

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Why must we challenge outdated ideas about gender?

Firstly, what do we mean when we say **outdated ideas about gender**? These are ideas that men and women should be, act, work, play, and communicate in certain ways because of their gender, rather than looking at them as an individual person.

These ideas can appear where we live, learn, work, see our friends, and in the media. When people carry these outdated assumptions and attitudes around gender, it can hold us all back and can be harmful and limiting to both women and men.

What stereotypes and gender can look like in daily life

Community

- Assumptions that men can't pursue careers in fields like nursing or early childhood education.
- Women who are assertive or show leadership are labelled as bossy.
- Unequal pay at work for men and women doing the same job.
- Unequal parental leave available for men and women in organisations based on the expectation that a woman would be the main caregiver.

Home and friends

- Assumptions that men should work and earn money, and women should stay home with children.
- Messages such as 'toughen up', 'don't cry' and 'don't be such a girl' put pressure on men and boys to hide their feeling and not express themselves. They also belittle girls and women.
- Women being judged for what they wear.

Actions you can take to create change

- Use inclusive language when addressing groups of people. For example, 'everyone' rather than terms such as 'guys' or 'ladies'.
- Supporting and celebrating all identities.
- Promoting carers leave for male staff and creating part time leadership positions.
- Sharing parenting duties and household tasks.
- Supporting your friends and being there for them if they need to talk.

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**.