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## Media Release

# Victorians share their stories of connection, respect and equality: 'Connection Keeps Us Strong'

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Respect Victoria is delighted to launch *Connection Keeps Us Strong*, a series of stories from Victorian families who are navigating the pandemic together.

The pandemic has led to significant challenges for all of us, but many families and households are working hard to stay connected, find the right balance at home, and lead with respect.

*Connection Keeps Us Strong* showcases conversations between three generations of Victorians, grandparents and grandkids, and a group of Dads who are making positive changes in their homes.

"These stories illustrate the heart, resilience and strength of Victorians," said Respect Victoria CEO Tracey Gaudry. "They also show that we can create positive change in our relationships and families at unexpected times."

For the families that Respect Victoria spoke with, change came in the form of learning how to use FaceTime or Zoom, stepping back and finding out what matters most, and taking action to improve equality in their homes.

"We know that the pandemic is already disproportionately affecting women in Australia – they are facing more job losses, are taking on more housework and care work, and there has been an increase in women experiencing family violence for the first time," said Ms Gaudry.

Older people are also facing significant challenges, and it is expected that we will see a rise in elder abuse during the pandemic.

For the Dads that Respect Victoria spoke with – Stephen, Andrew and Bwe – working from home has brought silver linings. They have been able to play a bigger role in the lives of their children and take steps to ensure that they are sharing housework and care work equally.

"Households that proactively share caregiving and chores are at a significant advantage," said Ms Gaudry.

"Gender equality benefits all of us, and it all starts with respect. Taking small steps to find balance in your household and stay connected leads to strong, healthy relationships."

The families span many cultural backgrounds, representative of our diverse Victorian community.

For further information on the campaign, visit the [Respect Victoria website](http://Respect Victoria website).

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