



Strategic Plan 2017-19

The Domestic Violence Prevention Council (DVPC) was established in 1997 as an independent statutory body under the Domestic Violence Agencies Act 1986. The Council's authority and accountabilities are shaped by legislation and the Council Standing Orders. The Council is the peak body to offer advice to the ACT Attorney-General on issues relevant to its responsibilities on domestic violence.

Our Objective

The objective of the Domestic Violence Prevention Council (DVPC) is to reduce the incidence of domestic violence offences in the ACT.

Our Functions

The functions of the Council are to:

- *monitor developments within and outside Australia of legislation, policy and community views on domestic violence and the provision of health and welfare services to victims and perpetrators of domestic violence offences;*
- *to collect statistical and other information relating to domestic violence offences; and*
- *inquire into and provide advice to the Minister on domestic violence matters referred to the Council by the Minister.*

The Council also has a function to establish and maintain links with and among, and promote collaboration among, government agencies and non-government organisations¹ in the ACT in order to:

- *assist and encourage those agencies and organisations to promote projects and programs aimed at enhancing the safety and security of victims of domestic violence offences, with particular regard to children; and*
- *assist them to develop procedures for the collection, standardisation and sharing of statistical information relating to domestic violence offences.*

¹ Defined as those involved in law enforcement; the provision of health, education, crisis or welfare services to victims or perpetrators of domestic violence; or otherwise relating to the incidence or prevention of domestic violence or concerned with domestic violence.

The DVPC acknowledges that Canberra has been built on the land of the Ngunnawal people. We pay our respects to their Elders and recognise the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the ongoing contribution that their cultures make to the ACT community.

Introduction

This Strategic Plan supports the objectives of the DVPC to raise the ACT community's understanding and awareness of family and domestic violence and to ensure that individuals and non-government and government organisations are supported to be able to take action.

While it is essential to continue working on better responses to existing violence against women and girls, it is also necessary to work to '*stop it before it starts.*' Prevention is about identifying and addressing underlying causes of a problem, rather than only focussing on its results or 'symptoms.'²

Therefore there is a focus on prevention in the Strategic Plan - an emphasis on promoting awareness and educating the community in order to change the attitudes and behaviours that have allowed violence against women and children to continue, and to develop a whole of community ownership of this issue in the ACT. This focus on primary prevention aims to move the discussion of violence against women and their children from being viewed as a problem for women and the 'domestic violence' sector, to discussions about what role the ACT general public, individuals, workplaces, sectors and organisations can take.

While the prevalence of violence against women remains high, the ongoing development of appropriate coordinated and integrated systems and services must also be a priority. These systems and services need to continue to protect the safety of people affected by domestic and family violence (including sexual violence), and to hold individual perpetrators accountable for their violence. And given that women and girls may be likely to identify violence in their own lives as a result of awareness-raising prevention activity and therefore seek assistance, effective and coordinated services and supports need to be available to respond, including the criminal justice system.

In planning for the 3 years the Domestic Violence Prevention Council has agreed four strategic priorities which form the basis of the overarching Strategic Plan - and also the annual Work Plans which will support it – and which align with the focus of the 3rd National Action Plan:

² World Health Organisation (2010) *Preventing Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Against Women – Taking Action and Generating Evidence.*

Strategic Priority 1

Generate a sense of community awareness of and involvement in the prevention of all forms of violence within intimate and family relationships.

This priority focusses on community education and awareness raising activities. Raising awareness about domestic and family violence (including sexual violence) in the ACT can help to create a safer environment, improve local responses, and change those attitudes and behaviours that condone and tolerate violence against women and their children.

Strategic Priority 2

Encourage and facilitate systematic early intervention strategies aimed at the prevention of domestic violence.

This priority focusses on taking action on the early signs of violence by targetting at risk individuals and groups – for example by identifying groups at greatest risk of violence and increasing their skills or their access to early support, or by acting on changing the behaviours of those who are at risk of committing violence. Early intervention strategies can also target environments in which there are strong signs that violence may occur or which can provide a focus for early intervention - for example sporting clubs in which there is may be a culture of disrespect for women, or workplaces which may be able to support employees experiencing domestic violence.

Strategic Priority 3

Encourage and facilitate a coordinated government, community and criminal justice response to domestic violence.

This priority focusses on dealing with the consequences of violence after the violence has occurred, and reducing the risk that it will be repeated or that it will escalate. This is achieved through ensuring an integrated system that provides consistent, coordinated and timely responses and supports for people experiencing domestic and family violence (including sexual violence) to receive consistent, effective responses from the criminal justice system, and that the system holds perpetrators to account.

Strategic Priority 4

Encourage and facilitate measures that reduce recidivism and the opportunities for re-offending.

This priority focusses on actions which aim to stop perpetrators from committing violence, bring them to justice, change their behaviours and deter others. Assessing and preventing the risk of continuing violence are critical to keeping people safe.

Strategic Priority 5

Monitor developments within and outside Australia of legislation, policy and community views on domestic and family violence (including sexual violence) and the provision of health and welfare services to victims and perpetrators, and gather relevant statistical and other information.

Links with other plans and strategies

The DVPC Strategic Plan 2014-2016 links with a range of plans and strategies at a Territory and National level.

Domestic Violence Prevention Council Strategic Plan 2014-16 - Strategic Priorities	National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022 - Outcome Areas	Third National Action Plan (2016-19) - National Priorities	ACT Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children Strategy (2011–2017) - Primary Objectives	National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2009-2020
<p>1. Generate a sense of community awareness of and involvement in the prevention of all forms of violence within intimate and family relationships.</p> <p>2. Encourage and facilitate systematic early intervention strategies aimed at the prevention of domestic violence.</p> <p>3. Encourage and facilitate a coordinated government, community and criminal justice response to domestic violence.</p> <p>4. Encourage and facilitate measures that reduce recidivism and the opportunities for re-offending.</p>	<p>1. Communities are safe and free from violence.</p> <p>2. Relationships are respectful.</p> <p>3. Indigenous communities are strengthened.</p> <p>4. Services meet the needs of women and their children experiencing violence</p> <p>5. Justice responses are effective</p> <p>6. Perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account</p>	<p>1. Prevention and early intervention.</p> <p>2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children.</p> <p>3. Greater support and choice.</p> <p>4. Sexual violence.</p> <p>5. Responding to children living with violence.</p> <p>6. Keeping perpetrators accountable across all systems.</p>	<p>1. Women and children are safe because an anti-violence culture exists in the ACT.</p> <p>2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children are supported and safe in their communities</p> <p>3. Women and children’s needs are met through joined up services and systems</p> <p>4. Men who use violence are held accountable and supported to change their behaviour.</p>	<p>1. Children live in safe and supportive families and communities.</p> <p>2. Children and families access adequate support to promote safety and intervene early.</p> <p>3. Risk factors for child abuse and neglect are addressed.</p> <p>4. Children who have been abused or neglected receive the support and care they need for their safety and wellbeing.</p> <p>5. Indigenous children are supported and safe in their families and communities.</p> <p>6. Child sexual abuse and exploitation is prevented and survivors receive adequate support.</p>

5. Monitor developments within and outside Australia of legislation, policy and community views on domestic and family violence (including sexual violence) and the provision of health and welfare services to victims and perpetrators, and gather relevant statistical and other information.				
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