

Resource 2:

Primary Prevention: How the National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey (NCAS) can support your prevention work

Practitioners can use the encouraging, concerning and predictive findings of the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) to plan, design and implement primary prevention of violence against women activity. We can celebrate the positive changes that have been made while planning prevention actions in areas where there is considerable room for further improvement. The NCAS data provides the evidence needed to **explore** the facts, **promote** healthy and respectful social norms, and to **highlight** problems with how Australians understand violence against women and gender equality. Below are some of the key ways we recommend the NCAS can be used to support your work.

Providing evidence that a problem exists

The NCAS is useful for showing a problem exists in two key ways

1. The NCAS data demonstrates that our community still has a considerable way to go in understanding the reality of violence against women and is useful for changing attitudes that enable this violence to continue.
2. The NCAS main report uses key supplementary research to provide in-depth explanations about why the problems explored in the NCAS are important (for example, attitudes to gender equality and its themes). This is useful for anyone seeking up-to-date evidence to support and validate an activity that overlaps with the NCAS research areas.

In the next column is an example of how NCAS data can be used as evidence that continuing work is needed to prevent violence against women. It is one example of how the NCAS can be used to provide evidence of a problem, and this model can also be used for example in funding applications, policy submissions, report writing, and/or as an educational tool.

Additional resources:

See Resource 7 'Answering 'backlash' and 'resistance' questions' within Section 3 of this toolkit for more messaging which addresses the problem of men's violence against women and gender inequality that still exists.

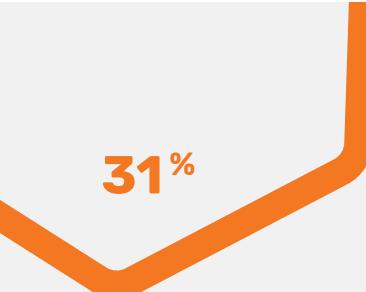
Example: Using the NCAS to prove the problem still exists – addressing backlash

Challenge statement:

"Attitudes are so much better than they used to be. The media is always talking about believing women to the point where no one is even allowed to question how she got into the situation in the first place!"

Response using the data:

"There is increasing public discussion around the importance of believing women, but Australians continue to mistrust women's reports of violence. Although false allegations are rare, the 2017 NCAS shows that 31% of Australians still mistakenly believe that a lot of the time, women who say they were raped had led the man on and then had regrets."



31%

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Planning prevention projects and programs

The NCAS shows that community attitudes to violence against women are slowly improving. At the same time, it also identifies areas where there is further work to be done. For prevention programmers and planners who seek to change attitudes, the NCAS offers a roadmap of where to focus efforts. The NCAS indicates:

- Which specific **attitudes are most prevalent** and the overarching **themes that most need to be addressed**.
- Where **barriers to prosocial bystander action** need to be addressed to increase the likelihood to act when witnessing abuse or disrespect towards women.
- The variables that most accurately predict attitudinal support for violence. This includes demographic and attitudinal variables. This information is useful in targeting and/or tailoring programs for particular groups or contexts. This also helps practitioners be aware of which of these variables are of critical importance in the prevention of violence against women.

Themes

Each component of the survey is broken down into **themes** (e.g. ‘minimising violence against women’). These themes reflect different aspects of knowledge, and different ways that attitudes are expressed. They sit within each overarching questionnaire component (e.g. the Gender Equality Attitudes Scale).

Questions to consider when assessing how the NCAS can help you plan your activity

- Which attitudes or understandings need to be addressed based on NCAS findings?
- What change does this activity seek to make?
- Does the NCAS provide demographic or contextual information about the community you are working with?

Identifying priority populations and contexts

The NCAS provides findings for the general community and analysis by demographics, and attitudinal and contextual variables. The NCAS found that demographics alone are not particularly strong predictors of violence supportive attitudes. However, some differences do emerge by demographic characteristics and this information is useful in targeting and tailoring prevention efforts to specific demographic groups.

The NCAS main report also includes a breakdown by state and territory, although few differences by state/territory were found.

Additional resources:

See [2017 NCAS Main Report](#) (p.32) for a list of demographic, attitudinal and contextual variables that are analysed within the main report.

Information regarding community specific reports can be found in Section 4 of this toolkit.

Further reading:

ANROWS. (2018). *Australians' attitudes to violence against women and gender equality: The 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women survey (NCAS): Stakeholder kit*. Sydney: ANROWS. (N.B. This Stakeholder Kit is based on the 2017 NCAS Main Report).

VicHealth. (2018). *Encountering resistance: Strategies to respond to resistance to gender equality initiatives*. Melbourne: VicHealth.

The NCAS found that demographics alone are not particularly strong predictors of violence supportive attitudes.

This resource is one of ten resources within the toolkit- Re-shaping Attitudes: A toolkit for using the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) in the primary prevention of violence against women. For more information, please visit www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/research

Suggested citation

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For more information or to provide feedback on this resource or toolkit, please contact
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