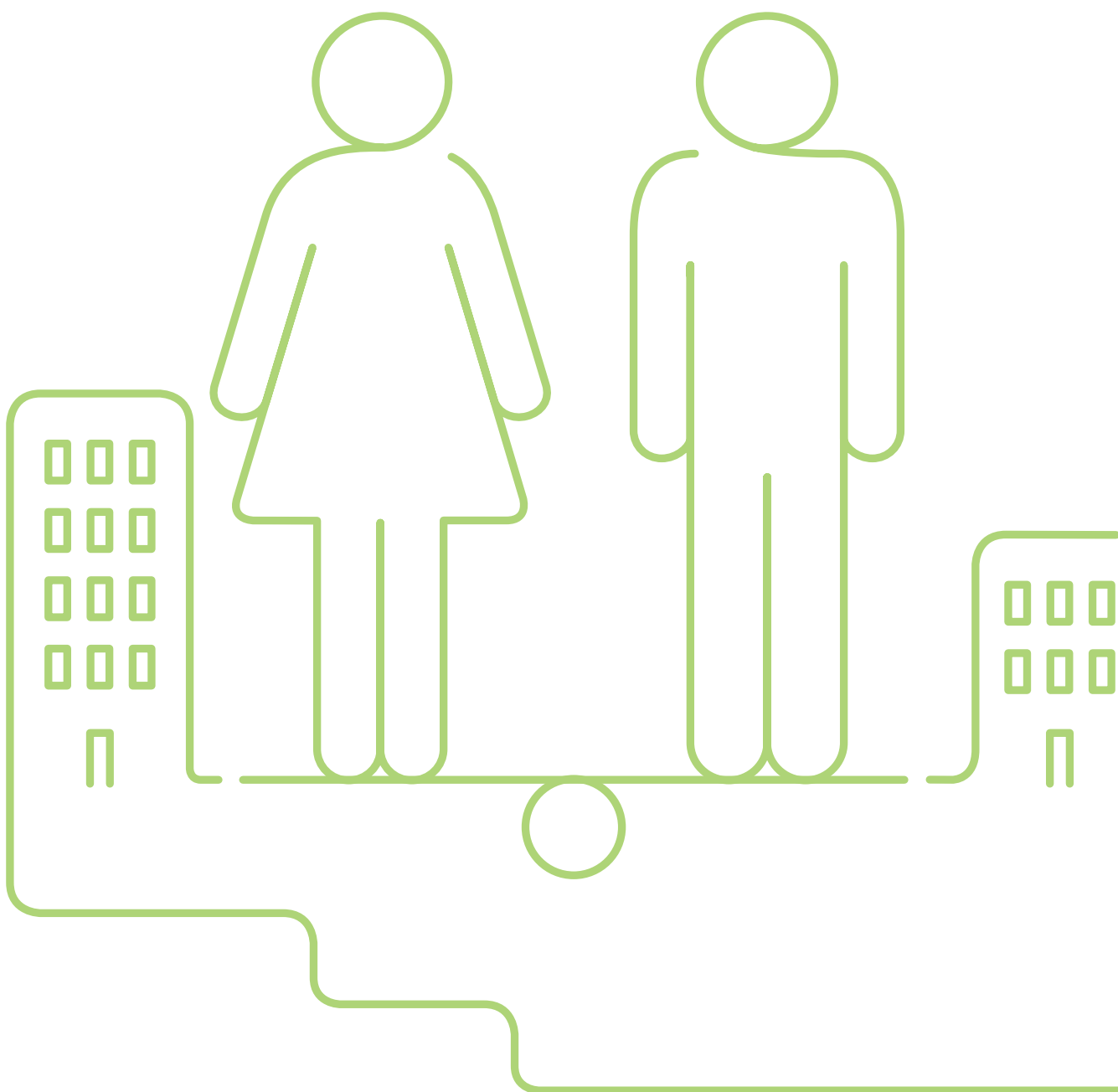


# Generating Equality and Respect

A world-first model for the primary prevention of violence against women

Summary report



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**Acknowledgements:**

The Generating Equality and Respect program was a truly collaborative endeavour. We wish to acknowledge everyone who contributed their time, knowledge and energy across all stages of the project, in particular Monash City Council, Link Health and Community, the Generating Equality and Respect Executive Committee, and the Australian Institute of Family Studies. VicHealth also wishes to acknowledge the following people:

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# Executive summary

Violence against women is an insidious violation of human rights and a complex and deeply entrenched social issue. It is also preventable. The ramifications of violence against women are profound and far-reaching, impacting seriously on the health and wellbeing of women and children affected, and exacting significant economic and social costs on communities and society more broadly. Preventing violence against women is a matter of national urgency requiring a comprehensive and concerted approach (Our Watch et al. 2015; PwC et al. 2015).

Generating Equality and Respect was a three-and-a-half-year program with a goal to build communities and cultures that are gender equitable, and value and support non-violent norms. The aim of this was to prevent violence against women from occurring in the first instance, a process referred to as 'primary prevention'. Generating Equality and Respect signalled a new and exciting direction for prevention activity. A small, yet promising body of research had begun to indicate the value of primary prevention programs and activities being implemented in everyday settings, but never before had these programs and activities been brought together to a single location to test the benefit of multiple, mutually reinforcing activities co-occurring. In this regard, Generating Equality and Respect was a fresh way of doing primary prevention in Victoria, and in fact worldwide.

The initiative was led by a strong and collaborative partnership between two locally based organisations: City of Monash, a Victorian local government, and Link Health and Community (formerly MonashLink Community Health Service), a community health service.

The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) as the funder, played an important role as third partner in leading the work.

The program articulated four goals:

- Goal 1: Build communities, cultures and organisations that are gender equitable and value and support non-violent norms
- Goal 2: Foster respectful and equal relationships between women and men
- Goal 3: Realise sustainable primary prevention through strong collaboration with established and new partners
- Goal 4: Pilot an innovative model for the primary prevention of violence against women, one that is transferrable and informs future practice.

By the conclusion of the program in 2015, Generating Equality and Respect had achieved its overall purpose. A range of tried and tested programs and activities had been implemented within a specified area and many primary prevention practices are now embedded – particularly within the lead partner organisations. The program built a transferable model that can be used to inform planning and implementation of future iterations of the program and described elements of the program that will be useful for stakeholders in other locations – whether in Victoria, nationally or internationally – to inform work in their own contexts. At a funding and policy level, a number of key recommendations emerged around how best to engage people, build sustainable processes and apply the most promising practice models to primary prevention in the future.

## SUMMARY OF PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

- Application of evidence-based tools and resources to guide on-the-ground activity – including proven prevention programs across several settings – leading to strong readiness for action within the community and across sectors.
- Establishment and modelling of a collaborative partnership between three organisations to lead a model of primary prevention.
- 'Saturation' of a local government and community health service allowing the lead partner organisations to demonstrate sufficient capability and capacity by the program's end to lead the community into a saturation approach.
- A dedicated focus on planning and leadership development prior to program delivery, resulting in a sustainable and transferable infrastructure for prevention.
- Strengthening of local partnerships at the leadership level and program level.
- Application of evaluation capacity building and other research methodologies to understand the effectiveness of the program overall, and to create accessible models and tools for future use.
- Significant reach into the local community with implementation of a breadth of programs, training and activities to support individuals and organisations to promote gender equality (see page 11).

Recommendations for future policy, planning and practice include:

- a site-based approach should be strongly considered as the basis for future policy, programming and funding of primary prevention of violence against women activity
- the processes and infrastructure for prevention at the local level should replicate the key features of the Generating Equality and Respect program
- the transferable model for prevention activity should be utilised in new investments to ensure a sustained, embedded commitment to prevention at the local and also regional level
- future application of the Generating Equality and Respect, or site-based models should include a focus on testing attitudinal and behavioural change.

We know that prevention initiatives are strengthened when their 'reach is maximised, and when their messages are reinforced by simultaneous complementary initiatives in other settings' (Our Watch et al. 2015). Generating Equality and Respect drew on an emerging body of evidence to prototype a model of primary prevention infrastructure that, by its very design, sought to maximise and reinforce primary prevention outcomes.

Prior to Generating Equality and Respect we anticipated that building communities, cultures, and organisations that are gender equitable and support non-violent norms was likely to

take time; what we can now confirm is that with a supportive infrastructure, shared vision, considered sequencing of actions, and collective investment, it is indeed possible. Findings from the recent Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence explicitly identified community-led prevention action as necessary to achieving the widespread culture change needed to combat family violence (State of Victoria 2016). Through this report we are pleased to share with you the key findings and practice insights from Generating Equality and Respect, a world-first model for the primary prevention of violence against women.

This report has two functions:

- provide a summary of findings and learnings from piloting an innovative site-based model of primary prevention
- draw on the experience of the program's implementation and distil elements of it to propose a model for site-based primary prevention that is transferrable to other sites, locations and partnerships.

This report draws upon two primary sources of information: a full process and impact evaluation report and the meticulous documentation of the site-based model as it emerged in practice. Readers are encouraged to access the *Generating Equality and Respect: Full evaluation report* at VicHealth's website to pursue areas of interest sparked by this summary report. Tools and guides arising from implementation can also be accessed at VicHealth's website [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au).

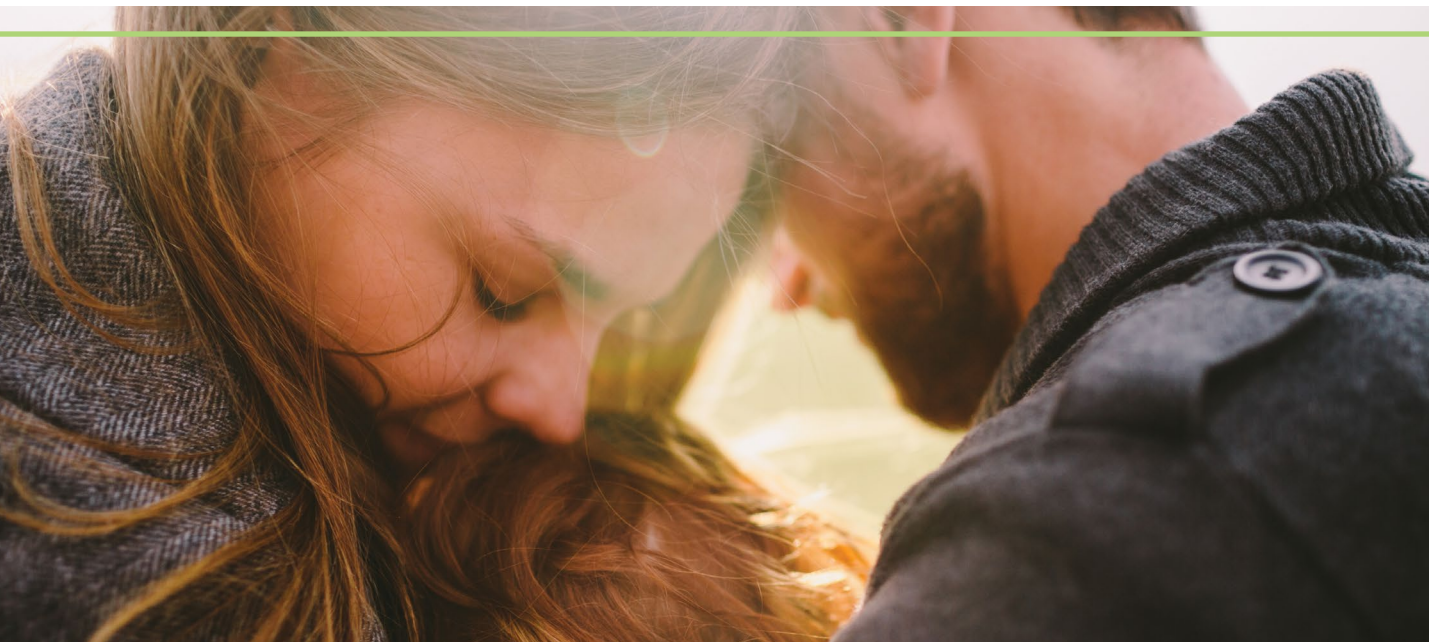
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**Preventing family violence is essential for the health and wellbeing of our community and requires widespread cultural change. There are no 'quick fixes': a long-term perspective and sustained effort and investment are needed. This is one of the most complex and intractable problems confronting the Victorian Government and the Victorian community.**

**Involving communities in the task of preventing family violence is essential. Whether communities are defined by a geographic place, a workplace or a population group with a shared ethos and interests, the culture they establish can have a powerful influence on the behaviour of individuals. Cultural change will not happen without community-led prevention action.”**

— Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence (State of Victoria 2016)

# Violence against women: prevalent, serious and preventable



Violence against women is widely recognised as a global problem of great magnitude. <sup>1</sup>In 2002, the World Health Organization (WHO) gave international significance to the epidemic rates and impacts of violence against women by naming male intimate partner violence a leading public health concern for countries around the world (WHO 2002).

In Australia, more than one in three women (39%) has experienced violence at the hands of a man since the age of 15 years. Around one in three women (34%) has experienced physical violence and almost one in five (19%) has experienced sexual violence (ABS 2013). In Victoria, male intimate partner violence is the leading contributor to death, disability and illness for women aged 15 to 44 years (VicHealth 2004).

While many factors are said to contribute to violence against women, research by VicHealth shows that two most significant determinants are:

- the unequal distribution of power and resources between men and women
- an adherence to rigidly defined gender roles, or what it means to be (and live as) masculine or feminine (VicHealth 2007).

VicHealth's research and the growing international consensus indicate that violence against women can be prevented from happening in the first place through initiatives that act squarely on these two main causes, to shift them towards greater gender equality. This is known as primary prevention. In the context of a public health approach, primary prevention refers to the process of identifying and addressing the underlying causes of a problem to stop it before it starts.

This is distinct from intervening only after the first signs of a problem have appeared (known as early intervention or secondary prevention), or focusing solely on its results, to support victim/survivors or stop recurrence of violence (i.e. response activity or tertiary prevention).

This approach strongly underpinned the design and implementation of the Generating Equality and Respect program – an innovative model for the primary prevention of violence against women.

<sup>1</sup> Violence against women is defined as 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. This definition encompasses all forms of violence that women experience (including physical, sexual, emotional, cultural/spiritual, financial, and others) that are gender based, meaning directed at women because of their gender. In Australia, male sexual assault and intimate partner violence are the most common form of violence against women. For more on these terms and definitions, see Our Watch et al. 2015.

# Respect, Responsibility and Equality: building new knowledge in primary prevention of violence against women

Since its inception, VicHealth's work in violence prevention has centred around using the best available evidence to develop and implement interventions aimed at the whole population, as well as interventions in priority 'settings' – e.g. local government and community services, sport and recreation settings, workplaces, faith settings and schools – where harmful attitudes and behaviour are most powerfully formed or supported.

Generating Equality and Respect built on VicHealth's history of research and investment to build leadership, an evidence base and practice guidance to prevent violence against women.

In 2006, VicHealth commenced an important partnership with the Victorian Government to develop a framework that would guide whole-of-government policy and activity to prevent violence against women. As a result of this work, *Preventing violence before it occurs: a framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria* (the Framework), was published in 2007 (VicHealth 2007).

Consistent with public health approaches, the Framework was based on an ecological understanding of the causes of violence against women and provides a theoretical and evidence base for partners to prevent violence before it occurs by outlining:

- main themes for primary prevention action
- settings for action
- population groups to work with
- strategy types to guide practice.

In 2015, the release of an updated national framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia, *Change the story*, provided new evidence around the drivers of violence. It confirmed that inequalities between women and men create the conditions where violence against women is most likely to occur, reinforcing the contribution of the Respect, Responsibility and Equality projects to the primary prevention evidence base (Our Watch et al. 2015).

In 2007, VicHealth announced Respect, Responsibility and Equality (RRE), a new funding stream available to support the development of Victorian practice in preventing violence against women; learnings from this work would eventually inform design of the Generating Equality and Respect program.

Phase I of the RRE program provided grants of up to \$30,000 to government and non-government organisations to undertake primary prevention activities over a 12-month period. Twenty-nine projects received support from VicHealth through RRE Phase I (VicHealth 2007). The projects worked with a range of populations, and in a number of settings.

In 2008, RRE Phase II funded five of the original 29 projects from Phase I for an additional three years to 'scale up' their primary prevention activities. This substantial resource allocation of \$1.5 million over three years enabled VicHealth's partners to consolidate their primary prevention efforts across five settings: a corporate workplace, maternal and child health services, faith organisations, youth practitioners and a local government. Individually, each project demonstrated effectiveness and positive impacts on the promotion of equal and respectful relationships between men and women within their given setting. These are summarised in Table 1.



**Table 1: Respect, Responsibility and Equality Phase II**

Setting	Project (and partner)	Description	Key activities/programs
<b>Corporate workplace</b>	Working Together against Violence (Women's Health Victoria)	Built the capacity of an international male-dominated workplace with sites (and a head office) in Victoria to promote respectful relationships between men and women	Whole-of-company strategy for cultural change (i.e. lead, train, promote)
<b>Maternal and child health services</b>	Baby Makes 3 (Carrington Health, formerly Whitehorse Community Health Service)	Engaged clients of maternal and child health services (City of Whitehorse) with programs that build equal and respectful relationships in the transition to parenthood	Group work activities for mums and dads that explore gender norms, expectations and roles
<b>Faith organisations</b>	Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships (Darebin City Council)	Built the capacity of faith leaders in Melbourne's north to foster respectful and violence-free relationships between men and women	Mentoring program and other tools and resources for faith leaders
<b>Youth practitioners</b>	Partners in Prevention (Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria)	Built the capacity of youth-focused practitioners in Victoria to promote respectful relationships among the young people they work with	Community of practice with opportunities for networking, information sharing and professional development
<b>Local government and its community</b>	Respect and Equity (Maribyrnong City Council)	Strengthened the capacity of a local government in Melbourne's west to address the underlying causes of violence against women	Comprehensive 'culture shift' agenda focusing on local government policy, planning, leadership and partnership activity



# Generating Equality and Respect: a world-first model for the primary prevention of violence against women

The contribution of RRE findings to a small but growing pool of tried and tested primary prevention projects prompted a series of questions that led to the conceptualisation of RRE Phase IV (which would later come to be known as Generating Equality and Respect): what would happen if VicHealth and its partners could identify a suitable geographically bounded area (also referred to as a ‘demonstration site’) in Victoria to saturate with all promising primary prevention practice we know of? What would this site look like? Who would be involved as partners? What structures and processes would be needed? How might it be supported and resourced? And importantly, could such a model for primary prevention be transferred to other places with similar outcomes?

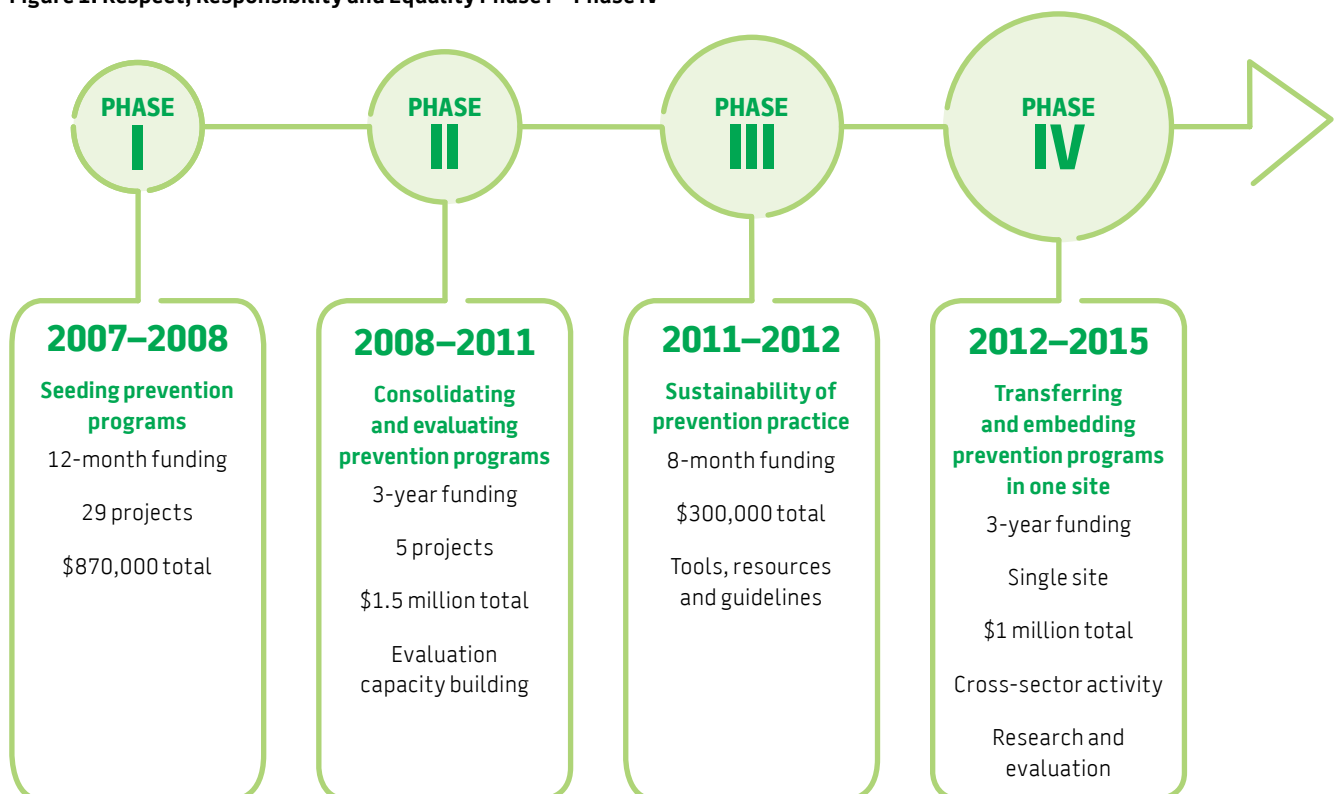
In exploring this concept, VicHealth first turned to the body of evidence on place-based initiatives that address health inequalities. A literature review and consultations with Victorian experts yielded an important piece of information: the evidence told us that place-based initiatives present incredible scope to achieve both breadth and depth with their programs, given the number of settings and population groups able to be targeted in a given location over a sustained period of time.

In 2012 this early development work had culminated into a blueprint<sup>2</sup> for an innovative framework for prevention activity for Generating Equality and Respect. An initial call for expressions of interest was released for organisations able and willing to:

- work in partnership to deliver a critical mass of proven primary prevention programs within a geographically bounded area within a municipality
- jointly plan, develop, implement and evaluate a holistic program of activities. The activities would be multi-layered, spanning from grassroots level to the most senior strategy development of partner organisations; they would operate at all levels of the identified settings, and be intended for the location’s population
- work across sectors and across multiple settings (to be determined as the project was established).

The strategic intent of the program was to engage as many partners, settings and population groups as could be realistically afforded by a site selected by the partnership so that primary prevention activities would continue beyond the three-year funding period that ‘seeded’ the initiative.

**Figure 1: Respect, Responsibility and Equality Phase I – Phase IV**



<sup>2</sup> Please contact VicHealth directly for more information.



By mid-2012, a formal partnership was established between VicHealth, City of Monash and MonashLink Community Health Service (Link Health and Community). Allocation of \$1 million funding over three years was provided by VicHealth to establish and embed a site for primary prevention of violence against women in a geographically bound area in Melbourne's south-east; from this the Generating Equality and Respect program was established. The funding enabled the appointment of a cross-organisational, dedicated project team which was

overseen by an executive committee, comprising members from the three partner organisations.

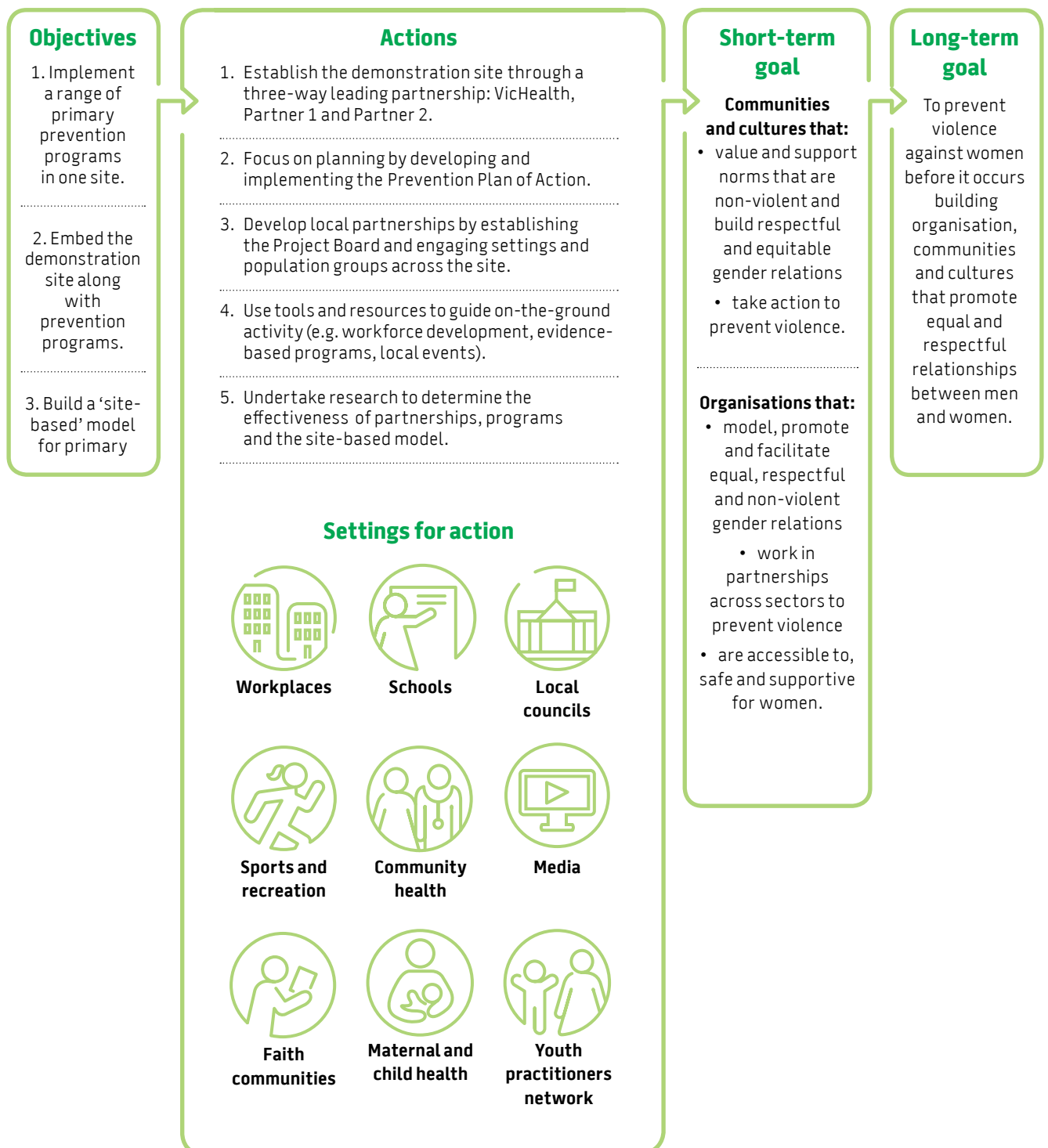
As a testing ground for primary prevention activity, the site was designed to support sustained evaluation activity to inform the effectiveness and impacts of its primary prevention programs, and also the transferability of its model to other locations. The overall concept for the demonstration site is summarised in Figure 2.

**This would be a truly innovative enterprise, the first for Victoria and, in fact, the world.**

# Summary of findings

This section provides a snapshot of program planning and implementation activity, and provides a summary of program findings relevant to these objectives.

**Figure 2: Generating Equality and Respect program goals**



# 1. Establishing a demonstration site through a three-way leading partnership

## Partnership for primary prevention

The partnership between the three lead organisations was one of the most important design features of Generating Equality and Respect. City of Monash was identified as a Victorian local government with strong capacity to implement a comprehensive program of primary prevention activity with the communities it served and as an organisational setting in and of itself. As a local government, City of Monash also provided reach into settings for the other tried and tested programs being brought into the site.

The second partner, Link Health and Community, had an existing relationship with Monash City Council prior to the initiative and came to the partnership with strong potential to complement or extend the primary prevention activity being brought into the site and its settings. Together, these two Monash-based partners were recognised as having the capacity and capability to demonstrate leadership to the site being established and embedded.

From program inception, the VicHealth *Partnerships analysis tool* (VicHealth 2011) was used intermittently to monitor the effectiveness of the partnership. Over the course of the three years, the project partners gave consistently high scores to the different aspects of their partnership, with their overall scores indicating that a partnership based on genuine collaboration had been established and continued throughout the program.

The evaluation shows that this relationship was a critical factor in the program's success, and has been significantly deepened as a result of the program. As a program legacy, this strengthened partnership between the two organisations for primary prevention is now a vital asset for the Monash community, to be leveraged for any future work.

“  
[Generating Equality and Respect] brings together two different sectors: local government and community health, each with their own strengths and their level of expertise, to extend the reach of the strategies and the messages as well. So local government has the capacity to reach the whole municipality whilst [for] community health its main strength is its capacity to reach vulnerable and marginalised groups.”

— Senior leader, Link Health and Community

## Establishing a site for primary prevention

While the design features and core concepts of Generating Equality and Respect were specified prior to establishment of the partnership, the site itself was not pre-determined. The Generating Equality and Respect Program Manager (City of Monash) was tasked with identifying a site for the program. Discussions with local stakeholders revealed many potential locations, which the Executive Committee then narrowed to four potential suburbs. The Program Manager used a specially designed data-collection tool to investigate each suburb and determine which was most suitable for primary prevention activity. This tool also enabled the Program Manager to scope the level of 'readiness' within each of the target settings (i.e. maternal and child health services, youth practitioners, and a corporate workplace).

What emerged over time was a complexity in keeping the boundaries of the site – as they were originally envisaged – fixed. The activities of two of the three settings occurred outside of the originally defined site boundaries, with only one of these settings remaining geographically within them. The inception model for Generating Equality and Respect recognised that over time the demonstration site might expand/be extended to settings or population groups in proximal areas or transition to another site within the municipality. Program learnings now indicate the need for early flexibility of a site's boundaries as well as a particular sequencing of activity (see page 16) to ensure a site can be established, embedded and expanded.

## CORE PROGRAM PRINCIPLES

1. **Saturate** a geographically-bounded site with primary prevention activity occurring within a breadth and depth of settings.
2. **Sustain** primary prevention partnerships and activities, so equality and respect is generated well beyond the period of funding that 'seeds' the site.
3. **Transfer** proven prevention programs and tools into the site, with attention given to those arising from the projects funded by VicHealth from 2008 to 2011.
4. **Engage** lead partners in their own program of organisational culture change so that they are able to model gender equality and respect to others within the site.
5. **Employ** a skilled locally based cross-organisational program team (one program manager and two prevention practitioners) to coordinate the settings-based activities and partnerships and the organisational culture change agendas of the lead partners.
6. **Evaluate** the initiative's processes, impacts and transferability, alongside implementation.

## 2. Developing and implementing a Prevention Plan of Action

Generating Equality and Respect's chief planning mechanism was a Prevention Plan of Action, produced in Year 1 following the process of site selection.

A raft of settings-based plans, reviewed annually, 'operationalised' the four goals into specific pieces of work. Partnerships and activities within the site's different settings were staggered over time, beginning with settings that were considered 'warmest' – or most ready for implementation activity to occur – and allowing relationships to build with those that were 'cooler'.

The settings (in order of implementation) were:

- Monash City Council and Link Health and Community – organisational culture change activities within the two locally based partners commenced immediately, to ensure they could authentically demonstrate primary prevention leadership to the site as specific work in the settings got underway. These organisational culture change activities were also reflected in annually-reviewed operational plans
- Partners in Prevention (PIP) network for youth practitioners in Clayton and the wider Monash municipality, for capacity development, information exchange, resourcing and learning in relation to good-practice respectful relationships education for young people, for example via schools
- Clayton Maternal and Child Health Centre, for delivery of Baby Makes 3 group work sessions for first-time parents
- a (predominantly male) corporate workplace, Robert Bosch Australia (Bosch), for customised support and resourcing to build a more gender equitable and respectful workplace culture.

Implementation of the settings-based plans and organisational culture change activities occurred over Year 2, Year 3 and (although to a lesser extent) in the final six months of Generating Equality and Respect.

### Prevention Plan of Action: achievements of the two Monash-based partners

Over the course of program implementation, considerable attention was given to the organisational culture change activities of the two locally based lead partners, City of Monash and Link Health and Community. The evaluation shows that activities such as policy reviews, strategy development, audits of programs and practices, tailored communications, public awareness, capacity development and skills building achieved significant traction in the two organisations concerned, being well supported through leadership, structures and processes. Indeed, at a programmatic level, this is where saturation of primary prevention effort truly occurred, an authorising environment for gender equity emerged, and transformative long-term change towards improved gender equality and respect was generated.

## Organisational impacts at City of Monash

Following are some selected organisational and leadership achievements resulting directly from the culture change activities of Generating Equality and Respect's Prevention Plan of Action:

### The inclusion of preventing violence against women or gender equity as priorities in numerous existing organisational plans or policies

For instance:

- Council Plan 2013–2017
- Monash Health and Wellbeing Partnership Plan 2013–2017
- Access and Equity Framework 2013–2017
- Monash Youth Plan 2013–2016
- People Plan (internal organisational development plan).

### The leadership of mayors and councillors

Throughout program implementation, mayors and councillors spoke publicly at primary prevention events, attended training opportunities at Monash City Council, participated in consultations for the *Gender Equity Strategy 2015–2020* (see next point), and advocated for a senior officer position for gender equity to be funded beyond Generating Equality and Respect.

### Gender Equity Strategy 2015–2020 (Monash City Council n.d.)

This new strategy is the organisation's framework for furthering its primary prevention commitments beyond Generating Equality and Respect. It supports an integrated, whole-of-organisation approach to gender equity. Through the application of the strategy, it is expected that gender equity will be considered and prioritised in all planning, policy, service delivery and practice across the organisation.

### Funding of a senior officer position for gender equity

This full-time position commenced in early 2016 to oversee implementation of the *Gender Equity Strategy 2015–2020* and coordinate the organisation's primary prevention activities beyond Generating Equality and Respect. As stated in the full evaluation report (VicHealth 2016, p. 88), 'The achievement of an ongoing role at Council is a significant outcome for Generating Equality and Respect given the current financial constraints for local government and it was the only new position funded in Council's 2015–2016 budget.'

## SELECTED PROGRAM IMPACTS

- Over 1160 people participated in gender equity events
- Over 15,000 community members viewed program collateral in the community
- Approximately 50 male employees from lead organisations supported a 'Say NO to violence' campaign
- Insights and learning from program shared at conferences and forums reaching more than 500 people
- 15 senior leaders at Bosch Australia (a male-dominated workplace) took part in training around gender equity
- 58 first-time parents supported to maintain equal and respectful relationships in the transition to parenthood

## Organisational impacts at Link Health and Community

Following are some examples of organisational and leadership achievements resulting directly from the culture change activities of Generating Equality and Respect's Prevention Plan of Action:

### Link Health and Community Organisational Statement for the Prevention of Violence against Women (MonashLink 2014)

This statement was endorsed by the organisation's Board and launched in 2014. The evaluation shows that the statement and what it stands for are strongly supported by the organisation. When staff were surveyed following the statement's development:

- 98 per cent of respondents supported the organisation's clear and public commitment to gender equality
- 89 per cent of respondents supported the organisation's internal commitment to having gender equity practices in place.

### Leadership of the (immediate past) CEO

This organisational leader legitimised primary prevention at Link Health and Community through his membership on the program's Executive Committee, his encouragement of male staff to be involved in primary prevention, his support of all staff to attend training opportunities at Link Health and Community, and his unwavering commitment to maintaining primary prevention as a strategic priority for the organisation.

### Prevention of Violence Against Women Subcommittee of the Integrated Health Promotion Committee

This group, among other things, supported the development of a gender policy checklist (see next point) and is expected to play a role in driving primary prevention activities beyond Generating Equality and Respect. The Health Promotion Manager, for instance, has a vision of evolving the subcommittee into an expert advisory group, with broad representation from across the organisation, to support to the development and implementation of a gender equity plan.

### Gender policy checklist

This tool was designed to assist the organisation in assessing whether a policy, program, service or practice is

gender sensitive and accountable to its access and equity commitments. The evaluation shows that:

- the checklist has been embedded in the organisation's policy and procedure review process as a quality measure, and has already been applied to three reviews
- the tool will be an integral part of the organisation's gender audit cycle of programs, services and plans set to commence in 2016 (i.e. beyond Generating Equality and Respect), with a gender lens having already been used during the development of the Link Health and Community Strategic Plan.

### Allocation of up to 0.4 FTE (full-time equivalent) of a Health Promotion Manager role to primary prevention

As part of this role, it is anticipated that initiatives will be developed that move outside of the organisation and reach into the community.

### Contribution to the evidence base: spotlight on community health

The organisational and leadership wins described above are especially significant for Link Health and Community as a community health service. Compared to the local government sector, community health in Victoria is a relative newcomer to primary prevention. Primary prevention could be considered the missing part of the jigsaw for community health to fully embrace its principles of working within the social model of health by working across the whole spectrum of prevention.

During program implementation, the program team was mindful of the transferability of the activities at Link Health and Community to other community health services and sought to communicate the organisation's progress and successes in different ways:

- insights and learnings were shared at conferences and forums reaching in excess of 500 people
- three Link Health and Community staff co-wrote an article on the role of community health services in tertiary, secondary and primary prevention; this paper was submitted to a peer-reviewed international journal, accepted for publication, and published in December 2015 (Upston et al. 2015).

By the program's end, Link Health and Community was demonstrating true leadership in primary prevention within the Victorian community health sector.

**The organisational culture change achieved at Link Health and Community during Generating Equality and Respect delivers fresh, emerging evidence that community health services – with expertise in secondary and tertiary prevention – can be viable settings for primary prevention.**

## Cross-organisational partnership successes

Monash City Council and Link Health and Community have each made strong commitments to continue their primary prevention journeys beyond Generating Equality and Respect, through embedded processes, structures, positions and role descriptions that will ensure organisational progress towards greater gender equality and respect. These are significant achievements as individual organisations.

The evaluation shows that there are notable cross-organisational partnership successes resulting from the program too. First is the commitment made by the two Monash-based partners to further their primary prevention endeavours with each other (and with Bosch as well, discussed further below).

Second is the program's communications campaign, which ran from September to early December in 2013 and again in 2014. The evaluation shows that the campaign:

- reached across the Monash municipality with 15,000 people estimated to have seen its principal message, 'Say NO to violence against women. Say YES to equality and respect', on a range of products including banners, mugs, flags and postcards
- communicated the commitment of the Monash-based partners to preventing violence against women, with their organisational logos and the program's brand displayed alongside the campaign's principal message
- provided staff at Monash City Council and Link Health and Community with a sense that 'work was occurring' to offset the slower and more invisible process of shifting organisational culture.

Third is the Monash Men's Action Group. This group was formed by male staff at Monash City Council prior to Generating Equality and Respect, but was galvanised through the support, resourcing and advice given to the group during program implementation. For the duration of Generating Equality and Respect, the group comprised 14 male staff from Monash City Council and Link Health and Community. The group was involved in program activities in a number of ways, for instance:

- participating in the development of communications messages for White Ribbon Day events
- attending training opportunities at Monash City Council and Link Health and Community.

Significantly, this cross-organisational group led their own activities too, including the release of two videos in 2013 and 2015 respectively:

- Monash Men Say 'No' to Violence against Women (Monash City Council 2013), which includes statements from 48 men in different roles and positions (and with different levels of influence) from both organisations
- White Ribbon Day 2015 (Monash City Council 2015), which includes members of the Monash Men's Action Group reflecting on their reasons for being involved in the group (and the program) and how their involvement has transformed their professional and personal lives.

“

**You approach [the site] from many, many different levels and using many different strategies all at once. So you have this collective build-up of varying changes of attitude and subtly shifting cultures, so it becomes greater than the sum of the parts of the various approaches if you like.”**

— Senior leader, Link Health and Community

### 3. Developing local partnerships and engaging setting: achievements in the three Clayton settings

#### Monash Partners in Prevention network

The Monash Partners in Prevention (PIP) network supported youth-focused practitioners in Clayton and the wider Monash municipality to share ideas and experiences of respectful relationships education and strengthen their capacity for good practice in such work. The network formed in 2013 and attracted 37 members from an array of professional backgrounds: teachers, youth workers, social workers, health promotion workers, police officers, school nurses, mental health workers and community development workers. It offered members newsletters and email updates, local professional development and networking opportunities, and access to research and resources. For five members, the network provided financial support of \$2500 each through a one-off competitive grants round (2014–15) to further their work in respectful relationships education.

Selected achievements resulting directly from the program's work in this setting include:

- a successfully-run grants scheme that gave network members the opportunity to implement comprehensive and sustainable respectful relationship education initiatives in their settings (e.g. curriculum development for students, professional development for colleagues)
- a forum in 2014 focusing on online issues for young people (i.e. sexting and pornography) which attracted 70 attendees (the grants scheme was also launched at this forum)
- a fact sheet based on best-practice principles of respectful relationships education, entitled *What is respectful relationships education?* (MonashLink et al. n.d.).

Members were satisfied with the offerings of the network. One member expressed:

'The network is offering a great service ... It's been brilliant being able to access all the different resources and the support with applying for grants has also been very helpful. An excellent initiative that I feel has presented many opportunities to support making change in the young people we work with.'

#### Baby Makes 3 program

Baby Makes 3 is a three-week group program for couples transitioning to parenthood. The program is promoted to participants of the New Parents Group, a standard offering of Victorian maternal and child health services. For Generating Equality and Respect, the Baby Makes 3 sessions were delivered at the Clayton Maternal and Child Health service. Baby Makes 3 also included a 'family night' to assist in father engagement to the program, professional development opportunities for maternal and child health staff, and training to group facilitators.

The evaluation shows that Baby Makes 3 at Clayton did not attract sufficient participants to warrant its continuation into Year 3 of Generating Equality and Respect, despite recruitment into two neighbouring maternal and child health services (East Oakleigh and Warrawee Park) and other engagement efforts.

In the end, seven Baby Makes 3 programs ran (three incomplete) and 58 first-time parents were supported in maintaining equal and respectful relationships in the transition to parenthood.

There were also strong impacts on the parents involved. Of those participating in the group sessions who were surveyed prior to and at three months following their involvement, there was a reported increase in the proportion who 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that gender equality is an important part of a healthy relationship.

These findings are consistent with results from the Baby Makes 3 project funded by VicHealth and piloted by Whitehorse Community Health (now Carrington Health) from 2008 to 2011 (Flynn 2011). They are also consistent with results from two concurrent Baby Makes 3 projects funded through the Reducing Violence Against Women and Their Children Grants program, Victorian Department of Justice and Regulation, and covered all seven local government areas of Melbourne's east (including suburbs other than Clayton in the Monash municipality) and five local government areas of Barwon South West in rural Victoria.

#### Bosch workplace activities

Bosch is a well-known employer in the Monash municipality, with its Australian head office based in Clayton. An estimated 650 staff work at the head office, the majority of whom are male. Bosch sees itself as a values-driven company, and its two corporate values of social responsibility and diversity, along with its commitment to employee health and wellbeing, were the foundations of its engagement with Generating Equality and Respect.

The program's work in this corporate setting was formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding between Monash City Council and Bosch in 2014. The program team worked closely with a nominated key contact at Bosch on customised activities that could support the company in the start of a culture change journey. Following the model of the original corporate workplace project piloted by VicHealth from 2008 to 2011, this work included three elements of 'train', 'lead' and 'promote'.

The following are some selected achievements resulting directly from the program's work in this setting:

#### The integration of violence against women content into existing training on equal employment opportunity workplace behaviour

This action was taken in recognition that a first step in any company's work in primary prevention is to raise awareness of the problem and its effects on people in the workplace, and to communicate to employees that something can be done about it (e.g. challenging sexism or violence-supportive attitudes). The evaluation shows that:

- over 90 per cent of participants attending this training at Bosch are men
- as this training reaches all employees, the integration of violence against women content is a sustainable achievement of the program.

#### Unconscious bias training through the Centre for Ethical Leadership, in 2015

Significantly, there was strong leadership support from the President of Bosch for this training to occur. Fifteen senior leaders (14 men) participated in the session, opening the door





for further action to be taken on gender equity in the future.

#### **Support in planning White Ribbon Day events in 2014 and 2015**

In 2014, Bosch was supported to host a White Ribbon Day event. Employee support for the event led to an increase in activities for White Ribbon Day in 2015.

The evaluation shows that the program reached around 400 Bosch employees through its activities with the company.

Introducing and integrating violence against women as a workplace issue into a male-dominated corporate workplace is an achievement in itself. Embedding gender equity within corporate workplaces through partnerships is a long-term prospect, perhaps beyond the life of a funded program such as Generating Equality and Respect.

Promisingly, the evaluation shows that partnerships are likely to be formed between Bosch and Monash City Council and/or Link Health and Community beyond program end, so that Bosch can continue along the prevention trajectory established during Generating Equality and Respect. The exact form of these partnerships, however, remains unclear.

## **4. Guiding on-the-ground activity**

The notion of applying tried and tested activity within the site was a critical concept of Generating Equality and Respect. Additionally, assessment of the site included scoping of existing, local activity to identify opportunities for the project team to tap into. While all settings-based activity consisted of tried and tested programs or intervention, the use of existing tools and resources to support gender equity was particularly evident within the lead partners' own organisational gender equity activity.

### **Impacts on people and their capacity to act**

Direct participation in the form of capacity development and skills building was a big part of the work of Generating Equality and Respect for City of Monash and Link Health and Community. The program presented several formal training opportunities to staff of both organisations. These training opportunities were linked to the structural work going on. Some of these were in the form of existing courses or sessions brought into the organisations; others were specifically developed by the

program team for the participants concerned. Prominent examples include:

# Site-based primary prevention: what have we learned?

Testing a site-based model of primary prevention through Generating Equality and Respect has revealed three key findings:

**There is a specific sequencing of activity that should be applied to site-based work: mature and embedded gender equity processes in place within lead organisations must occur prior to work in other settings within the site.**

Of the settings included within the program, those that achieved the greatest depth of change were the two organisational partners. The demands of the organisational culture change activities on the program were greater than envisaged by the Prevention Plan of Action and its cascading implementation plans. The core concept and design feature of having two locally based organisations demonstrating and modelling gender equality and respect to a site and its settings led to an early and unanticipated gravitational ‘pull’ on the program by their organisational culture change work.

As a result of the many internal achievements at Monash City Council and Link Health and Community through their involvement in the program, both partners had sufficient partner organisation capability and capacity by the program’s end to begin to build strong links into the site and create a groundswell of gender equity activity. In hindsight, the program may have benefited from an expanded or nuanced definition of ‘saturation’. Based on the experiences of Generating Equality and Respect, saturation must be communicated and understood as something to be aimed for by the two locally based organisations leading the work as well as in the site and its settings. Moreover, saturation should be understood as something to be achieved in the two locally based organisations *prior* to any attempts to saturate elsewhere.

The focus of activity within the lead organisations meant that they were unable – within the timeframe of the project – to deploy their leadership externally to a geographically defined site. However, there are strong indications that this kind of

modelling could be of significant value in leading and supporting other settings within the site to undergo their own journey of organisational culture change. The internal achievements of Monash City Council and Link Health and Community appeared to provide a supportive context for external settings within the site, reinforcing the value of sequencing and modelling of activity when implementing site-based prevention programs; this was particularly evident with the corporate workplace.

**Careful consideration should be given to the way a site is defined.**

It was originally envisaged that the focus and ‘weight’ of the work of Generating Equality and Respect would be drawn into settings outside of the lead organisations. However, the program did not tie settings into the site in the way that was envisaged. The more the program focused on Monash City Council and Link Health and Community, with saturation and sustainability occurring there (i.e. the Glen Waverley head offices of the two partners), the more the boundaries of the site (as originally envisaged) started to shift.

These implementation factors, coupled with the pull of the program’s focus away from Clayton, meant that Generating Equality and Respect was ultimately not successful in the full site-based saturation of sustainable primary prevention action in Clayton’s settings as originally envisaged.

While the inception model did note that over time the ‘demonstration site might expand/be extended to settings or population groups in proximal areas or transition to another site within the municipality’, learning at the conclusion of the program suggests that following early saturation of the organisational partners:

- a) settings should be selected that have sufficient ‘reach’ or demand from people and communities within the site
- b) definition of the site should be further refined to ensure fit with selected settings.

There are elements of the program that may be useful to stakeholders in other locations – whether in Victoria, nationally or internationally – and a transferable model is now available to inform future work.

### A model for site-based primary prevention

The implementation and evaluation of Generating Equality and Respect was structured with a view to determining which elements of the program’s site-based approach were transferable and could inform future practice. Figure 3 below, developed over the life of the program, illustrates the ‘architecture’ for planning and implementing site-based primary prevention within specific geographical areas and communities. The inner circle of the model identifies ‘fixed’ or core elements of the program that remain stable from inception through planning and implementation. They are fundamental in informing all aspects of the program:

- purpose and scope
- resourcing
- learning partnership.

**Figure 3: Elements for transferability of Generating Equality and Respect program**



The outer circle of the model identifies four transferable process elements, design features or practices that ideally need to be in continual operation for a site-based prevention framework to take root:

- leadership
- authorising environment
- planning and staging
- capacity building.

Both the core and process elements are explained in greater detail in the *Taking a local lead – A transferable model for a site-based program for the primary prevention of violence against women* available at [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/gear](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/gear). In this resource, the elements are broken down into key questions with the intent of guiding organisations who are planning and implementing future site-based work.

## Recommendations for future practice

Based on the program outcomes, and in consideration of the emerging state and policy context for primary prevention, the following are recommended as strategies to engage people, build sustainable processes and apply the most promising practice models to primary prevention in the future:

### 1. A site-based, saturation approach should be employed as the basis for future policy, programming and funding in primary prevention.

The site-based approach has been effective in building strong, sustained local leadership for prevention and now has strong potential to be applied at the community or site level. The saturation approach in the Generating Equality and Respect program has demonstrated potential to go beyond individual settings and instead aim for a collective impact across the community, achieving cultural change across the areas where people live, work, learn and play.

### 2. The processes and infrastructure for prevention at the local level should replicate the key features of the Generating Equality and Respect program.

These features include planning and leadership development prior to program delivery, a dedicated focus on partnership development, considered sequencing of activity, collective investment and joint activity, direct community engagement led by local partners and embedded evaluation activity. These features are consistent with the elements of infrastructure outlined in the national prevention framework *Change the Story* (Our Watch et al. 2015) and provide another level of direction for implementation at the local level.

### 3. The transferable model for prevention activity should be used in new investments to ensure a sustained, embedded commitment to prevention at the local and also regional level.

The elements of the transferable model are consistent with broader approaches to public health and social policy. However in the specific context of primary prevention of violence against women – that is, to address the drivers of violence across a range of settings in a local area – this model has demonstrated its capacity to deliver sustained leadership and ongoing activity to address this complex problem. The elements of the model can also be adapted at the regional level and potentially at the level of state and territory jurisdictions.

### 4. Future application of site-based or saturation models should include a focus on testing attitude and behavioural change.

During the pilot phase over 2012–15, the evaluation and research components of the Generating Equality and Respect program were focused on outcomes at the organisational and systems level – in particular within the lead agencies and the settings. Future investments in a saturation approach have strong potential to affect attitudinal and behavioural change over time and research should identify these changes.

**The Generating Equality and Respect program was effective in achieving its overall goal of trialing a site-based model of primary prevention of violence against women.**

# Conclusion



Generating Equality and Respect has created the leadership, community readiness and infrastructure to host a saturation approach to prevention in the future, in the demonstration site and across other areas of Victoria. A range of tried and tested primary prevention programs were successfully implemented within a local area. The core concepts and practices of primary prevention were embedded in the lead agencies and a number of settings within the area were activated. In addition, the program has built a transferable model for planning and leading site-based primary prevention activity.

As anticipated, Generating Equality and Respect has contributed to the building of communities and cultures that value and support norms that are non-violent and support respectful and equitable gender relations, and has instigated significant local action to address violence and its drivers. It has also enabled organisations across settings and sectors to model and promote equal and respectful relationships, and has improved their capacity to work in partnership to address violence against women. While many of the organisations involved in the program have made formal commitments to enhance safety and respect for women, further work is needed to understand how this translates into experiences for women in those organisations.

In addition to these outcomes at the community and organisational level, the Generating Equality and Respect program has led to the development of a transferable model

for a saturation approach to primary prevention. Since the research and development phase of Generating Equality and Respect there has been a significant change in the policy landscape surrounding the prevention of violence against women as well as a groundswell of political and public interest in the topic; there has also been ongoing contribution of research and practice insights to a growing evidence base. The 2015 release of *Change the story: a shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia* (Our Watch et al. 2015), and findings from the *Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence* (released April 2016) both acknowledge the role of comprehensive, community-focused approaches to preventing violence against women and their children. They present a great opportunity for ongoing application and analysis of the findings from Generating Equality and Respect.

Following on from VicHealth's leadership in the prevention of violence against women, and our proud history in developing the Generating Equality and Respect program, we will continue to seek opportunities to apply these models and achievements on a larger scale. As part of our refreshed focus on the prevention of violence against women and gender equality more broadly, we will explore ways to ensure that future investments in prevention build on the Generating Equality and Respect program, taking the work further to achieve tangible, long-lasting cultural change at every level.

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