



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Social Services**

Ref: MC24-009742

Bridget Mather PSM  
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Dear Ms Mather

Thank you for your letter of 27 August 2024 to the Minister for Social Services, the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP, about support for the ongoing work of the Domestic Family and Sexual Violence Commission (the Commission). I have been asked to reply on behalf of the Minister.

I appreciate the time you have taken, on behalf of Zonta Australia, to write to the Minister providing Zonta Australia's support for the work of the Commission and the delivery of the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032* (the National Plan), including the First Nations National Plan to be delivered in 2025.

As you may be aware, the National Plan provides a 10-year policy framework to guide the work of governments, policy makers, businesses, workplaces and specialist organisations in addressing, preventing and responding to family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia. It is our collective commitment for Australia to be a country free of gender-based violence in one generation, where all people live free from fear and violence and are safe at home, at work, at school, in the community and online.

The National Plan recognises that gender stereotypes harm both men and women. It also highlights the important role men can play in ending violence by drawing on strong, healthy models of masculinity and self-expression. To support this, the Government is investing in a number of other initiatives to change the attitudes that underpin gender-based violence, and stop intergenerational cycles of abuse, including:

- The Stop it at the Start campaign which aims to raise awareness, provide education and encourage behaviour change that aims to break the cycle of violence by encouraging adults to reflect on their attitudes and have conversations about respectful behaviours with young people aged 10-17.
- The Healthy Masculinities Trial and Evaluation (Healthy MaTE) program to help provide school-aged boys with greater understanding of ways to engage positively with masculinity and to better equip this cohort to develop healthier and more satisfying relationships. As part of this initiative, the department will evaluate the funded activities to further develop the evidence base on what works in relation to encouraging healthy masculinities in young men, and how best to implement programs that support these outcomes.

- The Supporting Adolescent Boys Trial program for boys aged 12-18 who present with adverse childhood experiences including family and domestic violence, and who are at risk of perpetrating family, domestic or sexual violence. The national early intervention trial will be established in 2024-25 and seeks to support participating boys and young men to recover and heal from their experience of violence and help them to avoid choosing to use violence in future.
- Helping Children Heal, to support children aged 6-12 years who are struggling to reach developmental, social and educational milestones due to family and domestic violence.
- Our Watch, the national leader in primary prevention, delivers The Line - Our Watch's primary prevention social marketing campaign, designed to promote respectful relationships and drive online and interpersonal behavioural change among young people aged 14 years and over by providing evidence-based information. More information is available at [www.theline.org.au](http://www.theline.org.au).

I appreciate you offering Zonta Australia's time and expertise to support implementation of the National Plan and the ongoing work of the Commission. Given your support for the Commission's Yearly Report, you may wish to explore initiatives aligned to the report's key focus area: engaging men. However, there are a number of ways to get involved and support your communities including:

- accessing resources to support local-level campaigns that promote and build awareness of respectful attitudes within your community such as the Stop it at the Start Community Toolkit (accessible via [www.respect.gov.au](http://www.respect.gov.au));
- engaging with the policies, framework and research provided by the national leader in primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia, Our Watch;
- joining a free domestic violence awareness workshop with DV-alert, to help members learn about what domestic and family violence is and how to recognise the signs ([dvalert.org.au](http://dvalert.org.au)); and
- sharing that accessing advice and information on ways to support people affected by domestic, family and sexual violence (available via [www.respect.gov.au](http://www.respect.gov.au))

Delivering the National Plan requires a whole of community approach where governments at all levels work together alongside businesses, schools, community organisations, sports clubs and the broader community to end violence against women and children. We can't do this alone.

Thank you again for writing.

Yours sincerely



Tim Crosier  
Branch Manager, National Policy

15 September 2024