BEING AN ACTIVE BYSTANDER



Encouraging respect & safety in our communtiy

What is an active bystander?

An active bystander is someone who does not remain silent when they witness behaviour that is aggressive, harmful, disrespectful, or unsafe.

Bystander intervention involves recognising inappropriate behaviour and taking action in a safe and respectful way to support those affected and promote accountability.

Everyone in our community has a role to play in helping create a culture where people feel respected, safe, and supported.

Recognising Disrespectful or Abusive Behaviour

To be an effective active bystander, it is important to understand what respectful and disrespectful behaviour looks like. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include:

- Sexist, racist, ageist or homophobic jokes or comments made towards another person
- Bullying and harassing types of behaviours (i.e. live or online)
- Controlling and derogatory comments or behaviours towards another person
- Other disrespectful behaviours that can intimidate or belittle a person

Why speaking up can be difficult

Many people hesitate to intervene because they:

- May not notice what is happening.
- Are unsure whether they have interpreted the situation correctly.
- Feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, or afraid of getting involved.
- Are uncertain about the best way to respond safely.

Despite these challenges, looking out for others demonstrates empathy, courage, and care. Taking action helps create a positive culture and reinforces community expectations about respectful behaviour.

Supporting someone who has been affected

If a person has experienced disrespectful or abusive behaviour, you can support them by:

- Checking in with them.
- Listening without judgement.
- Acknowledging their experience.
- Understanding that emotional reactions are normal.
- Supporting them if they choose to report the incident.
- Encouraging them to seek further support if needed.

The 5Ds of Bystander Intervention

1. Distract
Interrupt or redirect the situation by changing the subject or creating a diversion.

2. Direct
Address the inappropriate behaviour directly if it is safe to do so. Examples include:

- "That comment wasn't okay."
- "We don't use that language here."

3. Delegate
Seek assistance from someone with authority such as a manager, council officer, security officer, police officer, or another appropriate support person.

4. Delay
After the incident, check in with the person affected, make sure they are okay, and offer support.

5. Document
If it is safe and appropriate, record details of the incident and report it through the appropriate channels.

Key principles to remember

- **Safety comes first:**
  Never place yourself in danger. If direct intervention is unsafe, use distraction or delegation instead.

- **Intervention does not need to be confrontational:**
  Small actions can make a significant difference.

- **Every action matters:**
  Even minor interventions help build a culture of respect, safety, and accountability.

- **Collective responsibility creates change:**
  People are more likely to intervene when they feel supported by their colleagues and organisation

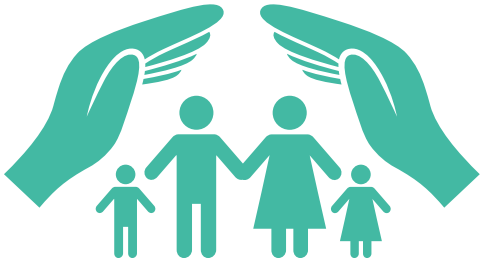
Key takeaways

Bystander intervention is about recognising harmful behaviour and taking safe, appropriate action to support others.

By using the 5Ds approach and prioritising safety, everyone can contribute to creating a respectful, inclusive, and supportive community where unacceptable behaviour is challenged rather than ignored

For more information scan the QR code

FAMILY VIOLENCE



City of Casey

Supporting families and individuals in our commuity to stay safe

What is family violence?

Family violence, also known as domestic violence, occurs when a person uses abusive, controlling, or coercive behaviour to dominate another family member or partner.

The key indicator of family violence is that the victim feels controlled, fearful, unsafe, or intimidated due to another person's behaviour.

Who is affected?

Family violence can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender, cultural background, or sexual orientation.

Children are particularly vulnerable and are considered victims of family violence even when the abuse is not directed at them. Witnessing violence, seeing injuries, living with property damage, or experiencing the effects of a distressed parent can have long-lasting impacts on children.

Family violence can cause significant psychological, emotional, and physical harm to both direct victims and those who witness it.

Types of Family Violence

Physical Abuse

- Hitting, pushing, restraining, or intimidating someone
- Throwing objects or using weapons
- Denying access to food, medication, or essential care

Verbal and Emotional Abuse

- Constant criticism, insults, name-calling, and humiliation
- Threats, harassment, and undermining a person, including in front of children

Sexual Abuse

- Forcing a person to participate in sexual activity against their wishes
- Pressuring someone into unwanted sexual acts or behaviours

Coercive Control

- A pattern of controlling and manipulative behaviour
- Isolating someone from family and friends
- Gaslighting, monitoring activities, threatening children or pets, controlling finances, and dictating clothing or behaviour

Financial Abuse

- Controlling access to money or bank accounts
- Forcing someone to take out loans or incur debt
- Closely monitoring spending or misusing joint finances

Spiritual or Religious Abuse

- Preventing someone from practising their faith
- Forcing a person to follow religious beliefs against their wishes

Technology and Social Media Abuse

- Monitoring or stalking someone through social media
- Controlling online activity, contacts, or profile content

Reproductive Coercion

- Interfering with a person's reproductive choices
- Pressuring or preventing pregnancy against the individual's wishes

Key Facts

- Approximately **1 in 4 women** experience violence, emotional abuse or economic abuse by an intimate partner or family member
- Family violence is the **leading cause of homelessness** for women and children
- More than **one women is killed every week** in Australia as a result of family violence
- **60.7% of surveyed LGBTIQA+ people** reported experiencing violence from an intiate partner during their lifetime
- Around **1 in 8 men** have experienced physica and/or sexual violence by a current or former partner since the age of 15

How to support someone experiencing family violence

- Believing them and taking their concerns seriously
- Listening without judgement or interruption
- Avoiding blame and never making excuses for the perpetrator
- Understanding that leaving a violent relationship may not be safe or possible immediately
- Providing practical support such as transport, attending appointments, childcare assistance or helping them connnect with support services

Where to get help

A number of support services are available for those affected by family violence including:

- **1800RESPECT**: 1800 737 732
- **Safe Steps Victoria**: 1800 015 188
- **MensLine Australia**: 1300 78 99 78
- **Sexual Assault Crisis Line (Victoria)**: 1800 806 292
- **Rainbow Door:** 1800 729 367
- **The Orange Door**
- **Kids Helpline**: 1800 55 1800
- **InTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence**
- **South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault and Family Violence (SECASA)**
- **After Hours Child Protection Crisis Line**: 131 278
- **Elizabeth Morgan House Aboriginal Women's Service**

Key takeaways

Family violence is about power, control, and abuse. It can affect anyone and can take many forms beyond physical violence. Recognising the signs, supporting those affected without judgment, and connecting people with appropriate services can make a significant difference. If someone is in immediate danger or feels unsafe, they should call 000 (Triple Zero) for emergency assistance.

If you're affected by family violence, it's important to know you're not alone. If you feel unsafe and need help right now, call 000 (triple zero).

HEALTHY MASCULINITY



City of Casey

Promoting healthy masculinity in our community

What is healthy masculinity?

Healthy masculinity is about expressing strength through empathy, respect, confidence, equality, and accountability. It encourages men and boys to express emotions, be vulnerable when needed, support others, and take responsibility for their actions.

Healthy masculinity benefits not only men, but also women, children, families, and the broader community by helping to create safer relationships, stronger friendships, and better mental health outcomes.

Understanding harmful masculinity

Harmful masculinity is characterised by behaviours and attitudes such as:

- Disrespect and discrimination
- Aggression and domination over others
- Controlling behaviours
- Hypersexuality
- Homophobia
- Risk-taking behaviours
- Low self-awareness and emotional suppression

These harmful attitudes can negatively impact relationships, mental health, workplace culture, and community safety. Challenging these behaviours is an important part of building respectful and inclusive communities.

What does healthy masculinity look like?

Healthy masculinity is demonstrated through a range of positive personal qualities and behaviours, including:

- Resilience and self-awareness.
- Respect for yourself and others.
- Emotional honesty and vulnerability.
- A commitment to personal growth.
- Open communication.
- Providing and accepting emotional support.
- Building authentic and healthy relationships

Other examples include:

- Listening to others and showing empathy
- Valuing equality and mutual respect in relationships
- Speaking out against violence, bullying, and sexism
- Encouraging friends and colleagues to seek help when needed
- Being a positive role model for boys and young men
- Recognising that masculinity can be expressed in many ways, including being nurturing, creative, playful, confident, or assertive

Key facts and statistics

- **One in three** men report feeling pressure to act "tough" even when they are struggling
- **Men die by suicide at three times the rate of women**, highlighting the importance of open conversations about mental health and help-seeking
- Men who openly discuss their feelings are more likely to **seek support** and recover more effectively
- Rigid stereotypes about masculinity are linked to family violence and abusive behaviours
- Most Australians do not support outdated stereotypes about men and masculinity
- Men are more likely to engage in certain risk-taking behaviours, including higher rates of road fatalities, smoking, and accidental drug-related deaths
- Men are predominantly identified as perpetrators of violence, with 95% of victims reporting male-instigated violence

These facts demonstrate the importance of encouraging healthier attitudes, behaviours, and support networks for men and boys.

Practical tips for promoting healthy masculinity

Challenge stereotypes
Do not allow outdated expectations to define behaviour. Instead, explore and embrace a personal understanding of masculinity that aligns with positive values and respectful behaviours.

Seek Help When Needed
Reaching out for support, whether for mental health, personal challenges, or practical issues, is a sign of strength rather than weakness.

Be a Positive Role Model
Demonstrate that expressing emotions, communicating openly, supporting others, and treating women with respect are important qualities of healthy masculinity.

Build Healthy Relationships
Focus on mutual respect, active listening, understanding, communication, and support within relationships, families, and friendships.

Be an Active Bystander
If you witness disrespectful, aggressive, or harmful behaviour, speak up or take appropriate action to challenge it safely and respectfully.

Key takeaways

Healthy masculinity is about promoting respect, empathy, emotional wellbeing, equality, and positive relationships. It encourages men and boys to reject harmful stereotypes, seek support when needed, and contribute to safer and more inclusive communities. By modelling positive behaviours and challenging harmful attitudes, everyone can help create a culture where people feel valued, respected, and supported.

For more information scan the QR code

INCLUSIVE PRACTICE



Building a community for everyone at the City of Casey

What is inclusive practice?

Inclusive practice refers to actions that ensure everyone has an equal opportunity to access, participate in, and contribute to community life, regardless of their age, gender, religion, culture, background, identity, or ability. It involves proactively identifying and removing barriers that may prevent people from engaging fully and adapting environments, services, and programs to meet diverse needs.

At the City of Casey, inclusive practice is about creating a community where everyone feels welcome, respected, valued, and able to participate. This includes supporting people from diverse cultural backgrounds, people with disability, neurodiverse individuals, older adults, and members of the LGBTIQ+ community.

City of Casey's commitment to inclusion

The City of Casey delivers a wide range of services, events, and programs across areas such as sport and recreation, libraries, arts, festivals, family services, and community programs.
The Council is committed to promoting equal access to opportunities and services by:

- Engaging people with diverse experiences and perspectives in decision-making processes.
- Supporting cultural awareness and understanding.
- Creating safe, welcoming, and accessible spaces.
- Ensuring opportunities are available to people of all abilities and backgrounds.
- Promoting participation and representation across all areas of community life.

Core principles of inclusive practice

Equal Opportunity and Access
Everyone should have the opportunity to participate fully in community life. This involves removing physical, social, and systemic barriers and addressing discrimination wherever it exists.

Valuing Diversity
Diversity should be recognised as a strength. Different experiences, cultures, perspectives, and identities enrich communities and contribute to innovation, learning, and stronger social connections.

Adaptability
Rather than expecting individuals to adapt to existing systems, services and environments should be modified to accommodate different needs. Accessibility should be built into planning and decision-making from the outset.

Partnership and Collaboration
Inclusive outcomes are best achieved when councils, community leaders, families, service providers, and residents work together to understand diverse needs and develop effective solutions.

Promoting Cultural Expression
Encouraging and supporting cultural diversity enables people to share their traditions, identities, and experiences. Cultural expression strengthens community connections and contributes to a vibrant and inclusive society.

Accessible Communication
Information should be accessible to everyone by providing materials in different languages, formats, and locations, while ensuring meetings, consultations, and events are inclusive and accessible.

Targeted Outreach
Actively engaging with diverse communities helps organisations better understand community needs and ensures services are designed to support all residents effectively.

Why inclusion matters

Inclusive practices lead to stronger and more connected communities. The flyer highlights several benefits, including:

- Better decision-making through broader perspectives and lived experiences.
- More effective programs and services that meet the needs of diverse residents.
- Increased participation in community and civic life.
- Stronger trust between residents and local government.
- Improved wellbeing and social connection.
- Greater community belonging and inclusion for everyone.

Inclusive communities are healthier, more resilient, and better equipped to support people from all backgrounds. When individuals feel valued and included, the entire community benefits.

How we can promote inclusion every day

- Reflect on personal biases and assumptions and remain open to learning from others.
- Use respectful and inclusive language that acknowledges different identities, cultures, and experiences.
- Design and create welcoming, accessible spaces.
- Celebrate diversity through cultural events, Pride activities, and other community celebrations.
- Increase the visibility and representation of diverse groups in communications, marketing, and community initiatives.
- Lead by example by demonstrating respect, understanding, support, and inclusion in everyday interactions.

Key takeaway

Inclusive practice is about ensuring that every person feels welcomed, respected, valued, and able to participate fully in community life.

By removing barriers, valuing diversity, promoting accessibility, and embracing different perspectives, we can build stronger, healthier, and more connected communities.

Inclusion is not just an organisational responsibility; it is something everyone can actively promote through their daily actions, language, and interactions.

For more information scan the QR code

PRIMARY PREVENTION



City of Casey

Building a safer, more equal and respectful community from the ground up

What is primary prevention?

Primary Prevention is an approach that focuses on stopping social problems, such as family violence, abuse, and neglect, before they occur. Rather than responding after harm has happened, it aims to address the root causes of violence and create conditions that promote safety, respect, and equality.

In particular, Primary Prevention seeks to prevent family violence and violence against women by addressing the underlying drivers that contribute to these issues. These drivers include:

- Gender inequality and power imbalances.
- Gender-biased systems and structure
- Harmful social norms and attitudes
- Practices that reinforce discrimination and unequal treatment

For the City of Casey, Primary Prevention is about creating communities where respect, equality, and physical and emotional safety are the norm in homes, schools, workplaces, sporting clubs, and other community settings.

Why primary prevention matters

As one of Victoria's most diverse and fastest-growing municipalities, the City of Casey has an important opportunity to foster safe, inclusive, and healthy communities. Primary Prevention is important because it:

- Helps prevent violence and abuse by addressing the underlying causes before harm occurs
- Encourages early action and intervention to support individuals and families
- Reduces the emotional, psychological, and social impacts of violence and trauma
- Supports the development of safer relationships and stronger communities.
- Creates long-term cultural and social change based on respect, equality, an accountability

Rather than focusing only on responding to violence, Primary Prevention works to stop violence from occurring in the first place, resulting in better outcomes for individuals, families, and communities

Key aspects of primary prevention

Addressing Root Causes

Primary Prevention aims to change the conditions that contribute to violence and inequality. This includes addressing:

- Gender inequality
- Harmful stereotypes
- Unequal power relationships
- Social norms that normalise disrespectful behaviours

Proactive Strategies

Preventative measures can include:

- Public awareness campaigns
- Education programs in schools and workplaces
- Community engagement initiatives
- Policies and practices that promote equality and inclusion

Long-Term Change

Primary Prevention is a long-term strategy focused on creating sustainable cultural and behavioural change so that future generations can live in safer, more respectful environments.

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How we can all promote primary prevention

Promote Respect

Model respectful communication and behaviour in everyday interactions at home, work, and within the broader community.

Challenge Gender Stereotypes

Encourage equality and question attitudes, behaviours, and expectations that reinforce gender inequality or discrimination.

Be an Upstander

Speak up when witnessing violence, abuse, disrespectful behaviour, or controlling conduct. Taking safe and appropriate action can help prevent harmful behaviours from becoming accepted or normalised.

Reach Out to Others

Support people who may feel isolated, disconnected, or unsafe by encouraging connection and helping them access support services early.

Create Inclusive and Culturally Safe Spaces

Foster environments where people from all backgrounds feel welcomed, valued, respected, and safe from harm.

Key takeaways

Primary Prevention is about preventing violence, abuse, and harm before they occur by addressing their underlying causes.

It promotes respect, equality, inclusion, and safety across all areas of community life.

Through education, awareness, collaboration, and everyday actions, everyone can contribute to creating a culture where violence is less likely to occur and where all people can thrive in safe and respectful environments.

For more information scan the QR code

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

City of Casey

Building respect and promoting equality. Strengthening our community.

What are respectful relationships?

Respectful and healthy relationships are built on trust, equality, communication, empathy, and mutual respect. They help create safe, inclusive, and supportive environments within families, friendships, workplaces, and the broader community. Respectful relationships allow people to be their authentic selves without fear of aggression, intimidation, or abuse.

Strong relationships are developed through open and honest communication, valuing the opinions of others, and respecting personal feelings, boundaries, and differences.

Signs of a healthy and respectful relationship

Open and Honest Communication

Healthy relationships encourage both people to communicate openly and listen to one another. Everyone should feel heard, understood, and able to express their thoughts and feelings safely.

Mutual Trust and Reliability

Trust is a foundation of respectful relationships. Individuals should feel confident that they can depend on one another and that commitments and boundaries will be respected.

Respect for Differences

Healthy relationships acknowledge that people may have different ideas, strengths, perspectives, and experiences. Respecting these differences helps build understanding and stronger connections.

Equality and Shared Decision-Making

Respectful relationships involve fairness and balance. Both people should feel equally valued and able to contribute to decisions without fear or pressure.

Compassion and Support

People in healthy relationships support one another through empathy, encouragement, and kindness. They celebrate each other's goals, interests, and achievements and provide support during challenges.

Why respectful relationships matter

Healthy relationships have a positive impact on individual wellbeing and community connectedness. They:

- Support positive mental and emotional wellbeing
- Create a sense of safety, trust, and belonging
- Reduce stress, loneliness, and social isolation
- Promote respectful communication and problem-solving skills
- Reduce the risk of family violence and gender-based violence
- Strengthen communities by creating safer and more connected environments
- Provide positive role modelling for children and young people
- Help families and individuals build resilience during difficult times

How people feel in respectful relationships

People who are in respectful relationships typically:

- Feel loved, safe, valued, and listened to
- Feel able to contribute to important decisions
- Can discuss disagreements calmly and respectfully
- Have their personal boundaries respected
- Experience a sense of equality and importance within the relationship

The importance of self-care

The most important relationship people have is the one with themselves. Self-care supports mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing and positively influences interactions with others. Examples of self-care include:

- Spending time with pets or animals
- Trying a new hobby or recreational activity.
- Maintaining a healthy diet and regular exercise
- Participating in creative activities such as cooking or journalling
- Taking breaks from technology and managing screen time
- Prioritising quality sleep and overall wellbeing

Self-awareness and self-care help strengthen resilience and contribute to healthier relationships with others.

How can we promote respectful relationships

Everyone has a role in creating a culture of respect. Practical actions include:

- Listening openly and without judgement
- Treating others with kindness, empathy, and respect
- Speaking up when witnessing disrespectful behaviour
- Supporting friends, family members, and colleagues to seek help when needed
- Celebrating diversity, inclusion, and different perspectives within the community

Key takeaways

Respectful relationships are built on trust, communication, equality, empathy, and mutual support. They contribute to positive wellbeing, stronger families, and safer communities.

By practising self-care, respecting boundaries, listening openly, and valuing others, we can all help foster healthy relationships and create environments where everyone feels safe, included, and respected.

For more information scan the QR code