



# PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

## Eliminating gender inequality

Working towards an Australia free from violence

Violence against women is preventable, and gender equality is the core of the solution, along with funding our vital front line services. An Australia free from violence against women and their children is an Australia where women are safe, respected, valued and treated as equals in private and public life.

The best way to stop violence is before it occurs. Primary prevention involves challenging the deeply ingrained attitudes, social norms and gender inequalities that give rise to men's violence against women. The Greens support the *Change the Story* framework<sup>i</sup> for primary prevention developed by Our Watch.

### > Key Points

Our plan to prevent violence against women will invest \$46 million over 6 years to 2021-2022 (or \$34 million over 4 years) and will see government lead a broad program for gender equality. The Greens commit to:

- **A broad program for gender equality** led by the federal government, but involving everyone across government, business, civil society and the community
- **Expanded and secure funding for our primary prevention experts**, Our Watch and ANROWS - \$18 million over 6 years
- **A national rollout of respectful relationships** in schools - \$10 million over 4 years
- **Building an expert primary prevention workforce** - \$18 million over 6 years

Our plan for primary prevention of violence against women is in addition to the Greens' comprehensive [Confronting our Domestic Violence Crisis](#) policy which includes:

- A \$5 billion, 10 year commitment to properly fund front line specialist domestic violence services under a new National Partnership Agreement
- \$100 million for construction of new shelters
- \$60 million to implement the Women's Legal Services Australia *Safety First In Family Law* campaign
- Ten days' paid domestic violence leave

The Greens have also committed to:

- [Double funding for specialist homelessness services](#), at a cost of \$827 million per year.
- [Boost federal funding for legal assistance](#) including community legal centres, Aboriginal legal service providers and Legal Aid by \$716 million over 4 years.

### > A broad program for gender equality

Gender inequality is the root cause of violence against women, and acknowledging this is the first step to truly eliminating it. The key objectives of the *Change the Story* framework are:<sup>ii</sup>

1. Challenge condoning of violence against women
2. Promote women's independence and decision-making in public life and relationships
3. Foster positive personal identities and challenge gender stereotypes and roles
4. Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relations between and among women and men, girls and boys
5. Promote and normalise gender equality in public and private life.

The Greens would commit to a broad program for gender equality led by the federal government, but involving everyone across government, business, civil society and the community. Measures include:

- [Boosting women's financial independence](#) by raising Newstart and Youth Allowance by \$55 per week, helping more than half a million Australians.<sup>iii</sup>
- [Supporting single parents](#) by moving 90,000 people, around 90% of whom are women, from Newstart to the more generous Parenting Payment Single. This would reverse the cruel cuts carried out by previous Labor and Coalition governments.
- [Securing adequate retirement incomes](#) via progressive superannuation tax reform which helps low-paid, casual and part time workers who are mostly women.
- [Access to safe, affordable abortion and contraception](#) to make sure all women can exercise their fundamental right to control their own bodies by supporting decriminalisation of abortion, ensuring rebates are adequate, expanding access to abortion and contraception via the public hospital system, and 'truth in advertising' for pregnancy counselling.
- [Ensure access to affordable, appropriate housing](#) to address the growing trend of homelessness and

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housing stress among women, and particularly older women. This would be delivered as part of the Greens' *National Housing Affordability Plan*.

- **Boosting women's workforce participation** and early learning by providing 24 hours of universal, subsidised, affordable and accessible early childhood education and care per week.
- **Action to close the gender pay gap**, starting with our *Fair Work Amendment (Gender Pay Gap) Bill 2015* to ban unfair 'pay gag clauses'.<sup>iv</sup>
- **Create opportunities for women in leadership** by making current gender-based targets for government boards mandatory rather than voluntary. These targets are: at least 40% women, at least 40% men and 20% of either gender.
- **Assess all government policy for its impact on women**, particularly via the use of a 'gender lens' in budget decisions, and support a stronger role for the Office for Women in the Budget process.
- **Encourage women into non-traditional industries** like construction or IT, starting with our \$213 million commitment to support for women in science.<sup>v</sup>
- **[A plan for more inclusive communities](#)** for LGBTIQ Australians to remove discrimination from our laws and institutions: from marriage to adoption, IVF, mental health, aged care and retrograde State laws.
- Encourage more equal sharing of unpaid and domestic work between women and men.
- Work across all levels of government, business and civil society to **address the drivers of violence against women in the media, popular culture, advertising and in leisure activities**.

## > Funding for primary prevention experts

**Our Watch** (the National Foundation for the Prevention of Violence Against Women) and Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety – or **ANROWS** – are our primary prevention and cultural change experts. The Greens support securing and expanding their funding.

The Greens would invest \$18 million over 6 years to support Our Watch including continuing base funding of \$1 million per year, with expanded funding for projects such as *The Line* social marketing campaign at \$2 million per year. Funding would be secure for 6 years, until at least 2021-22.

The Greens also support securing current levels of funding of \$1.7 million per year for ANROWS to conduct research until at least 2021-22.

## > National rollout of respectful relationships

**The Greens support a national rollout of best practice, age-appropriate Respectful Relationships** programs alongside age-appropriate sexual education in our schools, by working with States and Territory governments.

Now that respectful relationships education is included in the National Curriculum, the federal government must work with States and Territories within the education system to support its rollout. This work would be primarily state or territory funded, but **the Greens would invest \$10 million over 4 years in quality assurance, safety, evaluation and coordination**.

There is currently no nationally consistent sexual education curriculum, which results in significant gaps in the education of young people in issues such as consent, respect and safe sex. Importantly, sex education rarely incorporates principles of diversity, including consideration of same sex relationships, culturally and linguistically diverse people, people living with disabilities or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## > Building an expert primary prevention workforce

It is critical to ensure there are qualified practitioners with expertise in best practice approaches to primary prevention, who can not only advise government, but also lead local prevention activities.

**The Greens would develop an expert workforce of primary prevention specialists** who can support government as well as organisations like sporting clubs, media outlets and businesses to help them change the culture and challenge the drivers of violence against women. This work would be funded at \$3 million per year until 2022, or \$18 million over 6 years. These specialists would use national standards and frameworks developed by Our Watch and others.

## > The Greens' track record on gender equality and domestic violence

In recent years domestic violence has come out of the shadows and has become an issue of national concern. The Greens have been at the forefront of campaigns for gender equality and defending front line services from the Coalition's harsh cuts.

The Greens-initiated Senate inquiry on domestic violence was key in uncovering the Coalition's dangerous cuts to front line services, and in forcing the government to back down on some of those cuts. Towards the end of this Parliament, the Greens also established a Senate inquiry examining the relationship between domestic violence and gender inequality.

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<sup>i</sup> Our Watch, *Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia* <http://www.ourwatch.org.au/Media-Resources>

<sup>ii</sup> Our Watch, *Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia* <http://www.ourwatch.org.au/Media-Resources> page 9.

<sup>iii</sup> <http://greens.org.au/inequality>

<sup>iv</sup> More information about the Bill is [here](#).

<sup>v</sup> <http://greens.org.au/research>