



Australian Government  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

# OFFICE FOR WOMEN

Rapid review of prevention  
approaches: Australian Government  
implementation update - 20 February  
2026

PM  
&C

---

# Contents

Theme 1: A national emergency - and an ongoing national priority.....	2
Recommendation 1.....	2
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	2
Recommendation 2.....	2
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	2
Recommendation 3.....	3
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	4
Case study: National Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence (FDSV) Training for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Community and Faith Leaders (lead agency: <i>Department of Social Services</i> ).....	5
Theme 2: The prevention potential.....	5
Recommendation 4.....	5
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	6
Theme 3: Prevention through people .....	6
Recommendation 5.....	6
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	7
Recommendation 6.....	9
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	9
Case study: Healthy Masculinities Trial and Evaluation (Health MaTE) (lead agency: <i>Department of Social Services</i> ) .....	10
Recommendation 7.....	11
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	11
Case study: National FDSV Workforce Education on the Abuse of Older People (lead agency: <i>Department of Social Services</i> ).....	14
Recommendation 8.....	15
Update as at 20 February 2025 .....	15
Theme 4: Prevention through responses .....	15
Recommendation 9.....	15
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	16
Recommendation 10.....	17
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	17

---

Recommendation 11.....	18
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	18
Recommendation 12.....	19
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	20
Recommendation 13.....	20
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	21
Recommendation 14.....	22
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	22
Recommendation 15.....	23
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	23
Theme 5: Prevention through systems and industries.....	24
Recommendation 16.....	24
Update as at 20 February 2025 .....	24
Recommendation 17.....	25
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	25
Recommendation 18.....	26
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	26
Theme 6: Prevention through learning and data.....	28
Recommendation 19.....	28
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	28
Recommendation 20.....	28
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	28
Recommendation 21.....	29
Update as at 20 February 2026 .....	30

---

The Australian Government is committed to systemically addressing the drivers of gender-based violence, and making significant and meaningful inroads to ending violence against women and children in Australia.

This update was first published on 30 October 2025, with further information published on 20 February 2026 to reflect key updates, including the launch of Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices.

The Australian Government established an expert panel to undertake a [Rapid Review of Prevention Approaches](#) (Rapid Review) to build on and accelerate the considerable work underway under the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032* (the National Plan).

On 23 August 2024, the Australian Government received the expert panel's final report, [Unlocking the Prevention Potential: accelerating action to end domestic, family and sexual violence](#). The report was shared with state and territory governments.

Shortly after, on 6 September 2024, National Cabinet agreed to a \$4.7 billion package to prevent violence and support legal services, responding to a number of the Rapid Review's key recommendations. As a priority, the Australian Government is implementing measures announced at National Cabinet.

National Cabinet also agreed to respond progressively to the 21 recommendations set out in the Rapid Review. This includes responses through the National Plan and its action plans, with development of the Second Action Plan starting shortly. The Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council (the Council) is overseeing this progressive response.

On 28 November 2025, the Council published a comprehensive Australian Government, state and territory collective response to the Rapid Review, and in late 2025, submitted its report on progress of the Rapid Review to National Cabinet.

This 20 February 2026 point in time update:

- details commitments and actions by the Australian Government in response to the Rapid Review recommendations
- only includes Australian Government efforts and does not incorporate actions by states and territories
- also refers to some efforts that started before the Rapid Review as their delivery forms a critical part of the Government's response to its recommendations.

---

# Theme 1: A national emergency - and an ongoing national priority

## Recommendation 1

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments agree that 'ending gender-based violence, including violence against children and young people' becomes an ongoing priority of National Cabinet.

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Prime Minister and Cabinet, coordinating across all relevant portfolios*)

Update as at 20 February 2026

As a priority, the Australian and state and territory governments are implementing measures announced at National Cabinet on 6 September 2024.

On 6 September 2024, National Cabinet agreed that ending the national crisis of violence against women and children will remain an ongoing priority for National Cabinet. This is now listed as one of National Cabinet's 6 priority areas.

Between November and December 2025, *Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan to End Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence 2026–2036* (Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices) was endorsed by all governments, supporting a national priority tailored to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family violence contexts.

## Recommendation 2

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments to strongly embed and build on culturally-informed and place-based Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFSV) responses for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, families and communities, noting the significant work under way to develop a First Nations National Plan. This should include genuine and ongoing consideration of the evidence provided to the *Senate Inquiry into Missing and Murdered First Nations Women and Children*, and the commitments under Target 13 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Social Services, Indigenous Australians, multiple*)

Update as at 20 February 2026

As a priority, the Australian and state and territory governments are implementing measures announced at National Cabinet on 6 September 2024.

---

On 6 September 2024, National Cabinet committed to maintaining a central focus on missing and murdered First Nations women and children and agreed that all government commitments on gender-based violence must explicitly consider the needs and experiences of First Nations people, and be delivered in genuine partnership with First Nations communities.

Development and release of *Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices* (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*):

- Australian governments, in partnership with the *Our Ways Steering Committee*, developed *Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices*. This was informed by numerous government inquiries including the *Rapid Review*, *Senate Inquiry into Missing and Murdered First Nations Women and Children*, the *Northern Territory Coroner’s Inquest into the deaths of 4 Aboriginal women in the Northern Territory*, *Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women’s Voices)* report, and commitments under the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*.
- On 10 February 2026, the Government launched *Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices*.
- The Government has engaged the *Coalition of Peaks* to establish the *National Peak Body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Safety (National Peak Body)*. Once established it will play a key role in developing actions in partnership with governments.

Response to the *Senate Inquiry into Missing and Murdered First Nations Women and Children* (lead agency: *National Indigenous Australians Agency*):

- On 25 November 2024, the Australian Government tabled its response to the *Senate Inquiry report on Missing and Murdered First Nations Women and Children*, with drafting led by the *National Indigenous Australian Agency*. The Government is working with states and territories, and in partnership with First Nations people and the *Coalition of Peaks*, to ensure the inquiry’s report informs practical action. This includes through the development of *Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices* and the *National Peak Body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Safety*.

## Recommendation 3

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments to prioritise the experiences of communities that are marginalised especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, migrant and refugee communities, women and children with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ people, older women and regional and remote communities in implementing all of the recommendations in this report. Addressing gender-based violence for communities experiencing intersecting forms of marginalisation lays the foundation for population-wide success. Where applicable, implementation should involve a genuine and sustained co-design approach to ensure that affected communities are identifying priorities of greatest urgency and value to them.

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Social Services, multiple*)

---

## Update as at 20 February 2026

Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices:

- Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices is grounded in culture, kinship, connection to Country, and community leadership. It recognises that violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children impacts them in different ways and requires addressing underlying causes of violence, using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership to create meaningful and lasting change.

The National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032 (National Plan) recognises that violence against women and children impacts people in different ways, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, migrant and refugee communities, women and children with disabilities, and LGBTIQ+ people. This means considering diverse experiences of violence across all action to end gender-based violence, as well as taking a targeted approach where needed.

Developing a disability lens to First Action Plan (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*):

- Work is underway to develop a disability lens to the National Plan's First Action Plan. This work is currently with the Disability Senior Officials Group and the Disability Reform Ministerial Council for final clearance and is anticipated to be finalised in the first half of 2026.

Leaving Violence Program (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*):

- As part of establishing the Leaving Violence Program (LVP), an Expert Advisory Panel that is connected to the sector and representing lived experience, has been engaged to ensure the program remains trauma-informed, culturally responsive, ethical and accountable, and continues to meet the needs of victim-survivors.
  - Since the launch of the program on 1 July 2025 to 30 November 2025: 27,534 applications have been submitted through the webform.
  - 5,313 applications have been submitted via the phone.
  - 141 applications have been submitted in person/by email.
  - 10,528 victim-survivors have accessed financial support through the program.
  - Access to the program is not dependent on visa status.

---

## Case study: National Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence (FDSV) Training for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Community and Faith Leaders (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*)

The National FDSV Training for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities and faith leaders' program is a prevention and early intervention initiative, designed to empower CALD community and faith leaders to identify and respond to FDSV in diverse and complex community settings, and improve awareness and understanding of the impact of rigid gender roles and stereotyping in the context of FDSV. It is a 3-year program to deliver a comprehensive national training package by June 2026.

The training package being developed will consist of e-learning modules, vignettes and a conversation guide and it is currently being co-designed with CALD community and faith leaders. There have been 47 consultations with 295 attendees across all states and territories since late 2024. Intersectional needs within the CALD communities have been a key feature of the consultation process, with insights shared from CALD youth and CALD people also from the LGBTIQ+ community.

Recent community testing of the base-line training e-module demonstrated an immediate impact on participants.

## Theme 2: The prevention potential

### Recommendation 4

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments to expand their approach to prevention to acknowledge the global evidence base to leverage all prevention touchpoints more effectively. This should include:

- a. an independent review and expansion of Change the Story beyond primary prevention, with a focus on accommodating the evolving global evidence base around the prevention of violence across early intervention, response and recovery; and
- b. establish a five-year co-funded Prevention Innovation Fund, understanding what works better in an Australian context and at a community level.

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Social Services*)

---

## Update as at 20 February 2026

The *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032* (National Plan) references Our Watch's *Change the Story* as a key framework to support primary prevention strategies and activities.

Primary prevention approaches are only one aspect of the policy framework underpinning the National Plan. The First Action Plan 2023-2027 supports a range of broad prevention activities and efforts across the 4 domains of the National Plan. This has been strengthened since the delivery of the Rapid Review Report, and will also be considered through development of the Second Action Plan.

On 30 September 2025, Our Watch released and is implementing *Changing the Picture and Changing the Landscape*, with a dedicated LGBTIQ+ prevention framework currently in development. These frameworks expand and deepen the application of *Change the Story* by providing tailored, intersectional guidance for diverse communities.

# Theme 3: Prevention through people

## Recommendation 5

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments to adopt a strategic and coordinated approach to embedding the distinct experiences of children and young people in their own right. This includes through establishment of a Youth Taskforce under the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032* (National Plan), supported by the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission (DFSV Commission), to ensure implementation of the National Plan accelerates a focus on children and young people.

This strategic work should be complemented by more immediate efforts to support children and young people who have experienced violence, including:

- a. support and recovery for young children, with a focus on programmatic responses which maintain and repair a relationship with the protective parent, including in the context of the family law system, as well as upskilling Independent Children's Lawyers;
- b. developing tailored and developmentally appropriate service responses as well as youth-specific and informed, service responses for child sexual abuse, children and young people who have experienced family violence, young people using violence at home, and young people using and/or experiencing violence in intimate relationships, drawing on available evidence and practice frameworks available through Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS); and
- c. in recognition that certain cohorts of young people will not be in the care of statutory child protection systems or a protective parent, develop and deliver an appropriate and tailored response to young people escaping violence and seeking financial support and safe housing.

---

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Social Services, Attorney-General's, Treasury*)

### Update as at 20 February 2026

The Australian Government is providing \$218.3 million for early actions under Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices to support children and young people, and their families (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*).

This will:

- Strengthen the national Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation (ACCO) sector with funding for a national network of up to 40 ACCOs to deliver services to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families experiencing or at risk of experiencing family, domestic and sexual violence (FDSV). It will support the network to provide community-led interventions that keep women and children safe, address and reduce incidences of FDSV and reduce the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care.
- Extend the Leaving Violence Program Regional Trials to 2027 to continue providing \$5,000 support packages and culturally safe and accessible support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victim-survivors of Intimate Partner Violence.

As a priority, the Australian and state and territory governments are implementing measures announced at National Cabinet on 6 September 2024.

The following measures were announced at the 6 September 2024 National Cabinet, as part of the \$81.3 million package to support children and young people. Under this package, the Australian Government is:

- Providing \$40.6 million over 6 years from 2024-25 (and \$10.7 million per year ongoing from 2030–31) to expand the Children Specific Counselling components in the Specialised Family Violence Service (SFVS). Children Specific Counselling services support children as victims in their own right and aims to place children at the centre of the service being provided (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*).
  - In March 2025, the Government provided top-up funding to 8 Relationships Australia organisations from 2024-25.
- Providing \$20.1 million over 6 years from 2024-25 (and \$5.6 million per year ongoing from 2030-31) to expand and extend funding to 4 existing ACCOs under SFVS from 2024-25 and fund up to an additional 15 ACCOs to provide culturally safe child-centred support to First Nations children and young people and their families under SFVS from 2026-27 (lead agency: *Department of Social Services, in consultation with the National Indigenous Australians Agency*).
  - The Department of Social Services is in the early stages of consultation with stakeholders, including the Early Childhood Care and Development Policy Partnership co-secretariat and

- 
- the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) – National Voice for our Children. A stakeholder engagement plan is being developed to ensure ACCOs, peak organisations and communities contribute to the design and national awareness of the new services.
- In March 2025, the Government provided top-up funding to the existing 4 ACCOs delivering SFVS from 2024-25.
  - Providing \$12.8 million over 5 years from 2024-25 to deliver small-medium grants to enable specialist and community support services to enhance and expand critical support services provided to victim-survivors of child sexual abuse and children at risk of, or who have displayed, harmful sexual behaviour (lead agency: *Attorney-General's Department*).
    - Grant applications closed on 28 July 2025 and successful grants commenced in December 2025.
  - Providing \$6.8 million over 3 years from 2025-26 to expand the Supporting Children After Separation Program (SCASP) to provide specialised, longer-term support for children of separated families affected by family violence who are already engaged in counselling support within SCASP, to avoid needing to transfer those cases to a SFVS (lead agency: *Attorney-General's Department*).
  - Working with sector experts and stakeholders to identify gaps in supports for children and young people who have experienced or witnessed FDSV, to inform the design and implementation of new and revised initiatives and interventions (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*).
  - A consultant (WhereTo) is undertaking a Landscape Review and developing a report on the service needs of children and young people with lived experience of family and domestic violence.

All governments, First Nations representatives and the non-government sector are working together through *Safe and Supported: the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021–2031* towards the shared goal of making significant and sustained progress in reducing the rate of child abuse and neglect and its intergenerational impacts. This works alongside the *National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse 2021–2030* and the National Plan.

Youth advisory groups are becoming a common feature across jurisdictions. An example at the national level includes the Youth Advisory Groups run by the Office for Youth, including the Prevention of Gender-Based Violence Youth Advisory Group. These groups work with Ministers and government agencies on policies and programs that affect young people.

ANROWS held a conference from 14-16 May 2025 with the theme "*Listen, learn, act: Centring children and young people to end violence*", focused on demonstrating the importance of centring children and young people in driving evidence-informed change in policy and practice addressing FDSV.

---

The DFSV Commission has established a Reference Group, which includes young people with lived experience and youth-focused organisations, to assist with this work. The Commission has previously held a Youth Round table co-convened with Chanel Contos and the Global Institute for Women's Leadership. In December 2025, the Commission delivered a roundtable with ANROWS Youth Advisory Group centring children and young people, which the Minister for Social Services attended.

## Recommendation 6

The Commonwealth Government, with states and territories, to develop a national, coordinated and co-designed approach to engaging with men and boys, and on healthy masculinities and violence prevention. This should include:

- a. establishing intersectional, DFSV-informed advisory mechanisms for engaging with men and boys with multi-disciplinary expertise (e.g. health, education, tech), including the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Men's Advisory Body;
- b. adopting a strengths-based national definition and measurement methodology for healthy masculinities to guide future campaigns and/or program implementation;
- c. developing or expanding DFSV-informed program responses across sectors, focusing on healthy relationships and masculinities throughout men's life transitions, including school leavers, new fathers, separation/relationship breakdown and recent unemployment; and
- d. developing a national response, attuned to the experiences of men and boys, responding to the rise of online misogyny and radicalisation through targeted investment in research to understand relevant risk factors and the extent of harm; collaboration with specialist frontline educators; and a focus on evidence-based tech-industry regulation.

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Social Services, Health, Prime Minister and Cabinet, Communications, Home Affairs*)

### Update as at 20 February 2026

Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices has a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led programs promoting healthy masculinities for men and boys. Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices also seeks to reform the systems affecting safety, ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have access to culturally safe and holistic supports that recognise their real needs.

- During the May 2025 election, the Australian Government committed to 'take a coordinated approach to engaging men and boys in violence prevention' (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*).
- The Office of National Intelligence, on behalf of the National Intelligence Community, is funding research on Australian data into the links between misogyny and radicalisation. Funded research is investigating the prevalence of misogyny in young Australians, the relationship between misogyny and violent extremism, risk and protective factors for self-radicalisation to violent extremism, and the role of digital pathways in this space (lead agency: *Office of National Intelligence*).

- In August 2025, the Women and Women’s Safety Ministerial Council discussed the impact of different community attitudes on achieving gender equality, as well as the challenges of emerging resistance to gender equality. Ministers engaged in a strategic discussion on this challenge at the November 2025 Council meeting (lead agency: *Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet*).

This complements initiatives underway under the National Plan (including the Healthy Masculinities Trial and Evaluation, Movember Partnership and Men’s Wellness Centres, and Early Intervention Trial for Adolescent Boys) to support healthy masculinities, violence prevention and early intervention. These activities are in various stages of delivery (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*).

The Government provided \$12.7 million from 2022–23 to 2025–26 to continue funding No to Violence for a Men’s Referral Service (MRS) and Brief Intervention Service (BIS).

- The MRS offers confidential telephone counselling and referrals for perpetrators of domestic violence to help change their behaviour. In 2024–25 the MRS responded to 10,571 inbound calls and webchats from people seeking support related to men’s use of family and domestic violence.
- In 2024–25, 918 men engaged with the BIS, which provides multi-session telephone counselling support and referral options to men as they begin the behaviour change journey. 4,301 sessions were provided.
- This funding also enables continued delivery of training to support frontline workers in their work with men using family and domestic violence and an independent review of funded services. In 2024–25, training was delivered to 502 practitioners and counsellors.

## Case study: Healthy Masculinities Trial and Evaluation (Health MaTE) (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*)

The Empowering Boys to Become Great Men Project by The Man Cave will develop, trial and evaluate an in-school curriculum for boys designed to foster healthier concepts of masculinity, enhance empathy, and reduce gender-based violence. The curriculum is expected to engage around 10,240 students in at least 246 programs across approximately 100 diverse schools in Victoria (Vic) and New South Wales (NSW).

As at March 2025, The Man Cave has delivered activity in 45 schools across Vic and NSW, reaching 2,146 students through 61 workshops.

Testimonials from the Man Cave:

*“The program offered the boys in our Year 10 cohort a great opportunity to open up and discuss the value of relationships as young men. In complete honesty, I will take these lessons from the workshop through the rest of my life and definitely believe more young Australian men deserve to learn them too.” - School Vice Principal*

"I would like to thank The Man Cave for their work with our students. Your incredible facilitators delivered an outstanding program for our boys, and they have been raving about it ever since. The program has prompted so many discussions, opened up students to counselling and led to noticeable, positive changes in behaviour." - School Vice Principal

## Recommendation 7

The Commonwealth to undertake further structural reforms to strengthen women's economic equality, in recognition of the interconnectedness between lack of economic security and vulnerability to DFSV. This should include:

- a. consistent with the recommendations of the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce (WEET), abolishing the Child Care Subsidy Activity Test, as an immediate first step towards universal access to early education for Australian children, noting the current Activity Test limits flexibility in accessing child care for women in casual and insecure work;
- b. adopting in full the WEET recommendation to remove a major and escalating form of financial abuse against women seeking child support (recommendation 6.5);
- c. expanding eligibility for the Low Income Super Tax Offset (LISTO), in order to increase women's superannuation balances as they age;
- d. developing a successor plan to the *National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians (Elder Abuse) 2019-2023*;
- e. undertaking further reforms including expanding eligibility to address the economic insecurity experienced by women on visas who are victim-survivors of DFSV; and
- f. strengthening workplace health and safety laws to complement the positive duty on employers to prevent workplace sexual harassment, sex discrimination and harassment under the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*.

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Education, Attorney-General's, Social Services, Home Affairs, Employment and Workplace Relations, Treasury*)

### Update as at 20 February 2026

Women's Economic Equality:

- In February 2026, the gender pay gap is the lowest on record at 11.5%, supported by increases in the minimum wage, and pay increases for the female-dominated aged care and early childhood care and education workforces.

Child Care Subsidy Activity Test (lead agency: *Department of Education*):

- From 5 January 2026, the Australian Government implemented the 3 Day Guarantee which replaced the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) Activity Test. Under the 3 Day Guarantee, all CCS eligible families can now get 3 days of subsidised child care per week, regardless of their activity levels.

---

This means around 100,000 more families are eligible for subsidised child care. Families caring for a First Nations child can now get around 4 days of subsidised child care per week.

- From July 2025, the Government is rolling out the \$1 billion Building Early Education Fund, which will boost access to child care in areas of need, including in the outer suburbs and regional Australia.

Addressing weaponisation of the child support system:

- Through the Commonwealth Systems abuse audit further work is being done to change the child support system to prevent weaponisation.

Expanding eligibility for the LISTO, in order to increase women's superannuation balances as they age (lead agency: *Department of the Treasury*):

- On 13 October 2025, the Government committed to increase the LISTO from \$500 to \$810 and raise the eligibility threshold from \$37,000 to \$45,000 from 1 July 2027.
  - The majority of people who will benefit from changes to the LISTO are women, with a potential benefit at retirement of around \$15,000.
  - Around 1.3 million Australians will benefit, including around 750,000 women.
  - These changes build on other Government investments, including superannuation on Commonwealth-funded Paid Parental Leave from 1 July 2025, with modelling suggesting the median female earner's superannuation balance will be around \$4,250 higher at retirement as a result of this change; and on Payday Super reforms, which will benefit women who are more likely to be employed in lower paid, casual and insecure work and are at most risk of missing out on their super.

Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices recognises systemic drivers of family, domestic and sexual violence such as poverty, housing insecurity and exclusion and has a direct focus on breaking cycles through stronger housing and financial security, and addressing gaps for targeted violence-prevention measures.

Developing a successor National Plan to respond to elder abuse (lead agency: *Attorney-General's Department*):

- On 15 August 2025, the Standing Council of Attorneys-General agreed to progress approval by all governments of the National Plan to End the Abuse and Mistreatment of Older People 2025-35 as a priority.

Leaving Violence Program – eligibility (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*):

- The Leaving Violence Program supports people who are victim-survivors over 18 years of age experiencing intimate partner violence, regardless of visa status, gender or sexuality.

The Government has invested \$925.2 million over 5 years to establish the Leaving Violence Program as an ongoing financial support program for victim-survivors leaving a violent intimate partner

---

relationship. The Leaving Violence Program is not a crisis payment, but provides financial support packages to victim-survivors who are planning to leave, or have recently left, a violent intimate partner relationship.

- As at 1 July 2025, eligible victim-survivors, including those on temporary visas, are able to apply for support through the Leaving Violence Program.
- The Leaving Violence Program support workers help victim-survivors with referrals to appropriate services based on their safety plan and needs assessment, this can include legal and migration support. The Program will work with the sector to support relationships and linkages between the Leaving Violence Program and support services in the sector.
- As part of establishing the Leaving Violence Program, an Expert Advisory Panel, connected to the sector and representing lived experience, has been engaged to ensure the program remains trauma-informed, culturally responsive, ethical and accountable, and continues to meet the needs of victim-survivors.

Sex Discrimination Act's positive duty - making workplaces safer (lead agency: *Australian Human Rights Commission*):

- The Australian Human Rights Commission (the Commission) is taking action to make Australian workplaces safer for everyone. The Commission has started formal inquiries, developed proactive compliance strategies, and worked with organisations and businesses to meet their legal obligations to prevent and respond to work-related sexual harassment, sexist behaviour, sex discrimination and related victimisation.
- In the 2025–26 financial year, the Commission is proactively focusing on 2 high-risk industries: Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services. These industries employ large numbers of workers who face significant risks of work-related sexual harassment.

On 11 March 2025, the Commonwealth introduced the *Work Health and Safety (Sexual and Gender-based Harassment) Code of Practice 2025* to help employers and workers prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based harassment in Commonwealth workplaces.

Under work health and safety laws, duty holders must manage risks and hazards to both physical and psychological health, including the risks of sexual and/or gender-based violence and harassment. The Code of Practice provides practical guidance for duty holders on how to meet these obligations.

Action Plan Addressing Gender-based Violence in Higher Education (lead agency: *Department of Education*):

- On 25 August 2025 the *Universities Accord (National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence) Bill 2025* (the Bill) passed Parliament.
- The Bill creates a power for the Minister for Education to make a National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence (National Code) as a legislative instrument to:
  - reduce the incidence of gender-based violence

- 
- proactively strengthen prevention efforts
  - improve the response to gender-based violence; and
  - hold higher education providers accountable for their performance, including in student accommodation.
- On 1 January 2026, the National Code commenced.
  - Introducing a National Code was one of 7 key actions of the [Action Plan Addressing Gender-based Violence in Higher Education](#).
  - The National Code requires higher education providers to prioritise safety and proactively address the factors that drive and contribute to gender-based violence in their communities.
  - Students can also now escalate complaints to the National Student Ombudsman about the actions of their higher education provider.
  - The National Student Ombudsman can receive and investigate complaints about a broad range of issues, including student safety and welfare, and experiences of gender-based violence.

## Case study: National FDSV Workforce Education on the Abuse of Older People (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*)

The National FDSV Workforce Education on the Abuse of Older People program is a 3-year grant, running from 2023-24 to 2025-26. This grant aligns with Actions 1, 3, 4 and 7 of the National Plan and aims to improve awareness, knowledge and responses to addressing FDSV experienced by older people living in their home and not in residential care. The focus is on:

- sector workforce identifying and responding to abuse
- community attitudes and reporting
- improving the quality of life of older persons.

Elder Abuse Action Australia (EAAA) is the specialist organisation contracted to develop education and awareness raising materials targeted at workers delivering support to older people in their home. These materials have been developed in line with a national consultation process and include information on what constitutes abuse, how to respond, and where to refer people for support. These resources will enable workers and professionals engaging with, or those likely to engage with, older Australians to provide high quality support and intervention where there are instances of FDSV.

The materials will be made accessible via a website and include downloadable content including fact sheets. EAAA will evaluate the effectiveness of the training over a 5-month period, starting in early 2026.

---

## Recommendation 8

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments to expand the evidence base on how to build capability of family and friends to identify and respond to DFSV as “natural responders” in their relational contexts with victim-survivors and perpetrators. In the immediate term, the Commonwealth should resource Lifeline’s DV-alert to expand its current community-focused program offering, prioritising increased reach and frequency of facilitator-led delivery to regional and remote areas, as well as delivery virtually.

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Social Services*)

### Update as at 20 February 2025

DV-alert is a free, nationally recognised training program that is available, at no cost, to all health, allied health and frontline workers who are most likely to encounter people experiencing or at risk of domestic and family violence. DV-alert is available as general or Indigenous face-to-face workshops, via e-learning or awareness sessions. DV-alert can also tailor workshops to the needs of individual organisations. A 2-hour DV-aware workshop is open to the general public, aiming to enhance awareness and knowledge of family and domestic violence (FDV). Lifeline delivered 429 workshops to 6,274 individual clients in 2024-25 (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*).

Government is further considering how this recommendation could be addressed.

## Theme 4: Prevention through responses

### Recommendation 9

The Commonwealth, through the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) and with state and territory governments, to expedite a needs analysis to determine unmet demand in DFSV crisis response, recovery and healing (excluding police), with the view to develop a pathway to fund demand. This should take into consideration the needs of different groups of women and children and the demand for targeted and culturally safe responses, such as ethno-specific services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations, with a particular focus on remote communities.

More immediately, there should be a significant funding uplift for:

- a. legal services, noting the recommendations of the Independent Review of the National Legal Assistance Partnership and the expiry of the current partnership on 30 June 2025;
- b. crisis accommodation, noting commitments to date and what is outlined in *Recommendation 10*; and
- c. establishment of nationally consistent travel assistance for people escaping DFSV who live in remote areas (Commonwealth and states and territories).

---

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Social Services, Attorney-General's, Treasury*)

## Update as at 20 February 2026

As a priority, the Australian and state and territory governments are implementing measures announced at National Cabinet on 6 September 2024.

Following the National Cabinet announcement of a renewed Federation Funding Agreement (FFA) on 6 September 2024, on 1 July 2025 the renewed Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence (FDSV) FFA commenced. The Commonwealth, in partnership with states and territories, is investing over \$700 million in new matched funding under this FFA, which includes \$366.9 million of Commonwealth funding (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*):

- Funding under the FFA will support specialist supports for women, services for children exposed to FDSV to heal and recover, and working with men, including men's behaviour change programs for perpetrators of gendered violence.
- The FFA also supports greater flexibility for states and territories to direct funding to meet local need and is accompanied by stronger transparency and accountability mechanisms.
- States and territories are currently finalising their project plans which will be published on the Department of Social Services website in 2026.

Following National Cabinet on 6 September, in November 2024 the Commonwealth, state and territory Attorneys-General agreed to the terms of the new [National Access to Justice Partnership 2025-30](#) (NAJP). The NAJP commenced on 1 July 2025, following the expiry of the National Legal Assistance Program (lead agency: *Attorney-General's Department*).

- Through the NAJP, the Australian Government is providing a \$3.9 billion investment to support frontline legal assistance services, including an increase of nearly \$800 million to support specialist legal services. One of the priorities of the NAJP is providing services for women and children who are escaping or at risk of experiencing family and domestic violence.

Establishing a consistent method to collect data on unmet demand (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*):

- Under the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032* (National Plan), the Government has funded AIHW to develop a prototype for a national family and domestic violence specialist crisis services data collection. The key purpose of this project is to develop, test and agree a core set of data items that can be collected to quantify demand, as well as provide information about the characteristics and outcomes achieved for people accessing these services nationally.
- AIHW is working collaboratively with states and territories and consulting broadly with the sector, peak bodies and advocacy groups to understand the complex service delivery system and referral pathways in each jurisdiction, based on definitions of service types, and establish a good understanding of what data is and isn't collected.

- 
- The project is now in Phase 2 – the development of the prototype. A dedicated First Nations phase of work is also being developed, with a complementary governance arrangement.
  - The project is due to be completed in 2026.

## Recommendation 10

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments to apply a prevention lens to the resourcing and delivery of crisis response and recovery services. This includes through:

- a. replacing motels and other high-cost temporary crisis accommodation with specialist crisis accommodation that provide wraparound services (states and territories);
- b. resourcing the DFSV sector for long-term case management, following the needs analysis identified in Recommendation 9 (states and territories); and
- c. increasing linkage between the DFSV and homelessness sectors, and align these sectors in national frameworks and plans (Commonwealth and states and territories).

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Social Services, Treasury*)

### Update as at 20 February 2026

Since 2022, the Australian Government has made significant investments in housing, including for women and children impacted by violence (lead agency: *Department of Social Services and Department of the Treasury*):

- Delivery of crisis, transitional, social and affordable housing for vulnerable Australians, including women and children experiencing family and domestic violence, and youth at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness, continues through initiatives such as the \$1 billion National Housing Infrastructure Facility – Crisis and Transitional Housing, the \$100 million Crisis and Transitional Accommodation Program (CTAP) under the Housing Australia Future Fund, and \$175.1 million provided under the Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Program.
  - In February 2025, the Government announced that 42 projects across Australia will be offered funding as part of the CTAP to build new crisis and transitional homes for women and children experiencing family and domestic violence, and older women at risk of homelessness. As of 12 January 2026, 32 grants have been executed, and the remaining are still under negotiation, and 3 projects have commenced tenancy and are delivering support services.
  - As at 20 February 2026, a total of 39 Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Program projects have commenced assisting women and children across 214 dwellings.
- Further under the National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness, the Government is providing \$9.3 billion over 5 years from 1 July 2024 to state and territory governments to help people who are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness and support the effective operation of Australia's social housing and homelessness services sectors. The Leaving Violence Program supports people who are victim-survivors over 18 years of age, experiencing intimate partner

---

violence, regardless of visa status, gender or sexuality. It can provide referrals to housing support, and financial support can also be used by applicants for housing costs.

- The Government has invested \$41.7 million from 2022-23 to 2026-27 through the Keeping Women Safe in their Homes program, which aims to enhance the home security and personal safety of women and their children impacted by family and domestic violence.
- On 1 October 2025, the Government launched the 5% Deposit Scheme, guaranteeing portions of a first home buyer's home loan, so they can purchase with a lower deposit and not pay Lenders Mortgage Insurance. Through the 5% Deposit Scheme, launched on 1 October 2025, eligible single parents or guardians with at least one dependant are supported to purchase a home with a 2% deposit. All first home buyers are now eligible, with no caps on places or income. Participants in this stream may have previously owned or be divesting a property interest and are not required to be first home buyers.
- Together, these investments are helping to reduce the strain on the crisis accommodation system, reduce unmet need for transitional housing, and strengthen pathways into longer-term housing.

## Recommendation 11

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments to activate the health system and workforce as a key prevention lever. This should include:

- a. equipping and resourcing General Practitioners (GPs), perinatal, and mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) services to identify and support DFSV victim-survivors and people who use violence (Commonwealth and states and territories);
- b. creating a specific Medicare item number for GPs that enables them to spend appropriate time with victim-survivors (Commonwealth);
- c. mandating training of professionals in general primary and mental health settings in adult and child safeguarding, including DFSV, as a requirement for registration through the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Commonwealth and states and territories); and
- d. Increasing cross-sector collaboration between the AOD and DFSV sector and provide specialised services for women that are family friendly and support caring for children (states and territories).

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Health*)

### Update as at 20 February 2026

Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices calls for health system reform to strengthen the preventative layer and respond to better meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities in alignment with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. Our Ways also connects to existing national strategies, such as the *National Women's Health Strategy 2020–2030*, *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021–2031* (Health Plan) and the *National Drug Strategy 2017–2026*.

---

The Australian Government has a range of measures underway under the National Plan to activate the health system as a prevention lever – some commencing prior to and some following the Rapid Review (lead agency: *Department of Health, Disability and Ageing*). This includes:

- \$6 million to support 6 Primary Health Networks to trial delivering outreach health care to victim-survivors in women's crisis accommodation and services to support women and children fleeing violence.
- On 11 February 2026, the Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care announced that the Government is providing a further \$22.7 million to extend this support, following a positive evaluation of the pilot.
- \$48.7 million to support 12 Primary Health Networks to assist in the early identification and intervention of FDSV and coordinate referrals to support services.
- \$2.0 million for national primary care training, including building the capacity of primary health care providers to respond, refer and record disclosures of FDSV using a trauma and violence informed approach.
- \$67.2 million to support 6 Primary Health Networks to trial a new model of trauma-informed mental health recovery care for victim-survivors of FDSV.
- \$25.0 million towards a landmark initiative to establish a Women's Trauma Recovery Centre providing trauma-informed services and innovative wrap-around care to women and children in the Illawarra region who have experienced FDV.
- \$11.3 million towards men's health training for primary healthcare practitioners.

## Recommendation 12

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments to take targeted efforts to address the significant gaps in responses to people who use violence. This should include:

- a. strengthening initial justice responses to facilitate advice and assistance beyond legal needs, which can help to reduce risk and improve compliance, including access to crisis accommodation (states and territories); and
- b. improving the national evidence base, quality, capability and supply of men's behaviour change programs, including through a focus on continuous improvement. Behaviour change programs should:
  - i. be part of a community-coordinated response;
  - ii. be provided at appropriate intervention points;
  - iii. emphasise the value of associated support to victim-survivors through partner and family safety contact; and
  - iv. facilitate/co-locate access to support for needs related to harmful substance abuse, histories of trauma, cognitive impairment and mental ill-health through a DFSV-informed lens (states and territories, with Commonwealth supporting national consistency and best practice).

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Social Services, Attorney-General's, Treasury*)

---

## Update as at 20 February 2026

Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices has a focus on addressing the gaps in response to people who use violence including a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led responses that ensure accountability, provide pathways to healing, promote social and emotional wellbeing, provide prevention and early intervention initiatives for young people, and empower men to challenge violence, shift harmful attitudes, and contribute to safer and more respectful communities.

As a priority, the Australian and state and territory governments are implementing measures announced at National Cabinet on 6 September 2024.

At the 6 September 2024 National Cabinet meeting, the Australian Government announced it will provide funding to establish national standards for men’s behaviour change (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*).

- The Department of Social Services has undertaken planning and consultation to understand the scope of jurisdictional approaches to men’s behaviour change and existing standards. This includes understanding the breadth of men’s behaviour change interventions and evaluation and research.
- On 12 August 2025, the DFSV Commission hosted an online forum (co-chaired with Department of Social Services) with sector stakeholders from across the broader service system (including men’s behaviour change practitioners and other organisations who work with men and boys). The forum was hosted to support the Department of Social Services to scope and design the approach to establish the national standards, noting the range of relevant workforces and existing ways states and territories support and implement programs for behaviour change. The forum discussed existing evidence gaps and opportunities to support improved practice outcomes across the system. A summary of the discussion was published on the DFSV Commission website. The Commission also published an overview of recent research, policy development and service delivery on working with men and boys on its website ([Men and Boys Snapshot](#)).
- On 15 August 2025, the Women and Women’s Safety Ministerial Council agreed to accelerate work on national standards for men’s behaviour change interventions to improve quality and practice and deliver an effective, evidence-based and more consistent approach to addressing men’s use of violence across all jurisdictions.

## Recommendation 13

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments to work together to strengthen multi-agency approaches and better manage risk, with a lens on harm and safety, for victim-survivors of DFSV, including risk of homicide and suicide. This should include:

- a. the development and implementation of nationally consistent risk assessment and management principles to be utilised across the full range of roles identified as having decision-making

- 
- and/or support functions in relation to DFSV, with a proactive approach to preventing misidentification (Commonwealth and states and territories);
- b. strengthening information sharing within and across jurisdictions – including through the National Criminal Intelligence System (NCIS) (Commonwealth and states and territories);
  - c. the introduction and expansion of multi-agency responses, including fit-for-purpose police co-responder models – with an immediate focus on collaborative responses that increase access to forensic examinations (states and territories);
  - d. a national approach to strengthen systems responses to high-risk perpetrators, including through trialling and evaluating DFSV threat assessment centres and evidence-based focussed deterrence models (states and territories, with Commonwealth support); and
  - e. all jurisdictions establishing mechanisms that are DFSV-informed for independent oversight and accountability of police response and management of DFSV (including members investigated for DFSV). These mechanisms should sit outside of police forces and be civilian-led (states and territories).

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Social Services, Attorney-General's, Home Affairs*)

### Update as at 20 February 2026

The launch of Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices reinforces the need for common risk-assessment approaches that reflect the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

As a priority, the Australian and state and territory governments are implementing measures announced at National Cabinet on 6 September 2024.

The following measures were announced at the 6 September 2024 National Cabinet, as part of the \$82.4 million package to deliver innovative new approaches to better identify high risk perpetrators, share information about them across systems and state boundaries, and intervene earlier to stop violence escalating. This includes:

- \$2.0 million to develop a new national best-practice risk assessment principles and a model best-practice risk assessment framework (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*).
  - Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) has been contracted to update the principles. Consultations with all jurisdictions on the development of the best-practice model risk assessment framework are underway. The principles and Framework are expected to be completed by April 2026.
- \$0.6 million over 2 years to support enhancements to the National Criminal Intelligence System, which enables information sharing across jurisdictions, to provide a 'warning flag' that will assist police responding to high-risk perpetrators (lead agency: *Attorney-General's Department and Department of Home Affairs*).
- \$28.6 million over 4 years to trial 2 innovative models, Domestic Violence Threat Assessment Centres and focused deterrence, which will use evidence-based policing to detect, monitor and

---

intervene with high-risk and serial domestic violence offenders (lead agency: *Attorney-General's Department*).

- \$50.6 million over 4 years to work with states and territories to expand and increase nationally consistent, 2-way information sharing between family law courts and state and territory courts, child protection, policing and firearms agencies. On 15 August 2025, the Standing Council of Attorneys-General approved funding arrangements to extend information sharing under the *National Strategic Framework for Information Sharing between the Family Law and Family Violence and Child Protection Systems* and its Co-location Program (lead agency: *Attorney-General's Department*).
- \$0.6 million to conduct critical research on bail, remand, parole and sentencing with regard to risk of intimate partner homicide; and improving the operation of court mandated behaviour change programs and their interaction with justice systems (lead agency: *Attorney-General's Department*).

## Recommendation 14

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments to work together to build the specialist DFSV workforce and expand workforce capability of all services that frequently engage with victim-survivors and people who use violence. This should be done through:

- a. commissioning analysis into current and future labour supply for the DFSV specialist services sector and recommendations to build and support a secure and sustainably resourced sector;
- b. establishing a DFSV National Workforce Development Strategy that would expand the capacity and capability of sectors, such as the DFSV specialist sector, providing emergency services and accommodation, and including the men's behaviour change sector and the sexual violence sector; and
- c. establishing a strategy for capability uplift across other intersecting workforces, and prioritising legal, justice, child protection and health (including AOD and mental health) sectors.

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Social Services, Attorney-General's, Health, Skills and Training, Home Affairs*)

### Update as at 20 February 2026

Developing the specialist FDSV workforce and strengthening the community sector are priorities embedded through *Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices*. This plan is supported by a Sector Strengthening Plan for the community-controlled FDSV sectors that will be designed to improve service delivery, coverage, capacity, quality and resources for community-controlled organisations.

Workforce analysis (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*):

- The Australian Government has invested \$1.39 million to develop a National Workforce Survey to understand the size and capabilities of the FDSV workforce. It will build on state and territory workforce surveys undertaken over the past few years.

- 
- The Social Research Centre has been contracted to lead this work. The approach to the survey was developed in consultation with the sector from July to October 2024 to ensure it is fit-for-purpose, accessible and culturally sensitive.
  - An interim report was provided in December 2024 and the survey questionnaire was developed and cognitive testing undertaken over 2025.
  - The survey rolled out in February 2026 with a final report due by June 2026.

## Recommendation 15

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments should further expand and prioritise work on Action 6 in the First Action Plan of the National Plan to recognise the full range of sexual violence including where it occurs apart from DFV particularly noting the recommendations from the forthcoming Australian Law Reform Commission inquiry into justice responses to sexual violence.

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Attorney-General's*)

### Update as at 20 February 2026

Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices seeks to address sexual violence, recognising that violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children requires addressing underlying causes of violence, using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership to create meaningful and lasting change.

*Safe, Informed, Supported: Reforming Justice Responses to Sexual Violence* (lead agency: *Attorney-General's Department*):

- The Australian Law Reform Commission's (ALRC) report *Safe, Informed, Supported: Reforming Justice Responses to Sexual Violence* was tabled in Parliament on 6 March 2025, making 64 recommendations.
- In response, in the 2025-26 Budget, the Australian Government committed \$21.4 million to improve victim-survivor engagement with the justice system and inform a broader response to the ALRC's report.
- These investments specifically focus on improving victim and survivor engagement with the justice system through measures like expanding trauma-informed legal services, piloting culturally safe Justice System Navigators, and exploring restorative justice pathways.
- The Government is carefully considering the ALRC report's recommendations and will work closely with states and territories, experts and people with lived experience, through an Expert Advisory Group, to consider a longer-term response.

---

# Theme 5: Prevention through systems and industries

## Recommendation 16

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments to undertake an immediate audit of how Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFS) perpetrators are weaponising government systems, and to respond to these findings. This audit and subsequent plans for reform should be informed by Safety by Design principles.

The Commonwealth Government should build on work that is already underway and prioritise systems where significant harm is occurring, such as: family law, child support, immigration, and taxation.

(Responsible Australian Government portfolios: *Prime Minister and Cabinet coordinating across all relevant portfolios*)

### Update as at 20 February 2025

As a priority, the Australian and state and territory governments are implementing measures announced at National Cabinet on 6 September 2024.

On 6 September 2024, following National Cabinet, the Prime Minister announced the Australian Government would immediately commence an audit of key Commonwealth systems to identify areas where they are being weaponised by perpetrators of family and domestic violence (lead agency: *Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet*).

- The audit, overseen by a Secretaries Working Group on Gender-Based Violence, is an ongoing mechanism to identify and address weaponisation of Commonwealth systems by perpetrators of family and domestic violence.
- As an immediate response to the audit, the Australian Government has committed to embed safety in government systems and close financial abuse loopholes in the superannuation, tax and corporate, and social security systems.
- Further work is being done to consider how to strengthen the child support system against weaponisation, and to apply safety by design principles in systems design, operation and reform.
- The government has also committed to consult on changes to tax and social security law so that perpetrators, not victim-survivors, are accountable for debts they accrue through financial abuse.
- The Social Security and Other Legislation Amendment (Technical Changes No. 2) Bill 2025 was introduced into the House of Representatives on 4 September 2025. The Bill allows Services Australia to better account for circumstances like coercion or financial abuse when

---

administering the special circumstances debt waiver. This builds on the election commitment to embed safety in Commonwealth systems and ensure the social security system cannot be weaponised against women experiencing violence.

## Recommendation 17

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments to work with industries that are well positioned to prevent and reduce DFSV, including homicide, with a focus on alcohol and gambling industries, in addition to media and pornography. This includes reviewing and strengthening alcohol and gambling regulatory environments to prioritise the prevention of gender-based violence. This should include:

- a. adopting clear primary objectives in state and territory liquor regulatory regimes to prevent gender-based violence, alongside existing objectives around alcohol harm reduction (states and territories);
- b. restrictions on alcohol sales, delivery timeframes (states and territories) and advertising (Commonwealth and states and territories);
- c. stronger restrictions leading to a total ban on advertising of gambling (Commonwealth and states and territories);
- d. examining the density of electronic gaming machines, and use of online gambling, in relation to the prevalence of DFSV across different populations and communities (Commonwealth and states and territories);
- e. establishing and embedding national standards for media reporting on gender-based violence (Commonwealth); and
- f. ensuring the age-verification pilot for online pornography tests both the technology, and how age verification assurance systems will be implemented, including the participation of the major technology platforms used by Australian children.

Further, the Review recommends that the Commonwealth Government work with the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) and other organisations on a framework to ensure the development of an integrated and focused effort to address the role of alcohol in DFSV.

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Health, Communications*)

### Update as at 20 February 2026

As a priority, the Australian and state and territory governments are implementing measures announced at National Cabinet on 6 September 2024.

On 6 September 2024, National Cabinet agreed to a package of practical next steps, including efforts to address the role that systems and harmful industries play in exacerbating violence.

- 
- This included providing \$1.0 million to update the *National framework for action to prevent alcohol-related family violence*, developed by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) in 2015 (lead agency: *Department of Health, Disability and Ageing*).

Age assurance technology trial (lead agency: *Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts*):

- In late 2024, the Parliament of Australia made amendments to the *Online Safety Act 2021* to introduce a social media minimum age.
- In August 2025, the Government published a final report of the independent Age Assurance Technology Trial, which found age assurance technology is effective in protecting young Australians from explicit and age-inappropriate content online.
- On 2 September 2025, the Government announced that it will work to restrict access to nudification apps and undetectable stalking tools, engaging closely with industry on how best to achieve this.
  - This will help to address current gaps in the law and proactively prevent abuse facilitated by evolving technologies.
- In September 2025, the eSafety Commission released regulatory guidance for the online industry on reasonable steps to comply with the Social Media Minimum Age (SMMA) obligation.
- On 10 December 2025, the (SMMA) obligation came into effect. The SMMA requires certain social media platforms to take reasonable steps to prevent Australians under 16 from having an account.
- The Government has put Roblox on notice in response to serious reports of child safety risks on the popular online gaming platform and is giving serious consideration to the steps and measures it can take to address these issues.

## Recommendation 18

The Commonwealth Government to continue to support the eSafety Commissioner to undertake increasingly complex work preventing gender-based violence, which includes working with the technology industry on the improvement of policies, practices and accountability.

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Communications, Attorney-General's, Social Services*)

### Update as at 20 February 2026

As a priority, the Australian and state and territory governments are implementing measures announced at National Cabinet on 6 September 2024.

At the National Cabinet meeting on 1 May 2024, the Australian Government announced it will deliver a range of new measures to tackle factors that exacerbate violence against women, such as violent

---

online pornography, and misogynistic content targeting children and young people. This commitment was reiterated at the 6 September 2024 National Cabinet meeting.

Legislative changes:

- On 12 September 2024, the Government introduced the *Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024* to outlaw the malicious release of personal data online, or 'doxxing'. The Act came into force on 10 December 2024 (lead agency: *Attorney-General's Department*).
- On 8 November 2024, National Cabinet agreed to the Australian Government legislated a minimum age of 16 to access social media. The *Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024* was passed by Parliament on 29 November 2024, requiring social media platforms to prevent Australians under the age of 16 years from having social media accounts through age verification of users. The requirements came into effect on 10 December 2025 (lead agency: *Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts*).
- On 2 September 2025, the Government announced that it will work to restrict access to nudification apps and undetectable stalking tools, engaging closely with industry on how best to achieve this (lead agency: *Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts*).

Industry codes (lead agency: *eSafety Commissioner*):

- From 1 October 2024, a voluntary online dating industry code came into operation for online dating platforms, which establishes safeguards to reduce the risk of online enabled harm to users of dating services operating in Australia. On 1 April 2025, the industry code became subject to enforcement.
- On 30 July 2025, the eSafety Commissioner registered 3 new industry codes submitted by the online industry, creating safeguards to protect children from exposure to pornography, violent content, and themes of suicide, self-harm and disordered eating. Once in place, the new codes support efforts dealing with the highest-harm online material, such as child sexual abuse material and pro-terror content.

Project funding (lead agency: *eSafety Commissioner*):

- On 24 July 2025, the eSafety Commissioner awarded \$3.5 million to 10 new projects under the Government's \$10 million Preventing Tech-based Abuse of Women Grants Program. This includes a dedicated First Nations funding stream and targeted investments for the prevention of abuse of women with disability, culturally and linguistically diverse women, and LGBTIQ+ women.
  - 6 of the projects will directly engage boys and men, addressing the influence of misogynistic online narratives on teenage boys and involving men in the co-design of prevention resources.

---

# Theme 6: Prevention through learning and data

## Recommendation 19

The Commonwealth Government to expand the functions and powers of the National DFSV Commission and establish it as a statutory authority. Expanded powers should include performing a clearinghouse function, having stronger powers to gather information, and to continue monitoring the implementation and funding associated with the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032* (National Plan).

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Social Services*)

### Update as at 20 February 2026

In October 2025, the DFSV Commission tabled its Yearly Report in Parliament, which provides transparent accountability for implementation of the National Plan.

## Recommendation 20

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments to further strengthen data collection, in relation to DFSV. This includes:

- a. working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to embark on a process to determine a community led approach to data collection that accounts for Indigenous data sovereignty principles;
- b. increasing intersectional and disaggregated data, as well as a particular focus on improving data on regional, rural and remote communities such as the Torres Strait Islands, in addition to improving data on LGBTIQ+ experiences, experiences of people with a disability, and children and young people affected by family law processes;
- c. establishing a national data set focusing on the extent and nature of perpetration to inform and improve response; and
- d. prioritising enhancements to the measurements framework for the National Plan to include further quantitative targets.

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Social Services, Indigenous Australians, Health, Attorney-General's*)

### Update as at 20 February 2026

Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices strengthens the need for embedding Indigenous data sovereignty principles through community led approach to data collection.

There are considerable efforts underway to strengthen data and research under the National Plan (lead agency: *Department of Social Services*). The Australian Government is:

- Progressing a number of data development projects that will strengthen the collection and reporting of data related to family, domestic and sexual violence (FDSV). This includes 3 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) projects (the Prototype data collection on specialist crisis FDV services, the FDSV Integrated Data System, and the FDSV website for monitoring and reporting on FDSV and National Plan Outcomes) and 2 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) projects (Personal Safety Survey 2025-26 and the Criminal Justice Data Asset).
  - These projects are on track for delivery and implementation over the next 1-2 years.
- Implementing the \$15 million Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data measure, which will support measurement of progress against Closing the Gap Target 13.
  - The Government is consulting widely to identify suppliers with relevant skills, experience, and infrastructure to commence the procurement process.
  - The Government has worked with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council for FDSV (Advisory Council) to finalise the scope of the project and determine the implementation approach. The Advisory Council's tenure ceased on 31 December 2025.
- Providing \$27.6 million for the National Priority Research Fund to support Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) to continue its work.
  - Under the National Priority Research Fund, ANROWS has commissioned 14 research projects that focus on building the evidence base on pathways into and out of perpetration of FDSV. 8 research projects aim to inform policy and practice design for prevention and early intervention and 6 research projects focus on engaging sectors beyond those that specialise in FDSV, including health, education, and LGBTQIA+. 3 of these research projects are led by First Nations researchers.
- Committed to developing further quantitative targets within the lifetime of the First Action Plan of the National Plan. Work to consider and agree further quantitative targets is currently in the planning phase.

## Recommendation 21

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments to develop a consistent approach to death review processes and improve knowledge on the relationship between DFSV and suicide. This should include:

- a. establishing and uplifting death review panels across all jurisdictions, including with First Nations support units and protocols (state and territory governments);
- b. strengthening national coordination and consistency of DFSV death review processes, and learning and sharing of findings (state and territory governments supported by Commonwealth); and

- 
- c. initiating an urgent inquiry into the relationship between DFSV victimisation and suicide, with a view to developing a methodology for accurate counting of the DFSV death toll (Commonwealth, state and territory governments).

(Responsible Australian Government portfolio/s: *Social Services, Attorney-General's, Health*)

### Update as at 20 February 2026

The Australian Government recognises the critical role that death reviews play in identifying where systems and efforts have failed in their support for, and interaction with, victims and perpetrators of FDSV.

The Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Program is a partnership between the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Network (the Network) and ANROWS. The partnership produces landmark research exploring FDV-related deaths in Australia.

The Network comprises members of each of the death review teams from all of the Australian states and territories. Members of the Network have specialist expertise in domestic and family violence-related issues and are able to access information from coroner's courts, ombudsman's offices and government agencies to produce an informed and holistic understanding of the circumstances and context of a domestic and family violence-related death.

Government is further considering how this recommendation could be addressed.

On 30 October 2025, the Australian Government announced the launch of an inquiry into domestic, family and sexual violence related suicide. The inquiry is being undertaken by the House Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs.