



UNSW
SYDNEY

Gendered Violence Research Network

Literature Review: Prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) in sport settings

July 2025

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The Gendered Violence Research Network is based in the Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture at UNSW Sydney.

The legal entity for the contract is the University of New South Wales (ABN: 57195873179). The UNSW is a GST-registered organisation. Provider CRICOS Code 00098G.

This document has been prepared for the sole purpose of our services provided to the Office of Sport.

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Glossary

Child sexual abuse: Any act that exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes that are beyond their understanding, are contrary to accepted community standards, or are outside what is permitted by law.¹

Bystander: A person who is present and witnesses something but is not directly involved in it. An active bystander is someone who not only witnesses a situation, but takes action to keep a situation from escalating or to disrupt a problematic situation.²

Coercive control: Refers to someone's use of abusive behaviours against another person over time, with the effect of establishing and maintaining power and dominance over them. Abusive behaviours that perpetrators can use as part of their pattern of abuse include physical abuse, sexual abuse, monitoring a victim-survivor's actions, restricting a victim-survivor's freedom or independence, social abuse, using threats and intimidation, emotional or psychological abuse, financial abuse, sexual coercion, reproductive coercion, lateral violence, systems abuse, technology-facilitated abuse and animal abuse.³

Culturally and racially marginalised: Refers to people who 'cannot be racialised as 'white', and includes people who are Black, Brown, Asian, or other non-white group who experience marginalisation due to their race, religion and/or cultural background.⁴

Domestic and family violence: Includes any behaviour in a domestic relationship that is violent, threatening, coercive or controlling and causing a person to live in fear for their own or someone else's safety.⁵

Family violence: Refers to both violence between intimate partners and violence between family members. In Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, this is often the preferred term as it encapsulates violence within extended families, kinship networks and community relationships.⁵

Gender: Refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed. This includes norms, behaviours and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl or boy, as well as relationships with each other.⁶

Gender based violence: Captures any behaviour directed at a person or that affects a person because of their sex, gender or sexuality, because they do not adhere to socially prescribed gender roles, or because their body does not conform with male or female norms.⁵

Gender equality: Equality for people of all genders, in terms of equal opportunity and equal or just outcomes. It requires the redistribution of power, resources and responsibilities between men and women, and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures that create and sustain gender inequality.⁷

Gender norms: The dominant beliefs and rules of conduct which are determined by a society or social group in relation to the types of roles, interests, behaviours and contributions expected from girls and boys, and men are women.⁷

Intersectionality: Describes the interactions between multiple systems and structures of oppression such as sexism, racism, classism, ageism, ableism, heteronormativity and cissexism.⁵

Intimate partner violence: Any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm.⁷

Primary prevention: Primary prevention means stopping violence from occurring in the first place. It involves whole of population initiatives that address the underlying causes of domestic, family and sexual violence as well as context-specific risk factors.⁵

Sexual violence: Refers to acts of a sexual nature that happen without consent. It includes sexual assault, child sexual abuse, and sexual harassment. Sexual violence includes both physical and non-physical acts and behaviours, such as image-based sexual abuse, and can range from a single instance of harassment or assault to abuse perpetrated over long periods.⁵

Sport: Physical activity that can be undertaken by a team or an individual in a social or competitive environment in pursuit of a result. It can be organised or less formal with a greater focus on social outcomes.⁸

Violence against women: Any act of gender-based violence that causes, or could cause, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or in private life.⁷

Acronyms

AFL	Australian Football League
AHP	Athlete Health and Performance
AIFS	Australian Institute of Family Studies
ANROWS	Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety
APO	Analysis and Policy Observatory APO
CARM	Culturally and racially marginalised
CSA	Child sexual abuse
CBIM	Coaching Boys Into Men
DFSV	Domestic, family and sexual violence
DFV	Domestic and family violence
DV	Domestic violence
FV	Family violence
GBV	Gender based violence
GVRN	Gendered Violence Research Network
IOC	International Olympic Committee
MAV	Men Against Violence
NSW	New South Wales
NZ	New Zealand
SSO	State Sporting Organisation
SSOD	State Sporting Organisations for people with Disability
SV	Sexual violence
UNSW	University of New South Wales
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
VAW	Violence against women
WA	Western Australia

1. Executive Summary

1.1. Background

In May 2025, The NSW Office of Sport engaged the Gendered Violence Research Network (GVRN) at the University of New South Wales (UNSW), Sydney, to conduct a literature review into domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) prevention programs, initiatives and strategies in the sport sector at state, national and international levels. *Pathways to Prevention: NSW Strategy for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence 2024-2028* identifies sports clubs and organisations as a priority setting that has the potential for widespread positive impact in relation to DFSV. The Office of Sport have four key initiatives to deliver throughout the life of the NSW Prevention Strategy, including:

- Building the evidence-base for primary prevention in sport
- Launching the Multi-Sport Coalition for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence
- Multi-year delivery partnerships (grant program) with sporting organisations
- Aboriginal-led prevention through sport.

1.2. Methodology

The literature review addresses the following key questions:

1. What are the key elements of programs and initiatives that aim to prevent DFSV in sports sectors and related organisations?
2. Are there evaluations of DFSV prevention programs in sports sectors and related organisations? What are the measures of success used in these evaluations?
3. Is there evidence that certain prevention strategies or approaches are more promising for certain population groups (e.g., First Nations people, people with disability, children at risk) and/or types of DFSV?

1.3. Key findings

Prevention programs and initiatives in sport settings include a range of key elements

- Key elements of prevention programs and initiatives in sport settings were identified from the existing literature. Examples include:
 - a whole-of-sport approach
 - the implementation of policies and frameworks and procedures to support individuals experiencing violence, Codes of Conduct that sets out behavioural expectations for athletes and staff, and clear procedures and accountability structures for addressing allegations of DFSV
 - actively challenging rigid gender stereotypes and increasing the participation of women and girls, including as players, coaches, umpires, administrators and leaders
 - training and support, at both the local and elite level, to create sporting environments and structures that are inclusive, respectful and welcoming of women and girls and address harmful norms and attitudes that contribute to DFSV
 - collaboration and engagement with a range of stakeholders.

- Successful initiatives are those that are survivor-centred, evidence-based, delivered in an ongoing way, and supported by strong leadership and accountability mechanisms.
- Any program or initiative should carefully consider the type of violence it is seeking to address, the intended audience (e.g., coaches, players, volunteers), and the demographic make-up of participants (e.g., cultural background, age, gender).

Existing literature identified the importance of a whole-of-sport approach and multi-level strategies that combine individual, organisational and community-based actions, initiatives and programs

- A whole-of-sport approach enables sporting organisations to enact multiple strategies to change structures, norms, practices, attitudes and behaviours both within the organisation (including players, coaches, officials, staff, board members and executives) and in the broader sporting community (fans, media, volunteers and external stakeholders).
- Successfully conducting prevention activities across multiple levels of organisations and sectors requires the establishment of partnerships between program developers, sports organisations, and policy makers, as partnerships provide an opportunity for prevention stakeholders to collaborate, share expertise, and build the capacity of all parties involved.

Sports coaches were identified as key stakeholders that should be engaged in prevention activities

- Coaches spend large amounts of time with players/athletes and are often influential role models in young peoples' lives.
- Several studies identified in the review highlighted the positive influence that coaches can have on athletes in delivering prevention programs and messaging.

Evaluated prevention programs and initiatives demonstrated a range of positive outcomes

- The literature review identified evaluations of 13 prevention programs and initiatives implemented in sport settings. These programs aimed to improve DFSV knowledge, awareness and attitudes, increase bystander confidence, and reduce DFSV perpetration.
- Most were direct participation programs that engaged with players/athletes, coaches and other stakeholders at the individual or group level to address knowledge, attitudes and behaviours contributing to DFSV. It was also common for programs to use organisational development strategies to increase gender equality and address DFSV in sporting and related organisations, including by implementing policies, leveraging the support of senior leaders, and developing 'whole-of-organisation' prevention plans.
- The evaluated prevention programs demonstrated positive outcomes in relation to the following:
 - *Attitudes and beliefs:* Program participants reported improved attitudes and beliefs in relation to gender attitudes, domestic abuse myth acceptance, rape myth acceptance, rape-supportive beliefs, and sexual consent.

- *Bystander intentions and actions*: Program participants reported greater improvement for bystander intent, confidence to speak-up against problematic behaviours, and higher engagement in bystander behaviours.

DFSV perpetration: There was limited evidence that suggested that program participants were less likely to perpetrate adolescent relationship abuse, dating abuse, sexual harassment and sexual assault.

Primary prevention of DFSV in sport settings requires an intersectional approach

- Prevention efforts tailored to marginalised communities, including CARM groups, First Nations communities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people with disability, remain limited and warrant urgent attention.
- The literature review identified intersectional approaches as crucial to prevention initiatives. Programs should be tailored to participants and their settings (e.g., participants' characteristics, sport type and level, gender composition of the sport, and organisational type and resourcing).
- It is important individuals and organisations developing prevention initiatives are equipped with a firm and comprehensive understanding of the concept of intersectionality and the ways in which it can be translated into practice.

Barriers to the implementation of primary prevention initiatives in sports settings should be considered in the design and delivery of any programs

- These barriers may include:
 - backlash and resistance from program participants
 - insufficient time to implement the program, challenges engaging with local sporting clubs
 - the need for champions who are men but who also demonstrate a tangible commitment to gender equity and change
 - high turnover of staff within the organisation
 - weather impacting program delivery for outdoor sports, and
 - lack of funding/resources and challenges with project sustainability.

2. Background

In May 2025, The NSW Office of Sport engaged the Gendered Violence Research Network (GVRN) at the University of New South Wales (UNSW), Sydney, to conduct a literature review into domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) primary prevention programs, initiatives and strategies in the sport sector at state, national and international levels. The Office of Sport is the lead NSW Government agency for sport and active recreation, and aims to support all people, communities and organisations across NSW to enjoy and realise the benefits of participating in sport and active recreation.⁹

In 2024, the NSW Government launched *Pathways to Prevention: NSW Strategy for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence 2024-2028* ('the NSW Prevention Strategy').⁵ The NSW Prevention Strategy identified sports clubs and organisations as a priority setting that has the potential for widespread positive impact in relation to DFSV. This is because sport reaches and influences people of all ages across multiple settings, including employees, sponsors, supporters, volunteers, players and their families.

The Office of Sport have four key initiatives to deliver throughout the life of the NSW Prevention Strategy, including:

- Building the evidence-base for primary prevention in sport
- Launching the Multi-Sport Coalition for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence
- Multi-year delivery partnerships (grant program) with sporting organisations
- Aboriginal-led prevention through sport.

2.1. Domestic, family and sexual violence in the Australian community

DFSV is a significant problem in Australia that affects individuals of all ages and from all backgrounds. Statistics from the most recent Personal Safety Survey (PSS) indicate that since the age of 15:

- **1 in 4 women** (23%) and **1 in 14 men** (7.3%) have **experienced intimate partner violence**.
- **1 in 4 women** (23%) and **1 in 7 men** (14%) have **experienced cohabiting partner emotional abuse**.
- **1 in 12 women** (8.1%) and **1 in 17 men** (5.9%) have **experienced violence by a family member**.
- **1 in 5 women** (22%) and **1 in 16 men** (6.1%) have **experienced sexual violence**.¹⁰

The PSS also provides statistics about sexual harassment, reporting that 1.3 million women and 426,800 men had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months.¹¹ The PSS also asks respondents about their experiences of physical and sexual abuse perpetrated by an adult before the age of 15:

- Of women, **18% experienced abuse during childhood**, including 11% who experienced sexual abuse and 10% who experienced physical abuse.
- Of men, **11% experienced abuse during childhood**, including 3.6% who experienced sexual abuse and 8.3% who experienced physical abuse.¹⁰

The Australian Childhood Maltreatment Study identified even higher rates of childhood abuse.¹² The study estimated a national prevalence of child sexual abuse (CSA) of 28.5%, with girls twice as likely to experience CSA compared to boys. These statistics highlight that women are disproportionately

affected by DFSV compared to men. Research also indicates that gender and sexuality diverse people, women with disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women may be at increased risk of experiencing DFSV.^{10, 13}

Victim-survivors may also face barriers to seeking help after an experience of violence, including both personal and service barriers. Common barriers include:

- feelings of shame
- lack of awareness of services
- concerns about confidentiality
- lack of time
- concerns about communication
- normalisation of violence
- access challenges, including no access to transport
- cultural issues.¹⁴

2.2. Policies and related frameworks

2.2.1. Prevention frameworks

In Australia and internationally, a range of strategies have been developed and implemented to prevent DFSV. The NSW Prevention Strategy uses a public health approach to the prevention of DFSV, which offers a nuanced understanding of what is required to prevent this violence and engages people and communities in multiple, reinforcing ways. The socio-ecological model is a key part of the public health approach, illustrating how risk factors interact and intersect to contribute to DFSV. To effectively address violence, risk factors at the following four levels must be addressed:

- **Individual level:** This level focuses on personal characteristics and factors that may increase an individual's risk of perpetrating or experiencing DFSV. Examples include prior exposure to violence against a parent; emotional, physical or sexual abuse during childhood; previous experience of violence; age; and disability.
- **Relationship level:** This level focuses on the dynamics and characteristics within a relationship or relationships in a family or kinship network that may increase an individual's risk of DFSV perpetration or victimisation. Examples include inequality in decision-making and poor communication within a relationship; childhood exposure to violence; men's alcohol abuse; and male peer relations that emphasise aggression, dominance and control.
- **Community level:** This level focuses on risk factors within the context of community relationships and networks such as schools, workplaces, neighbourhoods. Examples include inequitable and harmful community-held beliefs, attitudes and norms surrounding violence, gender and sex; dominant and aggressive forms of masculinity; and high levels of community violence.
- **Societal level:** This level comprises broader societal factors that can increase rates of DFV and sexual violence perpetration and victimisation. Examples include men having greater control over public power, resources and decisions; and economic inequality including the gender pay gap.^{5, 17-19}

The Our Watch *Change the Story* framework also provides a scaffold for conceptualising strategies for the prevention of violence against women (VAW), which reflects a gender equality lens and may be

useful in a sporting context. The framework aims to drive change and guide action to achieve the ultimate goal of keeping all women free from violence in Australia.⁷ The framework describes VAW as caused by a range of relevant gendered factors that arise from gender-discriminatory institutional, social and economic structures, social and cultural norms, and organisational, community, family and relationship practices. These create environments in which women and men are not considered equal and VAW is more likely to be tolerated and condoned. Specifically, Our Watch conceptualises the gendered drivers of VAW as follows:

- Driver 1: The condoning of violence against women
- Driver 2: Men’s control of decision-making and limits to women’s independence in public and private life
- Driver 3: Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity
- Driver 4: Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control.⁷

The Our Watch framework also outlines a range of techniques that have demonstrated effectiveness in addressing the drivers of VAW. The techniques are outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Primary prevention techniques and examples of good practice outlined in the Our Watch *Change the Story* framework.⁷

Prevention technique	Description	Examples of good practice
Direct participation programs	Engages with people at the individual, relationship or group level to build knowledge and skills for equal, respectful and non-violent relationships. Can improve access to resources required to support equal, respectful and non-violent relationships and connections to social networks and institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs that build participants’ understanding of sexist and gendered norms, attitudes and behaviours, and their skills to address these through bystander actions. • Opportunities for program participants to practice skills learnt and reinforce attitude and behaviour change. • Programs that deliver multiple sessions to a given audience or continue to engage the same audience over time to prolong impact. • Complementary strategies that enable settings to reinforce program content. • Quality training and support for educators and program facilitators.
Organisational development	Enacting changes within organisations and their cultures, as this can have a powerful influence on the behaviours of individuals and groups, as well as systems and structures across society. Organisational development techniques can be part of a ‘whole-of-setting’ approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A ‘whole-of-organisation’ prevention plan that sets priorities, identifies key strategies, directs organisational resources, facilitates action and promotes accountability. • Employ strategies across multiple levels of an organisation. • Ensure staff are involved in shaping understandings of existing practices and what needs to be changed. • Use senior leadership to establish and reinforce organisational commitments to violence prevention and gender equality.

Prevention technique	Description	Examples of good practice
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish mechanisms that support those within the organisation who have personal experiences of violence.
Community mobilisation and strengthening	Works to strengthen and support communities to address VAW and shift social norms, increase community access to resources, and address broad community-level factors that may contribute to VAW.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage key organisations, recognised community leaders and diverse community members, including in decision-making. Empower communities to participate in shared decision-making. Implement mutually reinforcing strategies to maximise stakeholder participation, develop local leadership and improve resource mobilisation.
Communications and social marketing campaigns	Raising awareness of VAW and challenging problematic attitudes, behaviours and social norms can occur through various channels, including television, radio, print, online/digital media, social media, and events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop simple, strong and consistent key messages, with tailored messages for specific target audiences and channels. Identify and refine the target audience and their key needs. Devise campaigns with multiple components to promote key messages.
Civil society, advocacy and social movement activism	Involves building collective momentum to raise awareness about VAW and to encourage governments, organisations and communities to take action to prevent it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource women's civil society organisations and networks to lead prevention activities. Use an intersectional approach and promote collaborative effort across civil society organisations and networks to address gendered drivers of VAW. Engaging a diverse range of advocates who are respected within their communities, and who hold both formal and informal positions of leadership and influence. Facilitate opportunities for women to network and advocate collectively, particularly on issues or in settings where they are underrepresented.

Primary prevention

Primary prevention refers to prevention strategies that are targeted at general communities or populations and address the underlying drivers of DFSV to prevent such violence from occurring in the first place.^{7, 20, 21} Our Watch identify the following actions as critical to primary prevention:

- changing the social conditions that lead to violence
- reforming institutions and systems that promote, excuse or justify violence, and
- addressing the power imbalances, social norms, structures and practices that contribute to and normalise violence.⁷

Examples of primary prevention strategies that are employed in Australia to address DFSV include, but are not limited to, the following:

- social marketing campaigns, events and education-based strategies and related training designed to raise community awareness around DFSV in a whole of community strategy or response
- school-based programs on respectful relationships and sexual consent, and
- workplace programs and initiatives aimed at promoting equality and respect.²²

Secondary prevention

Secondary prevention or ‘early intervention’ includes strategies that target specific individuals and groups that have been identified as being at higher risk of perpetrating or experiencing DFSV.^{20,21} The goal of secondary prevention is to detect risk and act early to prevent high-risk individuals and groups from perpetrating or experiencing violence.²³

Examples of secondary prevention strategies that are employed in Australia to address DFSV include, but are not limited to, the following:

- enhancing child safeguarding schemes to prevent the abuse of children and foster child-safe cultures
- early intervention programs to support children, young people and families at risk of vulnerability, and
- services that provide referrals to individuals at risk of perpetrating violence so they can access specialised and targeted support.^{24,25}

Tertiary prevention

Tertiary prevention comprises strategies that are targeted at individuals who have perpetrated DFSV and aims to promote attitudinal and behavioural change to prevent these individuals from perpetrating such violence again.^{20,21} Tertiary prevention can also include responses to people who have experienced DFSV to prevent re-victimisation and ensure and that the person affected is safe.

Examples of tertiary prevention strategies that are employed in Australia to address DFSV including, but are not limited to, the following:

- Men’s Behaviour Change programs which aim to encourage men who have perpetrated violence to recognise their behaviour and develop strategies to prevent them from using violence²⁶
- criminal justice sanctions for individuals who have perpetrated DFSV
- DFV programs that propose intervention with women and children to prevent further violence and abuse and implement a range of technology tools (e.g., safety alarms, technology sweeps and CCTV) to achieve this goal.²⁷

2.2.2. The policy context

Sport organisations are identified as priority settings in the prevention of DFSV in several national and state-based policy documents. The NSW Prevention Strategy encompasses the NSW Government’s commitment to ensuring all people and communities are free from DFSV. The NSW Strategy is an extension of the *NSW Domestic and Family Violence Plan 2022-2027* and the *NSW Sexual Violence Plan 2022-2027*, with both plans specifying primary prevention as a key pillar.

The NSW Strategy outlines three key priorities to be addressed. These include:

- Priority 1: Progressing prevention action in priority settings, including local communities, schools and early childhood education and care, workplaces, and sports clubs and organisations, to ensure the NSW community is supported to live in healthy and safe relationships.
- Priority 2: Supporting Aboriginal-led prevention, to ensure Aboriginal families are healthy and safe, and enjoy equity in their relationships.
- Priority 3: Building centralised supports and the evidence based to ensure that NSW has structures and systems to support good governance, collaboration and coordination across the primary prevention system.⁵

The NSW Strategy clearly sets out the importance of implementing prevention programs and initiatives in sport settings. Specifically, the strategy notes:

Sport reaches and influences people in multiple settings and at all ages, including employees, sponsors, supporters, volunteers, players and their families. Sports clubs and organisations are workplaces and social contexts where people build relationships and communities and institutions with significant influence. Sport settings also present an opportunity to influence men and boys to develop healthy masculinities and to have positive, supportive male peer relationships.⁵

The NSW Strategy sets out a range of focus areas in relation to sports clubs and organisations, including but not limited to building evidence about what works in NSW sport to support gender equality and DFSV primary prevention; establishing, scaling up and strengthening successful evidence-based primary prevention activities in sport; and establishing a dedicated team within the Office of Sport to drive the coordination and implementation of primary prevention activity.

Similarly, the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and their Children 2022-2032* notes that prevention approaches should be embedded in a range of settings, including sporting organisations. Sporting organisations are a key setting for the prevention of DFSV because:

- The gendered drivers of violence may be particularly apparent in sport contexts, for example, the normalising of rigid gender stereotypes, unwelcoming environments for women, girls, LGBTQIA+ people, and trans and gender-diverse people, and the under-representation of women and gender diverse people in leadership positions.¹⁵
- Sport is part of the lives of many Australians and are important social institutions in which values norms are shaped and communicated.¹⁶
- Sporting organisations are places where violence against women can occur directly, while at the same time being sources of influence on attitudes that condone or excuse violence.¹⁶

Sporting organisations are workplaces that may have staff, volunteers, members or other stakeholders who have experienced or perpetrated violence.¹⁶

2.3. A note on project scope and definitions

This report uses the definition of sport provided by the Office of Sport. Sport is defined as physical activity that can be undertaken by a team or an individual in a social or competitive environment in pursuit of a result. It can be organised or less formal with a greater focus on social outcomes.⁸ As at August 2024, NSW recognises a total of 97 State Sporting Organisations (SSO) and State Sporting Organisations for people with Disability (SSOD). These sports vary significantly in terms of participant

numbers, participant demographics (e.g., gender, age, cultural background), and whether participation occurs at a community/grassroots or elite level. It should be noted that the existing literature may not necessarily distinguish between the different ways that sport can be practiced.

The potential for definitional slippage and overlap between the different aspects of the public health approach to the prevention of DFSV should be noted. Much of the existing literature does not distinguish between these different components and often collapses these terms into the binary of 'prevention' and 'response'. This may be particularly relevant to strategies and initiatives implemented in sport settings which do not always distinguish between primary and secondary prevention. As such, this report adopts a broad definition of 'primary prevention' to include both whole-of-population and whole-of-setting approaches to the prevention of DFSV. This may include programs delivered to an entire population within sport settings (e.g., programs delivered to male athletes). Responses to, and recovery from, DFSV are not in scope for the current project.

The research team understand that DFSV is the focus of this review, consistent with the NSW Prevention Strategy. However, it should be noted that a range of terms are used in the existing literature, including domestic and family violence (DFV), sexual violence (SV) and violence against women (VAW), and these terms may be used interchangeably. However, this means that some prevention programs and initiatives may not be directly comparable. When describing a specific publication, we have retained the term used in that publication.

2.4. This report

This report details the findings of a review of available literature relating to the primary prevention of DFSV in sport settings. It outlines the literature review methodology, findings of the review, and conclusions and next steps. This literature review is the first component of a broader rapid review into DFSV primary prevention programs, initiatives and strategies in the sport sector.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research questions

The literature review addresses the following key questions, developed in consultation with the Office of Sport:

1. What are the key elements of programs and initiatives that aim to prevent DFSV in sports sectors and related organisations?
2. Are there evaluations of DFSV prevention programs in sports sectors and related organisations? What are the measures of success used in these evaluations?
3. Is there evidence that certain prevention strategies or approaches are more promising for certain population groups (e.g., First Nations people, people with disability, children at risk) and/or types of DFSV?

3.2. Search strategy

To address the research questions, a search of academic and grey literature databases was conducted. Search terms were developed in relation to three broad concept areas:

- Concept area 1: Domestic, family and sexual violence
- Concept area 2: Prevention programs, strategies and initiatives
- Concept area 3: Sport

A complete list of search terms can be found in Appendix A Table 4. The search terms were adapted when searching grey literature databases, Google Scholar and other websites, as these sources cannot accommodate complex search strings.

Searches were conducted using the following databases: Google Scholar, EBSCO, Web of Science, Analysis and Policy Observatory (APO), Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) Digital Library, Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS), and key websites including Our Watch and the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Citation chaining was also used to identify any other relevant publications not identified through the previously described methods.

3.3. Inclusion criteria

The following inclusion criteria were used for the literature review:

1. Publications from Australia, NZ, UK, Ireland, USA and Canada
2. Published in English
3. Published in the last 10 years
4. Evidence in the form of empirical research, systematic/evidence/scoping reviews, evaluations, reports, models or frameworks, or policy documents
5. Publications that specifically refer to the prevention of DFSV within sporting sectors or using sport as a key element of the prevention program.

Any publications that did not meet the above criteria were excluded from the review.

3.4. Screening process

Results from the database searches were screened in two stages:

1. Title, keyword and abstracts were screened in the first stage to determine relevance to the review by two members of the research team.
2. If publications were deemed potentially relevant during the first stage of screening, their full text was then screened for relevance.

Data extraction for publications that passed the full-text screening were then conducted to identify information relevant to the research questions.

3.5. Limitations

Several limitations should be noted when interpreting the findings of this literature review. The literature review only identified publications from academic and grey literature and select key websites. The research team recognise that state and national sport organisations may have developed resources for the prevention of DFSV, which may or may not be easily accessible externally or publicly available. These resources will be identified in the next phase of the project, which will include engagement with key sporting organisations.

Most of the studies included in the review were international sources, with many of the included studies conducted in the USA. Approaches to prevention programs, initiatives and policies may vary across contexts, particularly where they are focused exclusively on university contexts, so care should be taken when considering how these findings may apply in NSW. Finally, there was little attention to diversity in the identified sources, and limited studies examining the use of sport in preventing DFSV in Aboriginal communities or the inclusion of people with disability.

4. Findings

A total of 42 publications were included in the literature review. This included publications from Australia (n=15), NZ (n=1), USA (n=18), Canada (n=4), the UK (n=2), and studies reporting on initiatives in multiple countries (n=2).

4.1. Elements of prevention programs and initiatives in sport settings

Key learnings

- The importance of a whole-of-sport approach was highlighted, as it enables sporting organisations to enact multiple strategies to change structures, norms, practices, attitudes and behaviours both within the organisation (including players, coaches, officials, staff, board members and executives) and in the broader sporting community (fans, media, volunteers and external stakeholders).
- Several studies identified examined the implementation of policies, frameworks and procedures to prevent DFSV in sport settings.
- Key elements of prevention programs and initiatives in sport settings were identified from the existing literature. Examples include implementing clear policies and procedures to support individuals experiencing violence, Codes of Conduct that sets out behavioural expectations for athletes and staff, and clear procedures and accountability structures for addressing allegations of DFSV.
- It is critical that sport organisations engaging in DFSV prevention work aim to challenge rigid gender stereotypes and increase the participation of women and girls, including as players, coaches, umpires, administrators and leaders.
- Training and support should be provided, at both the local and elite level, to create sporting environments and structures that are inclusive, respectful and welcoming of women and girls, address harmful norms and attitudes that contribute to DFSV and promote trauma-informed responses.
- Successfully conducting prevention activities across multiple levels of organisations and sectors requires the establishment of partnerships between program developers, sports organisations, and policy makers, as partnerships provide an opportunity for prevention stakeholders to collaborate, share expertise, and build the capacity of all parties involved.
- Sports coaches were identified as key stakeholders that should be engaged in prevention activities, as coaches often spend large amounts of time with players/athletes and are often influential role models in young peoples' lives. Several studies identified in the review highlighted the positive influence that coaches can have on athletes.

4.1.1. Whole-of-sport approach

A 'whole-of-setting' or 'whole-of-sport' approach was identified as a key element of prevention programs and initiatives in sports organisations and settings. Specifically, a 'whole-of-sport' approach can be defined as follows:

A whole-of-sport approach is a holistic one where a sporting organisation aims to address the drivers of VAW by enacting multiple strategies to change structures, norms, practices, attitudes and behaviours both within the organisation (including players, coaches, officials, staff, board members and executives) and in the broader sporting community (fans, media, volunteers and external stakeholders). A whole of sport approach can operate at different levels across a sport, from a peak national body to state associations, and regional and local organisations.¹⁶

This aligns with the Our Watch⁷ *Change the Story* framework for the primary prevention of VAW, which highlights the importance of whole-of-setting approaches that include:

- policy, practice and structural change within settings
- involvement of all those who engage with the setting, including leadership, staff, volunteers, setting audiences, and those outside the setting who provide it with services and support
- consideration of the mechanisms that can support and enable prevention activity across the setting.⁷

The review identified several resources developed by Our Watch that outlined how a 'whole-of-setting' approach to the prevention of VAW may be implemented in sports settings. Examples outlined in these resources include:

- involving all participants, leaders and the wider community in promoting equal, respectful and non-violent policies and practices in sport settings, including staff, players and supporters^{28, 29}
- ensuring strong leadership and endorsement, supportive governance structures, and culture that consciously seeks and supports equality and respect across the whole of sport³⁰
- ensuring regular communications that explicitly endorse gender equality and the prevention of VAW, including through campaigns and events, media releases, public statements/speeches, newsletters and emails³⁰
- deliberate efforts to value and make visible women's leadership within the organisation and across the whole of sport.³⁰

Similarly, Sport and Recreation Victoria's *Safe and Inclusive Sport Guide* highlights the importance of a whole-of-sport approach to create cultural change at all levels of sport.¹⁵ This includes working with national and state government, national sporting organisations, state sporting organisations, Regional Sports Assemblies, local councils, leagues and associations, local sports clubs, and individuals including players, coaches, staff, volunteers, parents, and spectators. A summary of the Guide can be found in Appendix B Table 6.

While the importance of whole-of-sport approaches was clearly stated in the literature, it is evident that prevention practices in sport typically occur at the individual level.³¹ Additionally, there was some evidence that that concept may be difficult to implement for some organisations. For example, Lambert et al.³² conducted an evaluation of the *Preventing Violence Through Sport* grant program, which funded 12 community sport and prevention organisations to address and prevent VAW in Victoria. The study found that while the participating organisations had a good overall understanding of whole-of-sport approaches, some were unclear about how to translate their project-specific work into whole-of-sport impact. Similarly, Liston et al.'s³³ study exploring sporting organisations' understanding of primary prevention principles identified limiting understanding and engagement with these concepts. This ultimately highlights the need for improved education for those working in sporting organisations and deeper consideration of the complex nature of doing violence prevention work in sport settings.³³

4.1.2. Policies, frameworks and procedures

Sporting organisations can make change to their policies, framework and procedures with the aim of preventing DFSV. Several studies identified in the literature review examined the implementation of DFSV policies within sport settings. Examples of actions that can be taken by sporting organisations include:

- implementing clear policies and procedures to support athletes, staff or other relevant stakeholders who experience violence³⁰
- increasing the representation of women within the organisation, including in leadership positions¹⁶
- implementing a Code of Conduct that sets out behavioural expectations for athletes and staff, requires a commitment to respectful conduct, and reinforces bystander and champion behaviour^{16, 31, 34, 35}
- implementing clear procedures and accountability structures for addressing allegations of DFSV or other safety concerns^{16, 31, 36}
- ensure policies address workplace flexibility, parental leave arrangements, and provisions for roles in the organisation to be filled on a part-time or job-share basis³⁰
- codifying requirements for ongoing education and training.³¹

Joy et al.³⁷ provided an overview of policies implementing by sporting organisations to prevent SV and improve how SV is addressed in these settings. For example, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Code of Ethics strives to ensure respect for human dignity and rejects all forms of harassment and abuse, including physical and sexual abuse. The IOC recommends that organisations implement and monitor policies and procedures for safe sport that:

- state that all athletes have a right to be treated with respect and be protected from violence
- state that the welfare of athletes is paramount
- identify who has responsibility for the implementation of policies and procedures
- specify what constitutes a violation and specify the range of consequences
- detail a response system for handling concerns and complaints
- provide details of where to seek advice and support.³⁷

In order to develop a consistent conceptual framework for safe sport and the prevention of violence and abuse, Gurgis and Kerr³⁸ interviewed sports administrators to understand their perspectives on how to advance such initiatives. Participants acknowledged the importance of policies in fostering a safe sport environment. They emphasised that policies should clearly define the meaning of unsafe conduct and the consequences for breaching these policies. However, they identified challenges in enforcing policies, as this is often dependent on the 'goodwill' of the organisation rather than any real enforcement mechanisms. Such policies may be viewed as 'checkboxes' safe sport policies may be ineffective without the appropriate enforcement strategies.

In an evaluation of the NSW program *Tacking Violence*, a Code of Conduct implemented by Rugby League Clubs was viewed as an effective mechanism to incentivise non-violent behaviour.³⁵ The Code committed the clubs to penalising and supporting players who perpetrate DFV in return for \$3,000 in sponsorship. It was suggested that requiring individual players to sign and keep a copy of the Code would further increase awareness and commitment to the club's message against DFV.

4.1.3. Involvement of women and girls and enhancing gender equality

Sports are recognised as critical settings for promoting positive physical, psychological and social outcomes, however girls are more likely to drop out and report poor quality sport experiences compared to boys.³⁹ Women and girls may face unique barriers to participating in sport, including entrenched stereotypes and cultural norms that depict sport as an activity for men, gender discrimination in selection processes, a lack of visible female role models, poor treatment of women in leadership roles, structural barriers in sporting clubs and recreational centres, and a lack of accessible, inclusive and affordable opportunities.¹⁶ It is therefore critical that sport organisations engaging in DFSV prevention work aim to challenge rigid gender stereotypes and increase the participation of women and girls, including as players, coaches, umpires, administrators and leaders.²⁸

Prevention strategies and initiatives in sport settings often focus on addressing gender inequality and addressing negative behaviours and attitudes towards those who do not conform to dominant gender stereotypes or rigid gender roles. This is critical given the link between gender inequality and DFSV. Addressing gender inequality in sport settings has several benefits and positive impacts for individuals and the whole community, including:

- Action on gender equality will improve the lives of women, girls and gender-diverse people by ensuring they are supported, included and have a sense of belonging in sport.
- Breaking free from dominant masculine stereotypes will support men's and boys' wellbeing, as well as prevent gender-based violence (GBV).
- Embedding gender equality within a sports club creates a stronger club that reflects the wider community and builds a sense of connectedness.
- Having gender diversity in club leadership positions such as committee members, coaches, players, umpires, referees and officials can bring different skills, expertise and views.¹⁵

Liston et al.¹⁶ conducted a literature review and stakeholder consultations to identify the key elements for effective work in sport as a setting for the prevention of VAW. They identified the meaningful involvement of women and girls as critical in the development, design and delivery of prevention strategies and initiatives in the sport sector. They provided the following examples of good practice:

- implement clear organisation strategies that increase the meaningful involvement of women and girls in all elements and levels of sport
- consult with women and girls to ensure organisational culture and physical spaces are safe, inclusive and accessible
- develop communications and marketing campaigns that celebrate the achievements of women in sporting organisations
- review the sporting environment and spaces to ensure appropriate access for, and representation of, women
- allocation of resources that reflects balance and equality for women and girls, including funding, staff, materials and infrastructure.¹⁶

In another study conducted by Liston et al.³³, they aimed to explore how representatives from sporting organisations understood and conceptualised the primary prevention of VAW within their organisation. Some participants discussed their organisation's policies that promote gender equality and women in sport and referred to actions that promote women's leadership, representation and participation.

Participants were also asked to rank the importance of various key elements for the primary prevention of VAW, including (1) changing norms and cultures, (2) awareness raising, (3) promoting gender equality, (4) challenging rigid gender roles and stereotypes, (5) working across the whole population, (6) challenging the condoning of violence against women, (7) promoting women's independence and decision making, and (8) strengthening positive, equal and respectful relationships. The promotion of women's independence and decision-making and challenging rigid gender roles were perceived by participants as the least important actions. This highlights the sporting organisation may require more specific information and education about the key drivers of VAW and essential actions to prevent it.³³

4.1.4. Education, training and awareness raising

The literature review highlighted the importance of education and training in raising awareness about gender equality and the prevention of DFSV, addressing harmful norms and attitudes that contribute to DFSV, and ensuring that all stakeholders understand their role in preventing DFSV in sports settings. Training and support should be provided, at both the local and elite level, to create sporting environments and structures that are inclusive, respectful and welcoming of women and girls.²⁸ Education and training should be survivor-centred in order to cultivate genuine understanding, compassion and empathy.⁴⁰ While the review identified existing training programs that were either a one-off or conducted over several sessions, ongoing training was generally considered best practice.

The Our Watch³⁰ *Equality and Respect in Sport: Implementation Guide* states that organisations should provide training and information to key staff to increase their understanding of VAW and equip them with bystander skills and confidence to take action against problematic behaviours and attitudes. A summary of the Guide can be found in Table 5 in Appendix B. The Guide identifies the following as good practice when engaging in training and education:

- training for organisational leaders to ensure they understand VAW, the drivers of violence, and the role of the organisation in prevention
- training for all staff to ensure that they understand the relevant policies and procedures
- staff should be provided with materials to support them to take bystander action, promote gender equality, and respond appropriately to those who experience sexism, harassment, discrimination or violence
- training should be provided by an expert prevention organisation.³⁰

The literature review identified that training and education in sports settings primarily focused on changing individual attitudes among players and staff. In an Australian study conducted by Hamilton et al.⁴¹, interviews were conducted with staff from national, state and local level sporting organisations to explore how they applied prevention principles in their work. Participants discussed how a large part of their prevention work involved education and awareness raising about VAW, aiming to change peoples' attitudes by discussing topics such as gender bias, sexual consent and respectful relationships.

There was also evidence that training should be tailored for certain stakeholder groups. Our Watch²⁸ suggested that training and support should be provided for sports club leaders, at both the local and elite level, to create club environments/structures that are inclusive, respectful and welcoming of women and girls. Gillard et al.⁴² conducted a review of the training needs of Athlete Health and Performance (AHP) team members navigating interpersonal violence in sport. The review identified common training needs for all types of AHP team members, including the ability to recognise signs

and symptoms of interpersonal violence in sport and implement trauma-informed practices. The following specific needs based on staff role were identified:

- *Sport managers*: Training should go beyond awareness raising and explicitly address ways of facilitating behavioural change, particularly among athletes and coaches. Training initiatives should cover topics such as policies and codes of conduct, prevention, power dynamics, and reporting. Managers should also be equipped to implement, maintain and adapt safeguarding systems within their organisation.
- *Medical staff*: Training initiatives should cover topics such as screening for interpersonal violence in sport by creating climates of open and reassuring communication, including the use of screening tools, and provide information on existing safeguarding policies and best practices when performing their professional duties with athletes.
- *Mental performance/mental health practitioners*: Training initiatives should cover information about safety in sport (e.g., protection policies, regulations or laws for children), definitions of interpersonal violence in sport, signs of interpersonal violence in sport, and appropriate intervention strategies.

In Gurgis and Kerr's³⁸ study with sports administrators in Canada, all participants agreed that offering education around safe sport was integral to creating a physically and psychologically safe environment. Safe sport education should not only target coaches, as it was suggested that education be developed and made compulsory for all participants in sport. Participants also noted that training should be values-based and highlight the positive side of sport.³⁸ Similarly, the evaluation of *Tackling Violence* highlighted the value of education sessions to Rugby League players, noting that programs should ensure sessions are tailored to individual communities, delivered early in the season, and leverage relationships with the local community and services.

Direct participation programs, with a focus on education and promoting respectful and healthy relationships, can also be implemented to address individual attitudes, norms and behaviours which reinforce or constitute DFSV.²⁸ The literature review identified that these programs are typically targeted towards players/athletes and coaches.^{e.g.,43-45} Further detail about programs identified in the literature review, including their evaluated effectiveness, can be found in section 4.2 below.

4.1.5. Collaboration and engaging with key stakeholders

Successfully conducting prevention activities across multiple levels of organisations and sectors requires the establishment of partnerships between program developers, sports organisations, and policy makers.³¹ Partnerships provide an opportunity for prevention stakeholders to collaborate, share expertise, and build the capacity of all parties involved.¹⁵ Sport and Recreation Victoria recommend developing partnerships with Universities and TAFE, local councils, gender equity and prevention organisations, women's health organisations, regional sport assemblies, schools, specialist inclusion organisations, local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, and organisations with specific expertise in engaging men and boys in gender equality.¹⁵ Organisations should also consider engaging with elite athletes, who can be involved in the promotion of media campaigns as ambassadors against VAW.¹⁶

There may also be potential for victim-survivors for DFSV to be involved in aspects of safeguarding in sport.⁴⁶ This may include as an educator, researcher, advocator, policy developer, investigator, advisor for reconciliation processes, supporter of survivors, or safeguarding officer. Mountjoy et al.⁴⁶ provide

recommendations for successful engagement of victim-survivors in ensuring safe sporting environments. These include:

- prioritising athlete safeguarding in sport leadership
- implementing a survivor-centred approach
- implementing trauma-informed training
- providing respectful; and ethical support
- following-up on commitments and project outcomes
- ensuring safe institutional policies and procedures
- engendering survivor trust.

4.1.6. The role of coaches

Sports coaches were also identified as key stakeholders that should be engaged in prevention activities, as coaches often spend large amounts of time with players/athletes and are often influential role models in young peoples' lives.¹⁶ Several studies identified in the literature review examined the Coaching Boys Into Men (CBIM) program, which leverages existing relationships between coaches and athletes to deliver an adolescent dating violence prevention program.^{43-45, 47-50} Coaches deliver weekly messages using CBIM 'training cards' and facilitate discussions with athletes about respect and violence prevention. Two studies sought feedback directly from coaches about their experiences of delivering the program.^{45, 50} Coaches reflected on the impact of the program for their athletes, stating that they had observed positive changes in athlete behaviours, including increased awareness of their language, attitudes and behaviours⁴⁵ and bystander intervention.⁵⁰ These positive impacts in turn increased coaches' commitment to the program. It was also important to have multiple coaches embrace the program in order to normalise its implementation.⁵⁰

Several other studies identified the positive influence that coaches can have on athletes. Kroshus et al.⁵¹ conducted a survey with male college athletes in the USA, asking whether they coach had ever talked to them about the following topics: the appropriate treatment of women, relationship violence, or speaking up when they see things that are not right. The study found that athletes reported a greater likelihood of intending to intervene when their coach had communicated expectations about appropriate off-field conduct. Similarly, Tredinnick and McMahon⁵² conducted a survey with student athletes to determine whether their coach had ever discussed the topics such as sexual assault, rape, and reporting sexual assault. The study found that students who had discussed sexual assault with their coach were more likely to report actively participating in activities to prevent sexual assault on campus and were more familiar with campus resources in relation to sexual assault.

4.2. Evaluations of prevention programs and initiatives in sport settings

Key learnings

- The literature review identified evaluations of 13 prevention programs and initiatives implemented in sport settings. These programs aimed to improve DFSV knowledge, awareness and attitudes, increase bystander confidence, and reduce DFSV perpetration.
- Most were direct participation programs that engaged with players/athletes, coaches and other stakeholders at the individual or group level to address knowledge, attitudes and behaviours contributing to DFSV. It was also common for programs to use organisational development strategies to increase gender equality and address DFSV in sporting and related organisations, including by implementing policies, leveraging the support of senior leaders, and developing 'whole-of-organisation' prevention plans.
- The evaluated prevention programs demonstrated positive outcomes in relation to the following:
 - *Attitudes and beliefs*: Program participants reported improved attitudes and beliefs in relation to gender attitudes, domestic abuse myth acceptance, rape myth acceptance, rape-supportive beliefs, and sexual consent.
 - *Bystander intentions and actions*: Program participants reported greater improvement for bystander intent, confidence to speak-up against problematic behaviours, and higher engagement in bystander behaviours.
 - *DFSV perpetration*: There was limited evidence that suggested that program participants were less likely to perpetrate adolescent relationship abuse, dating abuse, sexual harassment and sexual assault.
- Studies noted some barriers and challenges to the implementation of prevention programs in sports settings which should be considered in the design and delivery of any programs. These included:
 - backlash and resistance from program participants
 - insufficient time to implement the program
 - challenges engaging with local sporting clubs
 - the need for champions who are men but who also demonstrate a tangible commitment to gender equity and change
 - high turnover of staff within the organisation
 - weather impacting program delivery for outdoor sports
 - lack of funding/resources and challenges with project sustainability.

4.2.1. Summary of evaluated programs

Evaluations of 13 prevention programs and initiatives in sport settings were identified in the literature review. An overview of the programs can be found in Table 2 below. The evaluations used quantitative and qualitative methodologies to examine the implementation, impact and outcomes of the prevention programs, with many using a mixed-methods approach. Common evaluation approaches included

surveys and interviews with program participants, specifically athletes and coaches. While a best practice approach stipulates that monitoring and evaluation should be incorporated into prevention programs from the outset,^{7, 16} sporting organisations may not necessarily have the resources required to engage in robust evaluation activities.

The literature review identified a range of programs aimed at improving DFSV knowledge, awareness and attitudes, increasing bystander confidence, and reducing DFSV perpetration. As shown in Table 2 below, most were direct participation programs (n=11) that engage with players/athletes, coaches and other stakeholders at the individual or group level to address knowledge, attitudes and behaviours contributing to DFSV. It was also common for programs to use organisational development strategies (n=5) to increase gender equality and address DFSV in sporting and related organisations, including by implementing policies, leveraging the support of senior leaders, and developing 'whole-of-organisation' prevention plans. Communications and social marketing campaigns (n=2) were also used to raise awareness of DFSV and promote positive attitudes and behaviours.

Table 2 below and Table 7 in Appendix C outlines the features of the 13 evaluated DFSV prevention programs and initiatives identified in the literature review. Most of the programs were delivered in the Australia (n=6), with the remaining implemented in the USA (n=5), the UK (n=1) or NZ (n=1). Of the programs implemented in Australia, only one of these were in NSW (Tackling Violence), with the remaining implemented in Victoria or WA. The programs addressed various, sometimes multiple, forms of violence, including sexual violence or misconduct (n=6), DV or FV (n=3), adolescent dating violence (n=1) and CSA (n=1). Several programs addressed VAW or GBV more generally (n=3) rather than focusing on a specific type of violence.

The evaluations also included participant feedback on program delivery, which was largely positive across each of the programs. For example, participants of CBIM appreciated that the program facilitator built positive relationships with the participants.⁴⁴ The facilitator was described as a non-parental adult ally who participants felt comfortable talking with about program topics. Participants consistently reported viewing the facilitator as a credible and effective messenger because of their skill in delivering the program. Participants valued the facilitator's confident and natural delivery style, use of real-life examples to explain program content, and use of interactive teaching methods. Participants of the *All-In: A Culture of Respect* program indicated that they liked that the program was delivered online and that it required them to engage in various activities.⁵³ Participants from the *Wingman 101* program also reported that the facilitators were relatable which enabled to talk openly and honestly about a traditionally uncomfortable topic.⁵⁴

Table 2. Type and aims of evaluated DFSV prevention programs and initiatives in sports settings identified in the literature review.

Program name	Location	Types of sport included	Type of prevention activity	Program aims and content
All-In: A Culture of Respect ⁵³	USA	Not specific, various sports included	Direct participation program	The All-In: Culture of Respect program aims to increase bystander awareness and skills among student athletes. The program covers the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • definitions of sexual misconduct, harassment and violence • the role of consent • SV risk factors • delineating the association between heavy drinking and SV • bystander intervention strategies.⁵³
Coaching Boys Into Men (CBIM) 43-45, 47-50	USA	Not specific, various sports included	Direct participation program	The CBIM program aims to address the social norms that foster adolescent relationship abuse and sexual violence, promote bystander intervention, and reduce perpetration. The program engages with athletic coaches as positive role models to deliver violence prevention tools and scripts to male athletes. Content covered in the program includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what constitutes disrespectful and harmful relationship behaviours • dispelling myths that glorify male sexual aggression and promoting more gender-equitable attitudes • positive bystander intervention when aggressive male behaviours are witnessed.⁴⁷
Fair Play: Sexual Violence Prevention for Athletes ⁵⁵	USA	College athletic teams (football, softball, women's golf, women's tennis)	Direct participation program	The Fair Play: Sexual Violence Prevention for Athletes program incorporates a public health approach to SV prevention for college athletes. The program has four main components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • awareness and understanding of SV, consent and rape culture in sports • healthy sex education • gender and sexuality • bystander intervention.
Football Onside ⁵⁶	UK	Football	Direct participation program	Football Onside is a feminist, gender transformative and social justice-informed bystander leadership intervention. Content covered in the program includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information on the law • performative masculinities and sport • prevalence, impact and myths surrounding SV and DV • consent • bystander skills building.

Program name	Location	Types of sport included	Type of prevention activity	Program aims and content
It's not OK ⁵⁷	NZ	Rugby League	Organisational development; communications and social marketing campaigns	The It's not OK program is a community-driven campaign to reduce FV. The program aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase awareness of FV so that it becomes visible and talked about throughout NZ • increase understanding of FV and its many impacts • increase the personal relevance of FV so that New Zealanders acknowledge that it involves everyone • promote a greater propensity to act on FV • create a social climate that supports behavioural change
Preventing and Responding to Sexual Misconduct (PRSM) ⁵⁸	Australia (WA)	Football, basketball	Direct participation program	The PRSM program aims to challenge aspects of sports culture that reinforce norms that support rape culture, including entitlement, valuation of dominance, and rape myth acceptance. It aims to engender a set of values and behaviours that promote healthy communities and the prevention of sexual misconduct through bystander intervention. The program also includes alcohol-specific information that was designed to challenge athletes' beliefs about alcohol and encourage moderate drinking practices. ⁵⁸
Preventing Violence Through Sport Grants Program ³²	Australia (Vic)	Not specific, various sports included	Organisational development; community mobilisation and strengthening	The Preventing Violence Through Sport grants program, funded by Family Safety Victoria, takes a whole-of-sport approach to engage young people and the broader community in the prevention of GBV. Sport and Recreation Victoria's Gender Equity team administers the grant program and provides direct support for projects through capacity building activities, communities of practice, resource and information sharing, tailored advice, and stakeholder engagement. ³²
Men Against Violence (MAV) ⁵⁹	Australia (Vic)	Not specific, various sports included	Direct participation program; community mobilisation and strengthening	The MAV project aims to improve awareness in the community, particularly men and boys, about the importance of healthy and respectful relationships to address FV. The program focussed on improving gender equality in sporting environments through raising awareness and engagement. Topics covered included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how men can be involved in FV prevention • encouraging men to call out sexist remarks and behaviours amongst their peers • masculinity and respect.⁵⁹
Protecting God's Children (PGC) ⁶⁰	USA	Not specific, various sports included	Direct participation program	The PGC program aims to increase sport coaches' knowledge of CSA, increase their ability to identify warning signs of abuse, and increase their willingness to intervene by reporting suspicious behaviour. Program participants view two movies that cover the following topics:

Program name	Location	Types of sport included	Type of prevention activity	Program aims and content
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • common CSA myths • how to prevent and report CSA.⁶⁰
Respect and Responsibility ⁶¹	Australia (Vic)	AFL	Direct participation program; organisational development	<p>Respect and Responsibility is a policy and program for the prevention of VAW developed and implemented by the AFL. Its education program includes the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incidence and gendered nature of SV • meaning of sexual consent and communication skills in negotiating consent • how to ensure a respectful team culture that can work to prevent SV • legal definition of rape • impact of SV on victim-survivors • intervening in high-risk bystander situations involving friends and teammates.⁶¹
Tackling Violence ³⁵	Australia (NSW)	Rugby League	Direct participation program; organisational development; communication s and social marketing campaigns	<p>Tackling Violence aims to reduce the incidence of DFV by building knowledge and awareness and promoting positive attitudes and behaviours towards women through engagement with Rugby League clubs. The program is comprised of the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Code of Conduct that commits clubs to penalising and supporting players who perpetrate DFV in return for \$3,000 in sponsorship • education sessions delivered to club players and members • community awareness activities • referrals and support arrangements linking clubs to local DFV services.
We're Game ⁶²	Australia (Vic)	YMCA, tennis, netball, Australian rules football	Direct participation program; organisational development	<p>The We're Game project supports sports and leisure clubs and centres to plan and take action against violence and gender inequality. The program brings together partners to build capacity and harness collaboration to drive progress, supports local sports and leisure settings to undertake a gender equity audit and to develop an action plan to progress gender equality, and works with local communities to design and implement programs and initiatives that will meet the projects' goals.⁶³</p>
Wingman 101 ⁵⁴	USA	Not specific, various sports included	Direct participation program	<p>Wingman 101 is a bystander-based SV prevention program designed for male undergraduate athletes. The program focuses on facilitated scenario-based discussions, allowing participants to identify existing group norms around SV and then engaging in examination, critique and deconstruction of these norms.⁵⁴</p>

4.2.2. Effectiveness and impact of evaluated programs

Table 3 details the outcomes of the nine quantitative evaluations identified in the literature review. Key outcome measures included DFSV perpetration, knowledge and awareness, attitudes and beliefs, bystander intentions and confidence, and bystander actions. Several evaluations also sought qualitative feedback from program participants, which supplemented the quantitative data.

4.2.2.1. Knowledge and awareness

Several prevention programs identified in the literature review engaged with players/athletes and coaches/staff to increase their knowledge and awareness of DFSV and gender equality. Studies identified that participants reported increased knowledge and awareness of:

- different types of abuse, including DFV, SV and CSA^{35, 53, 60}
- what constitutes abusive behaviour^{44, 49, 53}
- where to seek help⁵⁸
- their organisation's procedures for addressing complaints.⁵⁸

The impact of prevention programs on participants' knowledge and awareness was typically measured using surveys administered both prior to and following their completion of the program. For example, Thompson et al.⁵³ examined the efficacy of an online SV prevention program (*All-In: A Culture of Respect*) for student athletes. Pre- and post-surveys were used to assess participants' knowledge of SV, using items such as 'sexual violence always involves some form of physical contact'. The study found improved knowledge of SV among those who participated in the program.

4.2.2.2. Attitudes and beliefs

There was some evidence that programs led to improved attitudes and beliefs among participants. Studies indicated that participants reported improved attitudes and beliefs in relation to:

- gender attitudes⁴⁴
- domestic abuse myth acceptance⁵⁶
- rape myth acceptance and rape-supportive beliefs^{53, 55, 56, 58}
- sexual consent.⁵³

Again, the impact of prevention programs was typically measured using pre- and post-surveys. Morean et al.'s⁵⁸ study evaluated the efficacy of the *preventing and Responding to Sexual Misconduct* program delivered to the student athletes. They found significant decreases in rape myths immediately following participation in the program. This decrease was also maintained at three-month follow-up.

However, some studies found limited evidence of improved attitudes and beliefs among participants. McCray and Taylor⁵⁵ evaluated the *Fair Play: Sexual Violence Prevention for Athletes* program and found that while participants reported lower rape myth acceptance after completing the program, there were no significant differences in perceptions of gender roles post-program completion. Following program completion, football players also scored significantly higher than women golfers on the rape myth scale, with higher scores indicating a greater acceptance/endorsement of rape myths.

4.2.2.3. Bystander intentions and actions

Bystander intentions, confidence and actions were also common outcome measures used in the evaluations. In Kovalenko and Fenton's⁵⁶ study of the *Football Onside* program, participants reported greater improvement for bystander intent and efficacy and higher engagement in bystander

behaviours. Bystander intent and efficacy was measured by surveying participants about their level of confidence to perform certain behaviours, such as 'confidence to speak up to someone who is making excuses for using physical force in a relationship'. Actual bystander behaviours were assessed by asking participants whether they had performed certain behaviours, such as 'verbally challenged sexist comments and jokes' and 'signalled disapproval at sexist comments or jokes using body language'.

Several studies evaluated the *Coaching Boys Into Men* (CBIM) program in relation to its impact on both student athletes and coaches delivering the program. Studies indicated that the program is effective in addressing the underlying norms that drive DFSV and increasing bystander confidence and behaviours. For example, Miller et al.⁴⁹ conducted a randomised clinical trial of the CBIM program delivered middle school male athletes. At the end of the sports season, athletes participating in CBIM reported more positive bystander behaviour and greater recognition of abuse compared to athletes in control schools. Athletes were followed up one year after the program had ended, with athletes in schools receiving CBIM reporting more positive bystander behaviours.

Jaime et al.⁴³ conducted a randomised controlled trial of CBIM delivered in high schools, with coaches completing baseline and post-season surveys to assess their attitudes and confidence in delivering the program. Compared to a control group of coaches who did not deliver the program, coaches delivering CBIM reported witnessing more abusive behaviour among their athletes and increased confidence to address athletes about abusive behaviours. They also reported increased positive bystander intervention and a greater number of discussions with their athletes about SV against women and girls and the use of physical violence on and off the field. In another similar study conducted by Jaime et al.⁴³, some coaches highlighted the challenges boys face in intervening when they witness peers engaging in disrespectful or harmful behaviours. Despite these challenges, coaches noted an overall change in the team's behaviour.

While some studies found strong evidence of improved bystander confidence and behaviour which was maintained at follow-up⁵⁸, other studies suggested that participants were equivocal about their willingness and comfort to act as pro-social bystanders. In an evaluation of the *Respect and Responsibility* program delivered to AFL players, two-thirds of players agreed that they would tell friends who were behaving in potentially offensive ways towards women to stop.⁶¹ However, less than half disagreed that they would feel uncomfortable in a group of men who were speaking disrespectfully about women telling them to stop. Younger age was also related to less willingness to intervene in situations involving friends behaving in offensive ways towards women and greater discomfort intervening when in a group of men speaking disrespectfully about women. Participants of the *Wingman 101* program also discussed barriers that might prevent their use of bystander actions in everyday life.⁵⁴ Barriers included concerns about the opinion of others, their relationship with the people involved, and potential power differentials related to age and status on the team.

4.2.2.4. DFSV perpetration

There was limited evidence that the prevention programs resulted in decreases in DFSV perpetration. Two studies evaluating the CBIM program examined perpetration of adolescent relationship abuse and SV. In Miller et al.'s⁴⁹ study, athletes who had participated in CBIM and had ever dated reported lower odds of adolescent relationship abuse perpetration. Similarly, Jones et al.⁴⁸ estimated that the program resulted in a slight decrease in perpetration of dating abuse, sexual harassment and sexual assault among high school athletes.

4.2.3. Barriers and challenges

Studies noted some barriers and challenges to the implementation of prevention programs in sports settings which should be considered in the design and delivery of any programs. These included:

- backlash and resistance from program participants, including a reluctance to open up to their teammates in group settings, and resistance other stakeholders^{32, 54, 59}
- insufficient time to implement the program in addition to the organisation's usual activities^{45, 50}
- challenges engaged with local sporting clubs⁵⁹
- the need for champions who are men but who also demonstrate a tangible commitment to gender equity and change³²
- high turnover of staff within the organisation⁴⁵
- weather impacting program delivery for outdoor sports⁵⁰
- lack of funding/resources and challenges with project sustainability.^{35, 59, 62}

Table 3. Summary of outcomes reported by quantitative evaluations of prevention strategies in sport settings.

Program name	Citation(s)	Significant positive impact on:					
		<i>DFSV perpetration</i>	<i>Knowledge/ awareness</i>	<i>Attitudes/ beliefs</i>	<i>Bystander intentions/ confidence</i>	<i>Bystander actions</i>	<i>Other measures*</i>
All-In: A Culture of Respect	Thompson et al. ⁵³		X	X			
Coaching Boys Into Men (CBIM)	Jaime et al. ⁴³				X	X	X
	Jaime et al. ⁴⁴		X	X			
	Jones et al. ⁴⁸	X					
	Miller et al. ⁴⁹	X	X			X	
Fair Play: Sexual Violence Prevention for Athletes	McCray and Taylor ⁵⁵			X			
Football Onside	Kovalenko and Fenton ⁵⁶			X	X	X	
Preventing and Responding to Sexual Misconduct	Morean et al. ⁵⁸		X	X	X	X	
Protecting God's Children	Nurse ⁶⁰		X				
Respect and Responsibility	Corboz et al. ⁶¹				X		
Tackling Violence	ARTD Consultants ³⁵		X		X		X
Wingman 101	Exner-Cortens and Cummings ⁵⁴				X		

* Number of discussions about SV with athletes, confidence in organisational procedures in addressing complaints, confidence to report DFV, women's feelings of safety.

4.3. Strategies and approaches for specific population groups

Key learnings

- Overall, there is a lack of studies examining prevention programs that are specifically tailored to the needs of vulnerable population groups (e.g., culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) communities, First Nations communities, people with disability, LGBTQ communities, younger athletes), highlighting a gap in the evidence base on this topic.
- Literature identified intersectional approaches as crucial to prevention initiatives. Programs should be tailored to participants and their settings (e.g., participants' characteristics, sport type and level, gender composition of the sport, and organisational type and resourcing).
- It is important individuals and organisations developing prevention initiatives are equipped with a firm and comprehensive understanding of the concept of intersectionality and the ways in which it can be translated into practice.
- There is a need for a broader cultural shift within sport, away from an environment where characteristics such as hypermasculinity, aggression and discrimination may be normalised, towards a culture where safety, fairness and inclusivity are prioritised.
- The literature provided evidence of effective approaches for engaging men in violence prevention, while also shedding light on some of the challenges of working in this space (e.g., resistance, backlash), and the factors that enable success (e.g., stakeholder partnerships, comprehensive evaluation, engaging with stakeholders at multiple levels).
- Several publications highlighted strategies and initiatives for prevention in sport settings (e.g., screening, codes of conduct, safety initiatives). There was also evidence which emphasised the need for a stronger climate of safety within youth sport settings.

4.3.1. Ensuring intersectional approaches

Intersectional approaches were identified as crucial to prevention initiatives, with several publications emphasising the need for programs to be tailored to the settings and participants that they are aimed at.^{16,31,62} Specifically, programs should consider factors such as:

- participants' sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., gender, race, age, disability status) and roles (e.g., athlete, coach, administrator, parent)³¹
- sport level and type (e.g., individual or team sport, contact or non-contact sport)³¹
- gender composition of the sport (e.g., traditionally male or female sport, or both)⁶²
- organisational type and resourcing (e.g., centres or sports clubs; the former group tends to have larger paid workforces than the latter).⁶²

Similarly, Gillard et al.,⁴² in synthesising the literature on the roles of AHP team members in addressing interpersonal violence in sport, identified the need to ensure that prevention strategies do not adopt a 'one-size-fits-all' approach, but account for intersectionality. It is crucial to recognise that dominant understandings of what constitutes 'Safe Sport' may reflect the needs of normative athletes, without considering the unique circumstances of a range of equity deserving groups (e.g., LGBTQ athletes, racially diverse athletes, athletes with disabilities). AHP team members should receive training to ensure that they are equipped with knowledge and understanding of the specific needs of these groups.^{64 in 42}

The evaluation of the *Tackling Violence* program also noted that the delivery of culturally-appropriate education sessions was key to the program's success.³⁵ All program facilitators identified as Aboriginal and were experienced, qualified and trauma informed. The facilitators also had existing community connections, which allowed them to continue building on trusted relationships. The evaluation noted that the program could be strengthened by engaging additional facilitators to help deliver education sessions to particular population groups, such as culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

Despite the value of intersectional approaches to prevention, there was evidence that suggested that the concept of intersectionality may not be consistently understood or operationalised by individuals and organisations developing and delivering prevention initiatives. In Lambert et al.'s³² evaluation of the Victorian *Preventing Violence Through Sport* grant program, participants had different levels of understanding of intersectionality. Some participants recognised that the concept encapsulated the 'compounding discrimination and barriers' that individuals and communities may experience and were able to adapt and integrate this understanding into their programs and strategies. However, other participants were less familiar with or had a more limited understanding of the concept, with some participants feeling uncertain about how to translate the concept into practice.³² These findings emphasise the need to equip individuals and organisations that are developing prevention initiatives with a firmer understanding of intersectionality and the ways in which it can be operationalised.

One participant in Lambert et al.'s³² evaluation also noted that while it is important to highlight and include the voices of marginalised individuals and communities, it is crucial to be aware of the potential backlash and increased risk of harm that these individuals and communities can face, particularly within a sports culture that may not necessarily be supportive. This finding suggests a need for a broader cultural shift within sport – a need which was also highlighted by Gurgis and Kerr's³⁸ Canadian study of sport administrators' perspectives on advancing Safe Sport. In their study, participants spoke about the importance of moving away from a hypermasculine, aggressive and discriminatory culture in sport, towards a culture that is characterised by safety, fairness and inclusivity.³⁸ These principles were also echoed by Sport and Recreation Victoria's *Safe and Inclusive Sport* guide for preventing GBV.¹⁵

Although the literature identified intersectional approaches as crucial to prevention, it was evident that there is an overall lack of studies examining programs which are specifically tailored to the needs of vulnerable population groups (e.g., culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) communities, First Nations communities, people with disability, LGBTQ communities, younger athletes). For example, Milroy et al.'s review of the literature on SV prevention efforts in sport did not find any culturally specific practices being employed in this context, and only three prevention practices that were aimed at young athletes (i.e., athletes under the age of 15). The gaps identified in Milroy et al.'s³¹ review may be explained by the fact that not all prevention efforts are evaluated in published studies, thereby limiting the availability of publicly available information about programs aimed at vulnerable population groups. Additionally, prevention practices that are intended for certain groups, such as younger athletes, may be integrated within broader educational programs not captured by the review.³¹ Nevertheless, Milroy et al.'s³¹ findings identify a need for greater delivery of tailored SV prevention programs within sport settings for vulnerable communities.

Similarly, the current review identified limited studies examining prevention programs which were aimed at First Nations communities. Ringin et al.'s⁵⁹ research represented one of the few studies in this review which looked at the implementation of a prevention project that sought to engage with First Nations communities. The study examined the MAV project which targeted boys and men via local

sporting clubs in the City of Greater Geraldton, Western Australia (see Section 4.2.1, Table 2). One key activity undertaken as part of the project involved engaging with students at a local high school Aboriginal football academy about topics such as respect and masculinity, and challenging the gendered drivers of DFV.⁵⁹ The study highlighted the importance of partnerships in facilitating engagement with target population groups. Notably, the project's partnership with the Geraldton Sporting Aboriginal Corporation (GSAC) was cited as pivotal in allowing the project to meet and engage with local sporting leagues and teams, and the local high school football academy.⁵⁹ While these findings provide some insight on engaging First Nations communities in prevention in sports settings, it is clear that the overall evidence base on the topic remains limited.

4.3.2. Engaging with men and boys

Some of the publications in this review discussed and/or evaluated gender-specific prevention programs that were targeted at men and/or boys, and which aimed to address the social norms that facilitate violence against women, and foster healthy and respectful relationships among men.^{e.g. 43-45, 47, 48, 50, 54, 59}

These programs represent examples of prevention approaches which aim to identify and engage with population groups (e.g., male athletes) who are perceived as being at higher risk of perpetrating violence. They also align more broadly with literature that calls for men and boys to act as allies for gender equality in sport.^{see 15} The literature on these programs provide evidence of effective approaches for engaging men in violence prevention, and also shed light on some of the challenges of working in this space and the factors that enable success.

One notable example of a prevention initiative that is targeted at boys is CBIM – a program that aims to prevent adolescent relationship abuse and sexual violence by engaging athletic coaches to deliver prevention content to male athletes. Multiple evaluations of CBIM highlight the positive impacts of the program on participants (see Section 4.2.2).

Within the Australian context, there are also programs that are tailored to men and boys. One example is the MAV project in the City of Greater Geraldton, Western Australia (see Sections 4.2.1 and 4.3.1). The project sought to engage men and boys on the subject of healthy and relationships through the medium of sport.⁵⁹ Activities undertaken as part of the program included:

- a MAV round of the local Australian rules football league which incorporated presentations to teams prior to the game about ways in which men can be involved in preventing DFV
- a MAV game with the local basketball team that involved speeches before the game and at half-time to encourage men to call out sexist comments and behaviours
- presentations to students at a local high school Aboriginal football academy on respect, masculinity and challenging the drivers of DFV.

Ringin et al.'s⁵⁹ discussion of MAV project identified resistance and pushback from some men to be barriers to effective engagement. Ringin et al.⁵⁹ also drew on learnings from the project to make several recommendations for prevention initiatives targeted at men. These included:

- building partnerships and collaborations with stakeholders to create opportunities for reaching and engaging participants
- providing for extensive evaluations of programs to inform program improvements
- engaging with stakeholders at multiple levels (i.e., from grassroots to national leadership) to ensure there is strong support for programs.⁵⁹

4.3.3. Preventing child sexual abuse in sport settings

DFSV primary prevention programs must also consider the prevention of CSA as a type of sexual violence. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse identified sport and recreation groups as settings in which CSA may occur. Sport settings therefore play an important role in the prevention of CSA and raising awareness about the importance of child safety across the whole community.³⁴

Several publications in this review focused on the issue of CSA, highlighting strategies and initiatives for prevention in sport settings.^{34, 36, 60} In synthesising the literature on risk and protective factors for CSA in institutional contexts, Kaufman et al.³⁶ identified a range of CSA strategies that can be used within sport settings and organisations. These included but were not limited to:

- conducting pre-employment and volunteer screening to identify child sex offenders³⁶
- having child protection and safety policies and/or codes of conduct³⁶
- developing guidelines which sets out what constitutes appropriate behaviour for athletes, coaches and parents^{65 in 36}
- implementing safety initiatives that:
 - provide local sports organisations with resources and training on child protection
 - increase awareness among sport organisations about the issue of child abuse in sport settings
 - enable information sharing between stakeholders at various levels of sport about relevant training and policies³⁶
- putting in place ‘hands-off’ coaching approaches that emphasise no or only minimal physical contact between coaches and athletes³⁶
- limiting the time that coaches and athletes spend alone, as well as restricting their contact outside of sport organisational settings (e.g., limiting contact via digital devices and social media)^{66 in 36}
- ensuring that coaches and volunteers are adequately monitored during their interactions with children.^{66 in 36}

Consistent with the literature discussed earlier in this report which highlighted a need for a broader cultural shift in sport (see Section 4.3.1), Kaufman et al.³⁶ also underscored the importance of a ‘stronger safety climate in youth sports’ to better safeguard children and young people. Without this climate, prevention initiatives and strategies may not be able to achieve their full impact and effectiveness.^{67 in 36}

In the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse’s final report,³⁴ the Commission recommended the expansion of and increased funding for *Play by the Rules* – a website which operates as the largest provider of free online materials to the Australian sport sector. *Play by the Rules* provides resources such as, template, guidelines, toolkits, self-assessment instruments, as well as online training, to support sport organisations and individuals (e.g., athletes, parents, coaches, club administrators, spectators) to safeguard children. In advocating for the expansion of *Play by the Rules*, the Commission sought to widen its remit to incorporate resources relevant to the wider range of sport and recreation organisations and institutions, including private sector institutions.³⁴

Another recommendation by the Commission related to the importance of ensuring that all sport and recreation institutions that work with children develop and implement a code of conduct to provide guidance to volunteers, employees and parents on inappropriate and unacceptable conduct.³⁴ Codes

of conduct should be developed irrespective of the size of the organisation, and could potentially be tailored to different stakeholders. For example, a code of conduct for coaches could prohibit conduct involving favouritism or 'special' relationships with children, and outline expectations regarding appropriate contact with children.³⁴

5. Conclusion and next steps

This literature review summarises the existing academic and grey literature on DFSV prevention programs and initiatives in sport settings. Existing literature demonstrates the significant role that sporting organisations can play in the prevention of DFSV. Sporting organisations are powerful social institutions that can influence attitudes, behaviours and cultural norms, making it an ideal setting for challenging the drivers of DFSV and promoting gender equality.

The review identified a range of key elements of prevention programs and initiatives in sport settings, including whole-of-sport approaches, the implementation of policies, frameworks and procedures, involvement of women and girls, education, training and awareness raising, collaboration and engagement with key stakeholders, and the role of sport coaches. Evaluated prevention programs and initiatives show promise in improving DFSV knowledge, awareness and attitudes, increasing bystander confidence, and potentially reducing DFSV perpetration.

The literature review findings highlight the importance of multi-level strategies that combine individual, organisational and community-based actions, initiatives and programs. Collaboration between sporting organisations, government, community groups, and expert bodies is essential to build capacity and embed prevention principles within sport sectors. Successful initiatives are those that are survivor-centred, evidence-based, delivered in an ongoing way, and supported by strong leadership and accountability mechanisms. Any program or initiative should carefully consider the type of violence it is seeking to address, the intended audience (e.g., coaches, players, volunteers), and the demographic make-up of participants (e.g., cultural background, age, gender).

Despite promising examples of prevention efforts, the review also identified key challenges and gaps. There is a need for stronger evaluation frameworks to measure impact, greater investment in sustainable program delivery, and increased implementation of intersectional approaches. Notably, prevention efforts tailored to marginalised communities, including CARM groups, First Nations communities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people with disability, remain limited and warrant urgent attention. There were also fewer than expected publications relevant to the prevention of CSA in sport settings, with publications instead focusing on responses to CSA in institutional settings, often in the context of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Building on the evidence identified in this literature review, the next phase of the project will include an audit of existing DFSV prevention programs and initiatives in sport settings. The audit will primarily focus on NSW but may draw upon national examples of best practice where possible. The research team will deliver the following reports to the Office of Sport:

- A Project Plan and Progress Report, outlining the approach to the Phase 2 program audit
- An Initial Program Audit Report detailing draft findings of the audit
- A Final Program Audit. The report will contain the following components: introduction, audit methodology, findings, key challenge and opportunities, conclusions and recommendations.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Search terms

Table 4. Literature review search terms.

Concept 1: Domestic, family and sexual violence	Concept 2: Prevention	Concept 3: Sports sector
domestic violence	prevention	sport*
domestic and family violence	training	athlet*
family and domestic violence	education	
domestic, family and sexual violence	strateg*	
family violence	policy	
domestic abuse	policies	
intimate partner violence	intervention	
dating violence	processes	
family abuse	campaign	
spouse* abuse	bystander	
gender* violence	safeguard*	
sex* harass*	child safe*	
sex* violence		
sex* assault		
rape		
sexual abuse		
CSA		
indecent assault		
violence against women		
respectful relationships		
gender equality		

Appendix B: Key frameworks and guidelines for the prevention of DFSV in sport settings

Table 5. Our Watch Equality and Respect in Sport Implementation Guide – select standards and criteria relevant to prevention of VAW.

Standard	Criteria
<p>Commitment – We are committed to preventing VAW and we have structures, strategies and policies that explicitly promote gender equality</p>	Our organisation understands VAW, its drivers and the importance of workplace contributions to prevent it
	Our leaders take responsibility for preventing VAW, demonstrate this commitment by explicitly endorsing gender equality as a priority in policies, actions and communications, and model gender equality and respect in all interactions.
	We uphold gender equality principles in all policies and we have policies and procedures related specifically to gender equality and/or the prevention of VAW
	Our organisational targets, quotas and/or strategies for gender equality are reflected in leadership work plans and performance reviews, and good practice in gender equality is recognised and rewarded.
	Consistent internal and external communication expresses our commitment to promoting gender equality to prevent VAW.
	We have partnerships with services that specialise in promoting gender equality and the primary prevention of VAW to inform and strengthen our actions and initiatives.
<p>Conditions – We embed gender equality in our recruitment, remuneration and promotion processes and men and women utilise flexible work options without penalty</p>	We make deliberate efforts to value and make visible women’s leadership within the organisation and across the whole of sport.
	Our leaders and policies support cultural norms about workplace flexibility and parental leave arrangements, and staff and players are not penalised or discriminated against for taking up these options.
	We have provision for all roles in the organisation, including leadership positions, to be filled on a part-time or job-share basis.
	We have targets, quotas and/or strategies in place to support the increased representation of women in leadership and traditionally male dominated areas and departments.
	Our recruitment processes are transparent and actively seek to eliminate unconscious bias, and our appointment decisions reflect the organisation’s commitment to gender equality.
	We use deliberate strategies to recruit, train, mentor and retain women in leadership roles, including providing opportunities to build leadership skills and confidence, and support women once appointed to leadership roles.
	We ensure that equal pay, tenure, length of contracts and other benefits are available to women and men, for work of equal or comparable value.
	<p>Culture – All staff feel safe and confident in the workplace, and we actively challenge gender stereotypes, roles and norms. Staff can</p>
We review the definitions, models and concepts of leadership espoused and valued in our workplace to ensure they don’t perpetuate ideas of ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ skills and attributes, or support the superiority of male leaders or ‘masculine’ leadership.	

Standard	Criteria
raise concerns about gender inequality and potential discrimination without adverse consequences.	Our code of conduct or staff charter includes a commitment that all staff and stakeholders be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their gender, makes clear what constitutes unacceptable behaviour, and clearly states the actions that we will take in response to sexist behaviour or sexual harassment.
	We consult female staff about workplace safety and reflect their perceptions and experiences in guidelines.
	Our induction processes include the gender equality policy, commitment to preventing VAW and key messages about the rights and responsibilities of individual staff.
	Our internal and external communications avoid pejorative, minimising or stereotypes language and images, and proactively challenge gender stereotypes and norms.
	We provide training and information to key staff, including leaders, to increase their understanding of VAW and equip them with the skills and confidence to take action when others express sexist, discriminatory or violence supportive attitudes or behaviours.
	We have a clear policy to deal with policy and procedural breaches related to gender equality and the prevention of VAW.

Table 6. Sport and Recreation Victoria’s examples of positive actions in sport settings to prevent GBV.

Action to prevent GBV	Examples in sport settings
Challenge disrespect and violence against women and gender diverse people.	Implement and regularly review policies and codes of conduct that clearly articulate zero-tolerance for disrespect, violence and harassment.
	Work with leadership to ensure the policies are consistently implemented.
	Actively support and promote campaigns that demonstrate the sport or club’s commitment to gender equality.
	Leverage the widespread influence of athletes as allies by organising events and media platforms to promote awareness.
	Raise awareness about the prevalence, impact and types of GBV.
	Run active bystander training for all club members.
Promote women’s independence and decision-making in public life and relationships	The club creates targets to increase the number of women and gender diverse leaders.
	Women and gender diverse people are well supported to coach men’s/boy’s teams as well as women’s/girls’ teams.
	Community clubs are supported to annually review how equal, safe, welcoming and inclusive they are for everyone at all levels.
	Community clubs are aware of small grants to showcase and celebrate the role of women and girls in the club.
	Volunteer and paid positions in community clubs do not reinforce gender stereotypes.

Action to prevent GBV	Examples in sport settings
Challenge gender stereotypes and roles, and support all personal identities not constrained by rigid gender stereotypes	Promoting the senior netball game time as well as the senior football game time and schedule them to be complementary to maximise spectators.
	Recognise and celebrate transgender and gender diverse people as part of our sporting communities and our society.
	Language across the sport that does not reinforce gender stereotypes or use gendered language.
	The club has a commitment to increase the gender diversity of coaches and all senior leaders.
	The club aims to increase engagement of different genders in all sports.
Support men and boys in developing healthy masculinities and positive, supportive peer relationships	Engage men and boys in efforts to prevent GBV.
	Engage men and boys as allies and focus on positive, practical actions that men and boys can take in their everyday lives with their teammates, families and friends.
	Engage leaders, coaches, players and other role models who are men in sessions that support critical thinking about socially prominent ideas of being a man and embrace more diverse and positive expressions of masculinity.
	Run active bystander training regularly at all levels of sport.
Promote and normalise gender equality in public and private life	Use the sport and club's social media to share videos and content that emphasises the sports' commitment to gender equality and respectful relationships.
	The club gives equal trophies to all awarded players and teams.
	The sport or club normalises gender diversity in leadership.
	Develop partnerships with local media to increase locally driven coverage of women's sport.
Address the intersections between gender inequality and other forms of systemic and structural oppression and discrimination, and promote broader social justice	The club recognises First Nations people as the owners of the land and includes this recognition of on their website and does an acknowledgement of country at the start of every meeting.
	The sport participates in National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC week and provides opportunities for education, learning and celebration for local clubs.
	Sport organisations partner with experts to build the capacity of staff and club communities to understand how other forms of discrimination impact on people's experiences of gender inequality and take action to address these forms of discrimination.
Build safe, fair and equitable organisations and institutions by focusing on policy and systems change	Sport organisations commit to developing a gender equity action plan and systematically addressing gender inequality in their organisation.
	The sport and associated clubs integrate actions and initiatives to prevent GBV into 'business as usual', rather than in a discrete, short or optional event.
	Sport organisations implement educational programming and training with staff, club members, local community and athletes to raise awareness about GBV.

Action to prevent GBV	Examples in sport settings
Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relations between and among women and men, girls and boys in public and private sphere	The club provides professionally facilitated gender equity training to all volunteers, players, umpires and coaches.
	Club leaders role model respectful and equitable relationships to younger people in the club and talk regularly about values and the code of conduct with them.
	The club identifies and acts on opportunities to promote positive and respectful mixed gender participation where appropriate.
	The club delivers respectful relationships sessions to young people in partnership with expert organisations or facilitators.

Appendix C: Evaluations of prevention programs and initiatives

Table 7. Features of evaluated DFSV prevention programs and initiatives in sports settings identified in the literature review.

Program name	Location	Types of DFSV addressed	Setting and target population	Types of sport included	Mode of program delivery
All-In: A Culture of Respect	USA	SV	College athletes	Not specific, various sports included	45 minute online program, including interactive activities such as quizzes, evaluations of SV scenarios, and videos demonstrating bystander skills.
Coaching Boys Into Men (CBIM)	USA	Adolescent dating violence	Middle and high school male athletes	Not specific, various sports included	Coaches deliver in person messages to their athletes using a series of 12 Training Cards, which provide 15 minute scripted discussions to be delivered weekly throughout the athletic season.
Fair Play: Sexual Violence Prevention for Athletes	USA	SV	College athletes	College athletic teams (football, softball, women's golf, women's tennis)	10 hours of training delivered over multiple sessions, with the sessions delivered separately to male and female athletes.
Football Onside	UK	DV and SV	Coaches and students from football clubs, and other key stakeholders	Football	Three two-hour in person education sessions, including presentations, videos, individual and group tasks, and discussions. Participants received an additional take-home booklet.
It's not OK	NZ	FV	Rugby League clubs, including players, spectators and other key stakeholders	Rugby League	12 clubs were supported to raise awareness of FV through campaign-branding and resources, implement a Code of Conduct that addresses violence, implementing strategies to address sideline abuse, and provide early childhood playgroups for high-risk families.
Men Against Violence	Australia (WA)	VAW	Players, students	Football, basketball	Presentations to Australian rules football players, speeches to State Basketball League players, a week of presentations to high school students from an Aboriginal football academy.
Preventing and Responding to Sexual Misconduct	USA	Sexual misconduct	College athletes	Not specific, various sports included	One-off, 2.5 hour workshop delivered as part of a larger leadership initiative on campus.

Program name	Location	Types of DFSV addressed	Setting and target population	Types of sport included	Mode of program delivery
Preventing Violence Through Sport Grants Program	Australia (Vic)	GBV	Community sport organisations	Not specific, various sports included	Grants program delivered to community sport organisations.
Protecting God's Children	USA	CSA	Sport coaches in contact with children in institutional settings	Not specific, various sports included	A three-hour instruction session led by a trained facilitator. The facilitator shows the group two 30-minute movies, directs discussion after the movies, and answer any questions that might arise.
Respect and Responsibility	Australia (Vic)	SV	Players from AFL clubs	AFL	In person education sessions.
Tackling Violence	Australia (NSW)	DFV	Rugby League clubs, including players, members and other key stakeholders	Rugby League	In person education sessions are delivered once annually. Community events included formal presentations, speeches and event staff, and informal gatherings and conversations at games. Online resources included educational videos and social media posts.
We're Game	Australia (Vic)	VAW	Community sport and leisure clubs	YMCA, tennis, netball, Australian rules football	Support provided to community sport and leisure clubs to achieve gender equality.
Wingman 101	USA	SV	Male university athletes	Not specific, various sports included	In person, one-off 75 minute sessions delivered by two or three male student peers.