

MEDIA RELEASE – MAY 3, 2024

**Plans to end gender-based violence must include greater emphasis on intervention at the earliest opportunity: Jesuit Social Services**

Following this week’s meeting of National Cabinet to discuss the national crisis of gender-based violence, which resulted in the announcement of a range of priorities for the Federal as well as state and territory Governments, Jesuit Social Services says there must be a greater emphasis on prevention and early intervention.

“We know that gender-based violence is a national crisis and that our political leaders must take urgent action to address it to keep women, children and by extension the broader community safe,” says Jesuit Social Services CEO Julie Edwards.

“The Prime Minister has since announced a range of key priorities such as a Leaving Violence Payment to help people experiencing intimate partner violence, legislation to ban deepfake pornography and an exploration of options to improve police responses to high risk and serial perpetrators.

“This work is valuable and will help people at the crisis end. We continue to acknowledge and support organisations that work with those impacted by family violence. In addition, Governments must make greater commitments to prevention and early intervention. We would like to see a more coordinated approach to working in schools to effectively implement respectful relationships curriculums, addressing adolescent family violence in the home which is often a predictive factor for people going on to perpetrate family violence in adulthood, and more action and investment to address the impact that rigid beliefs about what it means to be a man have on violence in the community as well as the health and wellbeing of Australian men.”

Jesuit Social Services’ The Men’s Project recently released the latest iteration of its Man Box research, supported by Respect Victoria. The largest Australian study into men’s perceptions of and belief in rigid masculine norms found that 28 per cent of Australian men have used physical or sexual violence against their intimate partner. Men who most strongly endorse rigid attitudes around masculinity are more likely to have used violence, sexually abused their partner, sexually harassed women, experienced poor mental health and displayed problematic gambling behaviours.

“All states and territories should have a violence prevention and early intervention strategy and, alongside this, additional resources directed towards services that work with women and children experiencing harm. We need effective place-based approaches including those that target young people at risk, support for workforces in sectors that can prevent violence, efforts to curb the impacts of gambling, pornography and alcohol, and further research to understand perpetration as well as better understand what works to prevent re-offending among men who have used violence to improve the wellbeing of women, children and men themselves.”



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