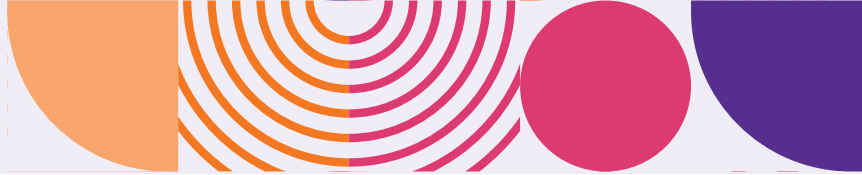


Respecting and valuing older people: Victoria's Primary Prevention of Elder Abuse Framework

Companion guide



To receive this document in another format, email Seniors Policy and Elder Abuse Reform at **elder.abuse@dffh.vic.gov.au**.

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In this document, we may use the terms 'First Peoples', 'First Nations' or 'Aboriginal people'. This includes all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in Victoria. We retain 'Indigenous' or 'Koori/Koorie' when part of a title, program or quote.

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<https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/preventing-elder-abuse>

(2609650)



Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples and Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live. We honour and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and recognise the continuing strength of First Peoples across Victoria.

We acknowledge their extraordinary strength and resilience in the face of historical and ongoing

injustices, the intergenerational impacts of colonisation and the enduring contributions of First Peoples to our communities.

The State of Victoria and the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria have signed a Statewide Treaty. Through treaty, the Victorian Government is committed to working in partnership and supporting self-determination.

Other acknowledgements

Victim survivors

We acknowledge the impact of elder abuse and all forms of family violence on individuals, families and communities.

We remember and pay respects to those who did not survive and acknowledge their family members and friends. We keep at the forefront of our minds all those who have been or continue to be harmed and recognise their ongoing courage and resilience.

Lived experience

This document recognises that the histories, stories and experiences of older people, communities and victim survivors are an important and rich source of information.

While this has been embraced in First Peoples communities, these experiences are generally underused in the evidence base for prevention of elder abuse and family violence more broadly.

Key contributors

We thank our sector stakeholders who contributed to shaping the development of this framework:

- Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC)
- Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS)
- Celebrate Ageing
- Dhelk Dja Koori Caucus¹
- LGBTIQ+ Taskforce²
- Respect Victoria
- Senior Victorians Advisory Committee sector and community members³
- Victoria's Elder Abuse Prevention Network funded agencies⁴
- Victims Survivors' Advisory Council past and present members with elder abuse lived experience⁵.

1 For more information, see the **Victorian Government's Statement from the Dhelk Dja Koori Caucus web page**. <https://www.vic.gov.au/dhelk-dja-3-year-action-plan/statement-dhelk-dja-koori-caucus>

2 For more information, see **LGBTIQ+ Taskforce web page**. <https://www.vic.gov.au/lgbtiqa-taskforce>

3 For more information, see **Seniors Online's Senior Victorians Advisory Committee web page**. <https://www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/advisory-committee>

4 For more information, see **DFFH Service Providers' Preventing elder abuse web page**. <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/preventing-elder-abuse>

5 For more information, see the **Victim Survivors' Advisory Group web page**. <https://www.vic.gov.au/victim-survivors-advisory-council>



Joint ministerial foreword

Everyone deserves to age well with dignity, equality and the confidence that we will be safe and valued throughout our lives. The Victorian Government is committed to making this a reality for all.

When we value people of all ages, we build a Victoria where older people can live:

- free from elder abuse
- connected to community
- supported to live healthy, meaningful lives.

Respecting and valuing older people: Victoria's Primary Prevention of Elder Abuse Framework (the framework) marked an important step towards achieving this vision. It is Victoria's first dedicated primary prevention framework for elder abuse. It provides clear, evidence-informed guidance to help professionals and organisations work together to change the attitudes, systems and structures that are likely enabling elder abuse.

Elder abuse is **not** inevitable, and as a form of family violence, it is driven by preventable social conditions. Emerging evidence suggests that ageism, gender inequality and other intersecting forms of discrimination create the conditions for elder abuse to occur. To address these we need coordinated, long-term action across the whole of society.

With Victoria's ageing population, this work is more critical than ever. Within the next 2 decades, older people will make up one in 5 Victorians – over 2.3 million people.

Nationally, around one in 6 older people experience elder abuse within a year, with older women more greatly affected. Rates of elder abuse are increasing faster than for any other adult group experiencing family violence. The consequences of the abuse can be devastating. One in 4 family violence homicide victims are older people – and two-thirds of them are older women.

Ageism remains one of the most overlooked forms of discrimination, despite its profound impact on the rights, dignity and autonomy of older people.

To stop elder abuse, we must collectively:

- address ageism and gender inequality
- strengthen intergenerational connection
- create communities where older people are included, valued and safe.

Victoria has a long-standing commitment to the primary prevention of all forms of family violence, including elder abuse. The framework handbook and its supporting companion guide strengthen this work by:

- embedding a consistent, evidence-informed statewide approach to elder abuse primary prevention
- encouraging joint action across family violence, ageing, health and community systems
- helping professionals and organisations plan, carry out and measure effective actions.

While the framework focuses on primary prevention, we recognise that ending elder abuse needs action across the prevention continuum – from prevention and early intervention through to response and recovery. And it needs action from everyone.

Preventing elder abuse is everyone's responsibility. It requires sustained collective action from governments, services, communities and families.

Our commitment to First Peoples

Preventing elder abuse in First Peoples communities must be led by First Peoples, using self-determined and culturally strong approaches.

We are committed to advancing Aboriginal self-determination in all efforts to prevent family violence, including elder abuse. This includes partnering with Aboriginal communities, Elders and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations to design and carry out culturally strong, community-led actions.

We will continue to:

- be informed by Aboriginal-led priorities and approaches
- address the ongoing impacts of colonisation and racism
- recognise the strength and resilience of First Peoples communities.

We will work with the Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum to make sure Elders' voices, leadership and cultural authority lead First Peoples policy and service design. This recognises that Elders play a vital role as cultural leaders, knowledge holders and community connectors in prevention efforts.

A shared commitment to address elder abuse

Addressing elder abuse requires sustained commitment from both government and the community. The framework builds on existing work around the prevention of family violence. It is part of our broader commitment to end all forms of family violence in our state, including elder abuse.

The Victorian Government has a shared commitment – through the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, including Family Safety Victoria, and the Department of Justice and Community Safety.

This commitment is reflected in *Until every Victorian is Safe: Victoria's third rolling action plan to end family and sexual violence 2025–2027*. The plan has 5 specific actions to address elder abuse, including:

- release the framework and embed it in the work of Elder Abuse Prevention Networks.
- address the drivers of elder abuse in broader government-funded primary prevention programs, including in program guidelines.
- build engagement with the Victorian Government's Elder Abuse Learning Hub and key services.
- ensure the Senior Victorians Advisory Committee's work program includes a focus on elder abuse.
- deliver the Elder Abuse Capability Development program to help specialist family violence practitioners build their capability to respond effectively and appropriately to elder abuse.

Together, these actions will help drive a more consistent, coordinated and effective approach to addressing elder abuse in Victoria. They build on long-standing Victorian Government efforts to prevent and respond to elder abuse. They also recognise the work being done by the Elder Abuse Prevention Networks we fund to embed the framework into their work with local communities. This is focused on to designing and testing:

- innovative primary prevention approaches
- initiatives targeting older women, who face greater risk of abuse due to gender inequality.

Our family violence service system (including the Orange Door network) also plays an essential role in supporting older people facing elder abuse.

We must understand the unique dynamics of elder abuse to recognise:

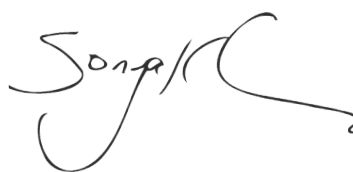
- presentations of older people experiencing abuse
- common behaviours of people who use violence.

By doing so, professionals can respond more effectively to older people experiencing elder abuse and help them access the support they need.

Together, we can build a Victoria where older people are safe, respected and valued.



The Hon. Nick Staikos MP
Minister for Seniors



The Hon. Sonya Kilkeny MP
Minister for Prevention of Family Violence

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Introduction

A future free from elder abuse is one where older people are valued, respected and treated equally. It is a future where older people are included fairly in society, without age discrimination and gender inequality. The lives of older and younger people are enriched by the positive, nurturing connections they have with each other.

'How we treat older people reflects who we are as a community'

– Linette Harriott, Senior Victorians Advisory Committee community member

The framework

Respecting and valuing older people: Victoria's primary prevention of elder abuse framework (the framework) helps professionals by providing a structure to plan actions to prevent elder abuse from happening in the first place. The framework is Victoria's first dedicated primary prevention resource for elder abuse released in two parts:

- handbook
- companion guide.

The handbook

The core framework is outlined in the *Respecting and valuing older people: Victoria's primary prevention of elder abuse framework* handbook available on **DFFH Service Providers' Preventing elder abuse web page**⁶. It is a short user-friendly resource outlining the core framework.

It includes guiding principles and 4 key themes for action to address ageism and gender inequality. The available and emerging evidence suggests these are the underlying drivers of elder abuse, alongside other intersecting forms of discrimination. For more information, see **Guiding the way to a new future**.

To give professionals a sense of what primary prevention of elder abuse action can look like, the framework also includes examples of possible actions for each theme. These are in line with the 3-level socio ecological model to target change across all of society. For more information, see **The socio-ecological model**. Professionals are not limited to the example actions listed and innovation is encouraged.

The framework also includes examples of settings and population groups to consider targeting when designing actions. This broad list supports the cultural change needed across society.

The companion guide

This companion guide supports professionals to use the framework by providing further information and guidance. Both the framework and the companion guide were developed using contemporary Victorian, national and international evidence, alongside input from a **key stakeholders**.

The companion guide is designed to be used flexibly. Professionals can refer to relevant sections as needed.

It brings together:

- the context and contributing likely drivers of elder abuse
- a primary prevention approach
- guiding principles and practical prevention actions
- an intersectional approach to prevention
- examples of practical actions across society
- guidance on applying the framework
- advice on measuring effectiveness
- list of resources to learn more

6 <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/preventing-elder-abuse>

The guide can support:

- strategic planning
- program development
- community engagement
- workforce capability building
- organisational reform.

The framework, alongside this guide, reflects emerging and available evidence. Over time, this evidence will build and evolve. These resources provide a foundation to inform primary prevention of elder abuse action.

Target audience

The primary audience is professionals and organisations involved in:

- primary prevention
- community development
- health promotion and related sectors.

More broadly, the framework can also help those in a position to influence attitudes, cultures, policies and practices that affect older people in Victoria. This includes (but is not limited to):

- health and community services
- local government
- family violence services
- aged care and seniors' services
- multicultural organisations
- Aboriginal community-controlled organisations (ACCOs)
- peak bodies
- community and not-for-profit organisations.

It also includes people working to promote:

- respect
- intergenerational connection
- inclusion
- gender equality.

To prevent elder abuse, we need collective action and impact across society so that older people can live safely and age well. This means the framework is also useful for partners who may be newer to primary prevention, including (but not limited to) those in:

- education
- housing
- justice
- finance
- disability
- mental health
- primary care.

How to use the framework and companion guide

This companion guide can be referred to for planning, funding, delivering and evaluating elder abuse primary prevention actions in Victoria.

Alongside the framework in the handbook, you can use the companion guide to:

- build a shared understanding of elder abuse prevention
- plan and strengthen elder abuse primary prevention initiatives
- include elder abuse primary prevention in existing programs and strategies
- support monitoring, evaluation and learning over time.

The handbook was designed as a separate downloadable tool so the framework can be easily viewed and used during:

- planning workshops
- partnership meetings
- community conversations.

'The clarity and evidence-based approach of the framework offers helpful guidance for professionals and communities to draw on to ensure that prevention of ageism and sexism are built into the fabric of the society.'

– Dr Chukwudozie (Dozie) Ezigbalike, Senior Victorians Advisory Committee community member

Language statement

The following are key terms used in this framework. Other useful terms and definitions are in **Appendix 3: Glossary**.

Aboriginal Elder

A respected Aboriginal person recognised by their community as a custodian of cultural knowledge, traditions and lore. They have permission to share this knowledge.

Eldership is primarily self-identified and affirmed through:

- community respect
- cultural connection
- long-standing contribution.⁷

Elder abuse

Elder abuse has various definitions depending on the jurisdiction.

In the framework and this companion guide, elder abuse refers to any act in a relationship with an implication of trust that results in harm to an older person.⁸ This includes fear of safety for themselves or another person.

It can be intentional or unintentional. It includes:

- single and repeated acts
- patterns of behaviours
- failure to act.

Elder

The term 'Elder' is a respected title earned by community leaders in First Peoples communities and is not necessarily an older person. As such, the term 'elder abuse' may not always resonate with First Peoples.⁹

In the framework and this companion guide, 'elder abuse' relates to older people.

Elder abuse occurs when there is a breach of trust and a power imbalance. It can take many forms,¹⁰ such as:

- physical abuse
- social abuse
- financial abuse
- sexual abuse
- psychological or emotional abuse
- neglect
- coercive control
- cultural and spiritual abuse.

'Neglect is also abuse and is just as harmful. We judge the health of a society by the treatment of its most vulnerable. How do we measure up?'

– Linette Harriott, Senior Victorian Advisory Committee community member

Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic) recognises elder abuse as a form of family violence occurring in family and family-like relationships.¹¹

Elder abuse can include:

- violence
- threats
- stalking
- domination
- threats around visa immigration status or deportation.

Elder abuse can range from serious assault and homicide to controlling social contact or accessing money without consent.

No matter the form it takes, all abuse can cause profound harm and trauma. This includes behaviours that may appear subtle.

7 Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC) 'Glossary of terms', *Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural capability toolkit* [no longer online]

8 Department of Health and Human Services (2018). **With respect to age – 2009**. <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/with-respect-age-2009>

9 Australian Government Attorney-General's Department (2026). *National plan to end the abuse and mistreatment of older people 2026–2036*

10 Department of Health and Human Services (2018). **With respect to age – 2009**. <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/with-respect-age-2009>

11 **Legislation Victoria's Family Violence Protection Act 2008 web page**. <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/family-violence-protection-act-2008>

To learn more about:

- elder abuse, see the Australian Institute of Family Studies' (AIFS) National elder abuse prevalence study. This study is the most extensive research into elder abuse in Australia to date. The study is on **AIFS' National elder abuse prevalence study: final report web page**.¹²
- what is not considered elder abuse in Victoria, see With Respect to Age.¹³
- elder abuse in First Peoples communities, and the harm caused by government policies, see:
 - **The unique experiences of First Peoples**
 - **Appendix 2: Resources**
 - **Appendix 4: Elder abuse and First Peoples.**

Older person

The lived experience and perception of ageing and older people is different for everyone. It is influenced by a wide range of factors. An older person is typically defined as over a specific age (particularly to access services).

In this framework, who is considered an 'older person' is more flexible. It can include alternative preferred terms (such as 'senior').

Reflections from the Dhelk Dja Koori Caucus

For older First Peoples, the experience of ageing (including ageism) is influenced by culture and a shorter life expectancy compared to non-Indigenous Australians.

First Peoples older people are largely considered to be from 50 years, due to:

- health outcomes influenced by colonisation
- continued barriers to accessing suitable services and supports.

Women

In this framework, 'women' refers to anyone who identifies as a woman, including:

- cisgender women
- transgender and gender diverse people
- sistergirls.

Intersectionality

The ways that different aspects of a person's identity can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation.¹⁴

Examples include:

- age
- disability
- gender identity
- sexual orientation
- ethnicity
- language
- religion
- class and socioeconomic status
- neurodivergence.

For more examples see the **Victorian Government's Understanding intersectionality web page**.¹⁵

Drivers

The underlying social and cultural conditions that create an environment where elder abuse can occur.¹⁶

Drivers form common:

- norms
- attitudes
- behaviours
- beliefs
- practices
- structures in our society.

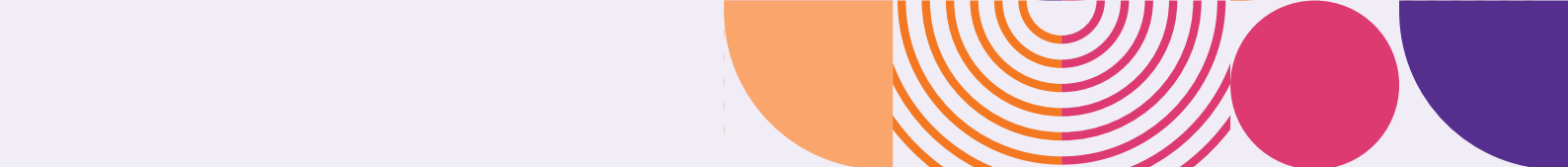
¹² <https://aifs.gov.au/research/research-reports/national-elder-abuse-prevalence-study-final-report>

¹³ Department of Health and Human Services (2018). *With respect to age* – 2009. <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/with-respect-age-2009>

¹⁴ **Victorian Government's Understanding intersectionality web page.** <https://www.vic.gov.au/understanding-intersectionality>

¹⁵ <https://www.vic.gov.au/understanding-intersectionality>

¹⁶ Adapted from AIHW (2025). *Factors associated with FDSV*. Accessed at: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/understanding-fdsv/factors-associated-with-fdsv>



Drivers are determined through robust research into specific underlying factors that consistently predict higher levels of violence at a population level, beyond individual behaviours and risk factors.¹⁷ These factors are deeply embedded. They normalise, enable and sustain violence in communities and systems, shaping expectations about:

- ageing
- family roles
- gender
- power
- autonomy
- the value of older people in society.

They influence:

- organisational cultures
- community norms
- media narratives
- institutional policies
- systems.¹⁸

For more on terms and concepts in the framework, including the nature, dynamics and effects of elder abuse, see **Appendix 2: Resources**.

¹⁷ Our Watch's **The link between gender inequality and violence web page**. <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/link-between-gender-inequality-and-violence>

¹⁸ Southern Melbourne Elder Abuse Prevention Network (2024). *A guide for addressing ageism in the workplace*

Setting the scene

'We all deserve to be part of a society that respects, values and celebrates everyone at every age and stage of life.'

– Southern Melbourne Elder Abuse Prevention Network¹⁹

The 2021 National Elder Abuse Prevalence Study (NEAPS) found that around one in 6 older people in Australia experienced at least one form of elder abuse in the year before the survey.²⁰

The true prevalence is likely to be higher due to:

- underreporting
- some groups of older people being excluded from the study.

The 2015 Royal Commission into Family Violence (Royal Commission) recognised elder abuse as a unique form of family violence.²¹ The Royal Commission outlined a clear roadmap for reforming Victoria's family violence system and in response, the Victorian Government released:

- *Ending family violence: Victoria's 10-year plan for change*²²
- *Free from violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women*.²³

*Until every Victorian is safe: Third rolling action plan to end family and sexual violence 2025–2027*²⁴ was launched on 2 September 2025.

It guides the current phase of Victoria's family and sexual violence reform. It includes specific actions to strengthen prevention and response to elder abuse.

The reform focuses on:

- building a system that is accessible and sustainable for all Victorians
- preventing violence before it starts.

The framework fulfils the Victorian Government's commitment to develop a dedicated primary prevention framework for elder abuse.²⁵

The framework will help better coordinate primary prevention programs that:

- foster positive attitudes to ageing
- address systemic forms of discrimination and marginalisation of older Victorians.²⁶

The framework is in line with *Ageing well in Victoria action plan 2026–2030: strengthening wellbeing for older people*²⁷ and *The National Plan to End the Abuse and Mistreatment of Older People 2026–2036*.²⁸

It is also in line with national and state strategies and reforms around:

- family violence
- ageing
- gender equality
- disability
- carers
- public health and wellbeing.

19 Southern Melbourne Elder Abuse Prevention Network (2024). *A guide for addressing ageism in the workplace*

20 AIFS (2021). *National elder abuse prevalence study: final report*

21 State of Victoria (2016). *Royal Commission into Family Violence: Report and recommendations*

22 Department of Premier and Cabinet (2016). *Ending family violence: Victoria's plan for change*

23 Department of Premier and Cabinet (2017). *Free from violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women*

24 Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) (2025b). *Until every Victorian is safe: Third rolling action plan to end family and sexual violence 2025 to 2027*

25 DFFH (2025b). *Until every Victorian is safe: Third rolling action plan to end family and sexual violence 2025 to 2027*

26 DFFH (2021). *Free from violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women – Second action plan 2022–2025*

27 DFFH (2026). *Ageing well in Victoria action plan 2026–2030: strengthening wellbeing for older people*

28 Australian Government Attorney-General's Department (2026). *National plan to end the abuse and mistreatment of older people 2026–2036*



Together, these strategies make a shared commitment to helping older people in Victorian to:

- age well
- stay connected to community
- get support that is inclusive, culturally safe and upholds human rights.

The framework supports Victorian primary prevention efforts to be more consistent and follow what the emerging evidence suggests is driving elder abuse.

When applying the framework, professionals should:

- focus on ageism and gender inequality, as well as other intersecting forms of discrimination
- be open to new findings and new evidence
- be responsive to older people's diverse experiences.

Emerging international and local literature will continue to inform how we act to prevent elder abuse into the future.

For more information on elder abuse prevalence and demographics of older people in Victorian, see **Appendix 1: Key evidence and literature**.

The unique experiences of First Peoples²⁹

Emerging data shows elder abuse is more prevalent in First Peoples communities, with greater rates of psychological abuse and neglect. It can arise from a distinct combination of:

- social, cultural, historical and economic pressures
- ongoing intergenerational trauma
- discrimination
- disadvantage.

Disadvantage may include poor economic, food and housing security. It may also involve reduced life expectancy. All this can lead to an increased risk of elder abuse.

First Peoples cultures have long practiced collective and reciprocal sharing of resources and caring responsibilities. Kinship systems can involve grandparents, aunties and uncles. This can ease pressure in families when raising children. If there is a disconnection from culture, this interchange can become one-sided or inconsistent, increasing risk of elder abuse.

Much of the stress faced by First Peoples families can be complex and shaped by political, social and historical experiences:

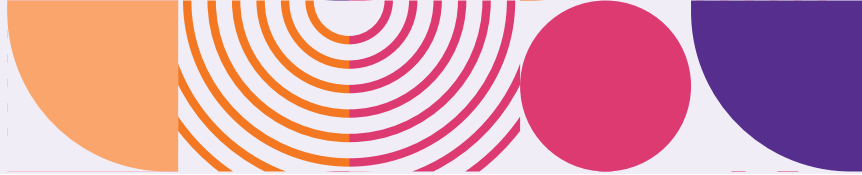
- many older First Peoples are survivors of the Stolen Generations. Government agencies removed children from their parents and families. Many were separated from their identity, culture and community. Many were also abused in state care
- many older First Peoples were born during or soon after the Aboriginal mission system in Victoria, forced to live in poor conditions and kept in poverty. This preventing gaining skills, getting work, speaking their languages and practicing culture
- older First Peoples have lived through years of unequal civic rights. This includes the right to citizenship, vote and be counted in the national census.

The harms caused by these policies are extensively documented. They have ongoing consequences for older people and their families. The Dhelk Dja Koori Caucus reflected there is an expectation that older people are treated with respect due to having lived through these experiences.

When families face multiple stressors or live with intergenerational trauma, sharing practices and cultural responsibilities can place immense pressure on older relatives. Without trusted support systems, older people may become vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

²⁹ Australian Government Attorney-General's Department (2026). *National plan to end the abuse and mistreatment of older people 2026–2036*;

AIFS (2026b). *Understanding abuse and mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older people*. Accessed at: <https://aifs.gov.au/all-research/research-snapshots/understanding-abuse-and-mistreatment-aboriginal-and-torres-strait>



For older First Peoples, experiences of elder abuse uniquely reflect the cultural context of their communities and the influence of institutions on their lives, for example:

- cultural and spiritual abuse can include services not supporting cultural practices or kinship connections.
- younger people may also exclude older First Peoples from accessing community gatherings.
- younger people may prematurely take over leadership responsibilities from older First Peoples like Welcome to Country or Knowledge Holder ceremonies.

‘Humbugging’ can also be more common among First Peoples, which refers to making persistent and unreasonable demands with no intention to repay or reciprocate them. The demands could be for:

- money
- food
- support
- housing
- childcare.

This can be challenging as older people may have cultural duties to care for family members and share their resources with family and community.

While financial abuse occurs among the general population, it can be amplified in First Peoples communities due to sharing culture. Pressure to share payments can be acutely felt when a First Peoples older person receives a payment for:

- Stolen Generation reparations
- Native Title arrangements
- delivering ceremonies.

In some cases, medication abuse may also occur. Family members may take prescribed medications for their own personal use to punish and control the older person.

Understanding prevention

Prevention occurs in a continuum of connected and related actions, divided into 3 forms of prevention:

- primary prevention – prevention
- secondary prevention – early intervention
- tertiary prevention – response and recovery.

Together they form the 'prevention continuum'.

The framework focuses specifically on taking primary prevention action to address elder abuse. This differs from the other forms of prevention that are outside the framework's scope.

By strengthening primary prevention, Victoria can:

- reduce elder abuse
- help people age well
- reduce demand on crisis responses across the service system.

Figure 1 illustrates this continuum using the example of people falling into a river.

Figure 1: The prevention continuum



Primary prevention

In the river example, primary prevention happens **upstream**. These are the actions preventing people from falling into the river in the first place. The group choose to enjoy the river by picnicking nearby.

Secondary prevention

Secondary prevention occurs mid-stream, focusing on:

- people at greater risk of experiencing harm and showing early warning signs or are at high risk of committing harm
- intervening early – targeting people who:
 - have just fallen in
 - are about to fall in
 - force or encourage someone into the river
 - are not practising adequate supervision.

Tertiary prevention

Tertiary prevention happens **downstream**. It responds **once harm has occurred**.

It focuses on:

- helping people to safety
- offering support, recovery and healing
- trying to stop further harm.

Elder abuse prevention continuum

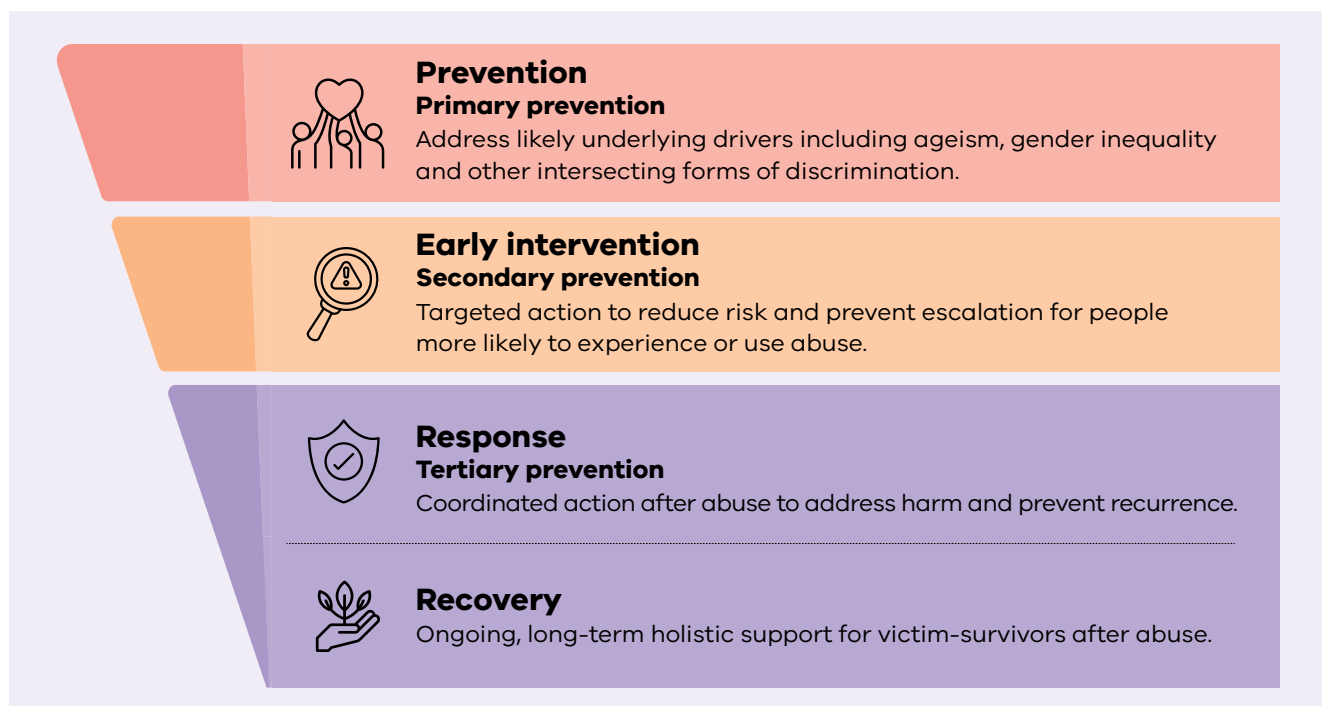
Figure 2 and **Table 1** outline the prevention continuum as **it relates to elder abuse**.

Further explanation is provided in **Table 1**, which also outlines the supporting role of awareness raising. In the figure, the largest section is primary prevention. This highlights the importance of primary prevention as it has the greatest potential for impact.³⁰

Both highlight how primary prevention differs from secondary and tertiary prevention.

Although the framework focuses on primary prevention, all the phases are interconnected and essential to addressing elder abuse.

Figure 2: Preventing elder abuse across the continuum



30 Our Watch's What is 'primary prevention' of violence against women? web page. <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/what-is-primary-prevention>

Table 1: Elder abuse prevention across the continuum

Phase	Timing	Description
Primary prevention	Prevention	- Aims to prevent elder abuse before it occurs in the first place - Focuses on whole of population cultural change, needing long-term, collective action at all levels of society to shift cultures and behaviours - Addresses the likely underlying drivers of elder abuse. Emerging evidence suggests targeting ageism, gender inequality and other intersecting forms of discrimination
Secondary prevention	Early intervention	- Aims to intervene early - Targets people at higher risk of experiencing or using elder abuse and looks at early warning signs. - Addresses risk and reinforcing factors that increase likelihood or severity of elder abuse Factors may include: - excusing elder abuse - physical and mental health conditions - alcohol and drug misuse - stress - previous abuse - social isolation - family and relationship problems.
Tertiary prevention	Response and recovery	- Aims to give support and responses during and after elder abuse - Prevents elder abuse from continuing, escalating or reoccurring – targets victims and users of elder abuse - Holds people who use elder abuse to account - Offers service responses and interventions to support safety - Includes healing and recovery, aiming to reduce traumatic impact of elder abuse
Awareness raising	Across all phases	- Elder abuse awareness raising and education to support activities across the prevention continuum - Acts as an enabler Includes raising awareness of: - what elder abuse is, its impact and prevalence - likely drivers of elder abuse and how to address them (primary prevention) - risk factors and early intervention strategies (secondary prevention) - elder abuse services and referral pathways (tertiary prevention).

Note: Adapted from various sources³¹

31 Eastern Community Legal Centre (2024). *Toolkit for elder abuse prevention networks*; Holstep Health (2025). *Preventing elder abuse across the continuum*; Safe and Equal (2022). *What is primary prevention? Connecting across the continuum from prevention to response*; Our Watch (2021). *Change the story*; **Our Watch's What is 'primary prevention' of violence against women? web page.** <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/what-is-primary-prevention>; **Respect Victoria's How primary prevention, early intervention, crisis response and recovery work together to end violence web page.** <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/prevention/how-do-we-prevent-violence/intervention-response-recovery>; Respect Victoria (2023c). *Summarising the evidence: exploring what we know about drivers of violence against women, family violence and other forms of gendered violence*; AIFS (2021). *National elder abuse prevalence study: final report*

A note on awareness raising

Raising awareness on the nature, pervasiveness and effect of elder abuse is an important enabling action. It can be a helpful first step in building momentum to act.

However, awareness raising on its own has its limits. It will not produce the social, cultural and behavioural change needed to prevent elder abuse.

To be primary prevention, an activity must address the likely drivers of elder abuse.³²

Comparing actions along the continuum

Actions differ at each phase of the prevention continuum. Example actions for each phase are listed in **Table 2**.

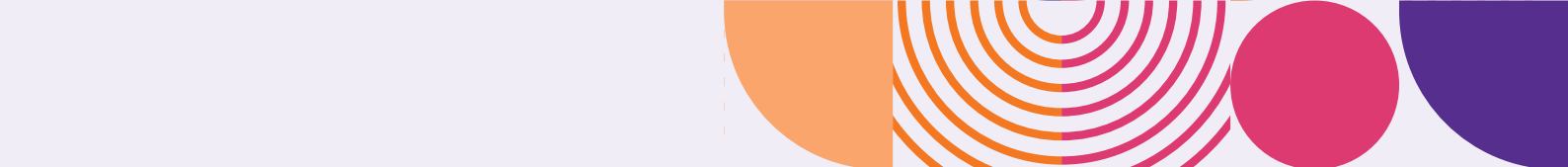
Table 2: Examples of actions to prevent and respond to elder abuse

Phase	Example actions
Prevention (primary prevention)	• Disrupt ageism and ageist stereotypes • Education on respectful relationships • Address age discrimination in the workplace • Facilitate positive intergenerational connection • Promote gender equality across all ages • Create inclusive and accessible communities and practices • Represent positive and diverse ageing in communication • Help men reject harmful expressions of masculinity
Early intervention (secondary prevention)	• Build workforce capability to identify risk • Give early advice and information about rights and options • Strengthen social connection for older people at risk of isolation • Encourage future planning (such as powers of attorney and wills) • Recognise and reduce carer stress and burnout • Address drug, alcohol and gambling harms • Provide early mental health and wellbeing support • Provide support for secure housing and financial vulnerabilities
Response and recovery (tertiary prevention)	• Respond to immediate threats through emergency services • Complete comprehensive risk assessment and safety planning • Provide case management through specialist elder abuse services • Advocate for legal and financial remedies • Arrange crisis accommodation • Run men's behaviour change programs • Provide trauma-informed counselling and support groups • Support access to safe and stable housing

Note: Adapted from Holstep Health's *Preventing elder abuse across the continuum*.³³

32 Our Watch, 'The limitations of awareness-raising', *Change the story*, 2021, p57

33 Holstep Health (2025). *Preventing elder abuse across the continuum*



The prevention continuum helps professionals design activities that are clearly linked to what you are aiming to achieve. For example, such as:

- address underlying drivers
- reduce risk factors
- respond to elder abuse
- a combination of goals.

Some activities may sit across more than one phase of the continuum. For example, intergenerational projects can simultaneously:

- address ageist norms (primary prevention)
- reduce social isolation (a key risk factor addressed by secondary prevention).³⁴

Primary prevention actions can also be included during early intervention and response. For example, including age-positive language education in response training helps boost primary prevention messages across the continuum.

To learn more on primary prevention and the prevention continuum, see **Appendix 2: Resources**. It also includes links to resources that outline risk factors for elder abuse to help understand secondary prevention.

³⁴ AIFS (2021). *National elder abuse prevalence study: final report*

The drivers of elder abuse

By addressing drivers (see **Language statement**), we can tackle elder abuse at its root and prevent it from occurring in the first place.

To do so, we need long-term, sustained action that:

- shifts harmful underlying social norms
- reduces inequality
- improves environments.

Research into what drives elder abuse is still developing. The current evidence base we have used includes:

- national studies
- Victorian data and literature
- international literature
- insights from family violence prevention.

Insights from prevalence data and literature

The Australian Government Attorney-General's Department commissioned AIFS to undertake the 2021 NEAPS.³⁵ The study found that elder abuse occurs more often intergenerationally by adult children younger than 65 years for most forms of abuse (either sons or daughters in rates). Psychological abuse made up 69.7% of cases. This highlights an underlying dynamic of power and control between generations. It suggests ageism plays a significant role.

In cases of elder abuse, there is not a large overall difference in the gender of:

- victim survivors (13.6% of men compared to 15.9% of women)
- users of elder abuse (55% male compared to 45% female).³⁶

In 2023, Respect Victoria commissioned research into what drives elder abuse and the gendered elements from the NEAPS.³⁷ This research showed there are clear gender trends in the study's analysis of particular types of elder abuse, finding that:

- men commit more than three-quarters of reported **physical** and **sexual** abuse
- men commit more than two-thirds of reported **financial** abuse
- in cases of **intimate partner violence**, older women are more likely to be victims of physical and sexual abuse by a male partner than the opposite (a statistically significant finding)
- all reports of sexual abuse by a spouse were made by older women.

The analysis concluded that:

In relation to intimate partner violence and sexual assault against older women, it is likely that what are described as the gendered drivers of violence [against women] are also relevant to these forms of elder abuse.

– Respect Victoria, Summarising the evidence – Elder abuse: research brief

Gender patterns are also seen in Victorian family violence homicide rates from 2024. Female victims aged over 65 years outnumber male victims nearly 2 to 1.³⁸

The NEAPS study also highlights the importance of **cultural context**.³⁹ Older people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities report abuse related to their language or cultural background. This suggests racism is a likely driver.⁴⁰

³⁵ AIFS (2021). *National elder abuse prevalence study: final report*

³⁶ AIFS (2021). *National elder abuse prevalence study: final report*

³⁷ Respect Victoria (2023b). *Summarising the evidence – Elder abuse: research brief*

³⁸ **Crime Statistics Agency Victoria's Family violence data web page.** <https://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/family-violence-data>

³⁹ AIFS (2021). *National elder abuse prevalence study: final report*

⁴⁰ AIFS (2021). *National elder abuse prevalence study: final report*

Unique experiences of First Peoples

First Peoples still face the ongoing effects of:

- colonisation
- colonial control
- trauma
- grief.

Experiences of First Peoples older people are shaped by unique historical and cultural factors, leading to unique forms of elder abuse. These are linked to:

- racism
- ongoing impacts of colonisation
- disruptions to cultural connection.⁴¹

First Nations peoples and communities vary significantly in cultural identities, practices, language and learnings, there are factors that contribute to shared experiences, which can be linked to discrimination, racism and entrenched social disadvantage shaped by the historical and ongoing impacts of colonisation

– National plan to end the abuse and mistreatment of older people 2026–2036

These insights show that elder abuse is not only a private family matter. Instead, it reflects structural, cultural and systemic conditions that shape attitudes and behaviours in society.

The gendered drivers of violence against women

Lifelong gender inequality shapes experiences of women in older age

– Our Watch, Preventing violence against older women⁴²

There are clear gendered patterns to elder abuse. This means research into the specific gendered drivers of violence against women can inform action taken to prevent elder abuse. This is particularly useful while the evidence base around preventing elder abuse is still developing.

The national prevention framework, *Change the story*,⁴³ identifies 4 gendered drivers that consistently predict violence against women:

- condoning violence against women
- men controlling decision making and limiting women's independence in public and private life
- rigid gender stereotypes and dominant forms of masculinity
- male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control.

41 Australian Government Attorney-General's Department (2026). *National plan to end the abuse and mistreatment of older people 2026–2036*; AIFS (2026b). *Understanding abuse and mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older people*

42 Our Watch (2022). *Preventing violence against older women*

43 Our Watch (2021). *Change the story*

Summarising what is known

Recent data and publications suggest that **ageism** is the most significant contributing social condition to elder abuse. For older women, gender inequality also plays a role in elder abuse. Ageism and **gender inequality** often intersect, increasing older women's risk of facing elder abuse.

More information is in **Appendix 1: Key evidence and literature**.

Other forms of discrimination are likely to contribute to a culture that condones and drives elder abuse. In particular, racism in relation to people who experience elder abuse relating to their culture.⁴⁴ Other forms include but are not limited to:

- ableism
- homophobia
- transphobia
- colonialism
- classism.⁴⁵

These create inequalities and shape the experiences of older people – especially those from marginalised or historically excluded communities.

Drivers of elder abuse

Current literature is limited on what drives elder abuse. Evidence is still emerging.

Ageism is most consistently identified as the greatest contributing condition.

This is followed by gender inequality and other forms of discrimination.

See **Appendix 2: Resources** to learn more about:

- the profiles and statistics of victim survivors of elder abuse and people who use elder abuse, including homicide data
- how to consider other intersecting forms of systemic and structural discrimination when preventing family violence.

This includes links to:

- primary prevention frameworks related to other marginalised communities
- publications providing insight into what drives elder abuse.

More to learn

Evidence about the drivers of elder abuse is growing. However, there are still gaps. We need **robust empirical research**⁴⁶ to better our understanding of the drivers of elder abuse:

- to confirm what the emerging evidence suggests
- by looking into the most consistent underlying population-level factors that predict elder abuse.

Robust evidence will also help us understand:

- what drives different types of elder abuse and users of elder abuse
- the specific ways that ageism appears in society
- how and to what extent ageism links to elder abuse
- how gender inequality influences elder abuse and how it differs from other forms of family violence
- the particular dynamics of abuse by adult children and others compared to intimate partners.

We also need more research on how intersecting forms of systemic and structural discrimination contribute to a culture that condones and drives elder abuse. In particular, for marginalised communities.⁴⁷

44 Respect Victoria (2023a). *Summarising the evidence – Elder abuse: context brief*; AIFS (2026b). *Understanding abuse and mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older people*

45 Eastern Community Legal Centre (2021). *Preventing abuse of older people in Melbourne's East: a primary prevention framework and guide*; AIFS (2026b). *Understanding abuse and mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older people*

46 WHO (2022). *Tackling abuse of older people: five priorities for the United Nations decade of healthy ageing (2021–2030)*; WHO (2021). *Global report on ageism*;

Pillemer, Karl et al (2021). 'Investigating the connection between ageism and elder mistreatment', *Nature Aging* 1(2), 159–164

47 Respect Victoria (2023c). *Summarising the evidence: exploring what we know about drivers of violence against women, family violence and other forms of gendered violence*

This includes:

- the ongoing effects of **colonialism** on First Peoples' communities
- **ableism** against people with disabilities⁴⁸
- **cisnormativity** and **heteronormativity** affecting LGBTIQA+ communities
- **classism**⁴⁹ or discrimination based on social and economic status
- a culture that values someone based on **how productive and capable** a person is (including a perceived capacity to contribute economically by earning a wage)⁵⁰
- **geographic marginalisation** due to where a person lives, often in regional or remote areas.

As the evidence base grows, it will help to:

- better understand the most effective ways to prevent elder abuse
- develop more targeted, culturally informed and community-led actions.

'As we learn more about the drivers of elder abuse, it becomes even clearer that prevention is something we must build together. When communities, services and families work side by side, we create a Victoria where older people are respected, connected and safe. By strengthening relationships across generations and championing equality, we can stop elder abuse before it begins.'

– Van Pho, Senior Victorian Advisory Committee community member

Ageism

Ageism involves:

- stereotypes (how we think)
- prejudice (how we feel)
- discrimination (how we act) against others or ourselves based on age.⁵¹

Ageism is easily overlooked or seen as harmless. But it contributes to older people being seen as less than equal in our society.

Ageist beliefs and stereotypes can lead to harmful behaviours against older people, such as:

- taking control over decisions
- ignoring wishes or preferences
- degrading treatment and treating an older person as less deserving of dignity, autonomy and respect.

Ageism is reflected in:

- language
- humour
- media portrayals
- assumptions about older people's capabilities
- access to resources, including online
- everyday practices that reduce independence or decision-making power.

Ageism can include well-meaning acts that are unintentionally patronising. For example, using 'elderspeak' by assuming older people are vulnerable, incompetent or dependent.

48 DFFH (2022c). 'Ableism', *Inclusive Victoria: state disability plan (2022–2026)*

49 Walsh et al (2011). 'Elder abuse and oppression: voices of marginalized elders', *Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect* 23(1), 17–42; NARI and Respect Victoria (2021). *Primary prevention of family violence among older people living in Victoria*

50 Eastern Community Legal Centre (2019). *Older people: Equity respect and ageing – Phase 1 findings*. Accessed at: <https://opera.eclc.org.au/resources>

51 **WHO's Ageism web page**. <https://www.who.int/health-topics/ageism>

Ageism can also be hostile, perpetrating negativity, fear and stigma towards older people. Older people can experience ageism:⁵²

- in institutions
- internally (directed at themselves)
- interpersonally (from other older people or younger groups).

Older people can also face ageism in society, creating systemic and structural barriers from:

- policies
- infrastructure
- technologies
- programs that ignore older people's needs.

Skills gained through life and work experience are not always valued in the same way as formal qualifications

– Reflections on ageism from victim-survivors of elder abuse, Victim Survivors' Advisory Council

The Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) found that ageism is the most accepted form of prejudice in Australia. Most older people (63%) have experienced ageism in the last 5 years.⁵³ Nearly one in 4 older working Australians have experienced age discrimination in employment since turning 50.⁵⁴

Ageism has far-reaching consequences. It contributes to poorer physical and mental health and reduces life expectancy by 7.5 years.⁵⁵ The United States of America spends \$63 billion on health care every year due to ageism.⁵⁶

Children as young as 4 years old become aware of their culture's age stereotypes. From that age onwards they internalize and use these stereotypes to guide their feelings and behaviour towards people of different ages. They also draw on culture's age stereotypes to perceive and understand themselves, which can result in self-directed ageism at any age.

– World Health Organization (WHO).⁵⁷

The experience of ageism is also gendered, as the impacts of ageism and a lifetime of gender inequality intersect to create unique inequalities for older women.⁵⁸ Older women experience ageism more than men. For older women, addressing both ageism and gender inequality are important to prevent elder abuse.⁵⁹

52 **WHO's Ageism web page.** <https://www.who.int/health-topics/ageism>

53 AHRC (2021). *What's age got to do with it?*

54 Polidoras, A., Banks, C., Toner, K., & Diseris, I. (2023). State of the Older Nation 2023. Councils on the Ageing Federation.

55 Levy, Becca R et al (2002). 'Longevity increased by positive self-perceptions of aging', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83(2), 261–270

56 Levy, Becca R et al (2020). 'Ageism amplifies cost and prevalence of health conditions', *The Gerontologist*, 60(1), 174–181

57 **WHO's Ageing: Ageism web page**, under 'Can we combat ageism?'. <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/ageing-ageism>

58 Barrett, C; Lee, Y; Gillbard, A; Smith, R; Nicholl, D; Rowe, G; Westgate, R; Doughan, H; Darling, G and Young, R. (2024). The [un] Silencing of Older Women. A Life Stages Approach for the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and their Children.

59 Respect Victoria (2023a). *Summarising the evidence – Elder abuse: context brief*

Gender inequality

Gender inequality sees men and women not being valued equally. Power, resources and opportunities are not shared equally between them.⁶⁰ Sexism is at its core, which includes:

- prejudice
- negative stereotypes
- discrimination.⁶¹

Gender inequalities exist across all levels of society, including:

- private life
- workplaces
- community life
- broader systems.⁶²

Women in Victoria often face gender inequality in their lives. This can continue into older age.⁶³ For example, lifetime gender differences in income and superannuation. This can lead to financial insecurity and housing challenges later in life.

Because of gender inequality, older women are more likely to experience certain forms of violence. In some cases, this violence may start with intimate partner violence and escalate in later life to involve many family members.

Programs and policies aimed at addressing gender inequality should use a **gender transformative approach**. This approach looks at the relationship between cisnormativity, heteronormativity and gender inequality.⁶⁴

It aims to reshape power relationships, norms and structures that drive gender-based violence to actively shift the conditions that feed inequality.⁶⁵

To learn more about ageism, gender inequality and a gender lens for elder abuse, see **Appendix 2: Resources**.

Experiences of older people

We asked our Victorian Seniors Advisory Committee community members what ageism and gender inequality looks and feels like to older people in Victoria. This is what they said.

'Ageism at home results in feelings of being overlooked and marginalisation with opinions disregarded. Ageism at work involves persistent discrimination impacting promotions, leave approvals and forced retirement.'

– **Mariamama John, Senior Victorian Advisory Committee community member**

'...stereotyping of older people as people who are unable to cope with the ordinary features of modern life. To me, it's ageism and incredibly patronising... I'm 84, it doesn't mean that I am brain dead.'

– **Jan Laidlaw, Senior Victorian Advisory Committee community member**

'Addressing older people in a deliberate and sometimes exaggerated slow manner as if the older person does not have the intellectual capacity to understand what is being discussed.

Overlooking older people for opportunities that they may be capable of, such as community leadership, simply because of age.

Even though older people may be excluded from opportunities, older women tend to experience that exclusion more than their male counterparts. The lifelong experience of women having their contributions to society undervalued continues and may even increase as they age.'

– **Dr Chukwudozie (Dozie) Ezigbalike, Senior Victorian Advisory Committee community member**

60 Australian Government Department of Social Services (2022). *National plan to end gender based violence*

61 **APA Dictionary of Psychology's Sexism web page**. <https://dictionary.apa.org/sexism>

62 **Our Watch's The link between gender inequality and violence against women web page**. <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/link-between-gender-inequality-and-violence>

63 DFFH (2026). *Ageing well in Victoria action plan 2026-30: strengthening wellbeing for older people*

64 Rainbow Health Australia (2020). *Pride in prevention evidence guide*

65 Safe and Equal (2026). *Transforming gender: Insights for primary prevention practice*

An intersectional approach

People's experiences differ based on their many different identities, circumstances and experiences of privilege or marginalisation.

Older people may experience overlapping discrimination beyond ageism and gender inequality.

These factors (or identities) can expose older people to more forms of inequality, which may also act as underlying drivers. Examples of these factors include:

- racism
- colonialism
- ableism
- cisnormativity
- heteronormativity.

Experiences of older people with disability

Older people with disability can face added disadvantage due to society's ableism:

- attitudes
- structures
- practices.

Resulting in devaluing or assuming an older person's abilities and needs. This result in:

- more exclusion from the community
- limited access to services
- increased risk of violence and abuse.⁶⁶

Understanding how different forms of inequality intersect is sometimes called '**intersectionality**' or taking an '**intersectional approach**'.⁶⁷ For more information, see **Intersectionality**.

It's systems and structures that make people more or less vulnerable to violence or disadvantage – not their identities, culture or individual circumstance.

– **Safe and Equal**⁶⁸

Professionals should take an intersectional approach when designing actions to prevent elder abuse, by recognising and addressing the overlapping forms of oppression and discrimination that worsen experiences for marginalised communities. This requires acting meaningfully, in solidarity with communities leading this work.

Older people in regional and rural areas may face additional barriers due to limited infrastructure and service availability. There is also sometimes an assumption that older people are able to drive, which can impact community participation in regional areas.

– **Reflections on additional barriers from victim-survivors of elder abuse, Victim Survivors' Advisory Council**

66 **Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's Family, domestic and sexual violence web page.** <https://www.aihw.gov.au/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/population-groups/people-with-disability>
World Health Organization's Disability fact sheet web page. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/disability-and-health>
67 **Our Watch's Preventing violence against different groups web page.** <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/preventing-violence>
68 **Safe and Equal's What is primary prevention? web page.** <https://safeandequal.org.au/working-in-family-violence/prevention/what-is-primary-prevention>

Figure 3: Different factors that can lead to overlapping or worse discrimination



Using an intersectional approach in planning will help you develop more inclusive, responsive and fair activities. Involve people who face many forms of discrimination from the start of your work. It will help you to think more deeply about:

- who you want and need to reach
- the particular experiences and needs of people and communities.

Taking an intersectional approach doesn't mean that your activities include absolutely everyone, can overcome every obstacle and accommodate every possible situation. It means you are aware of the gaps... that your own work practices and policies are not creating obstacles and that you are working towards fair and equitable opportunities for everyone.

– *Intersectionality matters: A guide to engaging immigrant and refugee communities to prevent violence against women*⁶⁹

69 Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (2017). *Intersectionality matters: A guide to engaging immigrant and refugee communities in Australia*, p24

An intersectional approach that addresses other forms of discrimination also strengthens the effectiveness, relevant and fairness of primary prevention actions.

To learn more about intersectionality and designing intersectional actions, see **Appendix 2: Resources**. It includes links to primary prevention family violence frameworks for other population groups.

Recent AIFS research snapshot findings

These key insights are from AIFS' May 2026 research snapshots into the abuse and mistreatment of older:

- First Peoples
- people in LGBTIQ+ communities.

First Peoples

Holistic approaches can be created by addressing:

- fractured family and kinship systems
- cultural knowledge
- the practice and modelling of reciprocal obligations in First Peoples local context.⁷⁰

LGBTIQ+ communities

For LGBTIQ+ communities, a range of discriminatory social factors likely lead to elder abuse, such as:

- ageism
- bias
- stereotyping of their identity (from within and outside LGBTIQ+ communities)
- cultural and religious beliefs that do not accept LGBTIQ+ communities
- attitudes condoning abuse
- changes in social norms.⁷¹

Key insights on primary prevention

Primary prevention means preventing something from happening in the first place. It focuses on changing the culture that allows elder abuse to happen.

For elder abuse, this involves taking action to address the underlying factors that create the environment for elder abuse to happen in the first place.

Emerging evidence recognises that elder abuse stems from:

- ageism
- gender inequality
- other forms of discrimination and structural disadvantage that marginalised communities face.

Effective primary prevention requires long-term collective action across all levels of society to shift cultures and behaviours.

70 AIFS (2026b). *Understanding abuse and mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older people*

71 AIFS (2026a). *The abuse and mistreatment of LGBTIQ+ older people*

Guiding the way to a new future

Everyone has a role to play

To prevent elder abuse from happening in the first place, we need long-term, coordinated and collective action across the whole of society. This means shifting from seeing elder abuse as an interpersonal or family issue to a cultural issue that we are all responsible for.

We also need to address the underlying societal:

- attitudes
- norms
- practices
- structures
- institutions
- power imbalances that let elder abuse occur.

This section outlines:

- the socio-ecological model for primary prevention action
- 4 key themes and guiding principles that underpin Victoria's approach to the primary prevention of elder abuse.

The socio-ecological model

Underlying drivers exist at every level of society. So, to create real change, primary prevention activities must occur at every level of society, including at the:^{72, 73}

- **individual, family and relationship level:** people's relationships with themselves and others.
- **community and organisational level:** community life, including volunteering, education, services, organisations and businesses.
- **societal level:** the broader social, structural and cultural environment shaped by public institutions, policy, laws, media and community norms.

The socio-ecological model (**Figure 4**) shows the relationship between the broader structures, norms and practices and the different levels of society.

To be most effective, primary prevention actions and messages should reinforce each other.⁷⁴

They should occur in all the places people:

- live
- work
- learn
- connect
- play.⁷⁵

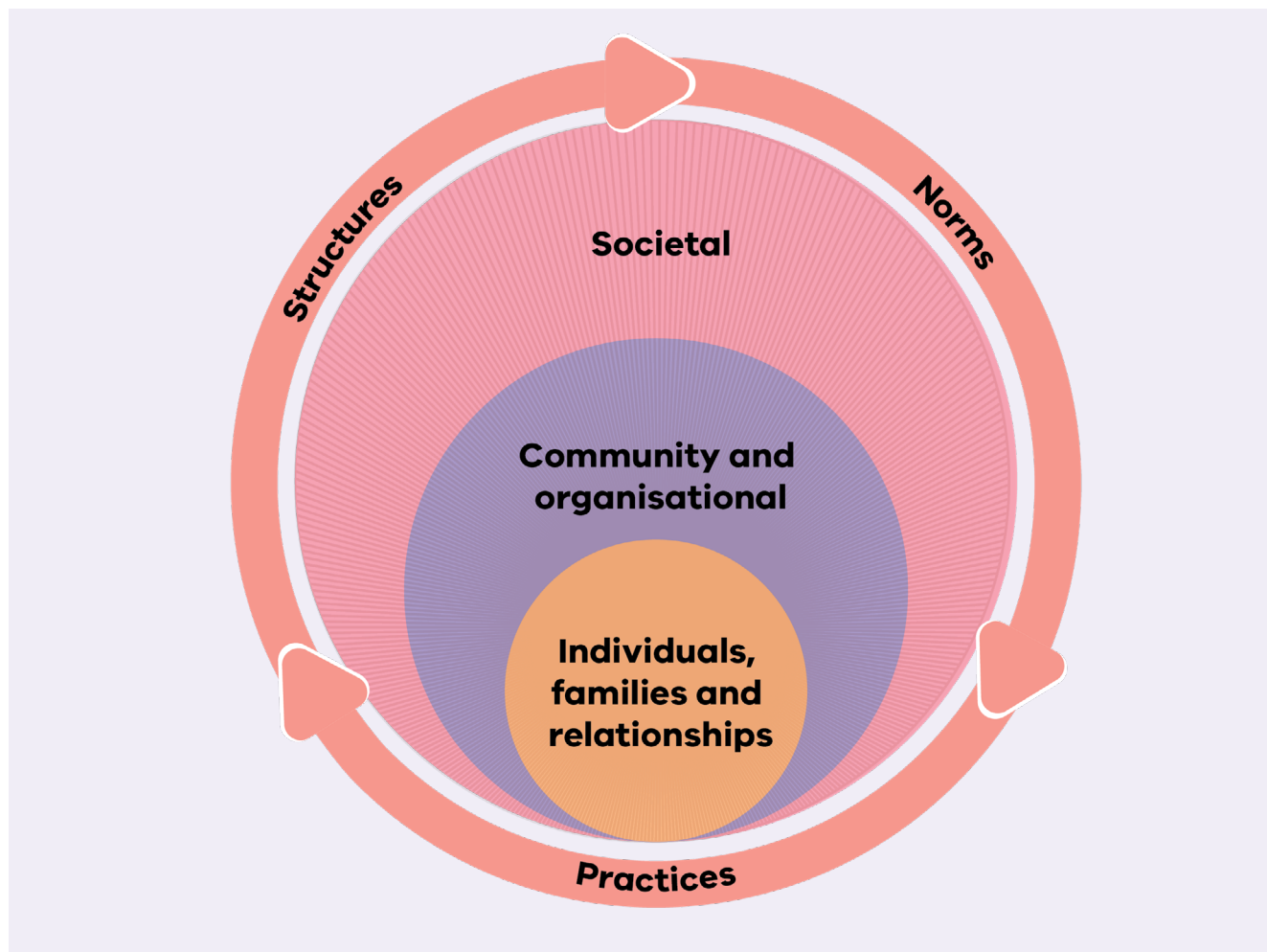
72 Our Watch's What is 'primary prevention' of violence against women? web page. <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/what-is-primary-prevention>

73 Our Watch (2021). *Change the story*

74 Respect Victoria's Respect Ballarat web page. <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/respect-ballarat>

75 WHO (2022). *Tackling abuse of older people: five priorities for the United Nations decade of healthy ageing (2021–2030)*

Figure 4: The socio-ecological model



Note: Adapted from Our Watch (2021)

See **Appendix 2: Resources** to learn more about the socio-ecological model.

Themes for action

Victoria's primary prevention approach to addressing elder abuse is based on 4 overarching themes for action:

respect

intergenerational connection

inclusion

gender equality

There is an emphasis on addressing ageism as elder abuse typically occurs intergenerationally. Three themes focus on addressing ageism. The fourth focuses on addressing gender inequality.

These themes were informed by feedback from sector stakeholders and the lived experience of older people in Victoria.

They are also based on current emerging evidence on:

- the likely drivers of elder abuse
- effective primary prevention strategies to address them.

Links to key data and publications are in **Appendix 1: Key evidence and literature**.

The first 3 themes reflect what is known to be most effective for addressing ageism,⁷⁶ including:

- policy and law changes
- education activities
- intergenerational contact interventions.

The fourth theme reflects Our Watch's 4 essential actions to address the gendered drivers of violence against women:⁷⁷

- challenge the condoning of violence against women
- promote women's independence and decision making in public life and relationships

- build new social norms that foster personal identities not constrained by rigid gender stereotypes
- support men and boys to develop healthy masculinities and positive, supportive male peer relationships.

The themes for action will shape elder abuse primary prevention action across Victoria and can be applied across the socio-ecological model. A vision for a new future based on these actions is summarised in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Themes for actions to guide us to a new future

Themes for action	A future where...
Respect older people by addressing ageist stereotypes and prejudices	Older people are valued, honoured, treated with respect and supported to live life that reflects personal preferences. Common attitudes, beliefs, language and imagery about older people and ageing are positive. Harmful assumptions about older people are dismantled.
Foster positive intergenerational connections with older people	People of all ages engage positively with older people. Younger people build respectful, multigenerational relationships with older people, through: • understanding and commonality • working with families as partners in prevention.
Include older people fairly in all their diversity to address age discrimination	All older people are visible, represented and recognised. Older people's diverse voices and perspectives are heard and valued equally. Older people have fair and accessible access, including on digital platforms.
Promote gender equality and address sexism against older women and gender diverse people	Rigid gender stereotypes are addressed. Women's independence and decision making are promoted. People challenge condoning violence against older women and encourage healthy expressions of masculinity. Transgender and gender diverse older people are supported, validated and celebrated no matter what age of transition.

⁷⁶ WHO (2021). *Global report on ageism*

⁷⁷ Safe and Equal (2023) *Driving change: Taking action against the drivers of family and gender-based violence*

Guiding principles

The following guiding principles underpin this framework. They reflect values and evidence for effective primary prevention practice in Victoria (see **Appendix 1: Key evidence and literature**).

Human rights

Promote and protect human rights, including the values of freedom, respect, equality and dignity, by acting in line with the:

- International Bill of Human Rights⁷⁸
- Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.⁷⁹

Aboriginal self-determination

- Support community-controlled approaches for First Peoples
- Transfer decision making power, authority and resources to First Peoples.^{80, 81}

A note on self-determination for First Peoples

Self-determination is key to better outcomes for First Peoples.

It recognises that First Peoples know and are the experts in what is best for them, their families and their communities.⁸²

Lived experience

Support self-determination of older people by including:

- the voices and insights of older people
- people with lived experience of elder abuse, their families, carers and diverse communities.

Involving those with lived experience is also important in informing and delivering effective prevention messaging and initiatives in ways that are convincing and do no harm.

– Safe and Equal⁸³

Intersectionality

Recognise that marginalised communities can experience overlapping forms of oppression and discrimination, such as:

- racism
- colonialism
- ableism
- cisnormativity and heteronormativity
- classism.

Use an intersectional approach to create inclusive, responsive and fair activities.

78 **AHRC's Human rights explained: The International Bill of Rights web page.** <https://humanrights.gov.au/resource-hub/by-resource-type/education/human-rights-explained/human-rights-explained-international-bill-rights>

79 **Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission's Human rights web page.** <https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/human-rights>

80 First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria and The State of Victoria (2022). '1. About the Agreement', *Self-Determination Fund Agreement*

81 Yoorrook Justice Commission (2022). *Guiding the path to Yoorrook*

82 Victorian Budget 25/26's Self-determination of First Peoples web page. Accessed at: <https://www.budget.vic.gov.au/self-determination-for-first-peoples> [no longer online]

83 **Safe and Equal's What is primary prevention? web page.** <https://safeandequal.org.au/working-in-family-violence/prevention/what-is-primary-prevention/>



Multigenerational change

- Target families and people across their lifespan.
- Recognise that attitudes, behaviours and norms that lead to elder abuse develop early and can continue throughout life.⁸⁴ They are shaped by lifelong experiences of gender, ageing and unequal structures and practices.



Community-led, culturally safe practice

- Ground prevention work in the strengths, leadership and expertise of communities. This includes First Peoples, LGBTIQ+, multicultural and faith communities.



Evidence informed

- Use current and developing research, data and other evidence to determine effective ways to prevent elder abuse.
- Adapt and innovate, updating approaches as evidence grows.
- Add to the evidence base by evaluating approaches and sharing resources and lessons learned.



Socio-ecological approach

Take collective action across different levels of society where people:

- live
- work
- volunteer
- learn
- visit
- receive care
- play
- socialise.

Create positive cultural change by targeting change:

- at an individual, relationship and family levels
- in community and organisational settings
- in broader society.

84 WHO's Ageing: Ageism web page, under 'Can we combat ageism?': <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/ageing-ageism>

Effective primary prevention actions

By understanding the important features of successful actions, we can better plan, resource and carry out primary prevention.

The following are features of effective, evidence-informed primary prevention actions. They have been determined based on:

- current emerging evidence of what works (see Appendix 1: **Key evidence and literature**)
- lessons from Victorian Elder Abuse Prevention Networks
- lessons from other organisations using action-research approaches for innovative primary prevention actions.

You should consider these with the framework's overarching guiding principles when planning action.

To learn more about Victoria's Elder Abuse Prevention Networks, see **Appendix 2: Resources**.

Features of effective primary prevention actions

Address the likely drivers of elder abuse

- In line with the emerging evidence base, target ageism, gender inequality and other intersecting forms of discrimination as likely underlying drivers.
- It is not enough to just raise awareness.

Engage wide and diverse populations

- Cultural change needs action across a broad range of people and settings.
- Always consider intersectionality.

Maintain coordinated action over time

- Cultural change needs long-term collaboration and action across sectors.

Co-design with older people and communities

- Consider co-designing actions to help reflect the lived experience, strengths and priorities of diverse groups.

Support inclusive, culturally safe and accessible actions

Consider the needs of:

- multicultural and faith communities
- First Peoples communities
- LGBTIQ+ people
- people with disabilities
- others facing marginalisation.

Get strong organisational commitment

- Gain active support from the organisation.
- Embed an elder abuse primary prevention focus through:
 - leadership
 - policy
 - workforce capability
 - resources.

Monitor, evaluate and share learning

- Track progress of actions to assess how effective they are over time.
- Use contemporary data and evidence to plan and improve actions.

Real examples of successful primary prevention actions

Table 4 lists real life practical examples of innovative and effective primary prevention of elder abuse actions with positive measurable outcomes. Victoria's elder abuse prevention networks carried out many of these actions. Table 4 also includes links to further information and links to resources and can help to deliver similar actions.

To learn more about Victoria's elder abuse prevention networks, see **Appendix 2: Resources**.

Table 4: Examples of successful primary prevention actions

Action	Description
Elder Abuse Prevention Network's (EAPN) Framing age online training modules and message guide	- How to talk about age, ageing and issues affecting older people in ways that reduce ageist attitudes and behaviours - Based on national messaging research EAPN's Self-paced training on framing age web page⁸⁵
EAPN's Guide for addressing ageism in the workplace	- Practical tips for acting against ageism in the workplace EAPN's Guide for addressing ageism in the workplace web page⁸⁶
Holstep Health's Digital age inclusivity and accessibility audit tool	- Checklist for making websites more friendly for older adults - Includes advice on using images and language that respects age Holstep Health's professional resources and tools for elder abuse prevention web page⁸⁷
Eastern Community Legal Centre's (ECLC) My Generation public art project	- Intergenerational public art project addressing ageism ECLC's My Generation web page⁸⁸
Primary Prevention of Family Violence Among Older People Living in Victoria intergenerational pilot program	- Paired an older person with a younger person weekly for 1-hour conversations for 6 weeks Respect Victoria's Primary prevention of elder abuse in Victoria web page⁸⁹
Celebrate Ageing's programs tackling ageism	- Features innovative and evaluated actions - Many focus on marginalised groups, including older women Celebrate Ageing website⁹⁰
Celebrate Ageing's The Biscuit Tin project	- Raises awareness of older women's contributions - Aims to highlight often-unseen contributions and achievements of older women to promote respect Celebrate Ageing's The Biscuit Tin web page⁹¹
Relationship Australia's Neighbours Every Day campaign	- Aims to empower everyone in Australia to build respectful and supportive relationships with their community - Neighbour Day is held on the last Sunday in March Neighbours Every Day website⁹²

85 <https://eapn.org.au/self-paced-training>

86 <https://eapn.org.au/addressing-ageism-guide>

87 <https://www.holstephealth.org.au/get-involved/elder-abuse-network/professional-resources-and-tools-for-elder-abuse-prevention>

88 <https://eclc.org.au/what-we-do/partnerships-and-projects/mygeneration>

89 <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/primary-prevention-elder-abuse-victoria>

90 <https://www.celebrateageing.com>

91 <https://www.celebrateageing.com/thebiscuittin.html>

92 <https://neighbourseveryday.org>

Applying the framework

The guidance in this section on applying the framework is evidence informed. It also includes insights from people with lived experience and those working in the sector, including Victoria's elder abuse prevention networks.⁹³ It also includes useful tips.

Plan what you want to achieve

Strong planning leads to purposeful and coordinated primary prevention efforts that are informed by evidence.

In the planning stage, identify the likely drivers of elder abuse you want to address and the outcomes you want to achieve. The themes for action in the framework can help give you ideas for taking action.

Developing a theory of change or a simple project logic model can show how your action and intended short-term outcomes fit with broader longer-term outcomes and goals.

A **theory of change** outlines how your project could contribute to the bigger changes you want at a societal level. It shows how earlier outcomes could lead to later ones.⁹⁴ Base your theory on a vision of a future where older people are valued, respected and free from elder abuse.

Link your intended outcomes to existing relevant plans to show how your work relates and contributes to broader strategies. This could include:

- long-term prevention outcomes in Victoria's *Family violence outcomes framework*⁹⁵ or *Public health and wellbeing outcomes framework*⁹⁶

- Victorian government plans focused on older people, such as the *Ageing well in Victoria action plan 2026–2030: strengthening wellbeing for older people*⁹⁷
- Victorian government plans with priorities and actions around elder abuse. For example, *Victorian public health and wellbeing plan 2023–2027* has preventing all forms of violence, including elder abuse, as a priority⁹⁸
- organisations' or services' plans, like community health or health promotion plans
- local government plans, like positive ageing plans and municipal public health and wellbeing plans.⁹⁹

There may be opportunity to work together with others aiming for similar goals and outcomes. They could support planning, implementation or evaluation.

A **project logic model** is a similar tool. You can use it to communicate why and how you are carrying out your project on a page. It links your aims to your resources and activities. It also highlights what you plan to achieve and the outcomes.¹⁰⁰

When planning outcomes, identify:

- short-term or medium-term **outcomes** of your action – what success looks like
- **indicators** – what needs to change to achieve the outcome
- **measures of success** – specific detail about the change and how you will know you are making progress.¹⁰¹

Example outcomes, indicators and measures are in **Table 5**.

93 **DFFH Service Providers' Preventing elder abuse web page.** <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/preventing-elder-abuse>

94 **Respect Victoria's Step 3: Develop a project logic web page.** <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/step-3-develop-project-logic>

95 DFFH (2022b). 'Domain 1: Prevention', *Ending family violence: annual report 2022*. Accessed at: <https://www.vic.gov.au/ending-family-violence-annual-report-2022/family-violence-outcomes-framework-measures/domain-1>

96 **Health.vic's Victorian public health and wellbeing outcomes framework and data dictionary web page.** <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/victorian-public-health-and-wellbeing-outcomes-framework-and-data-dictionary>

97 DFFH (2026). *Ageing well in Victoria action plan 2026–2030: strengthening wellbeing for older people*. Accessed at <https://vic.gov.au/ageing-well-victoria-action-plan>

98 Department of Health (2023). *Victorian public health and wellbeing plan 2023–2027*

99 **Health.vic's Municipal public health and wellbeing planning web page.** <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/population-health-systems/municipal-public-health-and-wellbeing-planning>

100 **Respect Victoria's Step 3: Develop a project logic web page.** <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/step-3-develop-project-logic>

101 Australian Policy Online's Outcomes reform in Victoria web page. <https://apo.org.au/node/250921>

Table 5: Example outcomes, indicators and measures

Outcome (What success looks like)	Indicator (What needs to change)	Measure (The specific amount of change achieved)
People understand what ageist language is	Increased awareness of ageist language	Proportion of people who show greater understanding of ageist language
People reject ageist attitudes about older people	Decrease in ageist attitudes about older people	Proportion of people reconsidering ageist attitudes about older people
People reject sexist attitudes about older women	Decrease in sexist attitudes about older women	Proportion of people reconsidering sexist attitudes about older women

Preparing how you will measure success

Develop a simple measurement tool (with a short set of questions). Use it before and after your action to measure change. Or you can use questioning after the activity, and include reflective questions which ask participants about before the engagement. For example, this stops people from over estimating understanding of ageist language before learning more about it. It is also less resource intensive.

Consider using relevant questions from larger surveys and validated tools (such as ageism scales) as part of your outcome measurement tools. For example:

- WHO Ageism Scale¹⁰²
- Ambivalent Ageism Scale¹⁰³
- Attitudes towards Gender Inequality Scale (AGIS).¹⁰⁴

Also see **Measure your effectiveness and share findings.**

Tips for prevention planning

Tailor initiatives and communications to your target audience and area

- Something that worked for one community may not suit another.
- Taking a place-based approach is important so actions are suitable for a local area.
- Supports cultural relevance and safety, engagement and relatability.
- Identify places that people already go to regularly, have large traffic or large viewership.
- Consider sporting matches, gaming rooms, bingo halls, shopping centres, billboards on busy roads and popular media.
- Identify suitable and accessible communication methods. For example, language services for multicultural communities, transcripts and captions for videos, sign language interpreters.

Assess organisational readiness and resources

- Use this to identify how much support is currently available for your intended action.

¹⁰² Decade of Healthy Ageing's The WHO ageism scale: manual and user guide web page. <https://www.decadeofhealthyageing.org/find-knowledge/resources/publications/the-who-ageism-scale-manual-and-user-guide>

¹⁰³ Cary LA, Chasteen AL, Remedios J (2017). 'The ambivalent ageism scale: developing and validating a scale to measure benevolent and hostile ageism', *The Gerontologist*, 57(2), e27–e36

¹⁰⁴ AIHW's Community attitudes towards gender inequality web page. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/resources/outcomes-framework/community-attitudes-towards-gender-inequality>

Develop a governance structure

- Good governance can give your work guidance and accountability.
- This can include a peer-review role to check with others who have valuable and relevant experience.
- Consider using an established group to provide governance for your activity.

Decide how you will evaluate your action

- Plan your evaluation methodology before you start.
- Consider both qualitative and quantitative methods.
- Test any newly created tools you will use.
- Measure outcomes that report on effectiveness.

Use evidence to inform actions

- Review the literature, prevalence data and available evaluation data to understand what works.
- This will improve the likelihood of your action having a positive impact and ensuring value for money.

Make a sustainability plan so your action continues to create change

- Continue reaching audiences by making resources available online.
- Diversify funding and partnerships.
- Include elements in orientation training.

Build effective partnerships

Effective primary prevention is built on strong, equitable partnerships

– Safe and Equal¹⁰⁵

Effective partnerships have:

- shared decision making
- cultural safety
- mutual accountability
- respect for diverse forms of knowledge, including lived experience.¹⁰⁶

Partnerships can lead to positive collective action. Strong partnerships may mean you can:

- expand the scope of possible actions and apply them to more people or settings to achieve greater outcomes¹⁰⁷
- share costs and available resources
- spread coordinated messages to community more easily or to a wider audience.

Tips for identifying possible partners

Look for people or organisations with relevant experience and expertise

People and organisations may have:

- local knowledge and leadership, particularly First Peoples
- expertise in prevention, ageing, health, family violence or community development
- lived experience, including older people of all genders
- support for participant accessibility and physical, emotional and cultural safety
- good sector and community engagement, including specific sector expertise around your target audience. For example:
 - multicultural
 - Aboriginal community-controlled organisations (ACCOs)
 - disability
 - LGBTIQ+.

¹⁰⁵ Safe and Equal's Primary prevention communities of practice web page. <https://safeandequal.org.au/training-events/networks-communities/primary-prevention>

¹⁰⁶ SNAICC (2025) *Creating structural change through shared decision-making: Guidance for government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations*

¹⁰⁷ Safe and Equal's Our approach to partnerships and collaboration web page. <https://safeandequal.org.au/about/partnerships-collaboration>

Engage people of influence as advocates

Involve people in leadership roles with broad reach into communities.

Look at formal and informal leaders in:

- organisations
- services
- education
- business
- government
- volunteer roles.

Community advocates may include:

- Aboriginal Elders
- LGBTIQ+ leaders
- people with disabilities
- cultural and faith leaders
- public figures
- coaches
- social influencers.

First Peoples-led prevention activities

First Peoples-led prevention activities are important.

They should be flexible and place based.

Local people, organisations and communities should be involved in decisions on design, development and implementation.¹⁰⁸

Local government partners

Local councils offer a range of services and are large local employers.

They have municipal leaders and can influence community attitudes and behaviours.

They are key partners in preventing family violence and violence against women.

They have commitments in public health and wellbeing plans and positive ageing plans that align with elder abuse prevention.

Consider working with local government staff in:

- community development
- engagement
- age-friendly planning.

Embed responsibility and commitment

Include elder abuse primary prevention in internal policies, strategies and commitments.

This helps make prevention an organisational responsibility instead of a standalone effort.

Involving families (including extended kinship) and community groups in prevention efforts supports whole-of-community approaches and strengthens commitment.

Tips on responsibility and commitment

Make public commitments

This can include commitments to take primary prevention action to address elder abuse in:

- strategic plans
- policies
- funding for sustainable actions.

Include elder abuse prevention actions in strategic plans and policies

This can turn primary prevention into an ongoing organisational responsibility.

It can mean more consistent support for your work as a continuing priority with regular resources.

A clear, multi-year commitment can help you:

- get buy-in from internal and external stakeholders
- secure funding and resources
- attempt more actions or achieve greater outcomes over time.

108 AIFS (2026b). *Understanding abuse and mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older people*

Take action

Note: Also see **Features of effective primary prevention actions**.

Tips for taking action

Take advantage of what has already been done

For example:

- scale up initiatives that have demonstrated effectiveness
- broaden the scope of established family violence prevention programs to address elder abuse
- access an event where people are already engaged
- run a broader campaign locally
- partner with organisations that have the same or related commitments
- add a primary prevention element to early intervention and response activities.

Use a strengths-based approach

- Don't focus on a community's or organisation's vulnerabilities and deficits, including for First Peoples communities. Instead, focus on their skills, capabilities and assets to tackle ageism and other intersecting forms of discrimination.
- Keep your prevention approaches positive to help engage people and encourage change. Remember to stay in line with the framework's themes for action.

Build skills and capabilities in community and sector workforces

This increases workforces':

- understanding of effective primary prevention approaches
- ability to take action themselves.

Consider your engagement intensity

Increasing how many people are engaged with and take part in your preventative actions can make them more effective.

When deciding on engagement intensity, consider factors like:

- how many skilled professionals will be involved
- multicomponent design
- frequency and duration of engagement
- booster sessions
- time for reflection and experiential learning.

Use media and public communications to maximise reach

Consider a range of options, including:

- community connectors and champions
- online platforms and social media
- local and ethno-specific radio
- hard copy publications and materials
- campaigns
- videos
- public displays in places people visit regularly, like shopping centres, waiting rooms or bathrooms.

Consider other ways to expand your reach

Look at different places or communication methods that can help you reach people who may be underrepresented or overlooked. For example:

- people who are not comfortable or are rarely online, or who face barriers to online engagement
- people not engaging with their local community
- people who do not use traditional communication channels or media (such as broadcast television or radio).

Aim to engage people not already onboard with your purpose but open to learn

- Focus on finding strategies to reach the 'moveable middle' – the group between those fully committed and those who will not change their views.
- Target groups that data suggests are more likely to have attitudes or beliefs in favour of ageism or gender inequality.¹⁰⁹
- Target education settings where people are already open to learn.

¹⁰⁹ For example, the findings from the National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey (NCAS) and *National elder abuse prevalence study*. Useful data sources are in **Appendix 1: Key evidence and literature**.

Communicate the results

This is key to showing the value and results of your work – to different stakeholders, researchers and the public.

For tips, see **Communicating your findings**.

Make it possible to repeat your work

This encourages collective action and can help contribute to greater long-term impact. Consider publishing an implementation toolkit online. To help others repeat your successes in other settings, include things like:

- guides
- resources
- outcome evaluation tools
- other useful templates.

Advice from sector professionals

This advice is from Victoria's Elder Abuse Prevention Network lead officers. It is based on the lessons they learned from primary prevention of elder abuse work in the sector:

- Consider not using the term 'elder abuse' in promotional materials. It can deter people from taking part
- Avoid using negative representations of older victims of elder abuse in primary prevention communications. Avoid reinforcing stereotypes of older people as frail, lonely or sad
- Frame ageing as a positive experience. Show older people as empowered, active, positive and socially connected. Also be realistic that the experience of ageing is different for everyone
- Think about what attitudes or behaviours (actual or intended) you are trying to target. Also think about how you will know if your project is successful.

'I would like to see a focus on what older people can do.'

– Jan Laidlaw, Senior Victorian Advisory Committee community member

Handling disclosures of elder abuse during primary prevention work

Plan for what to do if you receive a disclosure of elder abuse while you are undertaking primary prevention work.

Even if you do not mention elder abuse during primary prevention actions, there may be times when actions prompt disclosures. For example, when the action includes awareness-raising elements. People may also disclose other forms of family violence, abuse or mistreatment.

Help people understand how they should respond in their particular role through:

- disclosure training that supports cultural safety
- developing a disclosure guideline to follow, including supports available for the target group.

If you expect your action to have a large reach, check if support services have capacity to manage a potential increase in demand. Talk to service providers and their funders during the planning phase to:

- determine what is feasible
- support community safety.

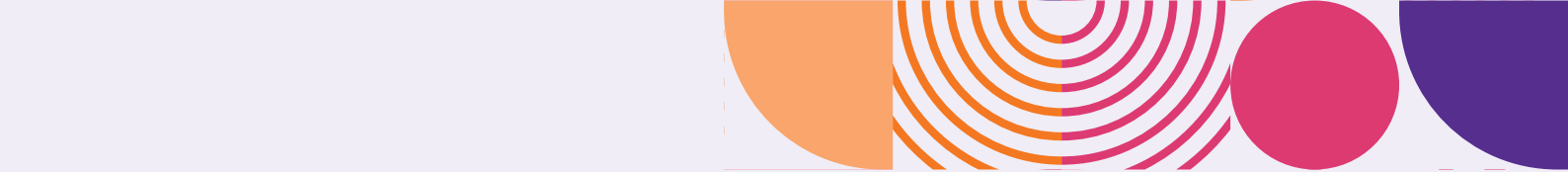
Cultural considerations for First Peoples

First Peoples continue to face the ongoing impacts of:

- colonisation
- colonial control
- trauma
- grief.

They may fear that reporting abuse will lead to trustee and guardianship agencies and the police becoming involved.¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ Australian Government Attorney-General's Department's National plan to end the abuse and mistreatment of older people 2026-2036 web page. <https://www.ag.gov.au/rights-and-protections/publications/national-plan-end-abuse-and-mistreatment-older-people-2026-2036>



Family violence multi-agency risk assessment and management framework

In Victoria, the *Family violence multi-agency risk assessment and management framework* (MARAM framework) has a central role in identifying and responding to all forms of family violence.

The MARAM framework is embedded in Victorian law through the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* (Vic).

It helps organisations identify and manage family violence risk for all victim survivors, including:

- children
- older people
- diverse communities.

The MARAM framework helps professionals understand:

- what family violence is, including elder abuse
- how to respond to family violence
- how to respond to people using family violence, to increase safety and accountability
- roles and responsibilities around risk.

The MARAM Framework has a suite of resources for identifying, assessing and managing family violence risk. There is also specific guidance for working with older victim survivors.

For more on responding to disclosures and useful resources, see:

- **Appendix 2: Resources**
- **Victorian Government's MARAM practice guides and resources web page.**¹¹¹

¹¹¹ <https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources>

Measure your effectiveness and share findings

Monitoring and evaluation are essential to understanding what works, demonstrating outcomes and improving practice.

There is still a lot to learn about the most effective ways to prevent elder abuse from happening in the first place.¹¹² One way to help prevent elder abuse is to expand the evidence base. We can contribute to this by:

- evaluating the effectiveness of existing and new activities
- sharing our findings.

Consider the best way to evaluate your action. There are different methods to choose from, such as:

- informal and formal evaluation using data collection tools to assess your action's outcomes and check if it achieved what you intended
- meaningful reflection exercises
- recording lessons learned to inform future planning.

Also consider when you will use your chosen methods. This can occur as you carry out your action or when after it is complete – or both.

It is best to think about evaluation when you are **planning** your actions. For more information, see **Plan what you want to achieve**.

Measuring outcomes

Measuring outcomes helps you understand how effective your action is. It can also guide investment decisions over time.

It is more than reporting on outputs (such as the number of sessions and participants or publishing a resource). Instead, outcomes look at:

- if the action made a difference (created change)
- if the change continued over time.¹¹³

Remember that large scale preventative cultural and societal change needs a broad range of sustained and coordinated actions over a long period of time.¹¹⁴ You should focus on short-term and medium-term outcomes that your action could achieve on its own and develop these in the planning phase.

Measuring prevention outcomes can:

- track shifts in understanding, attitudes, norms and behaviours
- assess changes in organisational policy, practice and culture
- document community engagement and partnership outcomes
- record diverse voices and lived experience using qualitative methods
- support continuous learning and adaptation.

Communicating your findings

It is important to be able to show the value and results of your work to different stakeholders, such as:

- participants
- funders
- possible investors
- the community
- the sector
- other professionals and stakeholders.

Share what you achieved and learned, matching the communication method to the target audience. This can include:

- lessons learned
- tools
- evaluation findings with outcomes
- case studies.

112 Ham, C and Bolkan, C (2020). 'Applying evidence-based violence prevention strategies to elder abuse in public health', *Innovation in Aging*, 4(Suppl 1), 45–46

113 Victorian Government (2019). *Outcomes reform in Victoria*. Accessed at: <https://apo.org.au/node/250921>

114 **Safe and Equal's Evaluating prevention activity web page**. <https://safeandequal.org.au/working-in-family-violence/prevention/evaluating-prevention-activity>

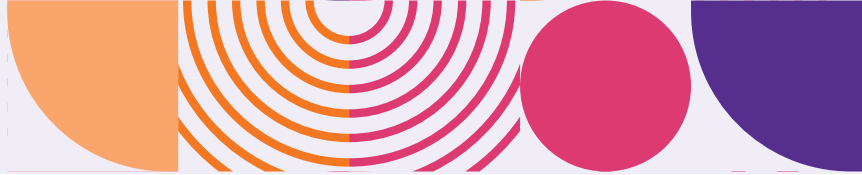


Table 6: Examples of where and how to present evaluation findings

Where	How
• Community events • Sector forums • Communities of practice • Publications • Digital storytelling • Peer exchange	• Formal reporting • Infographics • Community reports • Slide packs • Newsletters • Website content • Journal articles • A combination of methods

Tips for measuring and evaluating actions

You can measure outcomes using a range of methods

For example:

- surveys
- interviews
- group discussions.

Use these methods at different points of your action

- For example, you could survey participants before and/or immediately after the action. This can help you identify any change in thoughts, feelings or actions.
- If you have the time and resources, you could follow up weeks, months or even years after to see if the changes remain or even improve over time.

Check existing outcomes frameworks or longitudinal surveys that may relate to your action

- You may be able to align your work with them, which can help in aggregating data and making comparisons.

Get consent from possible participants first

- Tell them how you will use the data.
- Speak with the relevant area in your organisation, researcher or lawyer to determine what is appropriate.
- Confirm what is needed if your action includes children.

If you are undertaking research, check whether you need ethics approval

- There is a strong need for more formal research as there is still much to learn.
- Speak with the relevant area in your organisation to confirm the process you will need to follow.

Useful evaluation resources

There are useful resources on evaluation, including developing and measuring outcomes. For example:

- Respect Victoria's Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) toolkit has both guidance and tools to help professionals working in primary prevention of family violence monitor and evaluate projects. See **Respect Victoria's Monitoring, evaluation and learning toolkit web page**.¹¹⁵
- Advice on completing evaluation work in line with principles of ethical practice is on **Respect Victoria's Key concepts for practice web page**.¹¹⁶
- AIFS has a range of evaluation practice guides. See **AIFS' website's Practice guides web page (filtered by 'Evaluation')**.¹¹⁷

See **Appendix 2: Resources** to learn more about:

- theories of change
- project logic models
- measuring outcomes
- monitoring progress of a primary prevention action.

Case study: Can a single workshop change someone's mind?

The Australian Human Rights Commission sought to find out if a single educational session could change people's perspectives on older people.

Over 300 aged care and community workers took part in a one-off 2.5-hour interactive workshop on age awareness. The workshop was made available both in-person and online using Zoom.

The workshop covered topics like:

- common assumptions about ageism and older adults
- the language of ageism
- what we can do to reduce ageism.

The Commission found that the workshop was effective in reducing ageist attitudes and expectations about ageing. These positive changes were still present around 3 months after the workshop.

To measure the session's effectiveness, they conducted online surveys:

- before the workshop
- immediately after the session
- around 2 to 3 months after the session.

The also held post-workshop focus group discussions.

The short workshop had a positive effect on the majority of people:

- 82% rethought their attitudes towards ageing
- 90% rethought the way they communicate with older people
- 87% had conversations with people they know about ageism
- 86% thought about what they can do in their workplace to change ageist attitudes.

Learn more about the Changing Perspectives project on **AHRC's Changing perspectives: testing an ageism intervention web page**.¹¹⁸

No more assumptions about someone's ability to do something, no matter what age – including my own.

– Workshop participant¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/monitoring-evaluation-and-learning-toolkit>

¹¹⁶ <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/key-concepts-practice>

¹¹⁷ https://aifs.gov.au/resources/practice-guides?field_topics_target_id%5B481%5D=481

¹¹⁸ <https://humanrights.gov.au/resource-hub/by-resource-type/publications/older-peoples-rights/older-peoples-rights-policy-reports/changingperspectives>

¹¹⁹ AHRC (2023). *Changing perspectives: testing an ageism intervention*

Conclusion

Preventing elder abuse is essential to creating a Victoria where people of all ages are safe, valued, respected and live with dignity.

The framework gives professionals, organisations and partners a clear foundation for coordinated primary prevention action that addresses elder abuse at its core.

As the evidence evolves, so will primary prevention practice. By working together across sectors and communities, Victoria can lead the way in creating long-term, meaningful change that prevents elder abuse from happening in the first place.

Together, we can create a future where older people in Victoria:

- are respected and included
- have positive connections with people from all generations
- experience gender equality.

We all deserve to be treated equally, regardless of age or gender. We can all work together to create a more connected, caring and equal society.

– Respect Victoria

Call to action from older people in Victoria

A message from the Senior Victorians Advisory Committee community members

The Senior Victorians Advisory Committee gives the Victorian Government a lived experience voice for older people.

Our call for action

Community members, call on professionals to use this framework to help prevent elder abuse at its root in your communities and workplaces.

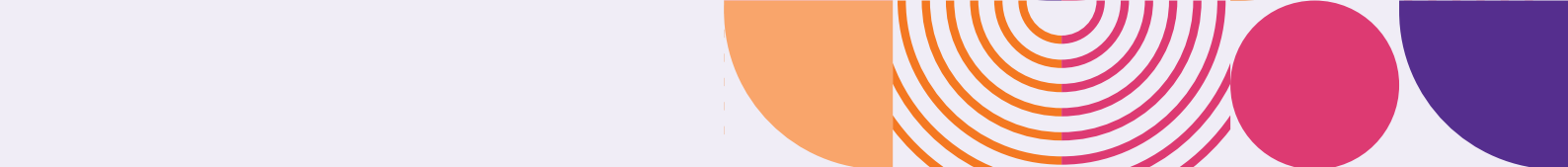
When planning and running activities, listen to older people. Engage us directly, learn from our diverse lived experience and involve us to inform and lead activities. This includes decisions that affect older people.

‘Professionals and policy makers to continue to listen to the views of older people, based on their lived experience, when formulating policies.’

– Dr Chukwudozie (Dozie) Ezigbalike, Senior Victorians Advisory Committee community member

‘A wide range of professionals, educators and policy makers to use it, apply it and embed it, so it guides everyday decisions and long-term planning.’

– Linette Harriott, Senior Victorians Advisory Committee community member



To live free from elder abuse, older people must be respected and treated with dignity in our society. We need to have a voice, to be visible and included in public life, whether online or offline.

‘In African and other traditional societies there is a saying that ‘the words of the elders are words of wisdom’. My hope is for a future where older people are free from ageist attitudes, discrimination and abuse and are celebrated for their wisdom.’

**– Dr Chukwudozie (Dozie) Ezigbalike,
Senior Victorians Advisory Committee
community member**

Older people need opportunities to stay active and connected, interact with people of all ages and to participate in activities that bring happiness, meaning and purpose.

‘We need grassroots strategies, including continuing to educate younger generations on how ageism, along with gender inequality, drives elder abuse of older people.’

**– Mariamma John, Senior Victorians
Advisory Committee community member**

Elder abuse primary prevention activities are integral to supporting older people to age well. We hope that the framework is widely used to guide action towards a future of greater respect and value for older people in Victoria.

‘Our elders have a wealth of experience and knowledge to share with and enrich our communities. Elder abuse is often invisible and insidious and erodes respect and esteem for older members of our community. *Victoria’s primary prevention of elder abuse framework* provides guidance as to how we can work together to help our elders be valued and respected, and to support older people to contribute to our communities to their fullest extent.’

**– Associate Professor Sue Harrison OAM,
Chair, Senior Victorian Advisory Committee**

Appendix 1: Key evidence and literature

This appendix lists key elder abuse data and publications. These publications offer more insights into what is likely to drive elder abuse and effective primary prevention actions

Elder abuse prevalence data

AIFS Elder abuse in Australia research snapshots:

- Short insights, with graphs, summarising findings from the *National elder abuse prevalence study: final report*¹²⁰ (NEAPS).
- Includes analysis on abuse types.
- Includes particular analysis on First Peoples, people who identify as LGBTIQ+, and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- **AIFS Research snapshots web page filtered by 'elder abuse research'**.¹²¹

National elder abuse prevalence study:

- Findings from the first national survey into elder abuse in Australia, published in 2021.
- Study sample size of 7,000 older people living in the community.
- Insights into:
 - the nature of elder abuse
 - likely drivers and risk factors for experiencing and using elder abuse
 - who is more likely to hold ageist attitudes, to help who actions should target.
- **AIFS' National elder abuse prevalence study: final report web page**.¹²²

Victorian family violence database:

- Victorian family violence data from a range of sources by age group, including homicide data.

- Includes interactive visualisations, Excel tables and explanatory materials.
- **Crime Statistics Agency Victoria's Family violence data web page**.¹²³

Key publications

- Summarising the evidence elder abuse research summary and context brief, Respect Victoria and the AIFS, 2023. See **Respect Victoria's Summarising the evidence... web page**.¹²⁴
- *Primary prevention of family violence among older people living in Victoria*, National Ageing Research Institute and Respect Victoria, 2021. See **Respect Victoria's Primary prevention of elder abuse in Victoria web page**.¹²⁵
- *Primary prevention interventions for elder abuse: Results from a systematic review*, National Ageing Research Institute (NARI) and Respect Victoria, 2020. See **NARI's Primary prevention of family violence among older Victorians web page**.¹²⁶
- *Preventing intimate partner violence against older women*, Our Watch and Seniors Rights Victoria, 2022. See **Our Watch's Preventing violence against older women web page**.¹²⁷
- *Community co-design of digital interventions for primary prevention of ageism and elder abuse*, Swinburne University of Technology, 2019. See **Australian Policy Online's Community co-design of digital interventions... web page**.¹²⁸
- Elder abuse: Key issues and emerging evidence, AIFS, 2019. See **AIFS' Elder abuse web page**.¹²⁹
- *Change the story*, Our Watch, 2021. See **Our Watch's Change the story framework web page**.¹³⁰

120 <https://aifs.gov.au/research/research-reports/national-elder-abuse-prevalence-study-final-report>

121 <https://aifs.gov.au/all-research/research-snapshots?project%5B3396%5D=3396>

122 <https://aifs.gov.au/research/research-reports/national-elder-abuse-prevalence-study-final-report>

123 <https://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/family-violence-data>

124 <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/what-we-know-about-drivers-of-violence>

125 <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/primary-prevention-elder-abuse-victoria>

126 <https://www.nari.net.au/primary-prevention-of-family-violence>

127 <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/preventing-violence/older-women>

128 <https://apo.org.au/node/270896>

129 <https://aifs.gov.au/resources/policy-and-practice-papers/elder-abuse>

130 <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/change-the-story/change-the-story-framework>

- *Investigating the connection between ageism and elder mistreatment*, Pillemer, Burnes and MacNeil, 2021. This includes a conceptual model on the link between ageism and elder abuse. See **PubMed Central's Investigating the connection between ageism and elder mistreatment web page**.¹³¹
- *Global report on ageism*, WHO, 2022. See **WHO's Global report on ageism web page**.¹³²
- *Tackling abuse of older people: five priorities for the United Nations decade of healthy ageing (2021–2030)*, WHO, 2022, See **WHO's Tackling abuse of older people: five priorities for the United Nations decade of healthy ageing (2021–2030) web page**.¹³³
- *Changing perspectives: testing an ageism intervention report, 2023*, Australian Human Rights Commission: **AHRC's Changing perspectives web page**.¹³⁴
- *Literature review: Elder abuse against people from migrant and refugee backgrounds*, Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria (ECCV), 2022. See **ECCV's Elder abuse literature review web page**.¹³⁵
- *Applying evidence-based violence prevention strategies to elder abuse in public health*, Carolyn Ham and Cory Bolkan. See **Oxford Academic's Applying evidence-based violence prevention strategies to elder abuse in public health web page**.¹³⁶
- *What works to prevent intimate partner violence and elder abuse?*, Louise Thornley, Quigley and Watts Ltd, 2013. See **Reports from the Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families web page**.¹³⁷
- *Connecting generations: planning and implementing interventions for intergenerational contact*, WHO, 2023. See **WHO's Connecting generations: planning and implementing interventions for intergenerational contact web page**.¹³⁸
- *Reducing and preventing violence against women: global evidence review*, Respect Victoria, 2024. See **Respect Victoria's Reducing and preventing violence against women: global evidence review web page**.¹³⁹
- *Tip sheet: Addressing and reducing resistance to preventing sexual harassment and violence against women*, Our Watch, 2024. See **Our Watch's Reducing resistance web page**.¹⁴⁰

131 <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10687725/>

132 <https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/demographic-change-and-healthy-ageing/combating-ageism/global-report-on-ageism>

133 <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240052550>

134 <https://humanrights.gov.au/changingperspectives>

135 <https://eccv.org.au/elder-abuse-literature-review>

136 https://academic.oup.com/innovateage/article/4/Supplement_1/45/6037289

137 <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/family-and-sexual-violence/taskforce-reports.html>

138 <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240070264>

139 <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/reducing-and-preventing-violence-against-women-global-evidence-review>

140 <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/workplace/resources/reducing-resistance>

Appendix 2: Resources

The following resources may help you:

- learn more about the concepts featured in the framework and this companion guide
- undertake primary prevention of elder abuse actions.

Primary prevention and the prevention continuum

Safe and Equal's What is primary prevention? resources:

- Includes a tip sheet and slide deck.
- Promotes understanding of work across the continuum from prevention to response.
- Offers practical suggestions.
- **Safe and Equal's What is primary prevention? web page.**¹⁴¹

Safe and Equal's Foundations for Action: Understanding the primary prevention workforce in Victoria:

- Findings from a 2024 project to strengthen the development of Victoria's primary prevention family violence workforce.
- Includes insights into the workforce and identifies key agencies working in primary prevention.
- **Safe and Equal's Foundations for Action web page.**¹⁴²

Our Watch: primary prevention of violence against women web page:

- Explains the concept of primary prevention of violence against women.
- Also covers the socio-ecological model.

- **Our Watch's What is 'primary prevention' of violence against women? web page.**¹⁴³

Respect Victoria: preventing family violence web page:

- Explains more about prevention and the role we all play in it.
- **Respect Victoria's Preventing violence web page.**¹⁴⁴

Ageism

United Nations' A World 4 All Ages campaign:

- WHO's global campaign to combat ageism.
- Resources, videos and tools on ageism, intergenerational practice and measuring ageism.
- **WHO's Global report on ageism web page.**¹⁴⁵

WHO's Global report on ageism:

- Presents a framework for action to reduce ageism.
- Outlines what strategies work to prevent and counter ageism.
- **WHO's Global report on ageism web page.**¹⁴⁶

AHRC's Breaking the age barrier:

- National initiative transforming age-related attitudes in healthcare using interactive workshops and person-centred care practices.
- Health and community organisations can co-host free interactive workshops with the AHRC.
- **AHRC's Breaking the age barrier: transforming age attitudes in health care web page.**¹⁴⁷

¹⁴¹ <https://safeandequal.org.au/resources/what-is-primary-prevention>

¹⁴² <https://safeandequal.org.au/resources/foundations-for-action-understanding-the-primary-prevention-workforce-in-victoria>

¹⁴³ <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/what-is-primary-prevention>

¹⁴⁴ <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/prevention>

¹⁴⁵ <https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/demographic-change-and-healthy-ageing/combating-ageism/global-report-on-ageism>

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/demographic-change-and-healthy-ageing/combating-ageism/global-report-on-ageism>

¹⁴⁷ <https://humanrights.gov.au/resource-hub/by-resource-type/projects2/older-peoples-rights/breaking-the-age-barrier-transforming-age-attitudes-in-health-care>

Every Age Counts campaign:

- Community-based advocacy campaign aimed at tackling ageism against older Australians.
- Includes resources covering research, policy and campaign materials
- Also has an 'Am I ageist?' quiz.
- **EveryAGE Counts website.**¹⁴⁸

Centre for Ageing Better's image library:

- Free photos showing positive and realistic images of people over 50 years of age.
- Aims to help tackle ageism and challenge the stereotypical notions of older people and ageing.
- **Centre for Ageing Better's Age positive image library web page.**¹⁴⁹

Celebrate Ageing's Gerontism mapping framework:

- Framework to help understand and prevent ageism experienced by older people.
- **Celebrate Ageing's Gerontism web page.**¹⁵⁰

Older people's views and experiences of ageing and age discrimination

Older People, Equity, Respect and Ageing (OPERA) project:

- Aims to foster communities that value and respect people of all ages.
- Partnership between Eastern Community Legal Centre and Swinburne University
- Engages with older people in eastern Melbourne on how they experience ageing and age discrimination in the community.
- Includes videos and other resources.
- **OPERA website.**¹⁵¹

WHO's Missing voices report:

- Study used focus groups in 8 countries to learn about older adults' views on ways to combat elder abuse.
- **WHO's Missing voices: views of older persons on elder abuse web page.**¹⁵²

Intergenerational connection

VicHealth's InterGen project:

- One of the first trials of a community-based model to develop and foster intergenerational social connection between older adults and teens.
- Report includes information on codesign, challenges, successes and lessons learned.
- The free online toolkit can help communities develop, run and evaluate their own intergenerational programs.
- **VicHealth's TheInterGen Project web page.**¹⁵³

Inner East Primary Care Partnership's (PCP's)

Building communities for all ages report:

- Report on good intergenerational practice.
- Summarises the international evidence base in intergenerational practice.
- **Victorian PCP's Resource Repository website search for 'building communities'.**¹⁵⁴

WHO's Connecting generations guide:

- How-to guide developed for the global campaign to combat ageism.
- Practical, step-by-step guidance on planning and running intergenerational activities.
- **WHO's Connecting generations web page.**¹⁵⁵

Australian Institute for Intergenerational Practice (AIIP) website:

- AIIP focuses on fostering meaningful engagement and bonds between young people and older people. They help communities reconnect through intergenerational programs.

148 <https://www.everyagecounts.org.au>

149 <https://ageing-better.org.uk/news/age-positive-image-library-launched>

150 <https://www.celebrateageing.com/gerontism.html>

151 <https://opera.eclc.org.au>

152 <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/missing-voices-views-of-older-persons-on-elder-abuse>

153 <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/research-impact/research-at-vichealth/research-highlights/the-intergen-project>

154 <https://vicpcp.org.au/search-our-work/?keyword=building+communities&submit=Search>

155 <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240070264>

- Their website has free resources on intergenerational practice and other materials.
- Resources include intergenerational tools, programs, videos, practice resources and research.
- **AIPP website.**¹⁵⁶

Relationships Australia's Neighbours Every Day campaign:

- Campaign aiming to empower everyone in Australia to build respectful and supportive relationships with their community.
- Provides simple, practical tools to help people create inclusive, welcoming spaces, plan and promote Neighbours Every Day activities and events.
- Also has resources tailored for local councils community organisations.
- **Neighbours Every Day website.**¹⁵⁷

Inclusion for older people

Australian Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's (DHDA's) action plan for LGBTI elders:

- Outlines what Australian aged care providers can do to offer more inclusive services to LGBTI elders.
- Helps providers work out what actions they need to take.
- **DHDA's Actions to support LGBTI elders web page.**¹⁵⁸

Val's LGBTI Ageing and Aged Care (Val's):

- Val's works with services to improve the health, wellbeing and visibility of older LGBTIQ+ people.
- Offers training, workshops, consultation, information and resources.
- **La Trobe University's Val's LGBTI Ageing and Aged Care web page.**¹⁵⁹

WHO's Age-friendly cities framework:

- Helps identify and address barriers to older people's wellbeing and participation.
- **WHO Extranet's The WHO age-friendly cities framework web page.**¹⁶⁰

Older women and applying a gender lens

Celebrate Ageing's The [un]silencing of older women resources:

- Presents a life stages approach for the *National plan to end violence against women and children*.
- Explores the gender lens for elder abuse.
- Includes a gender analysis for elder abuse tool.
- **Celebrate Ageing's Publications web page.**¹⁶¹

Respect Victoria's Summarising the evidence project:

- Respect Victoria commissioned AIFS to complete evidence reviews on 8 different forms of violence against women, family violence and other forms of gendered violence.
- Includes an elder abuse summary and key NEAPS findings on gendered patterns to elder abuse.
- **Respect Victoria's Summarising the evidence web page.**¹⁶²

Our Watch report on preventing intimate partner violence against older women:

- Developed with Seniors Rights Victoria to show findings from the Intimate Partner Violence Against Older Women project.
- Explores implications and considerations for future work to address intimate partner violence against older women.
- **Our Watch's Preventing violence against older women web page.**¹⁶³

¹⁵⁶ <https://aiip.net.au>

¹⁵⁷ <https://neighbourseveryday.org>

¹⁵⁸ <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/actions-to-support-lgbti-elders-a-guide-for-aged-care-providers>

¹⁵⁹ <https://www.latrobe.edu.au/arcshs/rainbow-health-australia/vals>

¹⁶⁰ <https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/age-friendly-cities-framework>

¹⁶¹ <https://www.celebrateageing.com/publications.html>

¹⁶² <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/what-we-know-about-drivers-of-violence>

¹⁶³ <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/preventing-violence/older-women>

Elder abuse prevention

Victorian Elder Abuse Prevention Networks:

- Networks that provide community-based primary prevention and raise awareness of elder abuse.
- **DFFH Service Providers' Preventing elder abuse web page.**¹⁶⁴

Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC):

- Multidisciplinary legal service working with partner organisations on elder abuse prevention.
- Elder abuse resources include evaluation reports, a framework and a toolkit.
- Local primary prevention framework, *Preventing abuse of older people in Melbourne's east*, was developed with the Eastern Elder Abuse Network.
- Toolkit for elder abuse prevention networks. Helps networks working on social change at the local level. Includes examples of work undertaken by elder abuse prevention networks.
- **ECLC's Elder abuse web page.**¹⁶⁵

Respect Victoria's elder abuse prevention campaign:

- Includes campaign materials and video on Helen's relationship with her grandson, Ollie.
- Resources are also in Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian and Vietnamese.
- **Respect Victoria's Respect older people web page.**¹⁶⁶

Future us: roadmap to elder abuse prevention (Canada):

- Pan-Canadian engagement strategy and toolkit developed by the Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (CNPEA).
- Aims to use coordinated actions to prevent violence and abuse of older people in their homes and communities.

- Resources include actions, learning modules, an infographic and toolkit.
- *Seniors leading change toolkit* covers how to build an elder abuse prevention network.
- **Future Us Roadmap website.**¹⁶⁷
- **Future Us Roadmap's Resources web page.**¹⁶⁸

Intersectionality and diversity

Seniors Rights Victoria's guide on intersectionality in elder abuse:

- Reference guide for practitioners, policymakers and organisations wanting to adopt an intersectional approach to elder abuse prevention and response.
- Can be used in many sectors, such as family violence, aged care, disability and housing.
- Seniors Rights Victoria is a Council on the Ageing Victoria program.
- **Senior Rights Victoria's Reference guide on intersectionality in elder abuse web page.**¹⁶⁹

Safe and Equal's Commitment to intersectionality in primary prevention:

- Outlines how Safe and Equal applies an intersectional approach and analysis to the prevention of family and gender based violence.
- **Safe and Equal's Intersectionality in primary prevention web page.**¹⁷⁰

Our Watch guidance on preventing violence against different groups:

- Guidance on preventing violence against 5 different diverse groups.
- Includes older women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and women with disabilities.
- **Our Watch's Preventing violence against different groups web page.**¹⁷¹

164 <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/preventing-elder-abuse>

165 <https://eclc.org.au/what-we-do/partnerships-and-projects/elder-abuse>

166 <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/campaigns/respect-older-people-call-it-out>

167 <https://futureus.cnpea.ca>

168 <https://futureus.cnpea.ca/en/resources>

169 <https://seniorsrights.org.au/policy/publication/reference-guide-on-intersectionality-in-elder-abuse>

170 <https://safeandequal.org.au/resources/intersectionality-primary-prevention>

171 <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/preventing-violence>

Rainbow Health Australia's guide to primary prevention in LGBTIQ+ communities:

- *Pride in prevention: a guide to primary prevention of family violence experienced by LGBTIQ communities*
- Summarises current available evidence on the drivers of family violence experienced by LGBTIQ communities.
- Includes recommendations for priority interventions.
- **Rainbow Health Australia's Pride in prevention evidence guide web page.**¹⁷²

Switchboard Victoria's Pride in Ageing program:

- Pilot program funded by the Victorian Government.
- Aims to reduce social isolation for older LGBTIQ+ people, tackle ageism and build long-term improvement and change for older LGBTIQ+ people.
- **Switchboard Victoria's Pride in ageing web page.**¹⁷³

Multicultural Centre for Women's Health's (MCWH) guide to engaging immigrant and refugee communities:

- *Intersectionality matters: a guide to engaging immigrant and refugee communities to prevent violence against women.*
- Helps people and organisations develop violence prevention approaches, strategies and activities in a way that meaningfully engages immigrant and refugee communities.
- **MCWH's Intersectionality matters a new resource for preventing violence against women web page.**¹⁷⁴

MCWH's guide to working with migrant and refugee communities:

- *Making the links: a guide to working with migrant and refugee communities in primary prevention and early intervention.*

- Framework for developing prevention activities for multicultural communities.
- Includes early intervention actions on how best to support migrant and refugee women at risk of sexual assault.
- **MCWH's Making the links: a guide to working with migrant and refugee communities in primary prevention and early intervention web page.**¹⁷⁵

Women with Disabilities Victoria's (WDV) violence prevention resources:

- Family violence prevention resources, including case studies, guidance and videos targeting women with disabilities.
- **WDV's Preventing and responding to violence against women with disabilities web page.**¹⁷⁶

Evaluation and monitoring

AIFS theory of change practice guide:

- Short guide on theories of change, *What is theory of change?*
- Includes key elements, examples and links to useful resources.
- **AIFS' What is theory of change? web page.**¹⁷⁷

Victorian Government's Outcomes reform in Victoria (2019):

- Information on measuring outcomes and progress along the way.
- **Australian Policy Online's Outcomes reform in Victoria web page.**¹⁷⁸

Australian Health Ethics Committee's guidance on ethics in evaluation:

- Guidance for considering ethical issues, including identifying triggers for ethical review.
- **NHMRC's Ethical considerations in quality assurance and evaluation activities web page.**¹⁷⁹

¹⁷² <https://rainbowhealthaustralia.org.au/news/launch-pride-in-prevention-evidence-guide>

¹⁷³ <https://www.switchboard.org.au/prideinageing>

¹⁷⁴ <https://www.mcwh.com.au/intersectionality-matters-a-new-resource-for-preventing-violence-against-women>

¹⁷⁵ <https://www.mcwh.com.au/making-the-links-a-guide-to-working-with-migrant-and-refugee-communities-in-primary-prevention-and-early-intervention>

¹⁷⁶ <https://www.wdv.org.au/our-work/our-work-with-organisations/preventing-and-responding-to-violence-against-women-with-disabilities>

¹⁷⁷ <https://aifs.gov.au/resources/practice-guides/what-theory-change>

¹⁷⁸ <https://apo.org.au/node/250921>

¹⁷⁹ <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/ethical-considerations-quality-assurance-and-evaluation-activities>

Respect Victoria's monitoring, evaluation and learning toolkit:

- Helps primary prevention professionals monitor and evaluate projects.
- Includes information on project logic models and theories of change.
- **Respect Victoria's Monitoring, evaluation and learning toolkit web page.**¹⁸⁰

AIFS evaluation practice guides:

- Over 30 practice guides to help practitioners with different aspects evaluation.
- **AIFS' Practice guides web page, filtered by 'Evaluation'**¹⁸¹

Preventing family violence – change over time

Respect Victoria progress reports:

- Every 3 years, Respect Victoria reports to the Victorian Parliament on work across Victoria to prevent violence against women and family violence, including primary prevention of elder abuse.
- Reports cover progress, trends, outcomes and collective impact of this work.
- **Respect Victoria's Reporting on the progress of prevention web page.**¹⁸²

Our Watch guide on measuring progress:

- *Counting on change*, guide on measuring population-level progress towards the prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia.
- Summary guide is also available.
- **Our Watch's Counting on change web page.**¹⁸³

Respect Victoria's Prevention of Family Violence Data Platform:

- Data platform focused on prevention and prevalence of family violence and violence against women.
- Helps track Victoria's progress in preventing family violence and violence against women.
- Includes data from over 35 data sources on prevalence, community attitudes towards gender inequality and other markers of discrimination.
- **Prevention of Family Violence Data Platform.**¹⁸⁴

Collective Impact Forum:

- A forum to help communities work together to create systemic change and reach their goals using a collective impact approach.
- Offers resources, event hosting and coaching.
- **Collective Impact Forum website.**¹⁸⁵

The National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS):

- Australia's longest-running survey about people's understanding of and attitudes about violence against women and gender inequality.
- Can help target action at groups that are more likely to hold negative attitudes.
- **NCAS website.**¹⁸⁶

180 <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/monitoring-evaluation-and-learning-toolkit>

181 https://aifs.gov.au/resources/practice-guides?field_topics_target_id%5B481%5D=481

182 <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/reporting-progress-prevention>

183 <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/resource/counting-on-change-a-guide-to-prevention-monitoring>

184 <https://files.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/Prevention-of-Family-Violence-Data-Platform.html>

185 <https://collectiveimpactforum.org>

186 <https://www.ncas.au>

Victorian demographic data

Planning in Victoria's Victoria in Future 2023 projection data:

- Outlines demographic projections for the period 2023 to 2051 for Victoria and the major region.
- Data projections are based on trends and assumptions for births, life expectancy, migration and living arrangements.
- Datasets are available as Excel spreadsheets (.xlsx).
- **Planning in Victoria's Victoria in Future web page.**¹⁸⁷

Australia Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) 2021 Census QuickStats on Victoria:

- QuickStats summarise the Victorian data for the 2021 Census.
- The Census provides a 5-yearly snapshot of Australia's population and households.
- **ABS' 2021 Victoria Census All persons QuickStats web page.**¹⁸⁸

Department of Health's Victorian Population Health Survey:

- Conducted every year.
- Primary source of insight about the health and wellbeing of Victorian adults.
- **Department of Health's Victorian Population Health Survey web page.**¹⁸⁹

Snapshot of Victoria's cultural diversity:

- Department of Health publishes high-level data on Victoria's cultural diversity.
- Multicultural Affairs has general community profiles on a range of Victorian communities. These combine Census data with information about migration and settlement history in Victoria.
- **Department of Health's Victoria's cultural diversity web page.**¹⁹⁰
- **Victorian Government's Community profiles web page.**¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁷ <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/guides-and-resources/Data-spatial-and-insights/discover-and-access-planning-open-data/victoria-in-future>

¹⁸⁸ <https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/2>

¹⁸⁹ <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/population-health-systems/victorian-population-health-survey>

¹⁹⁰ <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/multicultural-health-action-plan-2023-27/victorias-cultural-diversity>

¹⁹¹ <https://www.vic.gov.au/community-profiles>

Victorian strategies, policies, resources and training

Table 7: Victorian Government resources

Resource	Description	Location
<i>With respect to age - 2009</i>	Victoria's 2009 practice guidelines for health services and community agencies for the prevention of elder abuse. Includes detail on what elder abuse is and is not.	DFFH Service Providers' Elder abuse training and resources web page¹⁹²
Elder abuse learning hub	Free online training courses for: - professionals working with older people - anyone interested in learning more about elder abuse.	Elder Abuse Learning Hub¹⁹³
<i>Ageing well in Victoria action plan 2026–2030: Strengthening wellbeing for older people</i>	Victoria's commitment to help Victorians age well by: - continuing to take part in their community - safely ageing in-place at home, in community or aged care. Includes a snapshot of older people demographics and projections.	Victorian Government's Ageing well Victoria action plan web page¹⁹⁴
Free from violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence	Victoria's plan to break the cycle of family violence and violence against women.	Victorian Government's Free from violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence web page¹⁹⁵
<i>Primary prevention of family violence and gender-based violence capability framework</i>	Outlines the skills and knowledge professionals need to work in Victoria's family and gender-based violence primary prevention sector.	Victorian Government's Primary prevention of family violence and gender-based violence capability framework web page¹⁹⁶
<i>Everybody matters: Inclusion and equity statement</i>	Victoria's 10-year vision for a more inclusive, safe, responsive and accountable family violence system.	Victorian Government's Everybody matters: Inclusion and Equity Statement web page¹⁹⁷

¹⁹² <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/elder-abuse-training-and-resources>

¹⁹³ <https://elearning.dffh.vic.gov.au>

¹⁹⁴ <https://vic.gov.au/ageing-well-victoria-action-plan>

¹⁹⁵ <https://www.vic.gov.au/free-violence-victorias-strategy-prevent-family-violence>

¹⁹⁶ <https://www.vic.gov.au/primary-prevention-family-violence-and-gender-based-violence-capability-framework>

¹⁹⁷ <https://www.vic.gov.au/everybody-matters-inclusion-and-equity-statement>

Resource	Description	Location
<i>Family violence lived experience strategy</i>	The strategy calls on the Victorian Government and the sector to embed lived experience across the full spectrum of family and sexual violence reform. Outlines the phases in working together to transform the system to meet the needs of the people who use it.	Victorian Government's Family violence lived experience strategy web page¹⁹⁸
<i>MARAM practice guides: Foundation knowledge guide</i>	For all practitioners who use the MARAM framework. Covers foundational knowledge about family violence risk, including on elder abuse, to create a shared understanding of family violence.	Victorian Government's MARAM practice guides: Foundation knowledge guide web page¹⁹⁹
MARAM practice guides and resources	Practice guides with detailed practical guidance on what to do when: - identifying, assessing and managing family violence risk, including elder abuse - sharing information to work and coordinate with others in the system. Also a range of resources to help professionals and organisations apply the MARAM framework effectively.	Victorian Government's MARAM practice guides and resources web page²⁰⁰
Local government guide for preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women	Helps Victorian councils understand what they can do to embed primary prevention of family violence in: - everyday activities - the workplace - service delivery. Developed by the Victorian Government, with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and other partners.	MAV's Local government guide to preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women web page²⁰¹
Responding to family violence capability framework	Describes the knowledge and skills workers need to respond to family violence in a way that is safe and effective. For all workers whose roles intersect with family violence.	Victorian Government's Responding to family violence capability framework web page²⁰²

¹⁹⁸ <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-lived-experience-strategy>

¹⁹⁹ <https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-foundation-knowledge-guide>

²⁰⁰ <https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources>

²⁰¹ <https://www.mav.asn.au/what-we-do/policy-advocacy/social-community/family-violence-prevention/preventing-family-violence-guide>

²⁰² <https://www.vic.gov.au/responding-family-violence-capability-framework>

Resource	Description	Location
Responding to disclosures	Information on responding to disclosures of family violence from: • Safe and Equal • Respect Victoria.	Safe and Equal's Responding to disclosures web page ²⁰³ Respect Victoria's Responding to disclosures web page ²⁰⁴
Working with older people: A service provider's guide to welfare checks and suspected abuse	Victoria Police fact sheet for service providers when there are concerns for an older person's wellbeing.	Victoria Police resource available on Respecting Seniors Network's Training and resources web page ²⁰⁵
Our equal state: Victoria's gender equality strategy and action plan 2023–2027	Victoria's gender equality strategy and action plan. Sets out: • the vision for gender equality in Victoria • actions being taken to get there.	Victorian Government's Our equal state: Victorias gender equality strategy and action plan 2023-2027 web page ²⁰⁶
Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way – Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families 3 year action plan 2023-2025 (Dhelk Dja)	Aboriginal-led Victorian agreement to address family violence in Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal services and government commit to working together and making sure Aboriginal people, families and communities are: • stronger • safer • thriving • living free from family violence.	Victorian Government's Dhelk Dja: Safe our way web page ²⁰⁷
Indigenous family violence primary prevention framework	Framework that informed Dhelk Dja. Developed by the former Victorian Department of Human Services in 2012.	Australian Policy Online's Indigenous family violence primary prevention framework web page ²⁰⁸

203 <https://safeandequal.org.au/working-in-family-violence/prevention/disclosures>

204 <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/campaigns/toolkit/responding-to-disclosures>

205 <https://respectingseniornetwork.org.au/training-and-resources>

206 <https://www.vic.gov.au/our-equal-state-victorias-gender-equality-strategy-and-action-plan-2023-2027>

207 <https://www.vic.gov.au/dhelk-dja-3-year-action-plan>

208 <https://apo.org.au/node/30607>



Resource	Description	Location
<i>Victorian public health and wellbeing plan 2023-2027</i>	Sets the direction and 10 priorities for improving Victorian public health and wellbeing over the next 4 years. Creates a framework for coordinated action to make sure all Victorians have the opportunity for their best health and wellbeing. This will help them participate fully in: • their community • education • employment. Each council must prepare a related municipal public health and wellbeing plan every 4 years.	Department of Health's Victorian health and wellbeing plan web page²⁰⁹
<i>Place-based approaches: a guide for the Victorian public service</i>	Victoria's guide to: • place-based approaches • best practice in funding, data and governance for better community outcomes.	Victorian Government's The place-based approach best practice guide web page²¹⁰
<i>Healthier masculinities framework for gender equality: A framework to guide health promotion action when working with men and boys</i>	VicHealth's Framework for health promotion action when working with men and boys. Planning tool for people and organisations promoting health and wellbeing.	Australian Policy Online's Healthier masculinities framework for gender equality web page²¹¹

Other prevention strategies, frameworks and resources

Our Watch's *Change the story* and other frameworks:

- The *Change the story* framework guides a coordinated national approach to preventing violence against women.
- *Changing the picture* outlines actions to address violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.
- *Changing the landscape* is a guide to preventing violence against women and girls with disabilities.
- Other resources include guides, a handbook and a progress tracker.
- **Our Watch's *Change the story* and key frameworks web page²¹²**

²⁰⁹ <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-health-and-wellbeing-plan-2023-27>

²¹⁰ <https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-approaches-guide>

²¹¹ <https://apo.org.au/node/272711>

²¹² <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/change-the-story>

National plan to end violence against women and children (2022 to 2032):

- National policy framework guiding actions to end violence against women and children.
- **Australian Department of Social Services' National plan to end violence against women and children web page.**²¹³

Compass website:

- National website to help people understand, respond to and prevent elder abuse.
- Includes resources and information for both older Australians and the people who care for them.
- Has guidance to help older people respond to abuse.
- Australian Government initiative funded by the Attorney-General's Department.
- **Compass website.**²¹⁴

Queensland Elder Abuse Prevention Unit:

- Publishes research and reports on elder abuse.
- Includes yearly updates on Queensland elder abuse statistics, which can inform prevention strategies.
- Funded by the Queensland Government.
- **Queensland Elder Abuse Prevention Unit website.**²¹⁵

National plan to end the abuse and mistreatment of older people (2026 to 2036):

- Includes a commitment to develop a national prevention framework.
- **Australian Government Attorney-General's Department's National plan to end the abuse and mistreatment of older people web page.**²¹⁶

National prevention framework for the abuse and mistreatment of older people:

- National framework for taking practical action to prevent the abuse and mistreatment of older people, across the prevention continuum.
- Based on *National plan to end the abuse and mistreatment of older people 2026–2036*.
- Available in 5 languages.
- **Compass' National prevention framework web page.**²¹⁷

Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan to End Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence 2026–36

- National strategy to end family, domestic and sexual violence against First Nations women and children.
- **Australian Government Department of Social Services Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan to End Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence 2026–2036 webpage.**²¹⁸

United Nations policy brief: Tackling abuse of older people:

- *Tackling abuse of older people: five priorities for the United Nations decade of healthy ageing (2021–2030).*
- Outlines 5 priorities to prevent and respond to abuse of older people.
- Related resources include an infographic summary and a database of promising interventions.
- **WHO's Tackling abuse of older people web page.**²¹⁹

²¹³ <https://www.dss.gov.au/national-plan-end-gender-based-violence/resource/national-plan-end-violence-against-women-and-children-2022-2032>

²¹⁴ <https://www.compass.info>

²¹⁵ <https://eapu.com.au>

²¹⁶ <https://www.ag.gov.au/rights-and-protections/publications/national-plan-end-abuse-and-mistreatment-older-people-2026-2036>

²¹⁷ <https://www.compass.info/elder-abuse/preventing/national-prevention-framework>

²¹⁸ <https://www.dss.gov.au/first-nations-national-plan-end-family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/resource/our-ways-strong-ways-our-voices-national-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-plan-end-family-domestic-and-sexual-violence-2026-2036>

²¹⁹ <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240052550>

Appendix 3: Glossary

Term	Definition
Ableism	Discriminating against people with disabilities. ²²⁰
Aboriginal self determination	The inherent right of First Peoples to: • make decisions about matters affecting their lives, communities and cultures • define wellbeing according to their own values and aspirations. Self-determination means that all Victorian First Peoples lead decisions about matters affecting their lives. It requires government to transfer power, authority and resources to First Peoples to: • make sure approaches are culturally safe and community-led • include Aboriginal leadership in all policies and programs.²²¹
Ageism	Stereotypes (how we think), prejudice (how we feel) and discrimination (how we act) against others or oneself based on age. ²²²
Cisnormativity	Assuming that all people: • are cisgender • will continue to identify with the gender they were assigned at birth.²²³ Note: Cisgender refers to a person whose gender is the same as their sex recorded at birth.²²⁴
Classism	Unfair treatment of or negative opinions about someone based on their social class (that is, economic and social position). ²²⁵
Co-design	A participatory approach to designing, where decisions are based on the consensus of a group. All participants are seen as experts. Everyone's input (time, knowledge and other contributions) is valued and has equal standing. ²²⁶

220 DFFH (2022c). *Inclusive Victoria: state disability plan (2022–2026)*

221 Department of Premier and Cabinet (2018). *Victorian Aboriginal affairs framework 2018–2023*

222 WHO's Ageism web page. <https://www.who.int/health-topics/ageism>

223 AIFS' LGBTIQA+ glossary of common terms web page. <https://aifs.gov.au/resources/resource-sheets/lgbtiqa-glossary-common-terms>

224 DFFH (2025a). *LGBTIQA+ inclusive language guide*. Accessed at: <https://www.vic.gov.au/inclusive-language-guide>

225 Cambridge Dictionary's Classism web page. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/classism>

226 Definition adapted from Emma Blomkamp's *Sharing the principles of co-design post*. <https://emmablomkamp.medium.com/sharing-the-principles-of-co-design-4a976bb55c48>;

Victorian Government's Co-design web page. <https://www.vic.gov.au/co-design>



Term	Definition
Coercive control	The pattern or dynamic of ongoing, continuous abuse over time. It covers a wide range of behaviours, including non-physical, physical and sexual abuse. It can include any combination of family violence behaviours by the person using violence to create a pattern or 'system of behaviours' intended to: • harm • punish • frighten • dominate • isolate • degrade • monitor or stalk • regulate or subordinate the victim survivor.²²⁷
Colonialism	The domination of First Peoples populations by colonisers who settle among and retain control over them through practices such as: • violence • dispossession of land • exploitation of resources.²²⁸ Colonisation in Victoria caused profound and lasting harm to First Peoples through land dispossession, forced displacement and cultural suppression. It: • dismantled kinship systems • imposed racist laws • led to family separations • caused intergenerational trauma • led to systemic disadvantage in health, education, housing and justice. Despite this, First Peoples have shown resilience, maintained cultural identity and continued to fight for truth, justice and self determination.²²⁹
Cultural safety	Creating environments where there is no discrimination, unconscious bias and racism. People feel safe, their needs are met and their identity is not challenged.²³⁰
Driver	Broader underlying cultural factors that create the conditions for something to occur.²³¹ Also see Language statement.

227 **Victorian Government's MARAM practice guides: Foundation knowledge guide web page.** <https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-foundation-knowledge-guide>

228 Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector (2023). 'Glossary', *Intersectionality at work: building a baseline on compounded gender inequality in the Victorian public sector*

229 **Yoorrook Justice Commission's The impacts of colonisation web page.** <https://www.yoorrook.org.au/history/the-impacts-of-colonisation>

230 Department of Health and Human Services (2019). *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety framework*

231 Adapted from **AIHW's Factors associated with FDSV web page.** <https://www.aihw.gov.au/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/understanding-fdsv/factors-associated-with-fdsv>;

Safe and Equal's What causes family violence? web page. <https://safeandequal.org.au/understanding-family-violence/what-causes-family-violence>

Term	Definition
Elder abuse	Any act that causes harm to an older person and is carried out by someone they know and trust. ²³² Also see Language statement .
Elderspeak	A disrespectful communication style used with older people that includes: • simplified language including ‘baby talk’ • patronising tone • infantilising terms.²³³
Family violence	Any harmful or violent behaviour that is used to control, threaten, force or dominate a family member through fear. ²³⁴ Full legal definition is in section 5, <i>Family Violence Protection Act 2008</i> (Vic).
Gender equality	Access to rights or opportunities is not affected by gender. People of all genders have equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities. ²³⁵
Gender inequality	A social condition characterised by unequal value afforded to men and women and an unequal distribution of power, resources and opportunity between them. ²³⁶
Gender lens	A way to make gender visible by investigating whether policies, laws, regulations and opportunities: • have different effects on people based on their gender • reproduce harmful gender stereotypes or gender-based discrimination.²³⁷
Heteronormativity	Assuming that heterosexuality is the default, contributing to discrimination against LGBTIQ+ people. ²³⁸ Note: Heterosexuality refers to being attracted to a different (usually binary) gender than one’s own. ²³⁹
Intersectionality	An approach that understands the interconnected nature of social categorisation can create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage for either an individual or group. ²⁴⁰ Also see Language statement .

232 Department of Health and Human Services (2018). *With respect to age – 2009*

233 **Senior Rights Services’ What is elderspeak? web page.** <https://seniorsrightsservice.org.au/what-is-elderspeak>

234 **Department of Justice and Community Safety’s Family violence web page.** <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/family-violence>

235 Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (2023). *Our equal state: Victoria’s gender equality strategy and action plan 2023–2027*. Accessed at: <https://www.vic.gov.au/our-equal-state-victorias-gender-equality-strategy-and-action-plan-2023-2027>

236 Australian Government Department of Social Services (2022). *National plan to end violence against women and children 2022–2032*

237 Our Watch (2021). *Change the story*

238 Your Community Health and Transgender Victoria (2025). *LGBTIQ+ language and definitions guide*

239 Your Community Health and Transgender Victoria (2025). *LGBTIQ+ language and definitions guide*

240 Family Safety Victoria (2021). *Everybody matters: inclusion and equity statement*

Term	Definition
Lived experience	First-hand experience that affects a person's view of the world or their place in it. and leads to a process of meaning-making. ²⁴¹ This includes current experiences, commonly referred to as 'living experiences'.
Primary prevention	Stopping violence before it starts by changing the culture that lets it happen. ²⁴² It works across the whole population to address attitudes, norms, practices, structures and power imbalances that drive violence. ²⁴³
Racism	Beliefs, behaviours, systems and structures in a society that cause unfair and unequal distribution in power, resources and opportunities between racial or ethnic groups. Racism includes beliefs, stereotypes, prejudices or discrimination at personal, institutional and societal levels. ²⁴⁴
Self-determination	The freedom to live well and define what is means to live well according to a person's own values and beliefs. ²⁴⁵
Socio-ecological model	A feature of public health. The model shows: • how drivers of violence appear in personal, community and social levels • the value of putting in place many mutually-reinforcing strategies across these levels.²⁴⁶
Transphobia	Negative beliefs, prejudices and stereotypes that exist about transgender or trans people. ²⁴⁷ Note: Transgender or trans refers to a person whose gender does not exclusively align with their sex recorded at birth. ²⁴⁸ Not all trans people will use this term to describe themselves.
Transmisogyny	Dislike or unfair treatment of trans women. ²⁴⁹
Violence against women	Refers to violence: • directed at a woman because she is a woman • that affects women disproportionately.²⁵⁰

241 **Australian Department of Veterans' Affairs' Lived experience framework – frequently asked questions web page.** <https://www.dva.gov.au/about-us/engagement-and-consultation/lived-experience-framework/frequently-asked-questions>

242 **Respect Victoria's Preventing violence web page.** <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/prevention>

243 Our Watch (2021). 'Foreword', *Change the story*

244 Department of Premier and Cabinet (2024). *Victoria's anti-racism strategy 2024–2029*

245 **AHRCs Self-determination web page.** <https://humanrights.gov.au/know-your-rights/rights-of-individuals/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples-rights/articles-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples/self-determination>

246 Our Watch (2021) *Change the story*

247 **AIFS' LGBTIQ+ glossary of common terms web page.** <https://aifs.gov.au/resources/resource-sheets/lgbtiqa-glossary-common-terms>

248 DFFH (2025a). *LGBTIQ+ inclusive language guide*

249 **Cambridge Dictionary's Transmisogyny web page.** <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/transmisogyny>

250 DFFH (2025b). 'Glossary', *Until every Victorian is safe: Third rolling action plan to end family and sexual violence 2025 to 2027*. Accessed at <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-rolling-action-plan-2025-2027/glossary>



Appendix 4: Elder abuse and First Peoples

The following resources may help you learn more about:

- how harmful government policies have affected First Peoples
- the importance of Aboriginal-led approaches to elder abuse in First Peoples communities.

***Bringing Them Home* report:**

- Final report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families.
- Outlines the past laws, practices and policies that led to the forced removal of children.
- Documents the ongoing impact of these policies.
- Makes recommendations to support healing and reconciliation for the Stolen Generations and their families.
- **AHRC's Bringing them home report (1992) web page.**²⁵¹

Yoorrook Justice Commission reports:

- The Yoorrook Justice Commission is the first formal truth-telling process into historical and ongoing injustices experienced by First Peoples in Victoria.
- The reports document Yoorrook's findings and recommendations from truth-telling, hearings and submissions.
- **Yoorrook Justice Commission's Reports web page.**²⁵²

The need for Aboriginal-led approaches to elder abuse in First Peoples communities

The historic injustices First Peoples communities have experienced have ongoing consequences to this day. Because of this, approaches to elder abuse – be they primary, secondary or tertiary prevention – should be:

- holistic
- Aboriginal-led and self-determined
- trauma-informed
- family-oriented.

Older First Peoples are often best supported by ACCOs and ACCHOs. ACCOs can provide coordinated and culturally safe support in the range of services the older person and their family may need, such as:

- health, social and emotional wellbeing supports
- integrated counselling and family therapy
- financial counselling
- alcohol and other drug support.

In many cases, the older person will have existing, long-standing and trusted relationships with these organisations. This means that the underlying causes of harm can be addressed through a trauma informed, culturally grounded response that avoids stigma and supports healing.

²⁵¹ <https://humanrights.gov.au/bringing-them-home/the-report/bringing-them-home-report.html>

²⁵² <https://www.yoorrook.org.au/reports-and-recommendations/reports>

Appendix 5: Elder abuse services and support information

If you (or someone you know) are in an unsafe situation, phone Victoria Police on 000.

If you (or someone you know) are experiencing elder abuse, these services may help.

Table 8: Elder abuse support services

Service	Description	Contact
Elder abuse helpline	A free and confidential helpline run by Seniors Rights Victoria (a program of Council of the Ageing Victoria). It offers free information, support and legal advice for older people facing or at risk of elder abuse.	1300 368 821
Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV)	A community legal centre that specialises in elder abuse. It offers: • legal advice and case work • community education and resources • advocacy • referrals.	Seniors Rights Victoria website²⁵³
Victorian elder abuse prevention networks	The 8 elder abuse prevention networks: • provide community-based primary prevention • raise awareness of elder abuse in Victorian communities.	Contact details are listed under 'Elder abuse prevention networks' on DFFH Service Providers' Preventing elder abuse web page²⁵⁴
Better Place Australia's Respecting Elders service	Elder abuse counselling, mediation and case management services for older people in: • Inner Gippsland • Bayside Peninsula • North Eastern Melbourne • Western Melbourne • Barwon areas. The Orange Door can make referrals in these areas to this service.	• 1800 214 117 • Email respectingelders@betterplace.com.au • Better Place Australia website²⁵⁵

²⁵³ <https://seniorsrights.org.au>

²⁵⁴ <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/preventing-elder-abuse>

²⁵⁵ <https://www.betterplaceaustralia.com.au/>

Service	Description	Contact
The Orange Door	Free statewide service that provides quick and simple access to support for: • people of all ages experiencing family violence, including elder abuse • for people using family violence. There are many ways to contact The Orange Door, including face-to-face, phone and email. People do not need a referral. Open weekdays, 9 am to 5 pm	Contact details (phone, email and address) are on The Orange Door's Support near you web page²⁵⁶
Eastern Community Legal Centre's elder abuse response programs	Free confidential legal advice and help to older people facing or at risk of elder abuse: • Rights of the Seniors in the East program (ROSE) in the Eastern metropolitan region • Engaging and Living Safely and Autonomously program (ELSA) for older people getting care at Eastern Health.	• 1300 32 52 00 • 0429 697 960 • ECLC's Elder abuse web page²⁵⁷
Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre	Statewide family violence crisis support response line. Offers support and information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.	• 1800 015 188 • safesteps@safesteps.org.au • Safe Steps live chat web page²⁵⁸
1800 RESPECT	National domestic, family and sexual violence counselling service. Offers counselling, support and information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.	• 1800 737 732 • 1800 Respect website²⁵⁹
Men's Referral Service	National counselling, information and referral service to support behaviour change for men who use violence and abuse. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.	• 1300 766 491 • Men's Referral Service website²⁶⁰

²⁵⁶ <https://www.orangedoor.vic.gov.au/support-near-you>

²⁵⁷ <https://eclc.org.au/what-we-do/partnerships-and-projects/elder-abuse>

²⁵⁸ <https://safesteps.org.au/live-chat>

²⁵⁹ <https://1800respect.org.au/>

²⁶⁰ <https://mrs.org.au>

Service	Description	Contact
Victims of Crime Helpline	Victorian government service offering free information and support for people affected by crime. Open hours: - Monday to Friday: 8 am to 7 pm - Saturday, Sunday and public holidays: 8am to 5pm.	1800 819 817 - SMS: 0427 767 891 Victims of Crime website²⁶¹
Djirra	Telephone counselling service for Aboriginal people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence. Available Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm.	1800 105 303 Djirra's Contact us web page²⁶²
Yarning SafeNStrong	Telephone crisis line for Aboriginal people and families who need to have a yarn with someone about their wellbeing. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.	1800 959 563 ysns@vahs.org.au
Dardi Munwurro's Brother to Brother crisis line	Telephone crisis support for Aboriginal men with family violence issues. The crisis line is staffed by Aboriginal men, including Elders, with relevant lived experience. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.	1800 435 799
Intouch	Culturally tailored specialist services for women and non-binary people from migrant and refugee backgrounds facing family violence. Support is available Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5pm. Also offers advice and support for family violence professionals.	1800 755 988
Rainbow Door helpline and support service	LGBTIQA+ helpline offering information, support and referrals to all LGBTIQA+ Victorians, their friends and family. Support is available every day, 10 am to 5 pm.	1800 729 367 - SMS: 0480 017 246 support@rainbowdoor.org.au

²⁶¹ <https://www.victimsofcrime.vic.gov.au>

²⁶² <https://djirra.org.au/contact-us>

Service	Description	Contact
Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) advice service	OPA gives information and advice to: • people with disabilities • their family, carers and friends • professionals from relevant sectors. Gives advice on matters including: • enduring power of attorney • guardianship and administration • medical treatment decisions.	• 1300 309 337 • OPA_Advice@justice.vic.gov.au
Elder Rights Australia	Free service offering Victorians in residential and home care programs: • advocacy • information • support • advice. Helps older people, their families and representatives with issues about Australian Government-funded aged care services. Available: • Monday to Friday, 8 am to 8 pm • Saturday, 10 am to 4 pm.	1800 700 600
1800 Elder Help elder abuse helpline	Free national elder abuse helpline that redirects callers to an existing phone service near them. A collaboration between the Australian, state and territory governments. Operating hours and services vary across states and territories.	1800 353 374
Elder Abuse Action Australia	Specialist organisation and national body acting to eliminate elder abuse. It campaigns for a society that respects and values older Australians	Elder Abuse Action Australia website²⁶³
Seniors Online	Victorian Government website for senior Victorians. Includes: • community information • services directory • factsheets • resources on elder abuse	Seniors Online website²⁶⁴

²⁶³ <https://eaaa.org.au>

²⁶⁴ <https://www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au>

