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Engaging men in efforts to end violence against women remains critical

Australian men remain crucial partners in nationwide efforts to end violence against women and children, according to a network of organisations focused on engaging men in prevention, early intervention and support strategies.

The network, including the Accountability Matters Project, Jesuit Social Services (The Men's Project), Male Champions of Change, No To Violence and Stopping Family Violence, today restated their ongoing commitment to engaging men.

For over 12 months, this network has been meeting to plan how to extend and intensify efforts to engage men in ending domestic, family, and sexual violence and building gender equality. Although White Ribbon Australia has dissolved, these efforts very much continue and we encourage all those in the White Ribbon community to continue their advocacy and grassroots action.

Director of Strategy for No to Violence, Che Bishop said that as the corrosive and deadly impact of domestic violence persists for individuals, families and communities across Australia, leaders must work together to address the issue.

“We are at such a critical point and ongoing, cross-sector engagement must continue – including partnering with men to end domestic and sexual violence.” Ms. Bishop said.

Matt Tyler, Executive Director of The Men's Project at Jesuit Social Services, also reflected on the importance of cross-sector engagement: “There are many great services that work with women and children who are victims of, or impacted by, violence. Working with men is one component of

ending violence against women. Women and children's services must be adequately funded to ensure a rounded approach to this issue.

"In addition to adequately funding these services, we need to listen to the voices of women to guide further work that engages men and boys to address the attitudes and behaviours that underpin violence."

"We are building a strong network that will work closely with women's organisations to deliver a focused, coordinated and effective approach to end this dreadful scourge on our society," Mr Tyler said

Dr Michael Flood, leading researcher on violence prevention, echoed this sentiment with reference to the existing communities already involved in the wider movement to end violence against women.

"Male leaders in many of our largest organisations have recognised they have a significant role to play including delivering gender equality and pay equality in the workplace, providing policies and support systems for employees who may be experiencing domestic and sexual violence, as well as setting clear expectations about the standards of behavior they expect of their staff in and outside their organisations.

"We recognise the energetic community support behind the White Ribbon Campaign, both in Australia and in over 60 other countries. At this critical point in the movement to end violence against women, we need to maintain momentum, working together to deliver a community response so that men can continue to be part of real and effective solutions to ending domestic and sexual violence." Dr Flood said.

According to Mr Tyler, role models have a critical role to play as part of this work: "We will continue equipping role models – such as teachers, social workers and sports coaches – with the knowledge, skills and confidence to engage men and boys in discussions that promote healthy masculinities, improve attitudes and ultimately prevent violence." Mr Tyler said

Despite the loss of White Ribbon Australia, the legacy of engaging with men in Australia is still a core component of the movement to end violence against women.

More information and resources for engaging men in to end domestic and family violence can be found here:

Accountability Matters Project: www.ampchangency.com

Jesuit Social Services (The Men's Project): <https://jss.org.au/what-we-do/the-mens-project>

No To Violence: <https://www.ntv.org.au/>

Stopping Family Violence: <http://sfv.org.au/>

Male Champions of Change: <https://malechampionsofchange.com/>

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