilot of Respectful Relationships Education in Schools commenced.
- New branding and website for *The Line* behaviour change campaign for young people launched.
- Commencement of Sports Engagement Program.

2016

- Pilot of Workplace Equality and Respect commenced.
- Our Watch *Respectful Relationships Education Toolkit* published.

2017

- Inaugural *Organisational Strategy to Strengthen our Intersectional Approach 2017* published.
- *Counting on change: A guide to prevention monitoring* published.
- *Putting the prevention of violence against women into practice: How to Change the story* published.

2018

- *Changing the picture: A national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children* published.
- *No Excuse for Abuse* campaign launched.
- *Doing Nothing Does Harm* campaign launched.
- *Organisational Strategy to Strengthen our Intersectional Approach* renewed and extended to 2020.

2019

- Commencement of Respect and Equality in Universities and Respect and Equality in TAFEs projects.
- *The Line – Never Follow* campaign launched.
- Natasha Stott Despoja's *On Violence* published.
- Pilot of Endorsed Trainers commenced.
- Media Making Change website launched.
- Respectful Relationships Education website launched.
- Workplace Equality and Respect website launched.
- *Change the story three years on* published.
- *Our Watch, Our Journey* published.
- *Men in focus: Unpacking masculinities and engaging men in the prevention of violence against women* published.

Our values

Collaborative

– We do this work together.

When we work together, we are open, curious and respectful. We connect with each other's experiences and views to ensure we build strong, ethical and honest relationships. We succeed when we make decisions informed by all voices. By working collaboratively we are able to best use all of our skills, strengths and lived experience to achieve our shared vision.

Optimistic

– We believe that change is possible.

Our belief in our work helps us through the hard times, supports us to transform society and inspires us with hope for a better world. When we face the most difficult challenges, we are kind to ourselves and each other. Through the highs and lows, we believe deeply, we show how, we make it possible, we make it essential, we are positive and we are passionate. We do this in our work, in our partnerships and in the way we recognise and celebrate our successes.

Creative

– We are innovative and brave as we create change.

We transform society through our creative approach to the opportunities and challenges we face. Whether these issues are small and unique or large and complex we have the agility to look at and respond in new ways in order to move forward. We are prepared to step outside of the box, fail and learn. We are pragmatic, honest, supportive and constructive in everything we do.

Authentic

– We stand behind our work.

We are trusted because our work has integrity. We demonstrate that we are reliable by fulfilling the promises that we make. We are honest and ethical in our work, our decision-making and our communication. Our strong relationships allow us to find a pathway forward that protects the evidence base of our work and ensures ongoing support for the things we do.

Inclusive

– We embed a diverse range of perspectives in everything we do.

We know that recognising and valuing a diversity of experiences and perspectives is vitally important to the prevention of violence against all women. Doing this is complex, it requires great empathy for ourselves and the people we partner with. We succeed because we listen, are compassionate and self-reflective in our communication and decision-making.

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Our plan

This plan builds upon the knowledge and experience Our Watch has accumulated in the first phase of the organisation. In the next five years, the organisation maintains its commitment to the vision under which it was established – an Australia where women and their children live free from all forms of violence.

Our Watch can now take a major leap forwards and refine the role it plays to achieve this vision – to stop violence before it starts.

The national indicators of success, outlined on page 14, will guide our work. While we embrace a critical leadership role to focus national attention on delivering against these indicators, we acknowledge that we work alongside and with others.

Our work in the next five years will be directed towards achieving four strategic goals based upon the themes of evidence, action, leadership and sustainability, with a commitment to intersectionality cutting across these.

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Goal 1: Evidence

Australians understand the drivers of violence against women and their children and their role in creating change.

Our Watch has established itself as a vital, trusted source of evidence for national and international action to end violence against women. Having this evidence ensures the action is effective. Our Watch commits to building this evidence further, translating it into effective action and long-term approaches to changing structures, norms and practices. This will include building on our intersectional analysis and evidence to support intersectional approaches.

Goal 2: Action

Australians act to end violence against women and their children.

It will be the collective action of many Australians that will lead to success. Using evidence as our foundation, we will work to increase the skill, number, diversity and coordination of people preventing violence against all women across all settings and to integrate our work into Australian systems, institutions, structures to address the drivers of violence against all women.

Goal 3: Leadership

We lead a national conversation about ending violence against women and their children.

We embrace our role as a national leader. We will continue to work tirelessly to give Australians the confidence, motivation and tools to drive change, lead the ongoing conversation about prevention and drive investment across industries and governments to create change. In fulfilling this role, we will build alliances and work in partnership with leaders and organisations that specialise in working with people affected by multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and inequality.

Goal 4: Sustainability

We are a sustainable and well-run organisation.

Our great achievements have been built upon the support of our members and the diligence of our committed and focused staff and board. We commit to being an employer of choice by developing a leading workplace through a strong resilient culture, a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace, effective employee engagement and retention processes, and reward and recognition for quality work. We further commit to being a sustainable organisation with robust governance and effective business systems.

Our plan (continued)

Our vision

An Australia where women and their children live free from all forms of violence.

Our role

To stop violence before it starts.
We are a national leader of primary prevention of violence against women and their children.

Our strategic goals and objectives

Goal 1: Evidence *Australians understand the drivers of violence against women and their children and their role in creating change.*

Objective 1: To build the evidence base in understanding drivers of all types of violence against all women in Australia.

Objective 2: To translate evidence into accessible and effective social marketing campaigns, practice and policy solutions.

Objective 3: To build the evidence through developing, piloting and evaluating long-term approaches to change to prevent violence against all women.

Goal 2: Action *Australians act to end violence against women and their children.*

Objective 4: To increase the skill, number and coordination of people preventing violence against all women across all settings.

Objective 5: To integrate our work into Australian systems, institutions and structures to continuously address the drivers of violence against all women.

Goal 3: Leadership *We lead a national conversation about ending violence against women and their children.*

Objective 6: To connect with Australians where they live, rest, work and play and give them the confidence, motivation and tools to drive change.

Objective 7: To lead the ongoing conversation on preventing violence against all women and their children in Australia, and to share our learning internationally.

Objective 8: To create structures for leadership and drive investment across industries and governments to drive prevention and cultural change.

Goal 4: Sustainability *We are a sustainable and well-run organisation.*

Objective 9: To be an employer of choice through our strong, resilient and inclusive culture.

Objective 10: To be a sustainable organisation with robust governance and effective systems to support our work.

Five-year outcomes

1. People engaged in select Our Watch prevention activities demonstrate positive change on attitudes relating to the drivers of and/or knowledge of violence against women
2. Select organisations and institutions who Our Watch works with report improvements to their policies, structures, norms and/or practices that support gender equality
3. The reach of Our Watch work increases annually with a baseline being set in 2019/20
4. Our Watch achieves an outstanding result on its bi-annual organisational review with a baseline being set in 2019/20

National indicators of success

1. There is a national and sustained commitment to investment in an Australia where women live free from all forms of violence.
2. All Australians reject violence against women.
3. Australia has achieved gender equality.
4. Women in Australia live free from all forms of violence.

ourwatch.org.au

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