

Gendered Violence Research Network

# **Primary prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence in sport settings: Program Audit Final Report**

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

## A note from the Office of Sport

*Some sections of the Program Audit report have been redacted prior to publication. These redactions relate only to internal recommendations and advice directed to the NSW Office of Sport. The redactions have been made in the event that there is information in the report which may imply a specific preference or policy position of the Office of Sport which could be seen to influence how applicants respond to competitive grant programs that may be undertaken by the Office of Sport in this space. All publicly available content reflects the evidence, findings, and sector insights from the program audit.*

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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.<sup>1</sup>

**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.<sup>2</sup>

**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.<sup>3</sup>

**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.<sup>4</sup>

**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.<sup>4</sup>

**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.<sup>5</sup>

**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.<sup>4</sup>

**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.<sup>6</sup>

**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 and women.<sup>6</sup>

**Intersectionality:** Describes the interactions between multiple systems and structures of oppression such as sexism, racism, classism, ageism, ableism, heteronormativity and cissexism.<sup>4</sup>

**Intimate partner violence:** Any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm.<sup>6</sup>

**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.<sup>4</sup>

**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.<sup>4</sup>

**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.<sup>7</sup>

**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.<sup>6</sup>

**Whole-of-organisation:** Involves implementing comprehensive strategies across all levels of an organisation to address the drivers of VAW. It moves beyond isolated programs to embed prevention into the fabric of the organisation, including leadership, processes, and workplace culture. It may consider how prevention activities can target all individuals and groups within the organisation, how organisational policies and procedures can be used to drive change, how to engage leadership and shift organisational culture, and how to embed prevention into the day-to-day business of the organisation.<sup>6</sup>

**Whole-of-sport:** Where a sport aims to provide direction or regulation to address the drivers of DFSV 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.<sup>8</sup>

# Acronyms

AFL	Australian Football League
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
CSA	Child sexual abuse
CBIM	Coaching Boys Into Men
DCJ	Department of Communities and Justice
DEI	Diversity, equity and inclusion
DFSV	Domestic, family and sexual violence
DFV	Domestic and family violence
DV	Domestic violence
ECAV	Education Centre Against Violence
FV	Family violence
GBV	Gender based violence
GVRN	Gendered Violence Research Network
MAV	Men Against Violence
NSLHD	Northern Sydney Local Health District
NSW	New South Wales
NZ	New Zealand
PJRL	Parramatta Junior Rugby League
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
WSU	Western Sydney University

# 1. Executive Summary

## 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 rapid review into DFSV primary prevention programs, initiatives and strategies in the sport sector at state, national and international levels. This Audit Report maps existing programs, frameworks, and policies across Australian sporting contexts and examines their effectiveness and challenges.

This report highlights that sport is a powerful vehicle for cultural change due to its reach, visibility, and influence on community attitudes. Sporting clubs and codes provide unique opportunities to engage young people, families, and communities in primary prevention programs and initiatives. The audit found that while significant progress has been made, primary prevention efforts are at times inconsistent, under-resourced, and constrained by structural challenges.

*There's no doubt that sport is a great engagement vehicle, and the ability for us to have conversations right at the coalface with those that actually need it, is an opportunity that sport has that others don't."*

## Findings

The audit identified a range of DFSV primary prevention programs and initiatives implemented in sport settings

These included whole-of-sport approaches, soft entry approaches, and targeted approaches.

**Whole-of-sport** initiatives are those embedded across all levels of a sport and in the broader sporting community, including leadership, players, staff, volunteers, and community members. Examples include *Crash the Boards*, *Tackling Violence* and *The Grand Stand Program*. These models:

- Embed primary prevention into governance structures, codes of conduct, and policy frameworks.
- Normalise respectful behaviours through cultural change, rather than relying on isolated campaigns.
- Benefit significantly from leadership buy-in, which encourages long-term sustainability and drives constitutional or policy reforms (e.g., Football Victoria's equity reforms).
- Face challenges when dependent on volunteer coaches or short-term grant cycles.

**Soft-entry programs** engage communities through broader themes like gender equality, healthy relationships, positive masculinity, and leadership. They avoid explicit reference to DFSV but address the underlying drivers of violence. Examples include *Building Young Men*, *Daughters and Dads Active and Empowered*, and *Love Bites*. Specifically:

- These programs are effective at engaging resistant or hard-to-reach audiences, particularly young men.
- Their effectiveness may be enhanced by ensuring leadership buy-in and utilising partnership approaches.

- They use relatable framing (e.g., teamwork, respect, leadership) to reduce backlash.
- Their effectiveness depends on repeated, sustained engagement rather than one-off sessions.
- Many lack robust evaluation, making it difficult to demonstrate long-term outcomes.

**Targeted initiatives** explicitly focus on DFSV primary prevention, education, and behavioural change. Examples include *Tackling Violence*, *Voice Against Violence*, *Active Respect*, and the *DV Awareness Cup*. Specifically:

- Programs led by professional clubs, athletes, or trusted coaches often achieve high engagement and credibility.
- Education is most effective when interactive, trauma-informed, and delivered by relatable facilitators.
- Targeted programs can directly challenge harmful norms and behaviours, but they risk community resistance if not strategically framed.
- Their scalability is limited by reliance on short-term funding and high delivery costs.

The audit identified several enabling conditions for effective DFSV primary prevention in sport

These included:

- **Leadership commitment:** Programs succeed when boards and executives champion primary prevention.
- **Policy infrastructure:** Codes of conduct, safeguarding frameworks, and equity strategies embed cultural change.
- **Strategic framing:** Using sport's inherent values (e.g., teamwork, respect, fair play) helps make primary prevention messages accessible.
- **Education and training:** Ongoing, interactive, and trauma-informed education builds confidence and skills among players, staff, and coaches.
- **Coach engagement:** Coaches are key influencers and can embed primary prevention messaging into everyday training.
- **Partnerships and collaboration:** Effective initiatives involve women's health organisations, universities, specialist services, and government.
- **Community engagement:** Local adaptation and visible events (e.g., theme rounds, awareness cups) ensure broad community reach.
- **Scalability:** Programs that build internal capacity and use modular or digital tools show stronger potential for scaling.

The audit also identified the following challenges and gaps that should be considered when implementing primary prevention programs and initiatives

These included:

- **Funding instability**
  - Most programs rely on short-term grants, limiting sustainability and scalability of programs.
  - Successful pilots risk discontinuation when funding cycles end.



- Fee-for-service models are being considered but may limit accessibility.
- **Lack of formal evaluation**
  - While flagship programs (e.g., *Daughters and Dads*, *Love Bites*) have a strong evidence base, other programs may rely on anecdotal data.
  - Community-led or volunteer-driven programs often lack the resources to evaluate impact.
  - Dedicated evaluation funding is essential to demonstrate outcomes and secure long-term investment.
- **Resistance and backlash**
  - Some programs face pushback in male-dominated environments.
  - Backlash often stems from outdated gender norms, 'what about men?' sentiments, and doubts about sport's role in primary prevention.
  - Trusted facilitators and strategic framing may assist in mitigating resistance.
- **Organisational capacity**
  - Volunteer reliance may undermine delivery consistency.
  - Coaches are often under-trained or overburdened.
  - Even professional clubs with significant funding (e.g., Wests Tigers' *Empower*) face capacity constraints due to overwhelming demand.
- **Gaps in inclusion**
  - Programs often lack adequate tailoring for First Nations communities, CALD communities, people with disability, LGBTQIA+ participants, and rural/remote populations.
  - Limited cultural representation among facilitators can exacerbate exclusion.
  - Generic program materials may not resonate across diverse groups.

## Recommendations

These principles encompass the enabling conditions for primary prevention programs and initiatives in sport settings.

1. Provide dedicated evaluation funding, built into programs from the outset, to build the evidence base and demonstrate effectiveness. Long-term sustainability may be encouraged by using simple, in-house evaluation tools (e.g., basic surveys or forms) and evaluation capacity building for organisations.
2. Prioritise leadership buy-in at governance and executive levels, including by aligning with the organisation's strategic priorities, identifying internal champions who can advocate for change (e.g., board members, senior executives, respected coaches), provide tailored training to leadership, and showcasing the success and impact of programs.
3. Consider the size and maturity of the sporting organisation and whether it has the scaffolding necessary to successfully implement and deliver primary prevention programs (e.g., through a readiness assessment and review of existence of relevant policies and procedures). Organisational capacity may differ depending on whether the organisation is a professional or local club or a State Sporting Organisation (SSO).

4. Provide capacity-building funds for community organisations and clubs to ensure consistent delivery, leadership engagement and remuneration of volunteers. Consider partnerships between community organisations and elite sporting clubs to address gaps in funding and capacity and build sustainability.
5. Clearly articulate who the program intends to engage (e.g., school students/young people players, clubs/associations/sporting organisations, coaches, volunteers, parents, general community) and tailor program content accordingly to ensure relevance and engagement.
6. Ensure programs are inclusive of the needs of priority populations (e.g., First Nations, CALD, disability, LGBTQIA+, rural/remote). This may be achieved through co-designing programs with communities, using inclusive language, and building partnerships with relevant organisations (e.g., Pride in Sport).
7. Strategically frame primary prevention messages using sports values like teamwork, respect and fair play to avoid backlash and increase community buy-in. This can also include partnering with professional sporting organisations and high-profile player advocates. Program co-design with relevant stakeholders may also improve uptake and effectiveness.
8. Collaborate with expert partners (e.g., primary prevention experts, women's health organisations) to ensure that program content and delivery methods are appropriate for their target audience. Co-design of programs and initiatives can utilise a multi-pronged approach, linking prevention and sporting experts, funders, and diverse stakeholders.
9. Ensure sustainability and scalability by embedding DFSV prevention into core organisational structures (e.g., strategic plans, codes of conduct), building capacity across the whole sport system, building the capacity of volunteers, and fostering community ownership and co-design of programs. This could also be achieved by leveraging the role of professional sporting clubs and partners with funding, developing digital tools and applying a fee-for-service model.

Consider:

- **Whole-of-sport approaches** should provide multi-year funding to embed culture change, tie funding to governance reforms and equity benchmarks, resource state or national communities of practice, and require the implementation of organisational policy frameworks (e.g., codes of conduct, equity plans).
- **Soft entry approaches** should support mentoring, leadership, and healthy relationships models, fund sustained engagement (not one-off events), provide facilitator training in trauma-informed, culturally responsive practice, and allocate dedicated evaluation funding.
- **Targeted approaches** should support evidence-based coach and athlete-led programs, ensure partnerships with DFSV specialist services, fund community awareness events and campaigns, and embed rigorous evaluation and outcome measurement.

Full details of the recommendations arising from the audit can be found in Section 5.

## 2. Background

In 2024, the NSW Government launched *Pathways to Prevention: NSW Strategy for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence 2024-2028* ('NSW Prevention Strategy').<sup>4</sup> The NSW Prevention Strategy encompasses the NSW Government's commitment to ensuring all people and communities are free from domestic, family and sexual violence (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 Strategy draws upon the Our Watch framework for preventing violence against women (VAW), highlighting the need of programs and initiatives that address risk factors for violence across multiple levels of society.

The NSW Prevention Strategy specifically identifies sports clubs and organisations as priority settings that have the potential for widespread positive impact in relation to DFSV. 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. Sport clubs and organisations are workplaces and institutions with significant social influence, as sport reaches and influences people of all ages across multiple settings, including employees, sponsors, supporters, volunteers, players and their families. Sport settings also present an opportunity to influence men and boys to develop healthy masculinities and to have positive, supportive male peer relationships.<sup>4</sup>

The NSW 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.<sup>7</sup> The NSW Office of Sport have four key initiatives to deliver throughout the life of the NSW Strategy, including:

1. Building the evidence base for primary prevention in sport
2. Sporting organisations coalition
3. Multi-year delivery partnerships (grant program) with sporting organisations
4. Aboriginal-led prevention through sport.

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 rapid review into DFSV primary prevention programs, initiatives and strategies in the sport sector at state, national and international levels.

This project aims to support and inform these initiatives by examining the effectiveness of primary prevention programs for DFSV within the sports sector at the state, national and international level. The project comprises of the following key phases:

- **Phase 1:** A literature review of the existing base on DFSV primary prevention strategies in the sports sector (Report 1).
- **Phase 2:** An audit of existing DFSV primary prevention programs and initiatives within the sports sector.

This second report (Report 2) describes the findings of the Phase 2 audit of existing DFSV primary prevention programs and initiatives in the sport sector. Report 2 builds on the findings in Report 1 through engagement with stakeholders involved in primary prevention efforts in sport settings. This report considers how existing programs and initiatives align with key DFSV frameworks, including the Our Watch *Change the Story* framework and the NSW Prevention Strategy.

## 2.1. What we know about 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 national 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 emotional abuse from a partner they live with**.
- **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**.<sup>9</sup>

The PSS also provides statistics about sexual harassment, with 1.3 million women and 426,800 men reporting they had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months.<sup>10</sup> 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.<sup>9</sup>

The more recent Australian Childhood Maltreatment Study identified even higher rates of childhood abuse.<sup>11</sup> 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.<sup>9, 12</sup>

## 2.2. Primary prevention of DFSV

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.<sup>6, 13, 14</sup> Our Watch conceptualises the gendered drivers of VAW as follows:

1. The condoning of VAW
2. Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life
3. Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity
4. Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control.<sup>6</sup>

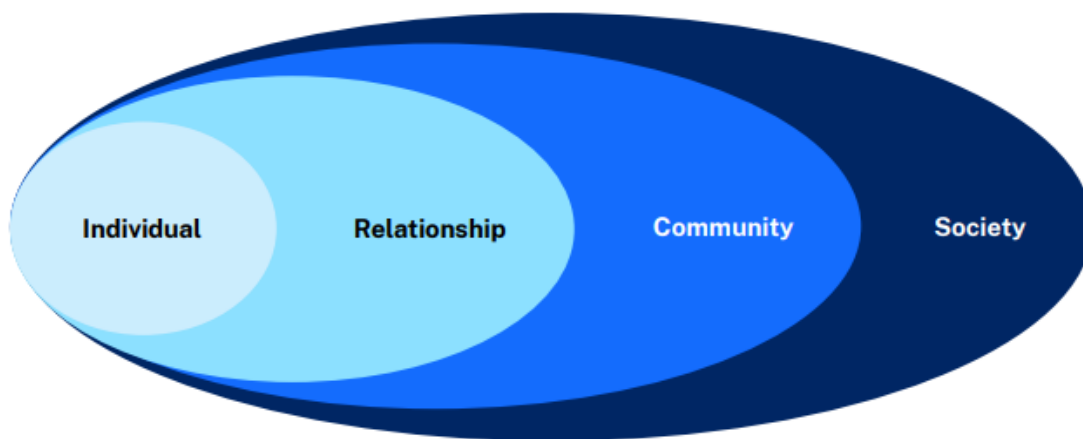
Our Watch also identifies the following actions as critical to primary prevention:

- 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.<sup>6</sup>

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.<sup>15</sup>

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 primary 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 (Figure 1) is a key part of the public health approach, illustrating how risk factors interact and intersect to contribute to DFSV.



**Figure 1.** The socio-ecological model.<sup>4</sup>

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, and 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 DFSV perpetration and victimisation. Examples include men having greater control over public power, resources and decisions; and economic inequality including the gender pay gap.<sup>4, 16-18</sup>

The Our Watch *Change the Story* framework also provides a scaffold for conceptualising strategies for the primary prevention of 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.<sup>6</sup> 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. Further information about the framework can be found in Appendix A.

### 2.2.1. Primary prevention of DFSV in sport

Sport organisations are identified as priority settings in the primary prevention of DFSV in several national and state-based policy documents. The NSW Prevention Strategy clearly sets out the importance of implementing primary 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.<sup>4</sup>

The NSW Prevention 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 NSW 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 primary prevention approaches should be embedded in a range of settings, including sporting organisations.<sup>3</sup> Sporting organisations are a key setting for the primary 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.<sup>19</sup>
- Sport is part of the lives of many Australians and are important social institutions in which values norms are shaped and communicated.<sup>8</sup>
- Sporting organisations are places where VAW can occur directly, while at the same time being sources of influence on attitudes that condone or excuse violence.<sup>8</sup>
- Sporting organisations are workplaces that may have staff, volunteers, members or other stakeholders who have experienced or perpetrated violence.<sup>8</sup>

*Change the Story* also identifies sport settings as a priority sector for the prevention of VAW. This is because sport:

- is seen by many as significant to Australia's national identity
- exerts a powerful influence on gender relations, attitudes, behaviours and social norms, including through professional athletes as role models, and
- provides an opportunity to reach large groups and communities, including groups of men and boys.<sup>6</sup>

## 2.3. Evaluating primary prevention programs

Strong evaluation of DFSV primary prevention programs is essential for improving implementation and building a strong prevention evidence base. It is important to recognise that establishing reductions in violence perpetration is only possible by undertaking evaluations or studies that measure success over time and are very costly because it means collecting data at multiple times. It is possible, however, to measure change against clear indicators of improvement or 'success', enabling organisations to demonstrate progress toward ending violence and inform future strategies.<sup>20, 21</sup>

There are two main ways in which progress can be established. First, 'process indicators' measure how well a program has been implemented or whether a program has been implemented as intended. Understanding the process of implementation can help organisations determine whether the program is working as intended and highlight areas that may need adjustment.<sup>22</sup> These indicators measure aspects of program delivery such as program reach, the effectiveness of the planning process, satisfaction, and quality, and often include consideration of the following:

- Involvement of staff and stakeholders in program planning
- Implementation of planned activities
- Number of training sessions conducted
- Quality of resources and materials developed
- Participant reach and whether the program implemented to all intended groups
- Participants' perceptions and experiences of the program.<sup>22</sup>

The second way in which progress can be established is by 'outcome indicators' which measure the impact of the program on attitudes or norms, organisational practices, and structures. Our Watch's *Counting on Change* framework identifies a range of indicators that measure progress at a participant level.<sup>20</sup> While not exhaustive, these indicators provide a guide for tracking change in addressing the drivers and reinforcing factors of VAW, many of which also inform broader efforts to prevent DFSV. Key considerations for evaluating primary prevention programs and activities are outlined in Appendix A.

### 2.3.1. Challenges and gaps in the evaluation of primary prevention programs

There are a range of challenges in measuring the effectiveness of primary prevention programs. Since primary prevention programs aim to address the underlying drivers of violence which are deeply embedded in social and institutional structures, change tends to happen gradually and in a non-linear fashion, making it difficult to design indicators to capture program effectiveness.<sup>20</sup>

Evaluation of primary prevention programs often relies on proxy indicators, such as self-reported changes to attitudes, norms and beliefs immediately following the program or intervention in question. However, what program participants say they believe or think after engaging with a program does not

necessarily translate into behaviour change and survey questions used to capture attitude change may oversimplify complex social beliefs. These challenges ultimately result in a lack of longitudinal studies which examine whether programs lead to long-term changes in beliefs or behaviour and whether this ultimately relates to a reduction in DFSV perpetration and victimisation. Additionally, there may also be an underrepresentation of diverse experiences in evaluation efforts, including the experiences Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities, CALD groups, people with disabilities, and LGBTIQ+ communities.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to the challenges in measuring and monitoring primary prevention, it is also difficult to ensure the sustainability of these mechanisms in practice. Many existing indicators of effectiveness are drawn from short-term projects or pilot programs. Many organisations report having resource constraints, meaning they do not invest in developing an evaluation framework at the beginning of a project, which then limits the ability of an organisation to collect information such as monitoring and administrative data for future evaluation. For example, evaluations of school-based primary prevention programs generate valuable data but are rarely sustained beyond the life of the program and for new student year groups. This undermines the capacity of most projects to establish long-term change or assess the outcomes of primary prevention programs.<sup>20</sup>



## 3. Methodology

This section outlines the methodology implemented for the program audit, including audit objectives, data sources utilised, approaches to data collection and analysis, and methodological limitations.

### 3.1. Aims of the audit

The audit aimed to:

- Identify existing DFSV primary prevention programs and initiatives implemented in sporting sectors.
- Focus primarily on the NSW context but also to consider programs and initiatives across Australia and internationally where those programs demonstrate a best practice approach to primary prevention.

### 3.2. Information collected

The audit was conducted using a website review, online survey, and interviews with key stakeholders. Table 1 below provides a summary of these data sources.

**Table 1.** Summary of data sources used to inform the audit.

Data source	Details
Website review	National Sporting Organisation (NSO) and State Sporting Organisation (SSO) websites were reviewed for the following 15 sporting codes: AFL, athletics, cricket, basketball, football/soccer, golf, hockey, karate, netball, rugby league, rugby union, tennis, volleyball, swimming and wheelchair sports.
Survey	A total of 28 responses from SSOs were received for the online survey.
Interviews	Interviews were conducted with a total of 23 stakeholders from sporting organisations or other types of organisations involved in the implementation of primary prevention programs/initiatives in sport settings.

#### 3.2.1. Website review

GVRN conducted a review of select national and state sporting organisations' websites to identify any publicly available information relevant to the primary prevention of DFSV in sport settings. The review sought to identify any organisational policies, frameworks or strategies related to DFSV and gender equality and documents or webpages describing or evaluating existing primary prevention programs and initiatives.

Websites were reviewed by navigating the relevant tabs or using the search function where available. The following search terms were used to identify relevant material: 'violence', 'sexual harassment', 'sexual abuse', 'child protection', 'child safeguarding', 'respectful behaviour', 'respectful relationships',

'fair play', 'gender equity', 'gender equality', 'code of conduct', 'diversity', 'inclusion', 'working with children check' and 'member protection'.

### 3.2.2. Online survey

SSOs and State Sporting Organisations for people with Disabilities (SSODs) were also invited to participate in an online survey to share their experiences and observations of DFSV primary prevention initiatives within their organisation in the last five years. The NSW Office of Sport built and distributed the survey link to potential respondents on behalf of GVRN using their existing primary prevention mailbox. Recipients were informed that the survey would require direct knowledge of their organisation's DFSV primary prevention work and were therefore asked to forward the link to the most relevant staff member in their organisation. All respondents provided informed consent prior to completing the survey.

The survey questions were designed by GVRN in collaboration with the NSW Office of Sport. The survey questions covered the following:

- The respondent's job role and how it relates to the primary prevention of DFSV.
- The organisation's implementation of policies, frameworks and codes of conduct that relate to DFSV, gender equality, and female participation in sport.
- The organisation's implementation of any DFSV primary prevention programs, including its aims, target audience, what worked well, and any challenges experienced.

The full list of survey questions can be found in Appendix B.

### 3.2.3. Stakeholder interviews

GVRN conducted interviews with stakeholders from sporting organisations and other types of organisations involved in the implementation of primary prevention programs and initiatives in sport settings. Specifically, interview participants included stakeholders from SSOs, professional sporting clubs, community organisations, government agencies, universities, and prevention organisations. Interview participants were recruited in the following ways:

- Survey respondents were given the opportunity to provide their contact information for a follow-up interview.
- Stakeholders known to the NSW Office of Sport were sent an invitation to participate in an interview.
- Additional interview participants were recruited through snowball sampling.

All interview participants were provided with an Information Sheet which contained detailed information about the project. Interviews were conducted via Zoom or Microsoft Teams and transcribed with the participant's permission. Each interview took approximately 45 minutes to complete.

The complete interview guides can be found in Appendix B.

## 3.3. Analysing the information and data collected

GVRN undertook a detailed mapping of the primary prevention programs and initiatives identified in the audit. This mapping captured key information about the programs and initiatives, including:

- aims
- program activities,
- the types of population groups included or targeted
- whether the program used a whole of sport approach, a direct approach to addressing DFSV (where violence reduction is a direct goal and explicitly stated) or was soft entry (e.g., addressing gender equality by looking positive masculinities and increased participation of women in sport and related activities
- any indication of program effectiveness
- program sustainability and scalability, and
- the extent to which programs are meeting intersectional needs of different priority population groups.

The programs were also examined against key DFSV frameworks, including the Our Watch Change the Story Framework and the NSW Prevention Plan.

### 3.4. Limitations

Several limitations should be noted when interpreting the project findings. While the audit methodology ensured that a broad range of DFSV primary prevention programs and initiatives were identified, it was not possible to identify all programs implemented in NSW. There was a lack of programs targeted towards specific population groups identified through the audit, particularly programs specific to First Nations people and communities, which limits our understanding of how a program may resonate or influence a particular population group. Programs for specific population groups are largely community-based and are not publicly advertised. There were also challenges with reviewing some NSO and SSO websites, and these websites were not always user friendly and required significant investigation to locate the relevant information.

## 4. Audit findings

This section outlines the findings from the program audit. It includes an overview of the policies, programs and initiatives identified in the audit, case studies of best practice, potential indicators of program effectiveness, and barriers and challenges in implementing DFSV primary prevention programs in sport settings.

### Summary of key findings

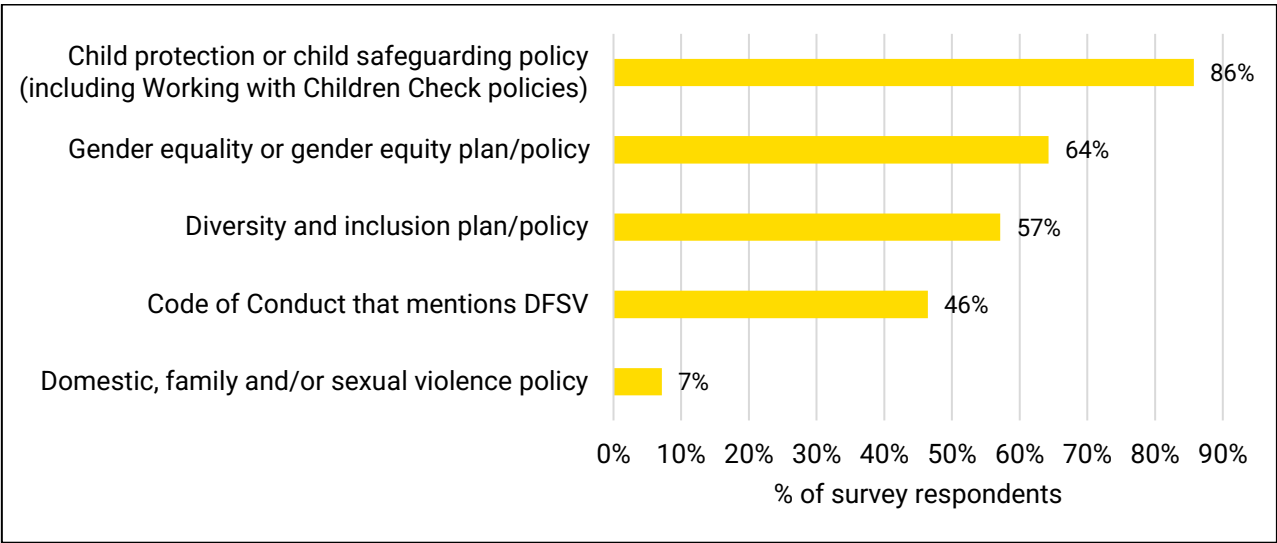
- A range of DFSV prevention programs and initiatives and related organisational policies and frameworks were identified in the audit. Programs and initiatives could be conceptualised as:
  - **Whole-of-sport initiatives that are embedded across all levels of an organisation** and in the broader sporting community.
  - *Soft entry approaches* that engage communities through broader themes like gender equality, healthy relationships, positive masculinity, and leadership.
  - *Targeted approaches* that explicitly focus on DFSV prevention, education, and behavioural change.
- The audit identified several enabling conditions for effective DFSV prevention in sport:
  - *Leadership commitment*, where boards and executives champion prevention.
  - *Policy infrastructure* including codes of conduct, safeguarding frameworks, and equity strategies.
  - *Strategic framing* using sport's inherent values (e.g., teamwork, respect, fair play).
  - *Education and training* to builds confidence and skills among players, staff, and coaches.
  - *Engagement with coaches* as key influencers that can embed prevention messaging into everyday training.
  - *Partnerships and collaboration* with women's health organisations, universities, prevention experts, specialist services, and government.
  - *Community engagement* through local adaptation and visible events.
  - *Scalability of programs* by building internal capacity and using modular or digital tools.
- The audit also identified the following challenges and gaps:
  - **Funding instability**
  - **Lack of formal evaluation**
  - **Resistance and backlash**
  - **Limited organisational capacity**
  - **Gaps in inclusion of diverse groups.**

### 4.1. Overview of policies, programs and initiatives identified in the audit

A range of DFSV primary prevention programs and initiatives and related organisational policies and frameworks were identified in the audit. These are described below.

4.1.1. Organisational policies and frameworks

A range of policies and frameworks related to the primary prevention of DFSV were identified from the website review and online survey. Survey respondents were asked to indicate the types of policies and frameworks implemented by their organisation (Figure 2). Almost all respondents (86%, n=24) said that their organisation has a child protection or child safeguarding policy, which is likely a direct result of recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse.<sup>23</sup> Over half had a gender equality or gender equity plan/policy (64%, n=18). Almost all organisations had a code of conduct that prohibited disrespectful behaviour generally, although only 46% of Codes specified DFSV. It was uncommon for organisations to have a specific DFSV policy, with only two respondents (7%) indicating that their organisation had this type of policy.



**Figure 2.** Organisational policies and frameworks implemented by survey respondents (N=28).

The website review of select NSOs and SSOs also identified a range of organisational policies and frameworks related to DFSV. Select examples of identified policies and frameworks are outlined in Table 2.

Codes of conduct generally applied to players/athletes and coaches, but some Codes also extended to spectators, parents and volunteers. Most organisations had a child safeguarding policy or provided links to external resources such as the NSW Office of Children’s Guardian or NSW Office of Sport websites which included information on training and factsheets on child safety. Member protection policies were also commonly identified in the website search, with these policies outlining the measures put in place by the organisation to protect their members from discrimination, harassment, abuse, and other inappropriate behaviour.<sup>24</sup>

Overall, the extent to which DFSV was explicitly mentioned in the policies and frameworks varied depending on the organisation. While all organisations had some form of code of conduct, as previously noted, these policies usually did not mention DFSV specifically. As expected, organisations implemented child safeguarding or child protection policies that explicitly prohibit the abuse of children participating in sport.

**Table 2.** Examples of NSO and SSO policies and frameworks identified from the website review.

Type of policy/ framework	Examples
Code of Conduct	<p>NRL <i>National Code of Conduct</i> applies to all rugby league participants, including players, coaches, trainers, match officials, club officials, volunteers, parents/carers and spectators. Participants are expected to discourage ‘all instances of foul or illegal play, or acts of violence, both on and off the field’.<sup>25</sup></p> <p>NSW Rugby League’s <i>Tough Love in League Policy</i> applies to all community rugby league competitions and outlines a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and violence on the field.<sup>26</sup></p>
	<p>Basketball NSW provides a separate Code of Conduct for players, spectators, and coaches, officials and support staff. Specifically, the <i>Code of Behaviour Coaches, Officials and Support Staff</i> prohibits any form of abuse, harassment or discrimination towards others and intimate relationships with players.<sup>27</sup></p>
Child Safeguarding	<p>Netball Australia’s <i>Child Safeguarding Policy</i> prohibits abuse against children. ‘Child abuse’ is defined as including physical abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and exposure to family violence.<sup>28</sup></p>
	<p>AFL’s <i>Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct</i> prohibits child abuse and grooming, sexual behaviour with or in the presence of children or young people, and use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, humiliating or culturally inappropriate.<sup>29</sup></p>
Diversity and Inclusion	<p>Basketball Australia’s <i>Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2021-2025</i> signifies the organisation’s commitment to ensuring basketball is a welcoming and inclusive space for all. It covers diversity and inclusion focused programs for women and girls, First Nations and CALD participants, people with disability, older participants, and LGBTQIA+ participants.<sup>30</sup></p>
Gender Equality	<p>AFL’s <i>Workforce Gender Equity Action Plan 2022-2024</i> outlines its vision to have women and men equally represented and respected across the sport. The Plan outlines pillars and key actions across several areas, including women and girls’ participation in AFL, women’s elite pathways, women in the AFL workforce, and women in management.<sup>31</sup></p>
	<p>Cricket Australia’s <i>Women and Girls Action Plan 2024-2034</i> aims to accelerate the growth of cricket for women and girls. It outlines key actions to increase women and girls’ participation and representation in leadership positions.<sup>32</sup></p>
Member Protection	<p>Australian Athletics’ <i>Member Protection Policy</i> seeks to ensure that all participants are aware of their rights and responsibilities and sets out standards of expected behaviour. ‘Abuse’ is defined as any type of behaviour (including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual and inappropriate uses of power) that has caused or is likely to cause harm to a person’s wellbeing. It also provides definitions of bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, and discrimination.<sup>33</sup></p>
	<p>Golf NSW’s <i>Member Protection Standard</i> outlines a code of appropriate and ethical conduct which all members must abide by. It prohibits child abuse, discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment and victimisation.<sup>34</sup></p>

### 4.1.2. Primary prevention programs and initiatives

A total of 31 primary prevention programs and initiatives were identified in the audit. A list of all programs and initiatives identified in the audit can be found in Appendix C.

Table 3 summarises the features of the programs and initiatives identified in the audit. Most of the programs were implemented in either NSW (45%, n=14) or Victoria (29%, n=9), which may in part reflect the NSW focus of this project. Some programs were implemented in specific sporting codes, most commonly NRL (26%, n=8) and football/soccer (16%, n=5). However, some (35%, n=11) were not specific to a particular type of sport. Most programs were implemented by professional (32%, n=10) or local clubs (23%, n=7). The most common target audience was either school students and/or young people (39%, n=12) or players/athletes (35%, n=11).

**Table 3.** Summary of programs and initiatives identified in the audit (N=31).

		n	%
<b>Location</b>	NSW	14	45%
	Victoria	9	29%
	Northern Territory	1	3%
	National	7	23%
<b>Sporting code*</b>	NRL	8	26%
	Football/soccer	5	16%
	AFL	4	13%
	Netball	3	10%
	Basketball	2	6%
	Tennis	1	3%
	Not specific	11	35%
<b>Level responsible for implementation</b>	Professional clubs	10	32%
	Association	2	6%
	Local clubs	7	23%
	Schools	4	13%
	University	2	6%
	Not specific	6	19%
<b>Target group*</b>	School students/young people	12	39%
	Players	11	35%
	General community	7	23%
	Clubs/associations/sporting organisations	9	29%
	Coaches	2	6%

\* Multiple options may be selected.

Table 4 outlines the primary prevention techniques used by the programs and initiatives as per the Our Watch *Change the Story* framework.<sup>6</sup> The most common techniques used were direct participation programs that engage with individuals to build knowledge, awareness and skills (74%, n=23) and communications and social marketing campaigns that aim to raise community awareness about DFSV and gender equality (45%, n=14).

Table 4 also outlines how the identified programs and initiatives outlined by Our Watch address the essential actions intended to prevent VAW. The most common actions implemented were challenging the condoning of VAW (87%, n=27), promoting and normalising gender equality in public and private life (68%, n=21) and supporting men and boys in developing healthy masculinities (45%, n=14).

**Table 4.** Primary prevention techniques used and essential actions addressed by programs and initiatives identified in the audit (N=31).

		n	%
<b>Prevention techniques used</b>	Direct participation programs	23	74%
	Organisational development	11	35%
	Community mobilising and strengthening	5	16%
	Communications and social marketing campaigns	14	45%
	Civil society advocacy and social movement activism	4	13%
<b>Essential actions addressed</b>	Challenge the condoning of VAW	27	87%
	Promote women's independence and decision-making	2	6%
	Build new social norms that foster personal identities not constrained by rigid gender stereotypes	10	32%
	Support men/boys in developing healthy masculinities	14	45%
	Promote and normalise gender equality in public and private life	21	68%
	Address the intersections between gender inequality and other forms of oppression and discrimination	9	29%
	Build safe, fair and equitable organisations and institutions by focusing on policy and systems change	13	42%
	Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relationships between women/men and boys/girls	8	26%

A detailed mapping of the identified programs and initiatives to key frameworks can be found in Appendix D (Table 8-10). Programs addressed the various levels of the socio-ecological model, with most falling under the individual, relationship or community levels:

- Programs addressing the *individual level* primarily focused on changing individual attitudes, awareness and behaviours that may contribute to DFSV. For example, programs such as *The Grand Stand Program*, *Voice Against Violence* and *Tackling Violence* provide educational workshops for players to increase their awareness and understanding of DFSV and its impacts.
- Programs addressing the *relationship level* included programs designed to strengthen parent-child relationships, promote positive peer norms and behaviours, and encourage healthy relationships. Examples include:
  - *Daughters and Dads Active and Empowered*, which aims to improve father-daughter relationships
  - *Crash the Boards*, which leverages the coach-player relationship to increase awareness of gender equality and address gender stereotypes
  - *Love Bites*, which aims to educate young people about safe and respectful relationships.



- Programs addressing the *community level* included programs targeting community-held beliefs, attitudes and norms regarding DFSV and gender equality. These were often implemented in settings such as schools, sporting clubs, or the general community via events such as theme rounds and awareness cups. For example, programs such as *The Grand Stand Program*, *Tackling Violence*, *DV Awareness Cup* and *Crash the Boards* utilised sport settings to promote DFSV primary prevention messages to the wider community.

Programs and initiatives also addressed key elements of evidence-based primary prevention outlined in the NSW Prevention Strategy.<sup>4</sup> These included:

- *Reaching people at all stages of their lives*: Some programs targeted individuals at various ages and life stages. For example, *Daughters and Dads Active and Empowered* brought together fathers/father-figures and their daughters to promote physical activity, improve the father-daughter relationship, and advance gender equality. However, it is also important to acknowledge that most programs focused primarily on one life stage or relationship type.
- *Localised and place-based*: Some programs were tailored to specific contexts and the diverse cultural, social and economic backgrounds within their community. Programs such as *Parramatta Junior Rugby League (PJRL) Coaching Leadership Workshops* and *Deadly Youth Mentoring* were implemented to respond to specific needs of the community or demographic groups.
- *Community collaboration*: Communities were actively involved in primary prevention programs and initiatives, with communities and organisations encouraged to take ownership of prevention activities. For example, *Crash the Boards* involved a co-design phase with relevant stakeholders prior to the implementation of the program.
- *Empowerment and strengths based*: Programs built upon the strength and resilience of individual and communities. For example, the *Grit for Girls* program aimed to support, empower and educate girls in basketball, addressing their unique challenges and addressing barriers to participating in sport.
- *Gender transformative*: A significant number of programs aimed to address social norms and inequality that contribute to DFSV. For example, Sport and Recreation Victoria's *Preventing Violence Through Sport Grants Program* supported a range of programs and initiatives that aimed to drive cultural change and address gender inequality in sport settings, with evidence of increased knowledge and awareness among participants regarding the drivers and impacts of violence.
- *Trauma informed*: Some programs highlighted the importance of trauma-informed approaches that are sensitive to victim-survivors' experiences and prioritise safety. *Name.Narrate.Navigate* is an example of a trauma-informed and culturally responsive program that engages with young people at risk of using violence. An awareness of trauma is critical for direct approaches to DFSV primary prevention.
- *Accessible and inclusive*: Programs strived to be accessible and inclusive for the communities they served. For example, Souths Cares' *Deadly Youth Mentoring* and *Play Her Way* programs were implemented to support disadvantaged youth and their families through the delivery of capacity building programs addressing education, health and employment needs. However, the audit identified a notable gap in programs that address the unique needs of specific population groups.

## 4.2. Case studies

This section provides case studies of programs and initiatives identified in the audit. These case studies provide examples of whole-of-sport, soft entry, and targeted approaches to the primary prevention of DFSV in sport settings. It should be noted that some of the programs in the 'soft entry' and 'targeted' approach categories may also utilise 'whole-of-sport' approaches.

### 4.2.1. Whole-of-sport approaches

'Whole-of-sport' approaches have been identified as a key element of primary prevention programs implemented in sport settings. A whole-of-sport approach can be defined as follows:

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.<sup>8</sup>

In practice, a whole-of-sport approach may involve engaging with athletes, leaders and the wider community in promoting respectful and non-violent practices in sport settings, ensuring strong leadership and governance structures, explicitly endorsing gender equality and the primary prevention of DFSV through campaigns, events and communications, and making visible women's leadership within the organisation.<sup>35-37</sup> It is broader than a 'whole-of-organisation' approach, which works within an individual organisation to develop an approach to prevention.<sup>6</sup>

Examples of primary prevention programs utilising a 'whole-of-sport' approach are outlined below.

#### Crash the Boards

<b>Location</b>	Victoria
<b>Sporting code</b>	Basketball
<b>Target audience</b>	Players, coaches, staff, community
<b>Sporting level</b>	Association
<b>Issues(s) addressed</b>	Gender-based violence
<b>Aims</b>	To implement a whole-of-sport approach targeting key change makers such as coaches, players, committee members and referees to address and act on the gendered drivers of violence.

Funded as part of the Victorian Government's *Preventing Violence Through Sport* grants program, the *Crash the Boards* program supports basketball associations to implement a suite of interventions aimed at preventing gender-based violence (GBV). The program was initially funded for two years, with funding then extended to a total of three years. The program was informed by the intersecting identities of the program developers and tailored to the diverse needs of the participating associations.

The *Crash the Boards* program included the following activities:

- *Gender audit*: Clubs undertake an audit to identify their strengths, priorities and gaps.

- *Gender equity action plan*: A plan is developed to embed change within the associations' practices and policies, using data from the gender audit as well as surveys, interviews and consultations across the association.
- *Awareness raising*: Key messages are promoted using posters, social media, and other communication materials.
- *Coaches' workshop*: Coaches are educated and upskilled to increase their awareness and knowledge to better support their players around gender equity and GBV. Specifically, the workshop aims to: (1) raise coaches' awareness about the gendered drivers of violence, (2) provide learning about gender equity, gender equality and harmful gendered attitudes, and (3) upskill coaches to deliver a warm-up drill for junior players to help facilitate their learning about gender equity and respectful relationships.
- *Active learning for junior players*: An eight-week training program about respectful relationships is delivered to junior players by coaches, incorporated into their regular training sessions.
- *Gender equity and active bystander training*: Delivered to club leaders and key influencers.
- *Theme round*: A dedicated round in the senior competition aims to raise awareness and promote key messages.
- *Knowledge sharing*: A regular community of practice is held to build collective impact of the program, where participants can share learnings and challenges.<sup>19, 38</sup>

There was evidence that the program had positive outcomes, particular in terms of coach engagement, retention of key program messages, and anecdotal evidence of behaviour change among players. Coaches reported increased awareness, knowledge and intention to apply primary prevention messages in their coaching. High implementation rates of the warm-up drill were confirmed through surveys and direct feedback from the coaches. Coaches also reported that players were using program messages to challenge sexist language among their teammates.

Specifically, an evaluation of the Korumburra Basketball Association's implementation of the program found that coaches reported an increase in awareness of the link between gender equality and the primary prevention of GBV. Specifically, a post-workshop survey found that 91% of coaches agreed that they were more aware of the links between inequality and GBV, 93% agreed they were more aware of the difference between equality and equity, and 91% agreed they feel more confident in challenging rigid gender norms around masculinity.<sup>38</sup>

## Tackling Violence

<b>Location</b>	<b>NSW</b>
<b>Sporting code</b>	Rugby League
<b>Target audience</b>	Players, sporting clubs, community
<b>Sporting level</b>	Club
<b>Issues(s) addressed</b>	DFV
<b>Aims</b>	To use men's involvement in Rugby League as a platform to change attitudes and behaviours towards DFV.

Funded by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) and facilitated by the Education Centre Against Violence (ECAV), the *Tackling Violence* program uses men's involvement in Rugby League to prevent DFV. The program includes the following activities:

- *Club sponsorship:* In return for \$3000 in sponsorship, clubs sign a Code of Conduct that commits them to penalising players for DFV offences and display the Tackling Violence logo on their playing kit and at their home ground.
- *Education sessions:* Clubs attend educational sessions that focus on identifying and challenging DFV and developing supportive attitudes and behaviours towards women.
- *Community awareness:* A targeted media campaign aims to inform and link the public to specialist support services. Clubs deliver anti-DFV message on regional commercial television during NRL broadcasts and on social media.
- *Referrals and support arrangements:* Sponsored clubs are linked up with DFV support services in their community.<sup>39, 40</sup>

The *Tackling Violence* program illustrates a culturally responsive and community-led approach to the primary prevention of DFSV in sport settings. Most participating clubs were in regional or remote areas, with high rates of DFV, low socio-economic conditions, and a significant First Nations population. The delivery of culturally appropriate education sessions was key to the program's success. All program facilitators identified as First Nations, had strong community connections, and were experienced in trauma-informed program delivery.

An evaluation of the *Tackling Violence* program conducted in 2019 suggested that the program has contributed to positive outcomes for individuals, participating Rugby League clubs, and the wider community.<sup>40</sup> The Code of Conduct was considered an effective mechanism that outlined appropriate incentives to prevent DFV among players (i.e., a four-game suspension for any breach of the Code). Club leaders and players spoke positively about the education sessions, describing the facilitators and program content as 'engaging' and 'relatable'. The evaluation found that education sessions increased participants' understanding of DFV and confidence in talking about DFV and challenging VAW or poor attitudes towards women. Just under half of the participants reported that they had stood up or intervened in a situation where someone was being violent or controlling towards a partner since participating in the education session.

### The Grand Stand Program

<b>Location</b>	<b>NSW</b>
<b>Sporting code</b>	Any sport with Senior A-Grade teams (including rugby union, rugby league, and AFL)
<b>Target audience</b>	Players, sporting clubs, community
<b>Sporting level</b>	Club
<b>Issues(s) addressed</b>	DFV
<b>Aims</b>	To build the capacity of Northern Sydney men engaged in community sport to be allies in the primary prevention of DFV.

The *Grand Stand Program*, led by Northern Sydney Local Health District (NSLHD), adopts a whole-of-sport approach using community sporting clubs as a platform to engage men and change attitudes

and behaviours that contribute to DFV.<sup>41</sup> It also addresses associated factors such as alcohol, gambling and mental health issues. The whole-of-sport approach allows the program messages to be embedded deeply within the club culture, with players influencing their peers and serving as credible voices or 'champions' within the community.

The *Grand Stand Program* is an adaptation of the *Tackling Violence* primary prevention program funded by DCJ. Although The *Grand Stand Program* maintains the core model and principles of *Tackling Violence*, it was adapted in several ways. This includes implementing a holistic, flexible and localised program that addresses both DFV and mental health, expanding the program to other sporting codes, and facilitating sessions using local partners.<sup>41</sup> Specifically, the program includes the following activities:

- *Zero tolerance stance on DFV*: Clubs adopt a Code of Conduct requiring players to refrain from perpetrating DFV with agreed sanctions for breaches, including suspension and counselling for players charged with DFV offences. In exchange, clubs received \$1500-2500 in sponsorship, depending on reach.
- *Education workshop*: Players and club leaders attend a one-hour educational session focused on DFV and associated factors including alcohol, mental health and gambling. The workshop utilises a theatre sports format, where participants help act out a scenario followed by a group discussion.
- *Training for club champions*: Club champions receive further certified training and capacity building through courses such as Accidental Counsellor, Responsible Service of Alcohol and Responsible Conduct of Gambling.
- *Community awareness event*: Clubs host a 'Grand Stand Against Domestic Abuse' round, complemented by community social marketing strategies. Players wear branded socks during their nominated Grand Stand round, with branded signage also displayed around the field.<sup>41</sup>

The *Grand Stand Program* has demonstrated strong engagement with local sporting clubs and positive outcomes in relation to participants' understanding, awareness, confidence and skills. An evaluation of the program in 2024 found that 96% of participants self-reported improved recognition of toxic or abusive relationships after the workshop. Almost all participants reported feeling more confident to respond to disrespect against another player or friend (98%) and felt that the workshop made them reflect on the influence of masculinity on their relationships and health behaviours (96%).<sup>41</sup>

#### 4.2.2. Soft entry approaches

Several programs and initiatives identified from the audit used 'soft entry' approaches to the primary prevention of DFSV in sport. This includes programs that addressed issues such as gender equality, positive masculinity or healthy relationships, rather than targeting DFSV specifically. Soft entry programs remain relevant to the primary prevention of DFSV as they target potential drivers of violence including gender inequality, rigid gender stereotypes and dominant forms of masculinity.<sup>6</sup> These approaches may be more effective for engaging young people and communities that may resist direct messaging. Soft entry approaches are often a useful way to initiate prevention activities and may be a first step in DFSV prevention within a club or grass roots association.

## Building Young Men

<b>Location</b>	<b>NSW</b>
<b>Sporting code</b>	Rugby League
<b>Target audience</b>	School students
<b>Sporting level</b>	Professional club initiative, implemented in schools
<b>Issues(s) addressed</b>	Masculinity, relationships, mental health
<b>Aims</b>	To support students in Year 10 who are at risk from disengaging from high school or who have leadership potential that requires further development.

*Building Young Men* is the Penrith Panthers' mentoring and leadership project for high school students in the wider Penrith area, targeting Year 10 students who may be at risk of disengaging from high school or who have demonstrated leadership potential. The program incorporates the practices of group work, youth work and mentoring to support adolescent males in exploring safe and healthy transitions into adulthood.<sup>42</sup> The program provides interactive learning opportunities where participants can engage in a positive, safe and caring environment with experienced and reliable male role models, with the ultimate goal of enhancing participants' psychological wellbeing and mitigating the impact of harmful risk factors.<sup>43</sup> All mentors are experienced in working with at-risk youth and receive specialised training through TAFE NSW.<sup>43</sup>

Students meet with their mentors on a weekly basis over the course of 20 weeks. Mentoring sessions are usually two hours in duration. Participants eat a meal together, after which they move into a group mentoring circle and discuss themes related to the messages of 'change', 'growing up' and 'becoming a man'.<sup>42</sup> Sessions cover a variety of topics related to positive psychology and positive masculinity, including relationships, responsibility, sexuality, mental health and facing challenges. Participants are assigned homework tasks and activities, including trust exercises, personal storytelling, physical games and sports, and journaling.<sup>42</sup>

The program utilises a soft entry approach to the primary prevention of DFSV. While prevention of violence is not a stated or explicit outcome of the program, it addresses potential contributors of DFSV including rigid gender roles and stereotypes and mental health. Program participants have identified a range of valuable program elements and outcomes, including:

- Diversity among the program mentors in terms of socio-economic and geographic background, political orientation, age and ethnicity.
- The flexible structure of the mentoring sessions, with adult mentors readily available to interact with any of the adolescent participants during the group sessions, rather than pairing up specific mentors and participants.
- Participants reported an improvement in their ability to connect with adults and express their ideas, including with parents, teachers and community members.
- Development of trusted relationships between the mentors and participants.<sup>42</sup>

## Carlton Respects

<b>Location</b>	Victoria
<b>Sporting code</b>	AFL
<b>Target audience</b>	School students, players, community
<b>Sporting level</b>	Professional club initiative, implemented in the community
<b>Issue(s) addressed</b>	Gender equality, VAW
<b>Aims</b>	To make a meaningful contribution to achieving gender equality and prevention of VAW

*Carlton Respects* is the Carlton Football Club's flagship community initiative promoting gender equality for the primary prevention of VAW.<sup>44</sup> The program was developed in collaboration with Our Watch and includes the following activities:

- *Road to Respect school program*: A free, digital-learning platform and face-to-face program for primary school students in grades 3 to 6. The program includes relatable and easy-to-follow tools and information to help students understand gender stereotypes, manage emotions, and create respectful relationships. Students gain access to tailored lesson plans delivered by members of the Carlton Football Club.<sup>45</sup>
- *Awareness raising*: Carlton dedicates one AFL and AFLW game each year to the Carlton Respects program. The campaign aims to raise awareness about gender equality in the primary prevention of VAW, promote the Road to Respect school program, and raise funds for the Carlton Respects initiative.<sup>46</sup>
- *Workplace Charter*: A framework of actions, tools, experiences and expertise to guide organisations in becoming a gender equitable workplace. Charter members gain access to tickets to the annual Charter Seminar, Carlton Respects game experiences, tailored workplace coaching, and use of the Charter logo.<sup>47</sup>

The Carlton Community 2024 *Year in Review* outlines the impact and reach of the initiative. A total of 4,056 students across 54 primary schools were reported as having completed the Road to Respect school program. Almost 70% of participating students reported an increase in their understanding of the key lessons delivered in the program.<sup>48</sup> The AFL and AFLW *Carlton Respects* games raised a total of \$452k and reported 5.5 million video impressions and over 20 mentions on prime time television.<sup>48</sup>

## Daughters and Dads Active and Empowered

<b>Location</b>	<b>NSW</b>
<b>Sporting code</b>	Not specific
<b>Target audience</b>	School students, father-figures
<b>Sporting level</b>	Not specific
<b>Issues(s) addressed</b>	Female engagement in sport and physical activity, gender equity
<b>Aims</b>	To bring together fathers/father-figures and their daughters to promote physical activity, enhance sport skills, boost wellbeing, strengthen the father-daughter relationship, and advance gender equity.



*Daughters and Dads Active and Empowered* is a multi-sport program developed by the University of Newcastle that engages with fathers/father-figures and their daughters to develop key sports skills, providing a pathway for youth sport initiatives and encouraging girls to participate in multiple sports in the long-term.<sup>49</sup> The program aims to strengthen the father–daughter relationship, improve girls’ physical activity and sport skills, and promote gender equity through a structured, evidence-based intervention. Program facilitators receive training via online modules and come from diverse backgrounds including teachers, coaches and community workers.

The program includes the following activities:

- *Dads-Only Session*: A two-hour session which focuses on positive parenting, engaging daughters in physical activity and sport, and gender equity advocacy.
- *Weekly Daughters and Dads Sessions*: One-hour joint sessions including empowerment content (i.e., how to optimise physical activity and sports participation, developing critical thinking to address gender bias, and boosting social-emotional skills) and practical content (i.e., rough and tumble play, sport skills, and fun fitness/modified games).

While the program does not specifically relate to DFSV, a gender equity lens is a key component of the program. Girls participating in the program learn to identify and respond to gendered assumptions related to physical activity, such as stereotypes of ‘strong boys’ vs ‘strong girls’. Fathers are also introduced to gender equity through the lens of their daughters’ wellbeing and learn to be gender equity advocates for their daughters and girls in the wider community.<sup>50</sup>

Many studies have been conducted to assess the effectiveness of the *Daughters and Dads* program. The program has resulted in improvements in physical activity levels, screen time behaviour, parenting practices, father-daughter relationships, and social-emotional wellbeing.<sup>51-55</sup> Specifically, fathers participating in the program have reported an increase in their knowledge and understanding of gender stereotypes and gender bias, with some reporting that this translated to a heightened awareness of sexism within the whole family.<sup>56</sup>

### Empower Program

Location	NSW
Sporting code	Rugby league
Target audience	School students
Sport level	Professional club initiative, implemented in the community
Issues(s) addressed	Employment, healthy relationships, domestic violence (DV)
Aims	To make a real difference in the community by playing a key role in addressing youth unemployment and DV.

The Wests Tigers’ *Empower* program is a school-based program that addresses issues of youth unemployment and DV in the Inner West and Southwest of Sydney. Launched in 2024, the pilot programs were delivered in six schools to provide support and resources for young people at risk to help them achieve their goals and reach their full potential. The programs are tailored to the individual needs of the respective school and its students.<sup>57</sup> Bespoke adaptations are provided for each school based on demographics, cultural context, and specific needs. The program is fully funded by Wests Tigers and philanthropic donors, with no cost to participating schools.

The *Empower* program includes the following three core elements:



- *Stripes of Success*: An eight-week program for students in Years 7-10 delivered by trained NRL players and facilitators, focused on motivation, wellbeing and personal development. The program supports students to learn leadership skills, with tasks provided to help students learn the behaviours of success.
- *Classroom to Careers*: Provides students with careers advice and direction, with a focus on students who are not looking to complete their HSC or receive an ATAR.
- *Healthy Relationships and Community*: An eight-week program targeted at students with identified behavioural or attitudinal challenges. The program starts the conversation about what healthy relationships are and how to prevent DV in the long-term, addressing communication, respect and help-seeking strategies.<sup>57</sup>

The *Empower* program has shown strong early results and is currently being formally evaluated by Western Sydney University (WSU). Initial feedback from pilot schools suggests high engagement and measurable improvements in key areas, including student self-confidence, self-awareness, help-seeking strategies, and career direction.

#### Parramatta Junior Rugby League (PJRL) Coaching Workshops and Culture and Wellbeing Summit

<b>Location</b>	<b>NSW</b>
<b>Sporting code</b>	Rugby league
<b>Target audience</b>	Coaches, players
<b>Sport level</b>	Association
<b>Issues(s) addressed</b>	On-field violence and aggression
<b>Aims</b>	To address the rising incidents of violence in junior rugby league competitions, and to support coaches in developing their skills in team communication, player support, player safeguarding, positive behaviour modelling, and improving player-group culture.

PJRL partnered with WSU and the Parramatta Eels to address the rising issue of unsanctioned violence and aggression in youth rugby league. A series of *Coaching Leadership Workshops* were developed to support PJRL coaches from teams in under 13s, 14s and 15s competitions. The aim of the workshops was to support coaches in developing safeguarding practices and responses to on-field and off-field incidents of unsanctioned violence and aggression.<sup>58</sup> The workshops included the following:

- A presentation from the current Parramatta Eels coach and former club captain on 'Coaching Philosophies and Values'
- An interactive discussion-based workshop facilitated by WSU staff on 'Addressing Sanctioned and Unsanctioned Violence and Aggression in Youth Rugby League'.<sup>58</sup>

An evaluation of the workshop conducted by WSU highlighted that the initiative had several positive outcomes. There was evidence that the workshops had a positive influence on coaches' awareness of behaviour modelling and improvements to their confidence and ability to manage instances of violence. Coaches also reported that the workshops had a positive influence on their coaching philosophy. Coaches identified a range of strategies they would use to foster a supportive and respectful team culture, including:

- Communication and inclusion: Involving all relevant people in discussions about violence, having an open-door policy for parents and players, and ensuring inclusivity for girls.
- Settings behavioural standards: Instilling values of fair play, respect, and settings clear behavioural expectations.
- Education and feedback: Regularly speaking about positive behaviour, educating players on consequences, and providing constant feedback.
- Team building and positive reinforcement: Promoting teamwork through games and drills and providing minimum 80% praise.<sup>58</sup>

In March 2025, PJRL hosted a *Culture and Wellbeing Summit* for all players competing in the under-14s competition and their coaches, trainers, managers and parents. The aim of the Summit was to demonstrate PJRL's commitment to changing the culture of junior rugby league to ensure that it is safe, respectful and free from all forms of violence and abuse. Over 1,000 people attended the Summit and participated in interactive presentations and workshops on violence prevention, mental health literacy, and respectful treatment of referees.<sup>59</sup>

An evaluation of the Summit conducted by WSU highlighted positive feedback received from the participants. Most of the participants agreed that the event was worthwhile, that it directly benefited young people and their teams, and had a positive impact on culture and wellbeing in the community. It was suggested that an increase in NRL/NRLW player involvement would strengthen relevance and engagement among young players, especially with the inclusive of culturally representative role models who reflect the communities within PJRL.<sup>59</sup>

### 4.2.3. Targeted approaches

Several programs and initiatives identified from the audit used 'targeted' approaches to the primary prevention of DFSV in sport. This included programs and initiatives that specifically targeted issues such as DV, family violence, and sexual violence/misconduct through education, awareness, and behavioural interventions.

#### Active Respect

<b>Location</b>	Victoria
<b>Sporting code</b>	Football
<b>Target audience</b>	Male school students, coaches
<b>Sport level</b>	Club
<b>Issues(s) addressed</b>	Adolescent relationship abuse
<b>Aims</b>	To equip school-aged boys with the skills to prevent violence through positive coach role modelling and healthier behaviours.

Through The Men's Project, Jesuit Social Services (JSS) has partnered with Football Victoria to provide free training and support to 30 football clubs to deliver an adaptation of the *Coaching Boys Into Men* (CBIM) program. CBIM an evidence-based primary prevention program that trains high school coaches to teach their young male athletes about healthy relationships and mental health and deliver violence

prevention tools. CBIM has been shown to increase positive bystander behaviours and reduce abuse perpetration among high school male athletes.<sup>60</sup>

Specifically, the *Active Respect* program utilises the CBIM approach to achieve the following:

- Build stronger peer relationships and foster respectful and inclusive behaviour
- Build trust and set expectations for acceptable behaviour
- Define abusive behaviours and teach healthy relationship skills
- Leverage coaches’ influence as role models to their athletes.<sup>61</sup>

*Active Respect* is a six-month program running throughout the football season. Coaches are required to participate in an 2.5 hour training session and then deliver CBIM’s 15-minute weekly talks to their teams during training sessions.<sup>62</sup> The talks cover topics such as personal responsibility, discipline, cooperation, respectful behaviour, mental health, healthy relationships and consent, and taking a stand against bullying.<sup>63</sup>

The *Active Respect* program will be independently evaluated, with all participants (players and coaches) offered the opportunity to participate in surveys and focus groups. Participants will be asked to share their experiences of the program and any changes to their knowledge, skills, confidence, attitudes and actions after participating in the program.<sup>61, 63</sup> Initial stakeholder insights indicate varied levels of engagement from coaches, with some showing strong commitment and uptake, while others withdrew from the program due to volunteer turnover and capacity issues.

DV Awareness Cup

Location	NSW
Sporting code	NRL
Target audience	Students
Sport level	Professional club initiative, implemented in the community
Issues(s) addressed	DV
Aims	To increase awareness, education, and encourage people to take a stand against DV.

The *DV Awareness Cup* is a community-driven initiative run by the South Coast Police District (SCPD) in partnership with the NRL and St George Illawarra Dragons, bringing together Year 9-11 students from across the Shoalhaven region to compete in a rugby league gala day. The event is delivered in collaboration with local community organisations such as Anglicare, Waminda, Southern Cross Housing, and Care South, alongside NSW Police Domestic Violence Officers (DVOs) and Youth Engagement Officers (YEOs). Together, these organisations engage students and families in discussions on breaking the cycle of DFV and strengthen community awareness of the support services available to those affected.<sup>64</sup>

The initiative combines education, sport, and community engagement through the following:

- *Pre-event engagement:* In the lead-up to the gala, DVOs and Women’s Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services (WDVCAS) staff visit participating schools to discuss issues relating to DFV. Sessions with girls specifically focus on issues of consent and coercive control to encourage disclosures and sensitive conversations, while content for boys is tailored around promoting

respect and healthy masculinities. Schools also design their own jerseys for the event, fostering a sense of pride and ownership.

- *Rugby League Gala Day*: The Gala Day forms the core of the initiative, combining a sporting competition with prevention and engagement activities. Students compete in multiple games, with boys playing tackle rugby league and girls participating in league tag.
- *Stakeholder engagement*: Each school has allocated time to engage with community organisations and agencies present on the day, thereby raising awareness of available support services. Players from the Dragons attend to speak with students about DFV, share lived experiences, and act as positive role models. The event creates opportunities for parents and community members to discreetly connect with support services in a safe setting.
- *Merit-based recognition*: At the end of the event, boys' and girls' teams are selected on merit, recognised not only for sporting performance but also for demonstrating positive behaviours such as leadership and engagement. Selected students are rewarded with a visit to the Dragons' training facility in Wollongong to tour the venue and interact with players, reinforcing positive behaviour and community connection.<sup>64</sup>

Launched in 2023, the DV Awareness Cup has expanded from four to six schools in the Shoalhaven region and is now being considered for statewide rollout. In 2025, the event engaged more than 200 students. Student feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with many requesting more frequent education sessions. A formal follow-up evaluation is in progress, using student surveys to assess changes in awareness, family conversations, and recognition of support services.

### Onside with the Mariners

<b>Location</b>	<b>NSW</b>
<b>Sporting code</b>	Football
<b>Target audience</b>	Students
<b>Sport level</b>	School-based
<b>Issues(s) addressed</b>	DV
<b>Aims</b>	To boost participation, create social impact and empower Central Coast youth.

*Onside with the Mariners* is a community impact program developed in partnership with the Central Coast Mariners and the University of Newcastle. Engaging students in Years 7 and 8 across the Central Coast region, the initiative combines structured football sessions to teach young people about healthy relationships, respect, and conflict resolution, while also fostering discussions that reinforce these concepts in practice.<sup>65</sup> The program underwent a process of re-design in collaboration with primary prevention experts and psychologists prior to its implementation to ensure alignment with best practice in violence prevention.

The program is delivered across five two-hour sessions, each combining an educational component with a practical football component. Key concepts are introduced through discussion-based activities and then reinforced within football sessions to engage students in practice. The modules build on one another, covering the following topics:

- Leadership and active bystander behaviour

- Boundaries and consent
- Healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Gender inequality and equity in sport
- Mental health and relationships.

The effectiveness of the program is promising but not yet demonstrated, as it is still in its early stages and current evaluation has been limited to feasibility rather than outcomes. However, promising indicators include its development alongside psychologists and evaluation experts to align with best practice in violence prevention and trauma-informed education, as well as comprehensive content and a whole-of-system approach.

### Voice Against Violence

<b>Location</b>	<b>National</b>
<b>Sporting code</b>	Rugby League
<b>Target audience</b>	School students, players
<b>Level</b>	Professional club initiative, implemented in the community
<b>Sport level</b>	Clubs
<b>Issues(s) addressed</b>	GBV
<b>Aims</b>	To use rugby league as a vehicle to increase awareness and understanding of GBV.

*Voice Against Violence* is the NRL's national initiative that uses rugby league as a vehicle to raise awareness about and prevent violence.<sup>66</sup> The program leverages NRL staff and past players who are trained to deliver programs, share personal stories, and foster connections with young people. The program uses rugby league drills and analogies to teach communication, empathy, respect, and the impacts of violence.

The program includes the following activities:

- *Education workshops*: Delivered to high schools and rugby league clubs across Australia and the Pacific to increase awareness and understanding of GBV. Participants are provided with insights into GBV, its different forms, causes, consequences, and how it can be prevented. The two-hour session combines classroom-based education and on-field, interactive activities.
- *Media awareness campaigns*: A variety of platforms (television, radio, print, online and social media) are used to raise awareness of GBV and challenge contributed attitudes, behaviours and social norms.
- *Voice Against Violence website*: Contains information about the issue of GBV, current research and statistics, and links to external resources.<sup>66</sup>

Surveys are conducted after each workshop to capture participants demographic information and self-reported improvements in their awareness of GBV. While no formal evaluation of the program is available, stakeholder feedback suggests that the program is effective in increasing participants knowledge of GBV. Participating schools and clubs also receive 3- and 6-month check ins, which can often prompt clubs to follow through on their commitments (e.g., fundraising for DFV services, making changes to organisational policies). The program's use of hand-on activities and relatable facilitators also resonates with participants, especially in regional and remote communities.

### 4.3. Elements of effective programs

A range of factors were identified as contributing to effective DFSV primary prevention programs in sport settings. These are described below.

#### Whole-of-sport approaches

Several programs and initiatives identified in the audit encompassed a comprehensive and holistic approach to primary prevention, engaging with leadership, players, staff, volunteers, and the general community in coordinated efforts to drive cultural change. Rather than relying on one-off campaigns or only targeting individual organisations, these programs engage every layer of the sports ecosystem to ensure that primary prevention messaging is consistent, reinforced and normalised across all levels of the organisation. *Crash the Boards* is an example of an effective whole-of-sport program, as this approach allowed the participating associations to commit to multiple prevention approaches, ensuring broader ownership and sustained engagement across the association. Primary prevention messages were ultimately accessible and non-intrusive as they were integrated into the everyday activities of coaches and players.

#### What stakeholders told us:

*"Something that we really talk about a lot is taking a whole of sport approach ... Unless you've got your state sporting organisation, your national sporting organisation and your leagues doing all the same work, you're going to run into so many barriers for success ... We feel really strongly about needing to make sure that we have multiple levels of sport involved and that we're not just working with one."*

*"I'd say you couldn't run it without all the different elements to it because you do need the player attitudes to be different, you do need the club culture to be different to facilitate the player attitudes, and then you also need the club culture and the players to kind of expand out into the broader community. like it all works together."*

#### Leadership buy-in

Strong leadership support is an integral part of primary prevention programs in sport settings. Leaders should actively model and promote gender equality and respect and set the standard of acceptable behaviour. Several programs and initiatives highlighted that strong leadership, particularly at the board and executive levels, was a key enabler of cultural change. When leadership actively support and promote primary prevention initiatives, these are more likely to be embraced, sustained, and embedded into the broader organisational culture and operations.

Programs such as *Crash the Boards* and the Women's Health Grampian's *Act @ Play* program demonstrated how leadership buy-in ensured key program activities, such as gender equity audits, action plans and training, were not just delivered but were acted upon. Football Victoria's *Changemakers* program led to leadership driven constitutional reform within the organisation, with clubs now required to implement diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) programs to retain voting rights.

#### What stakeholders told us:

*"I think it's a lot about the culture of the club, the clubs themselves. And sports are very grassroots. I think if you're looking at the community level, it is grassroots, and it is so much about the culture of the club. And the culture of the club is you know, it's a cliché, but it is determined by the leadership and how they do things".*

### Policy infrastructure

It is essential that sporting organisations have the right policy structures in place to support their primary prevention efforts. This may include codes of conduct that prohibit violence and abuse and promote safety, integrity frameworks, and gender equality frameworks. These policies and frameworks set the standard of acceptable behaviour for players, staff, volunteers and spectators and provide a process for responding to disclosures. For example, Basketball NSW has implemented a range of policies on child safety, member protection, codes of conduct, whistleblower protections, and inclusion of gender diverse people in sport. Such policies contribute to a broader 'safe spaces' philosophy, where basketball stadiums function as community hubs and offer a warm and welcoming environment for young people.

#### What stakeholders told us:

*"We do drive a lot of things ... we have zero tolerance policies around how you treat people, so we have a lot of messaging for parents, how they treat their kids, and how they treat the referees .... There's a lot of messaging. We have a lot of policies around that. We've got member protection policies, child protection policies ... and codes of conduct is around creating safe spaces".*

### Strategic framing

Strategic framing is an essential component of effective sport-based DFSV primary prevention, particularly when engaging communities that may be resistant to direct messaging about DFSV. Strategic framing allows primary prevention messaging to be accessible, relevant and empowering, ensuring that prevention efforts resonate with its target audience and leads to sustained impact.

Programs used sport's inherent values such as teamwork, respect and fair play as entry points to introduce complex and sensitive topics. This approach may help to reduce stigma and backlash, especially among young men. For example, *Game Changers: A Safer Together Event* deliberately avoids accusatory language and instead fosters personal reflection through relatable messaging and co-facilitation by male and female presenters. Programs such as *Love Bites* use language around 'respectful relationships' and 'healthy behaviours', allowing facilitators to build trust and open dialogue



without alienating participants. Framing sport as a vehicle for leadership, pride and cultural change helps organisations see themselves as part of the solution in preventing DFSV.

#### What stakeholders told us:

*"I think what we always do, first and foremost, is actually look at our game, and look at the values and the things that it actually represents from a top-down perspective, so if we're looking at teamwork, if we're looking at respect, all these sort of low-hanging fruit that we know sport globally represents, I think starting with that and using what's in our hands ... We have our football kit, and on our football ... there's actually a phrase on it that says 'the culture is in your hands'".*

### Education and training

Education and training for players, staff and volunteers is foundational to primary prevention efforts. Education and training can equip individuals with the knowledge, skills and confidence to recognise, respond to, and prevent DFSV. Programs such as *Voice Against Violence*, *Crash the Boards* and *Active Respect* combine theory with experiential learning, using sport drills and movement-based activities to engage participants in meaningful reflection and learning. Programs such as *Tackling Violence* have been evaluated to show that participants increased their understanding of DFV and confidence in challenging violent behaviour after completing the program.

Education and training initiatives should be delivered by an appropriately qualified facilitator who is trauma-informed and culturally responsive. Programs such as *Name.Narrate.Navigate* and *Building Young Men* demonstrate the importance of safe and inclusive environments for young people when discussing sensitive topics such as relationships, masculinity and violence. Programs may increase their likelihood of success by recruiting facilitators who are relatable and have lived experience similar to the participants. Education and training should also be ongoing, rather than provided in a one-off session. Several programs identified in the audit provided post-session resources, ongoing mentoring, and follow-up support to sustain impact.

#### What stakeholders told us:

*"[The] active bystander training and coach workshop were really positive around increased awareness, increased knowledge, increased intention to apply what they've learned ... take out of key messages, recall of key messages in the coach follow-up survey ... And anecdotally, when we went back and, talked to the director of coaching, their sense was 'oh yeah, yeah ... they're all doing it'".*

### Adaptability and tailoring

It is important that programs and initiatives are adapted to suit different contexts and communities. To support inclusion and intersectionality, programs should be tailored to ensure relevance and accessibility for different groups, including First Nations communities, CALD communities, and people with disability. While the audit only identified a limited number of programs adapted for certain communities, some best practice insights emerged. *Name.Narrate.Navigate* engages with young



people from diverse backgrounds in the design, delivery and evaluation of the program, with the program including specific adaptations to ensure cultural relevance.

There was also evidence of programs being adapted to meet the needs of the local community. The Wests Tigers' *Empower* program was implemented in some schools to respond to rising instances of DFSV. The *Grand Stand* program was adapted from the original *Tackling Violence* program to better meet the unique needs and preferences of the local sporting clubs and community, expanding the focus of the program to include a broader range of issues (e.g., DFV, mental health, alcohol and drug use). Programs were also adapted to ensure alignment with best practice in violence primary prevention and trauma-informed program delivery (e.g., *Onside with the Mariners*).

#### What stakeholders told us:

*"For us, a lot of the focus is on regional remote areas, and getting out to see them as much as possible ... One key thing for us is actually having facilitators that represent the community as well. So whether they're Anglo, whether they're Pacifica, whether they're Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, especially male and female, so having those strong male or female facilitators to go out in that stronger connection piece there. But also understanding that there's value in, you know, people that may have never heard from a Pacifica, may have never heard from an Anglo person as well, and being able to share their story too".*

#### Partnerships and collaboration

The audit consistently emphasised the importance of partnerships in primary prevention programs and initiatives. Programs regularly involved partnerships between professional sporting clubs, community organisations, primary prevention experts, government departments, and universities. For example, the Victorian Government's *Preventing Violence Through Sport Grant Program* utilised a partnership model, with lead organisations required to collaborate with at least two partners. Partnerships with women's health organisations and primary prevention experts were considered especially important, as these partners brought specialised knowledge on gender equality and violence.

The value of partnerships with professional sporting organisations was highlighted by several of the programs. Elite athletes and coaches are influential role models, particularly for young males. NRL programs often involved current or former athletes in their programs, which was considered key to increasing interest and engagement in the program. Professional clubs also have significant reach in the community, which can be leveraged to promote and legitimise prevention messages.

#### What stakeholders told us:

*"We're fortunate that we do partner with our local Domestic and Family Violence Networks who ... 99 per cent of the time have a presence at those [program workshop] sessions with us, so they're often the ones that will kind of, you know, chat through any of those kind of curly comments or questions ... We've also had a couple of disclosures as well and that's amazing to refer them to the counsellor, or give them a whole bunch of stuff like pens and brochures and things and talk them through the different supports they can get access to."*

## Engagement with coaches

Sports coaches have been identified as key stakeholders that should be engaged in primary prevention activities, given the substantial amount of time they spend with players and their potential to act as influential role models in players' lives. Programs such as *Crash the Boards*, *Active Respect* and PJRL's *Coaching Leadership Workshops* demonstrate the role of coaches in shaping attitudes, behaviours and team culture. Coaches can be leveraged as facilitators of DFSV education, embedding short and consistent messages into training sessions. Coaches can also reinforce prevention principles through everyday language, training drills, and leadership practices. It is essential that coaches are provided with adequate training to ensure they feel confident in delivering prevention messages. Early reflections from the *Active Respect* program indicate that clubs with committed coaches showed stronger uptake of the program. Coaches who are in paid roles, rather than volunteers, also offer a more stable and scalable program model.

### What stakeholders told us:

*"I think we need to work with boys quite widely ... adherence to traditional masculine norms ... I think, you know, sport plays quite a role for boys. And I think that coaches play an important role in terms of [acting as] mentors."*

## Community engagement

Communities bring local knowledge, insight and lived experience that can helpfully shape primary prevention programs and initiatives. Programs may achieve greater impact by working closely with local clubs, schools and community leaders. For example, the *DV Awareness Cup* used rugby league as a vehicle for primary prevention and community engagement, working with local schools and services to facilitate discussions and learning about DV. Engaging with the community through sporting events can also ensure a wider reach of program messaging. For example, *The Grand Stand Program's* dedicated *Grand Stand* round can attract up to 3,000 attendees who receive information about DFV and gender equality. Engaging with local respected figures, such as elite coaches and players, can also help to break down resistance and model respectful behaviours for community members.

### What stakeholders told us:

*"There's no doubt that sport is a great engagement vehicle, and the ability for us to have conversations right at the coalface with those that actually need it, is an opportunity that sport has that others don't."*

## Program scalability

Some programs and initiatives identified in the audit may have the potential to be scaled up and expanded, depending on their ability to be replicable, adaptable and sustainable across different settings. Programs such as *Daughters and Dads Active and Empowered* and *Love Bites* have made progress towards scalability by developing modular content, providing online facilitator training, and implementing flexible delivery models.

The scalability of programs may be limited by the extent to which they rely on short-term grant funding and volunteer facilitators. Programs like *Empower* and *Voice Against Violence* have addressed this by leveraging the role of professional sporting clubs and developing digital tools to support broader rollout of the initiatives. Initiatives that build internal capacity within clubs and schools, rather than relying solely on external stakeholders, are well positioned to sustain and scale their primary prevention efforts.

**What stakeholders told us:**

*"And for us, we're new into it, so it's gonna take us a while to really gain the credibility, evidence, and results that we need to properly go to government for some serious funding to get the scalability that we need. So we're sort of gonna plow through this component at the moment, for us on a funding level, but our numbers, yeah, we kind of need to really, find some long-term security. Knowing that even if we were to get government funding, you're kind of at risk at any stage that that drops off ... so getting some sustainability on this is definitely a big piece of the puzzle."*

## 4.4. Challenges and gaps

The audit identified several challenges and gaps in the implementation of DFSV primary prevention programs in sport settings. These are described below.

### Funding

Funding and resources are some of the most significant enablers for effective DFSV primary prevention and gender equality programs in sport settings. Many of the programs identified in the audit were reliant on short-term grants, and despite showing strong engagement and promising outcomes, are vulnerable to discontinuation once the initial funding ends. The provision of short-term funding ultimately creates a cycle where successful pilot programs are unable to be sustained and scaled into longer-term programs that are embedded within an organisation's core business. Some programs have introduced or are considering a fee-for-service model to ensure their sustainability.

#### What stakeholders told us:

*"Funding is always ... the main barrier, and I guess if that's something that we've been advising government sport and rec departments on, they're considering grants programs for community sport to implement, or sport to implement initiatives, like 12-month funding is not gonna make a difference, in my opinion. Two years even. If you can give longer-term funding, then you get an opportunity to see programs actually play out, give them a chance to pilot, review, evaluate, implement, on a sort of longer-term basis is where you're going to see change."*

### Lack of formal evaluation

Some organisations faced limitations in their evaluation capacity. This gap is particularly evident in community-led or volunteer-driven programs, where capacity for data collection and evaluation is often low. While programs such as *Daughters and Dads* and *Love Bites* have undergone rigorous evaluation, many others rely on anecdotal feedback or limited participant data. This lack of consistent, high-quality evaluation creates challenges in demonstrating the positive impact and effectiveness of programs, which in turn may make it difficult to secure further funding. Dedicated funding for evaluation that is embedded from the outset is ultimately needed to ensure continuous improvement and that program outcomes can be clearly demonstrated.

#### What stakeholders told us:

*"Because of also the piecemeal nature, often, of government funding, or other things that don't really have the investment in data collection and monitoring and evaluation that we'd like, so we're potentially not capturing the evidence that we would like to ... to determine efficacy."*

*"From the start, we would give them an evaluation framework or toolkit so that they were all measuring the same thing, but in a way that they could tailor it and it was very simple for sport, noting that in sport, evaluation is quite new to a lot of them."*

## Resistance and backlash

Some programs reported receiving backlash from the community or participants, however this was rare overall. Programs or initiatives addressing gender norms and equality, consent, and DFSV may encounter pushback from individuals or organisations, particularly in male-dominated environments. The most common types of backlash or resistance reported by stakeholders included outdated views held by club leaders regarding gender equality, doubts about the role of sporting organisations in the primary prevention of DFSV, 'what about men?' sentiments expressed by participants and community members. The use of trusted facilitators, partnerships with known community organisations, and strategic framing of program content can assist in managing complex dynamics and encourage participant engagement.

### What stakeholders told us:

*"We get backlash quite a lot, and it varies from town to town, so the more rural you go, the more resistance and backlash you will get ... I think sometimes resistance and backlash can be a good thing, because ... if people aren't asking questions or pushing buttons, if you're not pushing people's buttons, then I don't think anything's gonna change, so I think there's always an element of resistance that you get when you deliver training, or when you go out and talk to the community, but we welcome that. It's more when that resistance becomes formalised, or it becomes, energised, it can be quite undermining."*

## Organisational capacity

Barriers related to organisational capacity were also apparent in many of the programs. Certain prevention settings, such as schools and local sporting clubs, are often time-poor and under-resourced, making it difficult to maintain momentum or embed primary prevention work into everyday practice. Many community sport programs rely heavily on volunteers, posing challenges such as high volunteer turnover, inconsistent program delivery, and limited time or training or evaluation. Programs such as *Active Respect* and *Crash the Boards* found that volunteer coaches often lacked the capacity to deliver prevention content consistently, as they were often juggling multiple responsibilities or facing seasonal changes in club leadership. Programs such as the *DV Awareness Cup* are considering state-wide rollout, but this is largely dependent on personnel capacity and resourcing.

Issues with organisational capacity is not just limited to community organisations and can extend to professional sporting organisations. For example, the Wests Tigers' *Empower* program has received considerable funding and support but is still unable to meet demand, with almost 40 schools on a waitlist to participate in the program. Staff within these organisations may also require capacity building in primary prevention, trauma-informed practice, and program evaluation.

#### What stakeholders told us:

*"And maybe something that [government] may want to consider when they start doing their own [grants program], which is the capacity of organisations to actually participate in evaluation and data collection. It's really difficult for a lot of these small organisations. They just don't have.... I think some clubs would do it, but I imagine only the most professionalised, well-resourced, and well-set-up organisations would be able to do that. Many organisations would not. I can't imagine the local sport club being able to do that."*

*"But we've only got to 22 schools. There's about 38 that have contacted us wanting programs that we just don't have funding to expand and to deliver."*

#### Gaps in inclusion

While the programs identified in the audit aim to be inclusive and meet the needs of their local community, more work is needed to ensure that programs are inclusive of key groups including First Nations people, CALD communities, people with disability, LGBTQIA+ communities, and people living in rural and remote areas. Barriers to inclusion often stemmed from a lack of cultural consideration, limited resources, and a lack of representation among program facilitators. Some programs also rely on generic materials and delivery methods that may not resonate with certain groups. Organisations that are heavily reliant on volunteers may not have the capacity or skills to support participants with additional needs.

#### What stakeholders told us:

*"I think that's something that we could get better at, but I do know that one of the clubs, one of the challenges we've had is that the football clubs often are young people, or the boys are newly arrived, or they're the first generation of English-speaking. And that's been a barrier, because we need parental consent in order to for their boys to engage in this program. So, interpreting and... yeah, it's been a risk. It's been a challenge for us. That's one of the things we've learned."*

## 5. Conclusion and recommendations

This audit identified a range of DFSV primary prevention programs and initiatives implemented in sport settings and highlighted that sport is an effective platform for the primary prevention of DFSV. Sporting organisations are powerful social institutions that can influence attitudes, behaviours and cultural norms, making them an ideal setting for challenging the drivers of DFSV, promoting gender equality, and fostering safer communities.

The audit identified a range of elements of effective primary prevention programs and initiatives in sport settings. While several promising programs are operating across NSW and nationally, many are constrained by funding instability, a lack of evaluation, and gaps in organisational capacity and inclusion. Systemic and long-term investment in primary prevention through sport is ultimately needed, with funding tied to evidence, inclusivity, and sustainability.

Further engagement with priority population groups (e.g., First Nations and CALD communities, people with disability, LGBTQIA+ communities) is needed to ensure that any targeted programs are responding to community need and are designed and delivered by the communities themselves.

These principles encompass the enabling conditions for primary prevention programs and initiatives in sport settings.

1. Provide dedicated evaluation funding, built into programs from the outset, to build the evidence base and demonstrate effectiveness. Long-term sustainability may be encouraged by using simple, in-house evaluation tools (e.g., basic surveys or forms) and evaluation capacity building for organisations.
2. Prioritise leadership buy-in at governance and executive levels, including by aligning with the organisation's strategic priorities, identifying internal champions who can advocate for change (e.g., board members, senior executives, respected coaches), provide tailored training to leadership, and showcasing the success and impact of programs.
3. Consider the size and maturity of the sporting organisation, familiarisation with prevention concepts, and whether it has the scaffolding necessary to successfully implement and deliver primary prevention programs (e.g., through a readiness assessment and existence of relevant policies and procedures). Organisational capacity may differ depending on whether the organisation is a professional or local club or an SSO.
4. Provide capacity-building funds for community organisations and clubs to ensure consistent delivery, leadership engagement and remuneration of volunteers. Consider partnerships between community organisations and elite sporting clubs to address gaps in funding and capacity and build sustainability.
5. Clearly articulate who the program intends to engage (e.g., school students/young people players, clubs/associations/sporting organisations, coaches, volunteers, parents, general community) and tailor program content accordingly to ensure relevance and engagement.
6. Ensure programs are inclusive of the needs of priority populations (e.g., First Nations, CALD, disability, LGBTQIA+, rural/remote). This may be achieved through co-designing programs with communities, using inclusive language, and building partnerships with relevant organisations (e.g., Pride in Sport).
7. Strategically frame primary prevention messages using sports values like teamwork, respect and fair play to avoid backlash and increase community buy-in. This can also include partnering

with professional sporting organisations and high-profile player advocates. Program co-design with relevant stakeholders may also improve uptake and effectiveness.

8. Collaborate with expert partners (e.g., primary prevention experts, women's health organisations) to ensure that program content and delivery methods are appropriate for their target audience. Co-design of programs and initiatives can utilise a multi-pronged approach, linking prevention and sporting experts, funders, and diverse stakeholders.
9. Ensure sustainability and scalability by embedding DFSV prevention into core organisational structures (e.g., strategic plans, codes of conduct), building capacity across the whole sport system, building the capacity of volunteers, and fostering community ownership and co-design of programs. This could also be achieved by leveraging the role of professional sporting clubs and partners with funding, developing digital tools and applying a fee-for-service model.

Best practice recommendations for primary prevention programs and initiative in sport can also be grouped into three levels: whole-of-sport approaches, soft entry approaches, and targeted approaches.

### **1. Whole-of-sport approaches**

- Prioritise multi-year funding agreements that allow for sustained delivery, capacity-building, and embedding prevention messages within the culture of the sporting organisation.
- Support leadership and governance reforms such as gender audits, equity action plans, and diversity benchmarks tied to funding.
- Resource awareness campaigns integrated into competitions (theme rounds, branded kit, public messaging) that normalise prevention in everyday sporting activities.
- Provide resourcing for scaling community-of-practice networks so that lessons and strategies can be shared across associations and codes.
- Incentivise codes and clubs to adopt robust policy frameworks (codes of conduct, gender equity strategies, safeguarding policies) as a condition of funding.

### **2. Soft entry approaches**

- Invest in mentoring and leadership models that use sport to foster respectful relationships and challenge rigid gender roles e.g., by focusing on positive masculinities or increasing the participation of women in sport.
- Support long-term engagement models where participants receive repeated exposure, rather than one-off events.
- Embed evaluation funding from the outset to capture attitudinal and behavioural change over time.
- Fund training for facilitators and mentors in trauma-informed and culturally responsive practice to ensure inclusivity for diverse groups.

### **3. Targeted approaches**

- Support evidence-based, coach-led interventions where trusted role models are trained to deliver structured sessions on consent, respect, and bystander behaviour.
- Ensure programs are linked to specialist DFSV services for referral and wraparound support, particularly in regional and remote areas.



- Fund community-driven events and campaigns that combine sport, education, and service visibility to break stigma and foster disclosure pathways.
- Support targeted interventions for adolescents, with modules on consent, coercive control, and healthy relationships, designed alongside prevention experts.
- Embed rigorous evaluation and monitoring, particularly for newer targeted programs still in early feasibility stages, to ensure effectiveness and justify broader rollout.

Program type	Criteria	Best practice indicators
Soft entry approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support mentoring, leadership, and healthy relationships models</li> <li>• Fund sustained engagement (not one-off events)</li> <li>• Provide facilitator training in trauma-informed, culturally responsive practice</li> <li>• Allocate dedicated evaluation funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement of resistant/hard-to-reach groups</li> <li>• Demonstrated behaviour/attitude change</li> <li>• Inclusive design for diverse populations</li> <li>• Robust monitoring and evaluation plan</li> </ul>
Whole-of-sport approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide multi-year funding to embed culture change</li> <li>• Tie funding to governance reforms and equity benchmarks</li> <li>• Resource state/national communities of practice</li> <li>• Require organisational policy frameworks (e.g., codes of conduct, equity plans)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of leadership buy-in</li> <li>• Prevention messaging integrated at all levels</li> <li>• Broad reach (clubs, players, fans, community)</li> <li>• Demonstrated sustainability and scalability</li> </ul>
Targeted approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Back evidence-based coach/athlete-led programs</li> <li>• Ensure partnerships with DFSV specialist services</li> <li>• Fund community awareness events and campaigns</li> <li>• Embed rigorous evaluation and outcome measurement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear focus on DFSV primary prevention outcomes</li> <li>• Integration with referral pathways and support services</li> <li>• Demonstrated impact on knowledge, attitudes, behaviours</li> <li>• Evaluation capacity to support broader rollout</li> </ul>

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Our Watch framework

Our Watch conceptualises the gendered drivers of VAW as follows:

1. The condoning of VAW
2. Men’s control of decision-making and limits to women’s independence in public and private life
3. Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity
4. Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control.<sup>6</sup>

The framework outlines eight essential actions to address the gendered drivers of violence and change the social context in which it occurs. These include:

1. Challenge the condoning of VAW
2. Promote women’s independence and decision-making in public life and relationships
3. Build new social norms that foster personal identities not constrained by rigid gender stereotypes
4. Support men and boys in developing healthy masculinities and positive, supportive male peer relationships
5. Promote and normalise gender equality in public and private life
6. Address the intersections between gender inequality and other forms of systemic and structural oppression and discrimination, and promote broader social justice
7. Build safe, fair and equitable organisations and institutions by focusing on policy and systems change
8. Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relations between and among women and men, girls and boys, in public and private spheres.<sup>6</sup>

The Our Watch framework also outlines a range of techniques that have demonstrated effectiveness in addressing the drivers of VAW, and associated considerations for evaluation. These are outlined in Tables 5 and 6 below.

**Table 5.** Primary prevention techniques and examples of good practice outlined in the Our Watch *Change the Story* framework.<sup>6</sup>

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"><li>• Programs that build participants’ understanding of sexist and gendered norms, attitudes and behaviours, and their skills to address these through bystander actions.</li><li>• Opportunities for program participants to practice skills learnt and reinforce attitude and behaviour change.</li><li>• Programs that deliver multiple sessions to a given audience or continue to engage the same audience over time to prolong impact.</li><li>• Complementary strategies that enable settings to reinforce program content.</li></ul>



Prevention technique	Description	Examples of good practice
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality training and support for educators and program facilitators.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>A 'whole-of-organisation' prevention plan that sets priorities, identifies key strategies, directs organisational resources, facilitates action and promotes accountability.</li> <li>Employ strategies across multiple levels of an organisation.</li> <li>Ensure staff are involved in shaping understandings of existing practices and what needs to be changed.</li> <li>Use senior leadership to establish and reinforce organisational commitments to violence prevention and gender equality.</li> <li>Establish mechanisms that support those within the organisation who have personal experiences of violence.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>Engage key organisations, recognised community leaders and diverse community members, including in decision-making.</li> <li>Empower communities to participate in shared decision-making.</li> <li>Implement mutually reinforcing strategies to maximise stakeholder participation, develop local leadership and improve resource mobilisation.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>Develop simple, strong and consistent key messages, with tailored messages for specific target audiences and channels.</li> <li>Identify and refine the target audience and their key needs.</li> <li>Devise campaigns with multiple components to promote key messages.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>Resource women's civil society organisations and networks to lead prevention activities.</li> <li>Use an intersectional approach and promote collaborative effort across civil society organisations and networks to address gendered drivers of VAW.</li> <li>Engaging a diverse range of advocates who are respected within their communities, and who hold both formal and informal positions of leadership and influence.</li> <li>Facilitate opportunities for women to network and advocate collectively, particularly on issues or in settings where they are underrepresented.</li> </ul>

**Table 6.** Primary prevention techniques and consideration for evaluation.<sup>6</sup>

Prevention technique	Considerations for evaluation
Direct participation programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The connection between direct participation programs and long-term outcomes in violence perpetration is often complex and difficult to measure.</li> <li>• Evaluations should focus on how implementation processes support intended outcomes, such as reaching the target audience and achieving short-term changes in knowledge, attitudes, perceptions, and behavioural intentions.</li> </ul>
Organisational development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring and evaluation of organisational development should begin at program outset, ensuring that data collection is tied to prevention and equality outcomes and existing accountability mechanisms.</li> <li>• Organisational change should be measured at the policy, culture and process levels, including assessing norms and practices, structures and power dynamics, and any backlash or resistance to change.</li> </ul>
Community mobilisation and strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation of community mobilisation must be context-specific and use participatory evaluation methods that actively involve stakeholders in the process.</li> <li>• Evaluations should also assess community-level change, including enhanced confidence and collective identity, stronger commitments to prevention, contributions of leaders and key actors, mobilisation of resources, and any resistance or backlash.</li> </ul>
Communications and social marketing campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation should measure the campaign's reach and impact on targeted audiences, including its effect on engagement with the issues, its influence on public discourse, and its impact on knowledge, attitudes, perceptions, and behavioural intentions, as well as identify any resistance or backlash.</li> <li>• Evaluations should also consider how communications activity connects with other prevention strategies.</li> </ul>
Civil society advocacy and social movement activism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social movement advocacy is a complex and long-term process that is difficult to measure through simple or linear methods. Evaluations should therefore focus on stakeholder dynamics, the role of advocates, the breadth of support, and the strength of alliances.</li> <li>• Its success should be assessed not only through policy change but also through evidence of social norm change and cultural shifts.</li> </ul>



## Appendix B: Data collection tools

### Online survey questions

1. What is your role within the organisation?
2. How does your role relate to the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) programs, initiatives and strategies in your organisation?
3. Does your organisation have any of the following in relation to DFSV?
  - Domestic, family and/or sexual violence policy
  - Gender equality and gender equity plan/policy
  - Child protection or child safeguarding policy (including Working with Children Check policies)
  - Code of Conduct that mentions domestic, family and/or sexual violence
  - Diversity and inclusion plan/policy
  - None of the above
  - Other (please specify)
4. Has your organisation implemented a primary prevention program as described above in the last 5 years?
5. Has your organisation discussed or considered implementing, or are in the process of implementing, programs or training that relate to the prevention of DFSV?
6. Are you interested in hearing about the future developments in this project or primary prevention of DFSV in sport settings?
7. Please provide as much detail as you can, about the prevention program/initiative below.
8. What were the program/initiative aims?
9. Who was the program/training targeted towards?
10. What outcomes and/or changes were observed as a result of the program/initiative? This may include anecdotal changes or other informal indicators.
11. What worked well?
12. What were the challenges experienced?
13. Based on your organisation's experience, do you have recommendations that would help with the prevention of DFSV in sport settings?

### Interview questions – sporting organisations

- Could you please tell me what your role is at [organisation]?
  - How long have you been involved with the organisation?
  - Have you directly been involved/responsible for in your organisation's initiatives or training related to the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) or one aspect of this e.g.: violence prevention or gender equality?
  - How does your organisation have any preference for the way in which the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) is approached? eg: gender equality, respectful behaviour and relationships, fair play...?

- Do you think sporting organisations have a role to play in the prevention of DFSV?
  - What kinds of roles do you think sporting organisations can play in preventing DFSV in the broader community?
  - Do you think volunteers, players, officials, coaches and family members have a role to play in prevention of DFSV? Can you give examples?
- Does your organisation have policies, frameworks and codes of conduct that relate to the prevention of DFSV? This may include policies/codes that support respectful, inclusive or safe environmental and promote gender equality and female participation in sport.
  - If yes:
    - Please describe the policies, frameworks and codes of conduct and how they relate to DFSV?
    - Do you have any reflections on their effectiveness?
  - If no:
    - What do you think is stopping your organisation from implementing these types of policies/frameworks/codes of conduct?
    - What might help your organisation to implement them?
- Has your organisation implemented any programs/training that aim to prevent DFSV?
 

**If yes:**

  - What is the name of the program?
  - What are the aims of the program?
  - Who is the program targeted towards?
  - Who is responsible for implementing the program?
  - What type of activities does it involve?
    - Were these activities part of a one-off initiative or are they ongoing?
  - Has the program been implemented as intended? Why/why not?
  - Have there been any barriers to its implementation? If yes, please describe.
  - What outcomes or changes have you observed as a result of the program?
  - Did the program receive any resistance from key stakeholders?
  - Do you think the program has met its overall aims and objectives? Why/why not?
  - Do you think the program is effective at reaching any specific audience? (e.g., Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disability)?
    - What was it about the program that was effective?
    - Were there barriers to implementation?
  - Does the program have adequate resourcing? If no, what type of resourcing is needed for the program to be implemented effectively?

- Do you think the program is sustainable? Why/why not?
- Do you have any recommendations for how the program could be improved

**If no:**

- What do you think is getting in the way of your organisation from implementing DFSV prevention programs?
- What might help your organisation to implement these types of programs? (e.g., training or other guidance)
- Does your organisation partner with any prevention or advocacy organisation? If yes, which organisations and what does this involve?
- Do you have any publications, evaluations or media articles you can share with us?
- Is there anything else you would like to say about the role of sporting organisations in the prevention of DFSV?

### Interview questions – prevention experts

- Could you please tell me about your role at [organisation] and what it involves?
  - How long have you been involved with the organisation?
  - How does your role relate to the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV)?
  - Have you worked specifically with sporting organisations or clubs? If yes, in what capacity?
- What do you think makes sport organisations a valuable setting for the primary prevention of DFSV?
- What do you think are the key elements of an effective primary prevention program or initiatives in sport settings?
  - Are there any specific strategies that you think are most effective (e.g., education/training programs, leadership initiatives, policies)?
- Can you share an example of a prevention program or initiative in sport that you believe was particularly effective?
  - What is the name of the program?
  - What are the aims of the program?
  - Who is the program targeted towards?
  - Who is responsible for implementing the program?
  - What type of activities does it involve?
  - Do you have any insight into whether the program was effective?
  - Do you have any insight into barriers that were faced with the program's implementation?

- How do you think organisations should tailor prevention strategies to different contexts (e.g., community vs elite sport, individual vs team-based sport, male vs female participants)?
- How do you ensure that primary prevention work is inclusive and intersectional?
- How might sporting organisations respond to backlash or resistance from the community to DFSV prevention programs?
- Is there anything else you would like to say about the role of sporting organisations in the prevention of DFSV?

## Appendix C: Primary prevention programs and initiatives identified in the audit

**Table 7.** Overview of primary prevention programs and initiative identified in the audit.

Organisation	Program name	Location	Sporting code	Target group	Aim	Activities
AFL	Respect and Responsibility Program	National	AFL	Players	To create a safe and inclusive environment for women, girls, men, boys, and people of diverse genders.	<p>Through a partnership with Our Watch, the AFL delivers face-to-face educational training to all AFL clubs. The training covers It covers various topics, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the incidence and gendered nature of sexual violence</li> <li>sexual consent and communication skills in negotiating consent</li> <li>how to ensure a respectful team culture that can work to prevent sexual violence</li> <li>legal definition of rape</li> <li>impact of sexual violence on victim-survivors</li> <li>ways of supporting victim-survivors</li> <li>understanding individual responsibility and accountability</li> <li>intervening in high-risk bystander situations involving friends or teammates.</li> </ul> <p>The training is delivered alongside the AFL's <i>Respect and Responsibility Policy</i>.</p>
Basketball NSW	Grit for Girls	NSW	Basketball	Athletes	To support, empower and educate girls in basketball, both on and off the court.	<p>The program offers practical tools and additional support to young women navigating basketball pathways. The program is built around 4 key modules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mental health in sport</li> <li>motivation in sport</li> <li>barriers in sport – dealing with negative thoughts, body image</li> <li>performance enhancement – goal setting, growth mindset</li> </ul> <p>Each module explores the unique challenges and opportunities faced by female athletes, equipping them with evidence-based strategies and the confidence to thrive in their sporting journeys. The program also includes dedicated modules for parents and</p>

Organisation	Program name	Location	Sporting code	Target group	Aim	Activities
						coaches, designed to mirror the learning and create a shared understanding that reinforces support at every level.
Camden/ Wollondilly Domestic Violence Committee	SayNo2DV	NSW	AFL; netball	Associations; general community	To promote awareness of DV and raise funds for DV services.	<p>Camden Cats partnered with the Camden/Wollondilly DV Committee to host a SayNo2DV Gala Fundraiser. The event aimed to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>spread the SayNo2DV message to the community, highlighting that everyone has a role to play in putting an end to DV</li> <li>show the local community that Camden Cats are committed to doing their part to build a future free from DV</li> <li>raise money for the DV Committee</li> </ul> <p>The Camden &amp; District Netball Association also supported the Camden/Wollondilly DV Committee by raising awareness of DV and donating proceeds from their day to the Committee.</p>
Carlton Football Club	Carlton Respects	Victoria	AFL	Students; athletes; general community	To make a meaningful contribution to achieving gender equality and prevention of VAW.	<p>The program includes three key components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Road to Respect school program for primary school students, providing information on gender stereotypes, managing emotions, and creating respectful relationships among young people.</li> <li>Awareness raising through a dedicated AFL and AFLW game each year. The campaign aims to raise awareness about gender equality in the prevention of VAW, promote the Road to Respect school program, and raise funds for the Carlton Respects initiative.</li> <li>A Workplace Charter containing actions, tools, experiences and expertise to guide organisations in becoming a gender equitable workplace.</li> </ul>
Central Coast Mariners	Onside with the Mariners	NSW	Football	Students	To boost participation, create social impact, and empower youth through football.	<p>The program operates in three stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mariners A-League football skills session focusing on participation while initiating conversations about DV and employment.</li> <li>Tailored DFV education programs delivered through in-school sessions, focusing on DV, employment opportunities and vocational training.</li> </ul>

Organisation	Program name	Location	Sporting code	Target group	Aim	Activities
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow-up sessions to build on the initial discussions and education provided, offering interactive workshops and mentoring opportunities to reinforce learning outcomes.</li> </ul>
City of Greater Geelong	Barwon Respect Cup	Victoria	Netball	Students	To empower young people to take action against GBV.	<p>The event brings together Year 9 students from schools across the Greater Geelong region for a series of workshops and a friendly netball competition. Topics explored include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>gender stereotypes</li> <li>affirmative consent</li> <li>active bystander intervention</li> <li>help-seeking strategies.</li> </ul> <p>The workshops are followed by a mixed round-robin netball competition. Students are encouraged to promote gender equity in their schools and the wider community, helping to create safer, more inclusive spaces for all. The program is led by the City of Greater Geelong and supported by a coalition of organisations that advocate for respectful relationships education and violence prevention</p>
Football NSW	White Ribbon Cup Gala Day	NSW	Football	Students	To promote awareness about White Ribbon Australia and initiatives to reduce the incidence of DV.	Sporting gala-day for secondary school students promoting awareness about White Ribbon Australia and initiatives to reduce the incidence of domestic and partner violence. The day also provides a platform to raise funds for DV prevention. The initiative involves students from six secondary schools engaging in meaningful sporting competition, aimed at promoting the ideals of acceptance, equity and the development of respectful relationships.
Football Victoria	Change Makers	Victoria	Football	Clubs	To facilitate grassroots change by empowering and supporting clubs.	Football clubs participated in a series of workshops, guided by a mentor. Clubs were supported to create tailored, practical and sustainable solutions to support the experience of women and girls. A community of practice was then created to build the motivation and capacity of men within Football Victoria to positively influence gender equity within their organisation and on the field.
Jesuit Social Services	Active Respect	Victoria	Football	Players	To equip boys with the skills to prevent violence through positive	JSS will partner with 30 Victorian football clubs to provide six months of free training and support through an adapted version of the CBIM program. The training explores the pressures boys and men face to conform to certain behaviours, how these

Organisation	Program name	Location	Sporting code	Target group	Aim	Activities
					role modelling and healthy behaviours.	<p>pressures affect mental health, and their links to issues like sexual harassment and VAW.</p> <p>The pilot program will test and trial three approaches for running the CBIM program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program Stream 1 will test training coaches who will then deliver the 12 15-minute talks to their team at training. The coaches will receive four hours of support throughout the program.</li> <li>• Program Stream 2 will test training coaches as per Stream 1 with the addition of training for young leaders and providing them with four hours of support.</li> <li>• Program Stream 3 will be as per Stream 2 however with an additional four hours of support for both coaches and the young leaders.</li> </ul>
NAPCAN	Love Bites	NSW	Not specific	Students	To provide a safe environment for young people to explore and discuss respectful relationships.	<p>Love Bites Senior is a Respectful Relationships Education program for young people aged 15-17. It includes two interactive workshops on relationship violence and sex and relationships, followed by creative workshops and community campaigns. Love Bites Junior is designed for young people aged 11-14, focusing on respectful relationships development.</p> <p>NAPCAN has trained facilitators in the Love Bites program in communities all across Australia who deliver the program on a voluntary basis in schools and community settings.</p>
Netball Australia	Netball unites to end violence against women	NSW	Netball	Players; general community	To make a stand against VAW.	Players and umpires at all games will wear purple armbands (the colour which represents DV awareness).
No More	Domestic Violence Action Plans: Transforming Communities Through Sport	NT	Not specific	Clubs; general community	To develop local responses to reduce the incidence of DFV.	<p>Domestic Violence Action Plans help sporting clubs to formalise their commitment to ending DFV. The plan outlines the club's specific goals, commitments, strategies, responsibilities, and timeframes, ensuring a tailored approach to each club's unique needs.</p> <p>The campaign is supported by NRL NT, who created a Domestic Violence Action Plan for 2024-2025. They included a round</p>



Organisation	Program name	Location	Sporting code	Target group	Aim	Activities
						dedicated to the campaign, which was featured on NRL NT Media. No More "Spirit of the Game" awards were also presented.
NRL	Voice Against Violence	National	NRL	Players; general community	To increase awareness and understanding of GBV.	<p>The initiative includes the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education workshops delivered to rugby league teams across Australia and the Pacific.</li> <li>• Media awareness campaigns to raise awareness of violence and challenge contributing attitudes, social norms and behaviours.</li> <li>• A website with information about VAW, current research, statistics and links to external resources.</li> </ul>
NRL	Tackling Violence	NSW	NRL	Players; clubs; general community	To use men's involvement in rugby league as a platform to change attitudes and behaviours contributing to DFV.	<p>The initiative includes the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Club sponsorship on the condition that clubs sign a Code of Conduct that commits them to penalising players for DFV offences. Clubs also display the Tackling Violence logo on their playing kit and at their home ground.</li> <li>• Clubs attend educational sessions that focus on identifying and challenging DFV and developing supportive attitudes and behaviours towards women.</li> <li>• A targeted media campaign aims to inform and link the public to specialist support services.</li> <li>• Sponsored clubs are linked up with DFV support services in their community.</li> </ul>
NSLHD	The Grand Stand Program	NSW	Not specific	Players; clubs; general community	To build the capacity of Northern Sydney men engaged in community sport as allies in the prevention of DFV and it's contributing factors.	<p>The program includes the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A club code-of-conduct committing players to refrain from perpetrating DFV with agreed sanctions for breaches.</li> <li>• Players and club leaders attend an educational session focused on DFV and associated factors of alcohol, mental health and gambling.</li> <li>• Further capacity building of club 'champions' through courses such as Accidental Counsellor, RSA and RCG.</li> <li>• Club host a 'Grand Stand Against Domestic Abuse' round, complemented by community social marketing strategies.</li> </ul>

Organisation	Program name	Location	Sporting code	Target group	Aim	Activities
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A-grade players wear branded socks during their nominated Grand Stand Round.</li> <li>Review and enhancement of alcohol management and mental health strategies through the Alcohol and Drug Foundation's Good Sports program.</li> <li>Sporting clubs commit to the program via a MoU and receive a grant of \$1,500.</li> </ul>
PJRL	PJRL League Coaching Leadership Workshops	NSW	NRL	Coaches	To support coaches in developing safeguarding practices for prevention strategies and responses to on-field and off-field incidents of unsanctioned violence and aggression.	PJRL partnered with Western Sydney University to develop and implement a series of Coaching Leadership Workshops to address incidents of on- and off-field unsanctioned violence and aggression. Each workshop included a presentation on 'Coaching Philosophies and Values' from a current Parramatta Eels coach and former club captain. This was followed by an interactive discussion-based workshop on 'Addressing Sanctioned and Unsanctioned Violence and Aggression in Youth Rugby League' facilitated by WSU staff.
Penrith Panthers	Building Young Men	NSW	NRL	Students	To support students in Year 10 who are at risk from disengaging from high school or who have leadership potential that requires further development.	<p>The program provides explicit and interactive learning opportunities where boys can engage in a positive, safe and caring environment with experienced and reliable male role models in order to enhance psychological wellbeing and mitigate the impact of potential harmful risk factors. The program is implemented over 20 weeks, with students and mentors meeting for weekly sessions.</p> <p>Each weekly session has a theme and associated learning objectives aimed at progressively developing learning around positive psychology and positive masculinity. Participants engage in topics such as relationships, responsibility, sexuality, mental health and facing challenges. Groups are directed by an experienced and trained lead facilitator with professional experience working with at-risk children and youth.</p>

Organisation	Program name	Location	Sporting code	Target group	Aim	Activities
Play by the Rules	Start to Talk	National	Not specific	Sporting organisations; parents/carers	To encourage parents and sporting organisations to discuss how they can work together to create a child safe environment.	<p>The campaign features child safe sport resources developed by Sport Integrity Australia. It recognises that parents/carers play a leading role in encouraging and supporting their children to play and stay involved in sport, in a fun and safe environment. The campaign was developed in response to recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to CSA.</p> <p>The campaign asks sporting participants to read, download and discuss the Sport Integrity Australia Child Safe Sport resources. These resources include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Safe Practices - Dos and Dont's</li> <li>• A Parents/Carers Guide to Selecting a Safe Sporting Club</li> <li>• How to Involve Children and Young People in Your Sporting Organisation</li> <li>• Checklist for Selecting a Safe Sporting Club</li> <li>• Choosing a Child Safe Club - Poster</li> </ul>
Respect Victoria	Respect Women: "Call it Out" (Respect is) campaign	Victoria	Soccer; NRL; AFL	General community	To communicate prevention of VAW messages using sports-based channels as a means of reaching target audiences.	<p>The campaign encourages Victorian communities to unpack what respect looks like and how to put it into practice in relationships, families, workplaces and society. It aims to support communities to engage with the concept of respect and to build awareness of the early drivers of family violence and VAW, which are often driven by intersecting forms of discrimination.</p> <p>Media campaign included a mix of regional and metro television, digital, radio, social media, out of home and press. CALD audiences were targeted through social media, digital and radio. Campaign was supported by website information and links to reinforce the messages and calls to action across the broader campaign.</p>
Safer Together	Game Changers: A Safer Together Event	NSW	Not specific	Sporting organisations	To increase awareness and understanding of DFV and the importance of collective action in creating a	Community event featuring talks from local renowned sporting stars, guest speakers, providing an opportunity for participants to learn and engage in discussions about how the sporting community can eradicate DV.

Organisation	Program name	Location	Sporting code	Target group	Aim	Activities
					violence-free community.	
Souths Cares	Deadly Youth Mentoring Program, Play Her Way	NSW	NRL	Players; students	To support disadvantaged or marginalised youth and their families through the delivery of capacity building programs addressing education, training, health and employment needs.	<p>Includes the following two programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deadly Youth Mentoring Program: Provides at-risk Aboriginal youth aged 10-17 with 6 months of intensive mentoring focusing on education, positive social activities and building connections with Aboriginal culture and community. Participants who are consistently engaging with the program and achieving their goals receive unique incentives associated with the South Sydney Rabbitohs and attend Souths Cares leadership and cultural camps.</li> <li>Play Her Way: Developed to address many of the barriers girls face in participating in sport including affordability, quality of coaching and a lack of holistic training programs specifically designed for female athletes. A 10 week training program provides coaching by accredited mentors in a safe, inclusive environment while also receiving guidance on nutrition, mental fitness, leadership and goal-setting.</li> </ul>
Sport and Recreation Victoria	GBV Community of Practice	Victoria	Not specific	Sporting organisations	To build the capacity of the sport and primary prevention sectors to work together to prevent GBV by sharing learnings, ideas and evidence-based approaches for engaging sports and volunteers in the prevention of GBV.	<p>A CoP was created to achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build the capacity of their sport and recreation community to address the drivers of GBV</li> <li>Implement the guiding principles of <i>Safe and Inclusive Sport: Preventing Gender-Based Violence</i></li> <li>Build networks and partnerships between the sport and recreation community and primary prevention experts.</li> </ul> <p>The CoP involved a combination of in-person and virtual events and included presentations, discussions and small group activities. The CoP linked participants to evidence-based strategies, practical tools and other resources to apply in community sport settings. Case studies of work in action in community sport were also shared. Presenters included a range of experts across the primary prevention and sport sectors.</p> <p>Key CoP topics included:</p>

Organisation	Program name	Location	Sporting code	Target group	Aim	Activities
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport's role in the prevention of GBV</li> <li>• Taking an intersectional approach to sport's role in the prevention of GBV</li> <li>• Managing backlash and resistance</li> <li>• Engaging men as allies in the prevention of GBV</li> <li>• Developing and implementing appropriate responses to disrespect and violence in sport settings</li> <li>• Preventing GBV against First Nations women in sport</li> <li>• Undertaking evaluation.</li> </ul>
Sport and Recreation Victoria	Preventing Violence Through Sports Grant Program 2022-2025	Victoria	Not specific	Sporting organisations	To support new and existing partnerships between community sport and primary prevention experts that are innovative and strengths-based.	<p>Twelve individual projects received a total of \$2.76 million to establish partnerships that contribute to the prevention of GBV. The partnerships included SSAs, professional clubs, universities, regional sport assemblies, local councils, primary prevention organisations, and the women's health sector. Thirty-four organisations in total formed the partnerships.</p> <p>The 12 funded projects included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality and Respect in Sport in Whittlesea</li> <li>• Crash the Boards - striving for gender equality through basketball</li> <li>• Football Victoria</li> <li>• Champions of the West</li> <li>• Preventing Violence through Sport across Gippsland utilising the established Orange Round Campaign</li> <li>• Supporting the Readiness of Regional Sports to prevent and respond to GBV</li> <li>• Storm Stand Up, Speak Out and Take Action</li> <li>• We're Game: Preventing violence through sport in Merri-bek</li> <li>• Gendering in a new era in Mildura Regional Sports</li> <li>• Healthy Clubs, Healthy Relationships education for sporting clubs and league</li> <li>• Community Sport: An equal playing field</li> <li>• Leaders on and off the field – Respect starts here</li> </ul>

Organisation	Program name	Location	Sporting code	Target group	Aim	Activities
St George Illawarra Dragons, NSW Police	DV Awareness Cup	NSW	NRL	Students	To increase awareness, education and encourage people to take a stand against DFV.	A community-driven initiative run by the SCPD in partnership with the NRL and St George Illawarra Dragons, bringing together Year 9-11 students from across the Shoalhaven region to compete in a rugby league gala day. The event is delivered in collaboration with local community organisations such as Anglicare, Waminda, Southern Cross Housing, and Care South, alongside NSW DVOs and YEOs. Together, these organisations engage students and families in discussions on breaking the cycle of domestic and family violence and strengthen community awareness of the support services available to those affected.
Tennis Australia	A Safer Game Plan	National	Tennis	Sporting organisations; general community	To educate staff and the wider tennis community, including officials, coaches and clubs, about their responsibilities for safeguarding children on and off the court.	Tennis Australia has produced a number of resources including a webinar to assist with the education of staff and volunteers in relation to the protection of children and young people involved in tennis. Club and association administrators along with all Tennis Australia coach members and officials were invited to attend a series of training workshops.
Top Blokes Foundation	Top Blokes Foundation Mentoring Program	National	Not specific	Students; young men	To address harmful gender stereotypes and reshape the future of masculinities through long-term, evidence-based mentoring programs for 10-24 year olds.	Includes the following programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentoring for Boys: 8-10 week in-school mentoring program tailored for boys in their pre-teen years. The program guides them through the complexities of early adolescence with a focus on promoting healthy and safe lifestyles. Covers topics such as peer pressure, cyberbullying, transitioning to high school, healthy relationships, teamwork, discrimination, personal hygiene and health, redefining masculinities, mental health, drugs and alcohol, risky behaviour, and anger management.</li> <li>• Mentoring for Teens: In-school mentoring program for 14-17 year olds, running over two terms. The program focuses on building the skills necessary for young males to navigate the teenage experience. Covers topics such as alcohol, drugs, peer pressure, leadership and resilience, mental health, online behaviour, sexual health,</li> </ul>

Organisation	Program name	Location	Sporting code	Target group	Aim	Activities
						<p>pornography, communication and connection, racism and stereotyping, discrimination, and inclusion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentoring for Young Men: Partners with businesses and organisations to equip young male employees between the ages of 18-24 with the skills to thrive through an 8 week mentoring program. Covers topics such as self-awareness and purpose, masculinities, money mindset, resilience, addictive behaviours, emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, sexual health and consent, pornography, challenge biases, inclusivity, lead from within, future you, and communication.</li> </ul>
University of Newcastle	Daughters and Dads Active and Empowered	NSW	Not specific	Students; parents/carers	To bring together fathers/father-figures and their daughters to promote physical activity, enhance sport skills, boost wellbeing, strengthen the father-daughter relationship and advance gender equity.	<p>Daughters and Dads Active and Empowered is a multi-sport program targeting key sports skills (kick, catch, bounce, strike, overhand throw, underhand throw). The program provides the foundation for key sport skills to enable a pathway for youth sport initiatives and encourages them to engage in multiple sports in the long-term.</p> <p>The program includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Dads-Only Session focusing on positive parenting, engaging daughters in physical activity/sport and gender equity advocacy.</li> <li>• Weekly Daughters &amp; Dads Sessions including empowerment and practical content.</li> </ul>
University of Newcastle	Name.Narrate. Navigate	NSW	Not specific	Students; professionals	To address the issue of interpersonal violence in the lives of young people, increase knowledge and skills, strengthen adaptive behaviour, and build connections for greater	<p>The program recognises the importance of relationship-based approaches to practice that are trauma-informed and culturally responsive. The program addresses the need for improved knowledge, behaviour, confidence, connection and coping. The program has two components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preventive-intervention: Psychoeducation and skill development of young people aged 12-18 years who are at risk of (or are using) violence</li> <li>• Training and education: Provides professional education, mentoring and training to workers who support young people.</li> </ul>

Organisation	Program name	Location	Sporting code	Target group	Aim	Activities
					confidence and coping.	Young people engage in a program of interactive group workshops, while practitioners learn from and alongside young people through engaged professional development themed around program content, emerging findings and feedback.
Victorian Basketball Associations	Crash the Boards for Gender Equality	Victoria	Basketball	Players; coaches; associations	To implement a whole-of-sport approach targeting key change makers such as coaches, players, committee members and referees to address and act on the gendered drivers of violence.	<p>The program consisted of eight phases for participating associations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender audit: Clubs undertake an audit to identify their strengths, priorities and gaps.</li> <li>• Gender equity action plan: A plan is developed using data from the gender audit as well as surveys, interviews and consultations across the association.</li> <li>• Awareness raising of messages: Posters and other communication materials are displayed around stadiums to promote key messages.</li> <li>• Coaches' workshop: Coaches are educated and upskilled to implement respectful relationships and training sessions for junior players.</li> <li>• Active learning for junior players: Junior players learn about respectful relationships through an 8-week active training program, incorporated into their regular training sessions.</li> <li>• Gender equity and active bystander training: Training is delivered to club leaders and key influencers.</li> <li>• Theme round with senior teams: A dedicated competition round champions key messages and raises awareness across senior competitions.</li> <li>• Knowledge sharing: A regular community of practice is held to build collective impact of the program by sharing learnings and challenges.</li> </ul>
West's Tigers	Empower Program	NSW	NRL	Students	To make a real difference in the community by playing a key role in addressing young	<p>Three core programs are delivered to schools within the club's catchment area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stripes of Success: The focus of the program is on developing leadership skills, with tasks provided to help students learn the behaviours of success.</li> </ul>



Organisation	Program name	Location	Sporting code	Target group	Aim	Activities
					unemployment and DV.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom to Careers: The program provides students with career advice and direction, with a focus on students who are not looking to complete their HSC.</li> <li>Healthy Relationships and Community: The program starts the conversation about what healthy relationships are and how to prevent long-term GBV.</li> </ul>
Women's Health Grampians	Gender Equality in Sport and Recreation	Victoria	Not specific	Clubs	To guide individual organisations and collective work that fosters communities of respect, equality and preventing VAW.	<p>The Communities of Respect and Equality (CoRE) Alliance is a partnership of organisations, businesses, sporting clubs and groups who share a vision for safe, equal and respectful communities in the Grampians region.</p> <p>A regional consultant provides clubs with one-on-one support, practical guidance and expertise in promoting gender equality in a club context. Participants have access to a range of tailored resources, including Taking Action to Prevent Violence Against Women guides, Gender Equality Action Plan templates, policy templates, bystander posters, and guidance notes.</p> <p>WHG also delivers the Act@Play program, a six-month intensive cultural change program for sporting clubs to fast track gender equality outcomes and help create inclusive, safe, respectful and welcoming environments across club systems, structures, and culture.</p> <p>Movement-Based Bystander Training for Players is a face-to-face workshop involving a high-performance field session and interactive education session. The training aims to increase participant awareness and understanding of GBV and provide practical advice on how everyone can contribute to preventing it.</p>

## Appendix D: Mapping of primary prevention programs and initiatives identified in the audit

**Table 8.** Mapping of programs and initiatives to the socio-ecological model of DFSV prevention.

Organisation	Program/initiative	Socio-ecological level			
		<i>Individual</i>	<i>Relationship</i>	<i>Community</i>	<i>Societal</i>
AFL	Respect and Responsibility Program	X	X	X	
Basketball NSW	Grit for Girls	X			
Camden/Wollondilly Domestic Violence Committee	SayNo2DV			X	
Carlton Football Club	Carlton Respects	X	X	X	
Central Coast Mariners	Onside with the Mariners	X	X	X	
City of Greater Geelong	Barwon Respect Cup	X		X	
Football NSW	White Ribbon Cup Gala Day	X		X	
Football Victoria	Change Makers			X	
Jesuit Social Services	Active Respect	X	X	X	
NAPCAN	Love Bites	X	X	X	
Netball Australia	Netball unites to end violence against women			X	
No More	Domestic Violence Action Plans: Transforming Communities Through Sport			X	
NRL	Voice against Violence	X	X	X	
NRL	Tackling Violence	X	X	X	
NSLHD	The Grand Stand Program	X	X	X	
PJRL	PJRL League Coaching Leadership Workshops	X	X	X	
Penrith Panthers	Building Young Men	X	X	X	
Play by the Rules	Start to Talk			X	
Respect Victoria	Respect Women: "Call it Out" (Respect is) campaign	X	X	X	
Safer Together	Game Changers: A Safer Together Event			X	

Souths Cares	Deadly Youth Mentoring Program, Play Her Way	X	X	X	
Sport and Recreation Victoria	GBV Community of Practice	X		X	
Sport and Recreation Victoria	Preventing Violence Through Sports Grant Program 2022-2025	X	X	X	X
St George Illawarra Dragons, NSW Police	DV Awareness Cup	X	X	X	
Tennis Australia	A Safer Game Plan	X		X	
Top Blokes Foundation	Top Blokes Foundation Mentoring Program	X	X	X	
University of Newcastle	Daughters and Dads Active and Empowered	X	X		
University of Newcastle	Name.Narrate.Navigate	X	X	X	
Victorian Basketball Associations	Crash the Boards for Gender Equality	X	X	X	
West's Tigers	Empower Program	X	X	X	
Women's Health Grampians	Gender Equality in Sport and Recreation	X		X	

**Table 9.** Elements of effective evidence-based prevention identified in programs and initiatives.

Organisation	Program/initiative	Element of evidence-based prevention						
		<i>Reaching people at all stages of their lives</i>	<i>Localised and place-based</i>	<i>Community collaboration</i>	<i>Empowerment and strengths based</i>	<i>Gender transformative</i>	<i>Trauma-informed</i>	<i>Accessible and inclusive</i>
AFL	Respect and Responsibility program			X	X	X		
NRL	Voice against Violence	X		X				
NRL	Tackling Violence			X	X	X		X
Basketball NSW	Grit for Girls				X	X	X	X
Camden/Wollondilly Domestic Violence Committee	SayNo2DV	X	X	X	X	X		
Carlton Football Club	Carlton Respects	X			X	X	X	X
Central Coast Mariners	Onside with the Mariners		X		X	X		X
City of Greater Geelong	Barwon Respect Cup		X		X	X	X	X
Football NSW	White Ribbon Cup Gala Day		X	X	X			
Football Victoria	Change Makers			X				
Jesuit Social Services	Active Respect				X	X		
NAPCAN	Love Bites			X	X	X		
Netball Australia	Netball unites to end violence against women	X						

No More	Domestic Violence Action Plans: Transforming Communities Through Sport	X	X	X		X		
NSLHD	The Grand Stand Program	X		X	X			
PJRL	PJRL Coaching Leadership Workshops		X	X				
Penrith Panthers	Building Young Men				X	X	X	
Play by the Rules	Start to Talk	X		X	X			
Respect Victoria	Respect Women: "Call it Out" (Respect is) campaign	X		X	X			
Safer Together	Game Changers: A Safer Together Event		X	X	X			X
Souths Cares	Deadly Youth Mentoring Program, Play Her Way	X	X	X	X	X		X
Sport and Recreation Victoria	GBV Community of Practice	X		X	X	X	X	
Sport and Recreation Victoria	Preventing Violence Through Sports Grant Program 2022-2025	X		X		X	X	
St George Illawarra Dragons, NSW Police	DV Awareness Cup	X	X	X				X
Tennis Australia	A Safer Game Plan			X				
Top Blokes Foundation	Top Blokes Foundation Mentoring Program	X			X	X		
University of Newcastle	Daughters and Dads Active and Empowered	X			X	X		
University of Newcastle	Name.Narrate.Navigate				X	X	X	X

Victorian Basketball Associations	Crash the Boards for Gender Equality	X	X	X	X	X		X
West's Tigers	Empower Program		X		X			
Women's Health Grampians	Gender Equality in Sport and Recreation			X				

**Table 10.** Prevention techniques used in programs and initiatives.

Organisation	Program/initiative	Prevention technique				
		<i>Direct participation programs</i>	<i>Organisational development</i>	<i>Communications and social marketing</i>	<i>Community mobilisation and strengthening</i>	<i>Civil society, advocacy and social movement activism</i>
AFL	Respect and Responsibility Program	X	X			
Basketball NSW	Grit for Girls	X				
Camden/Wollondilly Domestic Violence Committee	SayNo2DV			X		
Carlton Football Club	Carlton Respects	X	X	X		
Central Coast Mariners	Onside with the Mariners	X				
City of Greater Geelong	Barwon Respect Cup	X				
Football NSW	White Ribbon Cup Gala Day	X				
Football Victoria	Change Makers		X			
Jesuit Social Services	Active Respect	X				
NAPCAN	Love Bites	X				
Netball Australia	Netball unites to end violence against women			X		
No More	Domestic Violence Action Plans: Transforming Communities Through Sport		X	X	X	X
NRL	Voice against Violence	X		X		
NRL	Tackling Violence	X	X	X		
NSLHD	The Grand Stand Program	X	X	X		
PJRL	PJRL League Coaching Leadership Workshops	X				

Penrith Panthers	Building Young Men	X				
Play by the Rules	Start to Talk		X	X		
Respect Victoria	Respect Women: "Call it Out" (Respect is) campaign			X		
Safer Together	Game Changers: A Safer Together Event			X		
Souths Cares	Deadly Youth Mentoring Program, Play Her Way	X				
Sport and Recreation Victoria	GBV Community of Practice		X		X	X
Sport and Recreation Victoria	Preventing Violence Through Sports Grant Program 2022-2025	X	X	X	X	X
St George Illawarra Dragons, NSW Police	DV Awareness Cup	X			X	X
Tennis Australia	A Safer Game Plan	X				
Top Blokes Foundation	Top Blokes Foundation Mentoring Program	X		X		
University of Newcastle	Daughters and Dads Active and Empowered	X				
University of Newcastle	Name.Narrate.Navigate	X				
Victorian Basketball Associations	Crash the Boards for Gender Equality	X	X	X	X	
West's Tigers	Empower Program	X				
Women's Health Grampians	Gender Equality in Sport and Recreation	X	X	X		