



CHANGE STARTS WITH YOU

RESOURCE FOR YOUTH

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TRIGGER WARNING

Topics discussed in this resource could be triggering (violence, abuse, sexual assault).

If anything you read causes you distress, please reach out to the support resources listed on page 22–25 and your own social networks, if you feel comfortable to do so.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The creators of this resource acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their elders past and present.

We also acknowledge the far higher rates at which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience family violence in Australia.

Structural oppression impacts the frequency and forms of violence that women and gender diverse people experience.

We also acknowledge the strength and resilience of victim-survivors who have experienced or currently live with family violence, and recognise their contributions to propelling change.



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SELF- CARE

Self-care is very important to maintain health and wellbeing, both physically and mentally. Self-care helps to prevent stress and anxiety. Self-care can take many forms and what helps can be unique to each individual.

SELF-CARE TIPS FOR WHEN YOU'RE OVERWHELMED



Breathing exercises



List three things you are grateful for



Speed clean your room



Stretch your body



Listen to your favourite song



Call a friend



Listen to your favourite podcast



Get a good night's sleep



Get outdoors, go for a quick walk



Let go of what you cannot control



CHANGE STARTS WITH YOU.

This resource is for you, the young people of Melbourne, to empower you to have the knowledge & confidence to create real change in our community.

Together we can strive for a safer community for everyone, including women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people of colour, people with disabilities, gender diverse people, culturally and linguistically diverse people, people of all faiths and members of the LGBTIQ+ community.

EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT

to live in a safe, equitable and respectful environment that is free from violence: a right that's set in our laws.



WHAT IS HAPPENING AROUND AUSTRALIA?

50%

of Australian women have experienced sexual harassment in their lifetime

25%

of Australian women have experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner



1 IN 3

Australian women has experienced physical violence since the age of 15

WEEKLY MURDER

On average, one Australian woman a week is murdered by her current or former partner¹

3 IN 5

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women have experienced physical or sexual violence perpetrated by a male intimate partner*

*This violence is perpetrated by men from many cultural backgrounds, including indigenous and non-indigenous men.



1 IN 5

Australian women has experienced sexual violence since the age of 15

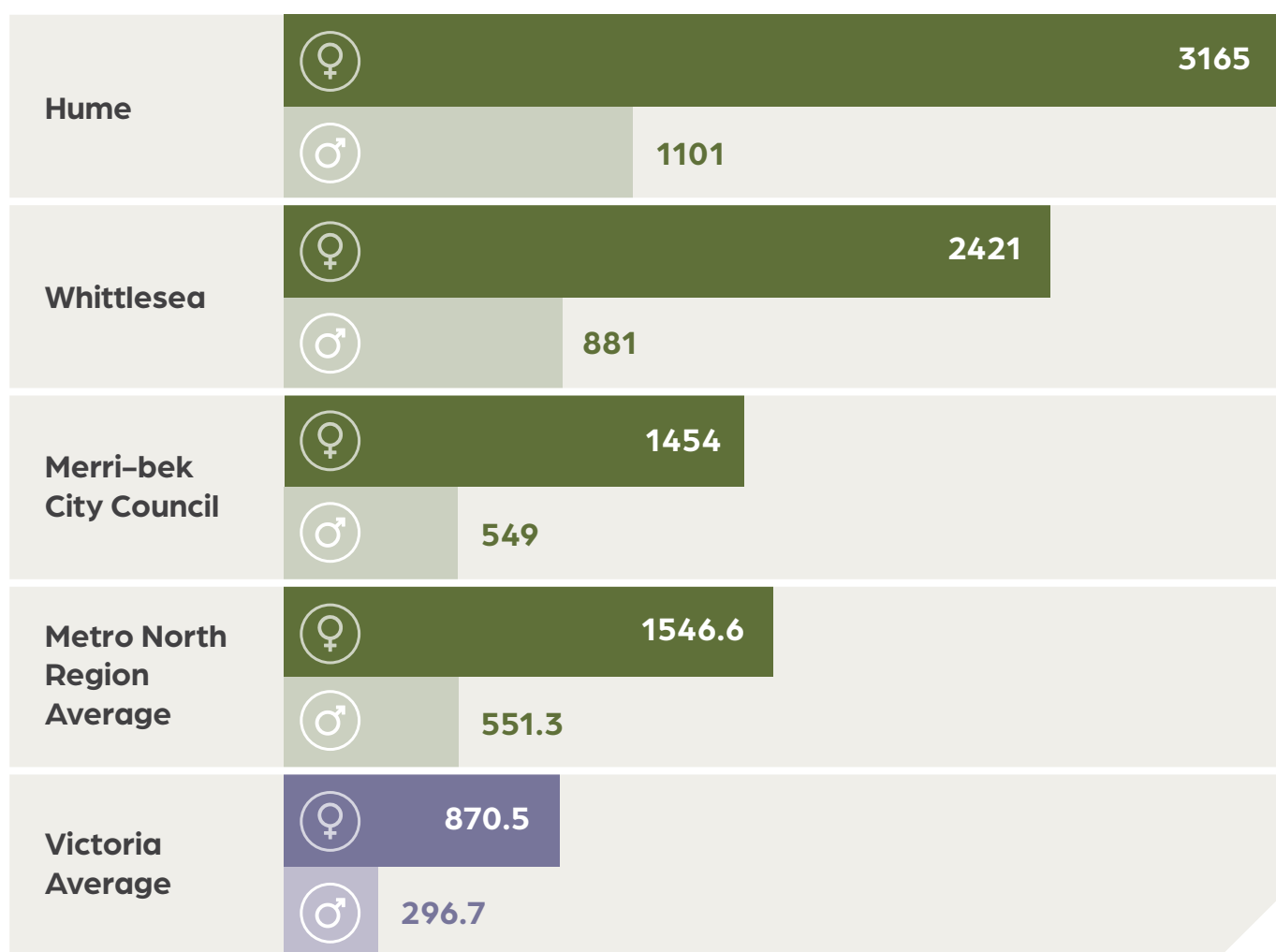


2 IN 5

women with disabilities have experienced intimate partner violence since the age of 15²

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN VICTORIA?

Family Violence – The number of victim reports made where an incident was attended by Victoria Police (L17) in 2020³



Many women experiencing violence don't report it to police, which means the true extent of the problem is underestimated.

There's a number of reasons why women don't report violence, including fear of further abuse, community attitudes, social isolation, victim-blaming, and sexism.

 FEMALE
 MALE

WHAT IS FAMILY VIOLENCE?

We acknowledge that gender is a social construct, and exists on a spectrum that encompasses much more than binary 'male' and 'female' identities.

We also acknowledge that men can experience violence, and that violence happens in LGBTQIA+ relationships. In this booklet, however, we focus on men's violence against women, because women are disproportionately affected by violence and their experience of violence is different.

Women are more likely to experience violence in the home, at the hands of someone they know, whereas men are more likely to experience violence in public,

at the hands of a stranger. Regardless of the gender of the victim, 95 per cent of violence is perpetrated by men.¹

DEFINITIONS

Violence against women (VAW) refers to any act of gender-based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or private life.¹

Family violence (FV)* includes patterns of coercive, controlling, abusive, violent or threatening behaviour, or any other form of behaviour that coerces or controls a family member, or causes them

to be fearful for their own or someone else's safety and wellbeing⁵

Under Victorian law, children are also victims of family violence if they see or hear violence in their homes and between family members. The definition of family encompasses a wide range of relationships. These include intimate partners, family of origin (e.g., parent–parent, parent–child, sibling, etc.) or blended families, as well as kinship relationships, carer and other roles.

| TYPE OF VIOLENCE | WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE? |
|----------------------|---|
| Emotional | Insults, ridicule, name-calling, humiliation, mind games |
| Financial | Withholding money, controlling finances, financial dependence |
| Physical | Hitting, beating, pushing, strangulation |
| Psychological | Intimidation, manipulation, breach of privacy, threats, gaslighting |
| Sexual | Sexual assault, forced sexuality, sexual insults, unwanted touching, not seeking consent. For more info, go to page 19 |
| Spiritual | Stopping someone from practicing their religious or cultural beliefs Forcing someone to practice certain religious or cultural beliefs Shaming or insulting religious or cultural beliefs Using religion and culture as reasons to control someone |
| Social | Controlling interactions, isolation, stalking, using the internet to tell lies or share someone's personal information, embarrassing a person in front of others |
| Reproductive | Pressuring a person to have a baby or an abortion Forcing decisions on the use of contraception Making someone have unprotected sex Not seeking consent |
| Visa | Hiding passport/visa documentation, threatening visa status/residency |

footnote 6

* This definition is similar to domestic violence and the two can be used interchangeably.



WHAT'S THE LINK

BETWEEN GENDER INEQUALITY AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN?

Violence against women is a serious human rights issue that is driven by gender inequality. Disrespectful relationships, gender stereotypes and sexism all contribute.

The good news is, violence against women is preventable so we can all contribute to ending it.

Here's some examples of discriminatory attitudes and behaviours that are still often seen as acceptable

**BUT
ARE
NOT.**



'BOYS WILL BE BOYS'

This suggests there is one way to be a boy or man, and essentially attempts to explain away aggressive or violent behaviour based on gender (e.g., unwanted attention towards a girl that a boy has a crush on, teasing, touching etc).



PEER PRESSURE

Boys or men can be pressured by peers to pursue sex with women in coercive and aggressive ways, and to talk about women as sexual objects.



TOXIC MALE BONDING

Bonding rituals between boys or men can include rating girls and women on their physical looks.



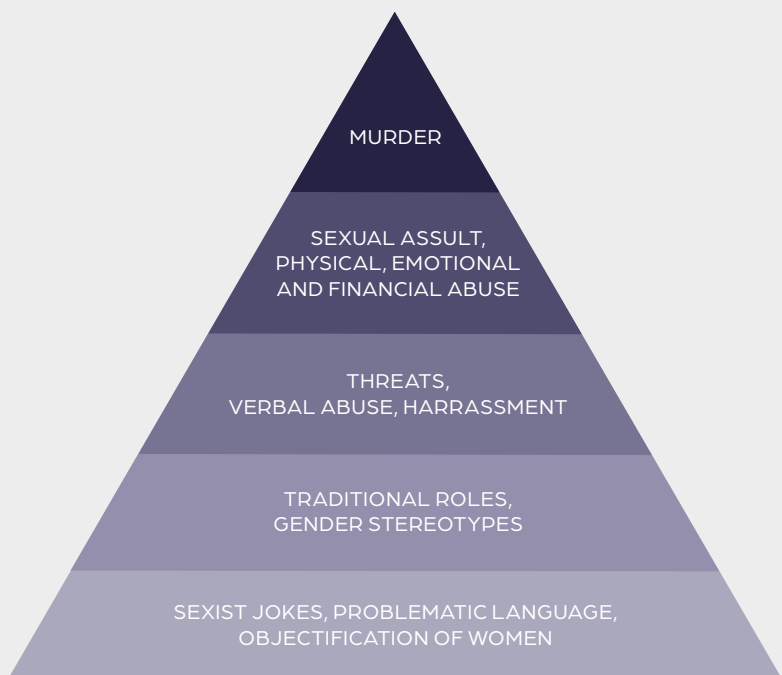
COMPETITION

Boasting about the number of sexual partners (hook-ups) is often mistakenly seen as a badge of honour for boys or men.

PYRAMID OF DISCRIMINATION⁴

The Pyramid of Discrimination reveals all the layers involved in discrimination against women. People often don't realise how sexist jokes or stereotypes contribute to family violence, but the lower levels of the pyramid form the building blocks for more severe types of discrimination and abuse.

If we challenge these jokes and stereotypes, the pyramid begins to crumble.



WHAT IS A GENDER STEREOTYPE?



A stereotype is a judgement or bias about a person or group. It's often outdated, gendered and very rarely accurate. For example, 'men are strong and women are weak', or 'men are logical and women are emotional'.

We know these stereotypes are harmful, and not just to women. They also limit the scope of emotional development for men and boys. The pressure to live up to the stereotype of always being 'tough', 'strong' and 'never showing emotion' can cause boys and men to experience negative feelings and emotions, and have poorer attitudes.

A survey of 1000 Australians showed that men who identify with these stereotypes are more likely to report poorer mental health, experience violence, or use violence against women.⁷

TOGETHER WE CAN CHALLENGE THESE STEREOTYPES



MYTH

Family violence only happens in poor, uneducated or minority families.

Family violence happens because women provoke men.

If a woman was in real danger, she would just break up with him or leave. If she hasn't, it can't be that bad.

Only physical violence counts as family violence.

Children aren't really affected by family violence between their parents.

Lots of women make false claims about family violence and sexual assault or exaggerate how bad the abuse is.

Most people who commit violence are under the effects of alcohol or drugs, or stressed and angry.

Family and intimate partner violence is a personal problem between a couple.



FACT

Family violence occurs in all types of families, regardless of income, profession, religion, ethnicity, education, race or sexuality.

It's common for perpetrators to blame women for provoking them, but there is no excuse for violence. Family violence happens because a person chooses to act violently.

A woman is at highest risk of extreme violence, including murder, when she does leave a perpetrator. A woman may stay in a relationship for many reasons including fear, low self-esteem, keeping a family together or a belief that her partner will change.

Family violence can be defined as any controlling or violent behaviour that causes emotional, psychological, sexual, financial or physical damage to a family member, partner or ex-partner, or causes them to feel fear.

Seeing violent behaviour by one parent towards another and growing up in an unpredictable, fear-filled environment can have significant detrimental impacts on young people.

False claims about family violence and sexual assault are extremely rare. Most women who experience abuse don't report it. When talking to family, friends and others, women are more likely to downplay their experience of violence than exaggerate it.

Violent behaviour is a choice. Perpetrators of family or intimate partner violence are usually not violent in public. Violence occurs regardless of alcohol or drug misuse, or stress and anger.

Violence is everyone's business. By becoming an active bystander you can help end violence against women.



BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

**VIOLENCE
AGAINST
WOMEN IS
PREVENT-
ABLE**

BYSTANDER ACTION

A bystander is someone who sees or hears about an act of sexism, harassment, discrimination, or any other form of inappropriate or violent behaviour.

People who witness this behaviour (but are not involved either as perpetrators or victims/survivors) are in a position to be powerful allies in challenging sexist and discriminatory behaviours and attitudes.

WHAT IS BYSTANDER ACTION?

Bystander action is action taken by a bystander to prevent harm and call-out sexist, racist or homophobic behaviour. Preventing violence against women begins with challenging the behaviours that enable it.

NO

Say **NO** or make it clear you don't like what's happening, e.g., call out harmful comments made to your peers. Remember to skip directly to **GO** if it's not safe to stick around and say this!

When a sexist joke is made, ignore it completely or roll your eyes and change the conversation.

Check-in with the person affected afterwards to make sure they're okay.

GO

Remove yourself from the situation. Go directly to this step if it's not safe to say **NO**.

Walk away, get yourself to somewhere safe or switch off your device if that's the source of the problem.

Sometimes it's not possible or safe to **GO**. Whatever happens, use the next step, **TELL**.

TELL

TELL a trusted adult about what's happened, e.g., a parent or teacher. It's not your fault if you are harassed or if you witness an incident. Remember, it's the perpetrator who did the wrong thing.

It is important to **TELL**. Keeping it to yourself can lead to things getting worse for you or for others. Telling someone leads to the next step, **CHANGE**.

If you don't feel comfortable telling someone you know, get support from KidsHelpline on 1800 55 1800.

CHANGE

Work for **CHANGE**. That means, be an active bystander. Be part of a group that won't accept these behaviours, and that speaks-up or works with others to prevent gender-based violence.

You could:

- create an action group at your school
- practice being an active bystander
- challenge gender stereotypes
- start conversations with friends and family
- join the [Good People Act Now \(GPAN\) Youth Action Group \(YAG\)](#).



footnote 12

PUT YOUR ACTIVE
BYSTANDER SKILLS TO

THE TEST

You're scrolling through your socials and see a naked image of a girl from school that's been posted by her ex. Do you:

A. 'Like' the photo because all your friends have.

B. Just keep scrolling, it's not your business.

C. Message the person responsible for the post to let them know it's inappropriate and ask them to remove it.

D. Report it anonymously.



You can also:

- report it anonymously to the social media site
- tell a trusted adult (a parent or teacher)
- reach out to the girl and ask if she's okay
- ask your friends to 'unlike' the image and encourage them to report it.

If you answered C, give yourself a gold star.

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

What does a respectful relationship look like?



You both feel safe, valued and cared for



You are both free to make your own choices



Sexual activity between you and your partner is legal and consensual



You both support each other's needs and wellbeing



You both listen to and hear one another



There is freedom to disagree without verbal insults



You both have trust, honesty and confidentiality



You are equals

What are warning signs of an unhealthy relationship?



Feeling worried around your partner



Being careful not to make your partner angry



Your partner threatens to hurt themselves if you leave them



Your partner makes excuses for their abusive behaviour



Your partner pressures you to do things



Your partner tries to control your life



Your partner humiliates or embarrasses you in public



Your partner's jealousy stops you from seeing friends and family



Your partner intimidates you

SEX & CONSENT

It's helpful to get a clear definition of what consent really means.

In a legal sense, consent is defined as a 'free and voluntary agreement.' Consent is essential to having sex. Everyone deserves to feel safe, and it should be enjoyable for everyone involved. In fact, the law says that two people can't have sex unless they both freely agree (consent).

SEX

Sex is an umbrella term for a variety of sexual acts. These can include vaginal sex, anal sex, hand jobs, oral sex, fingering, hugging, kissing or sexual touching. Remember that 'sexting' also falls under the umbrella of sex!

Sex – consent
= sexual assault or rape

Sex + consent
= respect and enjoyment

When any sexual act happens without consent, it's sexual assault. Sexual assault is a serious crime with serious consequences.

Be sure you have consent. You can make sure you do by asking questions like:

- "Can I do this?"
- "Is this okay?"
- "Do you want to go further?"
- "Does this feel good?"
- "Do you like it when I do this?"
- "Do you want me to stop?"

THE MAIN PRINCIPLES OF CONSENT CAN BE REMEMBERED WITH THE ACRONYM, 'FRIES'.

F **Freely given:** means getting consent without pressure, force, manipulation or while someone is drunk or high.

R **Reversible:** you can change your mind about what you want to do, at any point. Even if you've done it before or are in the middle of having sex, consent is always reversible.

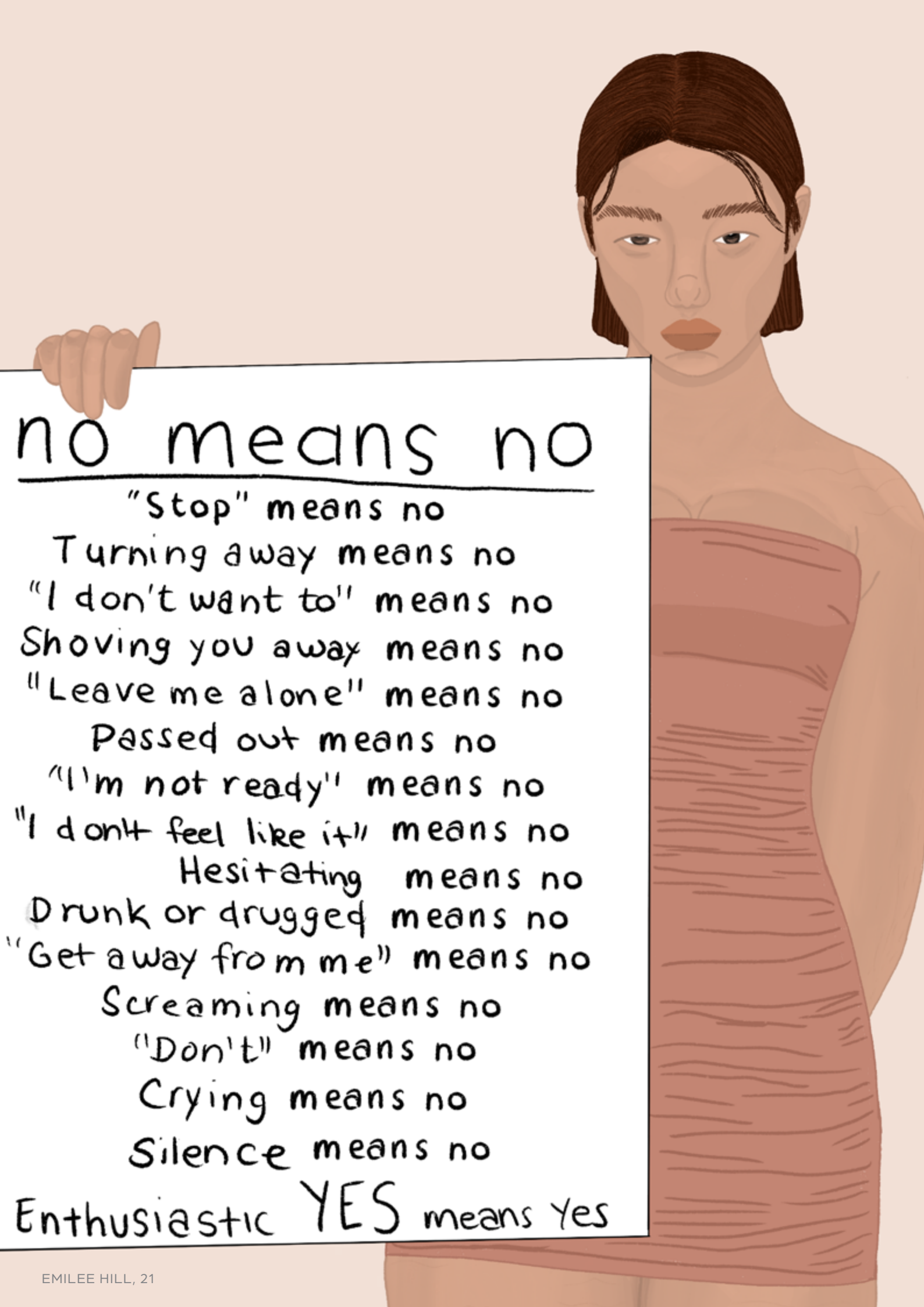
I **Informed:** be honest, for example, if someone says they'll use a condom and then they don't, that's not consent.

E **Enthusiastic:** for positive body language and verbal cues – if it's not an enthusiastic yes, then it's a no!

S **Specific:** saying yes to one thing (like going to the bedroom to make out) doesn't mean yes to other things (like oral or vaginal sex, etc).

Check-in with each other at each stage, so everyone feels safe and you protect each other's wellbeing.





no means no

"Stop" means no

Turning away means no

"I don't want to" means no

Shoving you away means no

"Leave me alone" means no

Passed out means no

"I'm not ready" means no

"I don't feel like it" means no

Hesitating means no

Drunk or drugged means no

"Get away from me" means no

Screaming means no

"Don't" means no

Crying means no

Silence means no

Enthusiastic **YES** means yes

STAYING SAFE

What if a friend or family member tells you they're experiencing violence or abuse?

Bystander action is not about stepping into a physically-threatening situation. It's important to remember to keep yourself safe.

Creating change can be as simple as challenging sexist jokes made by your friends or talking to a teacher about unfair treatment of young women at your school.

1

LISTEN

Take the time to listen and talk with them in a private space.

2

BELIEVE THEM

Believe what they tell you. It's not your job to investigate or judge. Remember that it's likely to be very difficult for them to talk about.

3

RESPOND WITH CARE

Respond with care, sensitivity and a non-judgemental approach. Avoid intrusive enquiries, and take their fears seriously. Ensure they know it's not their fault, that the perpetrator is responsible.

4

CONFIDENTIALITY

Respect their confidentiality as much as possible. It is not your job to keep your friends safe. If you're concerned about them, tell a trusted adult what you know.

5

SUPPORT SERVICES

Share some support resources with your friend or family member. You'll find some suggestions on page 22-25.

6

CHECK-IN

Keep checking-in with your friend over time. If they've told you what's going on, they trust you.

7

SELF CARE

When you're supporting someone who's experiencing violence, make sure you take time to care for yourself as well. Remember, it is not your job to keep someone safe.



FAMILY VIOLENCE & THE LAW

There are laws in Victoria to protect victims of family violence.

These are designed to protect people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence, to prevent family violence, and to promote accountability for perpetrators.

These laws acknowledge important principles about family violence:

- **it is a fundamental violation of human rights** and is unacceptable in any form
- **it is not acceptable** in any community or culture.

There are ways the law can help protect you and your family.

- 1 Call 000 if you are in danger. The police can respond quickly and have the power to:
 - arrest a violent person
 - remove weapons from a home
 - issue safety notices to remove a perpetrator from a home for a short time
- 2 Get legal advice and support through [Northern Community Legal Centre](#)
- 3 You can apply for an intervention order online at mcv.vic.gov.au

RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT

WORRIED ABOUT YOURSELF, A FRIEND
OR ANOTHER FAMILY MEMBER?

The following services provide help and support:

**In an emergency,
CALL 000**

and speak to the
police if you or
someone you know is
in immediate danger.

SUPPORT FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

[1800 RESPECT](#): 1800 737 732

[Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre](#) (24-hour service):
1800 015 188

[Orange Door](#)

1800 271 151
9am to 5pm Monday to Friday
hma@orangedoor.vic.gov.au

The Orange Door is a free service for adults, children and young people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence and for families who need extra support with the care of children.

You should contact The Orange Door if:

- someone close to you is hurting you, controlling you or making you feel afraid – such as your partner, family member, carer or parent(s)
- you are a child or young person who doesn't have what you need to be OK
- you are worried about the safety of a friend or family member
- you need more support with the care of children, e.g. due to money issues, illness, addiction, grief, isolation or conflict
- you are worried about the safety of a child or young person
- you need help to change your behaviour and stop using violence in your relationships

[Sexual Assault Crisis Line](#): (24-hour service): 1800 806 292

[1800 My Options](#) (available 10 am to 4:00pm): 1800 696 784

[Kids Helpline](#) (available 24-hours): 1800 55 1800

RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT

WORRIED ABOUT YOURSELF, A FRIEND
OR ANOTHER FAMILY MEMBER?

The following services provide help and support:

**In an emergency,
CALL 000**

and speak to the
police if you or
someone you know is
in immediate danger.

SUPPORT FOR MEN

[No To Violence](#) (24-hour service): 1800 065 973

SUPPORT FOR LGBTIQA+ COMMUNITY

[QLife](#): (3:00 pm- midnight) (Australia wide): 1800 184 527

SPECIALIST SUPPORT

[In Touch Multicultural Centre against Family Violence](#):
03 9482 5744 or 03 8413 6800

[Elizabeth Morgan House Aboriginal Women's Service
\(Melbourne\)](#): 03 9482 5744

[Djirra](#) is a place where culture is shared and celebrated, and where practical support is available to all Aboriginal women and particularly to Aboriginal people who are currently experiencing family violence or have in the past. Call: 1800 105 303

[Women with Disabilities Victoria](#)

[CASA house \(Centre Against Sexual Assault\)](#)

24 HOURS, 7 DAYS A WEEK

Counselling & Support Line: 03 9635 3610

Provides support and care to all victims of sexual assault.

RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT

WORRIED ABOUT YOURSELF, A FRIEND
OR ANOTHER FAMILY MEMBER?

The following services provide help and support:

**In an emergency,
CALL 000**

and speak to the police if you or someone you know is in immediate danger.

LEGAL SUPPORT

[Northern Community Legal Centre](#)
(9:00am – 5:00pm Monday – Friday):
(03) 9310 4376

Support they can offer:

- Free legal advice
- Intervention orders; assist with what's involved and how to apply

[Magistrates' Court of Victoria](#)

SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO USE VIOLENCE

[Berry Street's](#) 'Wattle Project', operates in Melbourne's northern suburbs, working therapeutically with adolescents who are using unsafe or harmful behaviours at home. The program is free and available to families:

- with young people aged 12 to 17 years who are using unsafe or harmful behaviours at home
- who are living in Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Merri-bek, Nillumbik, Whittlesea or Yarra local government areas

Phone 03 9450 4700

Email wattleteam@berrystreet.org.au



HELPFUL LANGUAGE

CISGENDER

A person whose gender identity aligns with the gender assigned to them at birth. For example, someone who identifies as a woman and was assigned as 'female' at birth is a 'ciswoman'. The term 'cis' is often used as an abbreviation.¹⁴

COERCIVE CONTROL

A pattern of behaviours used by a person to exert power, domination and control within a relationship. These behaviours result in fear, distress or isolation.¹⁵

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Violence that is used against someone because of their gender. It describes violence rooted in gender-based power inequalities and gender-based discrimination.¹⁶

GENDER DIVERSE

People whose gender expression differs from what

is socially expected. This includes individuals who identify as a-gender (having no gender), bi-gender (both woman and man) or non-binary (neither woman nor man).¹⁴

GENDER EQUALITY

The equal distribution of rights, opportunities, resources, responsibilities and outcomes between people of different genders.¹⁷

GENDER EQUITY

The process to achieve gender equality. Gender equity initiatives recognise that women and gender diverse people don't have the same 'starting position' as men, and that treating people the same way may not result in fairness.¹⁸

GENDER INEQUALITY

The unequal distribution of power, resources, opportunity, and value between different genders and sexualities, based on gendered norms and structures.¹⁹

GENDER IDENTITY

A person's innate, deeply-felt psychological identification of their gender, which may or may not correspond to the person's designated gender at birth. A person's gender identity may be different from their biological and physiological gender, and may change over their lifetime.¹⁴

INTERSECTIONALITY

The way in which people's attributes (such as race, gender, ability, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, sexual identity and socio-economic status) interact to shape their experience of individual, cultural and structural oppression, discrimination, violence and disadvantage or, conversely, privilege.²⁰

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