

Building long-term commitment



Continuing to build skill, capacity and commitment is crucial for achieving long-term social change. As the VicHealth preventing violence against women framework for action notes, it will take a long-term commitment from a raft of organisations and community groups to influence the social and community norms that lead to violence against women in the first place. Remember that this is about the role your council plays in influencing these changes – you are not responsible for changing the world single-handedly!

Building sustainability into your preventing violence against women work

Planning ahead – Identify barriers to sustainability and develop strategies to address them. Examples include exploring options for ongoing funding and organisational commitment, developing a plan to address competing and changing priorities, enhance and continually develop leadership capacities, ensure there is cross-organisational support so that work does not end when key staff leave, and continually promote the central role councils play in preventing violence against women.



Advocacy – Find channels through which to advocate for what is needed to sustain this work. This could be for funding (through council budget processes), leadership (keeping leaders inspired and committed) or ensuring organisational commitment to preventing violence against women (embedding prevention strategies into the key planning documents).

Policy development – Formalise your organisation's commitment and leadership to preventing violence against women by developing a policy or strategy. This can be a stand-alone policy or strategies integrated with existing documents, such as the Council Plan or Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. Also consider linking your work to key federal and state plans (see Useful links for both the national and Victorian plans).

Embedding preventing violence against women into core functions – Run education programs on respectful relationships through your council's youth or maternal and child health services (see more information about these approaches in Useful Links). Consider gender in emergency management and recovery planning to ensure preventing violence against women is considered as part of council's emergency management role (see Info Sheet 6).

Partnerships and collaborations – Sustained interest in work to prevent violence against women is more likely if you have a group of motivated and committed stakeholders involved. Especially if there is a clear vision seen to be of benefit to all. Stakeholders could be a committee of council and community members who bring important 'capital' such as influence, knowledge, skills and passion. Investing time into resourcing and supporting a group like this will lay strong foundations for the work to continue.

Keep the interest and conversations going – A long-term communication plan focused on raising awareness and maximising engagement will help influence community attitudes. Seek opportunities to promote messages and be prepared to tailor them according to your audience (see Info Sheet 5).

Skills and knowledge development – Keep your skills and knowledge up to date and be aware of new developments in the field. This will keep you motivated, inspired by new ideas and able to keep your council informed of best practice. Seek out preventing violence against women training such as the VicHealth or DVRCV preventing violence against women short course (see Useful links).

One of the most positive aspects of working in a council setting is the willingness to share knowledge across the sector. Having these avenues for support will help keep you and your council engaged for the long term.

Funding opportunities – Look externally and internally through annual budget bids. The MAV Preventing Violence Against Women (PVAW) Network provides information about funding opportunities when they arise. Allocate prevention work to a specific staff or management role, with key performance indicators to ensure adequate resourcing.

Evaluation and monitoring – Assess how effective your work has been to help guide future activity. Recording and analysing evaluation data will help identify learnings to be applied in future initiatives. Follow this link for more about evaluation techniques and skills www.betterevaluation.org



Useful links:

National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children-2010-2022

Victoria's Action Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-business-and-community/community-involvement/women-in-the-community/preventing-violence-against-women/action-plan-to-address-violence-against-women-and-children

VicHealth Preventing Violence Against Women Short Course www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/Workforce/Short-Course-Listings.aspx

Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria Preventing Violence Against Women Short Course www.dvrcv.org.au/training/courses

Respectful Relationship Education www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/~media/ProgramsandProjects/DiscriminationandViolence/ViolenceAgainstWomen/respectful-relationships.ashx

Baby Makes 3 Program www.wchs.org.au/services/groups/baby-makes-3

MAV PVAW Network www.mav.asn.au/policy-services/social-community/gender-equity/Pages/preventing-violence-against-women-network.aspx

Program Sustainability Assessment Tool www.sustaintool.org/assess

i VicHealth, 2007, *Preventing Violence Before it Occurs: A Framework for Action and Background Paper to Guide the Primary Prevention of Violence Against Women in Victoria*, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne.



MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA



Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)
Level 12, 60 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000
GPO Box 4326, Melbourne 3001

www.mav.asn.au