

RESPECT STARTS WITH A CONVERSATION

Challenging gender stereotypes and roles

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RESPECT STARTS WITH A CONVERSATION. LET'S START TALKING.

Why must we challenge assumptions and ideas about gender?

We all deserve to be respected for who we are. But growing up, many of us are told we should have certain skills, likes and dislikes, and ways we should look based on our gender - rather than who we are as a person.

Assumptions about gender limit us. They create expectations about who carries the parenting load and does most of the housework. Whose role it is to earn money, and the kinds of jobs we should have. Who gets to make decisions – at home, work, and in our communities. Who is allowed to be emotional, and who is allowed to be assertive. What we can wear and how we should look.

These ideas keep us from being ourselves and filter through our relationships, workplaces, and communities. They limit opportunities and choices and can lead to discrimination and violence. It's important to challenge assumptions about gender to help create a society where everyone is free to be themselves.

Conversation you can have to create change

What could a world look like where we are all free and supported to be ourselves?

It all starts with a conversation. These conversations matter because they challenge the underlying conditions that drive violence against women. A conversation could be:

- talking to your partner about how you can share the housework or parenting in a way that works for everyone
- choosing to call out a homophobic or sexist joke
- chatting to your mate about how they treat their partner if you notice they control them, talk down to them or you see any other red flags.
- having discussions at your local sports club about treating people of all genders equally
- respecting and asking for a person's pronouns
- supporting your friends and being there for them if they need to talk
- letting your children know it's okay to express sadness, frustration and a range of emotions – no matter their gender.

Let's start talking, so we can build a future where we are all safe, equal and respected for who we are – not who we're told to be.

Benefits

- More meaningful connections
- More respectful and equal relationships
- Improved individual mental health and wellbeing
- Safe, more inclusive social environments
- Decreased frequency and severity of violence, bullying and sexual harassment

- Increased access to equal opportunities for everyone
- Improved quality of life for all.

How to seek help

If you believe someone is in immediate danger of violence, call **triple zero (000)** and ask for the police.

- **Safe Steps** is Victoria's family violence support service with translators available for non-English speaking backgrounds, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. **Call 1800 015 188 or visit the Safe Steps website**
- **InTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence** is a specialist family violence service that works with multicultural women, their families and their communities. **Call 1800 755 988 or visit the InTouch website**.
- **No to Violence** - Men's Referral Service is a confidential support for men at risk of using family violence with translators available for non-English speakers. If you are concerned about your behaviour, **call 1300 766 491** (7 days a week, check website for times of day) or **visit the No to Violence website**.