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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Sexism harmful to all: on International Women's Day it's time to end it.

Far from being a thing of the past, sexism continues to be a major problem in Australia today. "A constant in women's lives, sexism is experienced with a frequency and regularity that places an ongoing, and significant, burden on women's health and wellbeing" says Women's Health East CEO, Kristine Olaris.

Launching on International Women's Day, a new campaign [Sexism: See it, Say it, Stop it](#) asks all Australians to reject sexism. Ms Olaris, who is part of the team behind this campaign, says "Join us in rejecting the sexist treatment of Australian women leaders. Now is the time to stamp out sexism."

According to the Australian Human Rights Commission, one in five Australian women has experienced sexual harassment in the workplace. But sexism isn't limited to demeaning comments or sexual objectification. Sexism is equally about traditional gender role stereotyping and the discrimination that stems from these attitudes and beliefs.

Sexism plays out in all areas of life – social, sport, family, work. The impacts of sexism can be witnessed across Australian society and includes the low rates of women in senior leadership roles, the undervaluing of caring, the gender pay gap and the appalling rates of violence perpetrated against women.

While the impacts of sexism are especially deleterious to women, sexism doesn't just affect women. Sexism is everyone's problem and preventing sexism is everyone's responsibility.

"As a society, it is time to change the public discourse about sexism, so that we recognise it when we see it, understand its insidious impacts on our lives, and feel confident to call people on it. This is about women's right to be equally valued, heard and respected and to experience equality of opportunity. Sexism continues to stand in the way of equality. It's time we all took action to stop sexism when we see it."

So, what should you do when you witness sexism? Name the behaviour and ask them to stop it. By naming it, we highlight where and when sexism occurs and make everyone aware that this sort of behaviour is a problem. Men have an especially important role to play in challenging the sexist behaviour of other men.

As Pamela, a survivor of intimate partner violence, says "*The greatest gift for me would be to know that my daughter, and her generation, can benefit from respectful relationships.*"

[Sexism: See it, Say it, Stop it](#) Australians will all be better off if you do.

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## Links

**SEXISM: See it. Say it. Stop it** <http://seeitsayitstopit.com/>

## About Women's Health East

*Women's Health East* is a regional women's health promotion agency working across the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) of Melbourne. A not-for-profit agency funded primarily by the Victorian Department of Health, we advocate for gender equity and work to support the women and girls of the EMR to live the lives they want. Our health promotion priorities include:

- Preventing violence against women
- Promoting mental health & wellbeing and
- Enhancing sexual & reproductive rights

[www.whe.org.au](http://www.whe.org.au)