

Together For Equality & Respect

Elevating Diverse
Community Voices Across
Melbourne's East

16 Days of Activism Community Conversations Guide



Background

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence is an international campaign that takes place each year from 25 November until 10 December. In 2023, Respect Victoria and Safe and Equal are working together to support local community engagement with the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (16 Days of Activism). Women's Health East has been funded under Respect Victoria's 16 Days of Activism grassroots initiative to lead this campaign on behalf of the partnership.

The 2023 Together For Equality and Respect Partnership 16 Days of Activism campaign is focused on elevating diverse community voices by holding conversations across Melbourne's east using Respect Victoria's 'Respect is' theme.

Why hold a community conversation?

Everyone deserves to be respected. Gender inequalities and outdated gender norms limit us as individuals and in our relationships, workplaces and communities. Rigid gender norms and stereotypes limit people's opportunities and choices and can lead to discrimination and violence against women and girls.

The Together For Equality and Respect Partnership 16 Days of Activism 'Respect is' community conversations aim to encourage and support partners to engage in conversations with diverse local communities about addressing gender inequality, and to be part of the movement to prevent violence against women.

The campaign aims to increase opportunities for diverse local communities in Melbourne's east to be part of this movement. This includes communities that face inequalities or barriers, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, migrant and refugee communities, people with disabilities, and people from LGBTQIA+ communities.

Purpose of this guide

Partners are encouraged to host 'Respect is' community conversations with communities that they work with. The purpose of this guide is to provide your organisation with messages, tips and resources to hold a successful conversation during the 16 Days of Activism campaign.

The guide includes a simple evaluation survey that can be adapted for evaluation purposes. These standardised evidence-based questions can be used as a basis for collecting and sharing data as part of the Together For Equality and Respect shared evaluation pilot. To find out more about the pilot, contact Roshika on rkumar@whe.org.au.



Sixteen 'Respect is' messages for the 16 Days of Activism campaign

The Together For Equality and Respect partners are encouraged to identify a message or theme to guide their community conversations. The following 'Respect is' messages, developed and tested by Safe and Equal, can be useful as a conversation starter or as a starting point for developing a theme more relevant to your group.

Respect is choosing not to laugh at jokes that put women down

Respect is sharing the housework

Respect is challenging outdated masculine stereotypes

Respect is treating girls and boys as equal

Respect is calling out harmful comments towards women

Respect is challenging ableism

Respect is bodily autonomy for everyone

Respect is amplifying Aboriginal women's voices

Respect is valuing older women's experiences and challenging ageism

Respect is calling out degrading language in sports

Respect is being an ally to trans women and challenging transphobia

Respect is promoting women's financial independence

Respect is making home a safe place

Respect is supporting everyone to express their identities

Respect is upholding women's independence

Respect is making sure every woman feels safe at work

Ideas for community conversations

There are many ways to bring people together for conversations about respect and gender equality. Here are some ideas:

- Plan a community conversation with food, and ask vision questions that inspire people to reflect on their own hopes and visions for gender equality and respect.
- Chat while going for a casual walk and encourage reflections using some of the resources below.
- Organise to attend a regional walk. A walk against family violence is being led by Boorndawan Willam Aboriginal Healing Service and other Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations on 4 December 2023 at Lilydale Lake. Contact education@bwahs.com.au to find out more.
- Attend the Melbourne [walk against family violence](#) on 25 November 2023.
- Organise to discuss a movie, book or share other creative works that inspire conversations using the resources below.
- Attend and discuss one of the screenings of [Happy Sad Man](#).
- Create games such as bingo with the theme of 'Respect Is'. Use the [resources for organising a bingo game](#) provided by Headspace Victoria, and use the 16 'Respect is' messages above as bingo squares.
- Invite people to an art activity. Use the resources below to inspire conversations and provide art materials for individuals or a shared artwork that promote a 'Respect is' message.
- Hold an event with storytelling using books from [Respect Victoria's 2023 booklist](#) or host your conversation in a library where participants can find books for ongoing learning.



Tips for your 'Respect is' conversations

Do it your way

You know the communities that your organisation works with and you will understand what is relevant and appropriate. It is important to be realistic about what you can do, given your resources and capacity. Conversations can be structured in any way that is suitable for the community group, whether that be a casual morning or afternoon tea, adding time to an existing program or by hosting a new conversation in the form of an activity to engage community.

Make the conversation positive and relevant

It is important to facilitate the conversation in a way that brings focus to the value of gender equality and respect to girls and women, as well as individuals, families, and communities who experience discrimination, disadvantage and inequity. We encourage you to be creative in finding ways to connect conversations to the values of those in the group and to encourage them to feel that they are part of a broader movement of change. The resources below can help in providing vision questions and videos that can inspire conversations about people's hope for a future where people of all genders experience respect and equality.

Use values-based messaging

Use clear and direct language in your conversations. When speaking about respect and violence prevention, this could mean avoiding complex statistics or acronyms. When thinking about your conversation format, aim to use values-based messaging. Think about what matters to your community and what are core values they hold that relate to respect. By including values-based messaging, your conversation can have a greater impact on participants' awareness and knowledge.

See how to use values-based messaging for your conversation on page 12 of [Respect Victoria's toolkit](#), including further guides to find out more.

[Common Cause resources](#) provide further support for strategic values-based messaging.

Community-led conversations

Community conversations are ideally facilitated by someone from the community to ensure that the conversation is culturally safe and respectful. For mainstream organisations, we encourage you to plan and deliver your community conversation with someone from the community who you are engaging with. There may be different ways to do this, including through bicultural workers or through your partnerships. We also encourage a co-facilitation model with someone who has prevention or gender equity expertise where possible.

Share support information and be prepared for potential disclosures

Prevention activities can sometimes lead to group members disclosing experiences of violence and abuse. Safe and Equal provide ideas and resources for preparing for and responding to disclosures, available [here](#). It is important to remember that while a participant might feel safe disclosing in that moment, ultimately it is a public space, and this may not be safe in the long-term. It may also be triggering for other participants. Here are some further recommendations:

- Where possible, include in your group agreement that this will be a learning, rather than a therapeutic, space.
- Have resources printed out that explain the activity and include support services. See [Respect Victoria's toolkit](#) on page 35 to download the support services poster.
- If someone begins to disclose, validate them and contain the disclosure.
- Check in with the person at your next opportunity and provide them with support and referral services as required.
- Consider including as part of your resources the following text: "If you or a community member are in immediate danger, please call 000 for urgent police assistance. If you or a community member need support or advice reach out to 1800 Respect (1800 737 732) available 24 hours, 7 days a week or contact the following services:..." and add the relevant services for people in your group.

For more information on how to respond to disclosures see [Respect Victoria's toolkit](#) on page 28-30, and how to prepare for backlash on page 31-33.

Promote your community conversation

We encourage Together For Equality and Respect partner organisations to:

- Add your event details on the online action plan by completing [this online form](#).
- Share your event information with Safe and Equal to share on their state-wide socials 16days@safeandequal.org.au.
- Post your event information on the [Safe and Equal community calendar here](#).
- We encourage the use of the Together For Equality and Respect logo on your promotional material. Please see [the brand guidelines](#).
- Post the text and graphics from the [Together For Equality and Respect 16 Days of Activism social media toolkit](#).



Resources for your conversations

Resources from Respect Victoria

Respect Victoria's 2023 toolkit

The 2023 toolkit includes information and resources on violence against women, how to host events in your community, social media messaging, responding to disclosures, preparing for backlash, and support services.

Respect Victoria's files to download

These files include social media assets and templates, online posters, email banners, virtual backgrounds, book recommendations, 'respect is' cards and printable posters including support services.

Respect starts with a conversation, multiple language pack

Respect starts with a conversation 2023 explores rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity. There are social media tiles and videos translated in Arabic, Cantonese, Hindi, Mandarin, and Vietnamese.

Respect older people: Call it out

This 2022 campaign outlines what is elder abuse and how we can prevent it. The link above includes fact sheets, posters, postcards, wallet cards and FAQs, available in English, Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian and Vietnamese.

Respect women: Call it out (Respect is)

This 2022 campaign aims to support the Victorian community in understanding what respect means, what it looks like, and how to put it into practice in their everyday lives. Click the link above to see 16 ways you can call out sexism and disrespect.

Resources for use in community conversations

The Together For Equality and Respect vision can guide conversations. Ask group members to reflect on their own personal hopes, feelings and ideas for a future society where people of all genders are equally valued, heard and respected, with equal access to opportunities, and where women and children live free from discrimination and men's violence.

Margins to the Mainstream videos feature women with disabilities addressing intersecting ableist and sexist drivers of violence against women. These videos are now available with Auslan translations and are available on the [Margins to the Mainstream website](#).

Djirra's videos raise awareness about actions to prevent violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls and are available on [Djirra's website](#).

An **inspiring animation** produced through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices) project, Yajilarra nhingi, mindija warrma, which means in the Bunuba language, 'from dreams, let's make it reality', is [available on YouTube](#).

A **Hakha Chin community video** about healthy relationships produced by Multicultural Information Centre Eastern Melbourne is [available on YouTube](#).

'See past the stereotypes' short videos produced by Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges Councils promote discussion about gender discrimination and are available on YouTube [here](#) and [here](#).

Group resources for community conversations about gender equality and respect are available through Community Houses in the Outer Eastern Suburbs of Melbourne (CHAOS): [vision questions](#), [gender equality videos](#), and [what is gender equality information sheet](#).

Guided mindfulness exercises tailored to different ages, cultures and languages are available from [Smiling Mind App](#) to include within your community conversation.

Evidence-based resources



Fast facts on family and gender-based violence 2023 An overview of statistics and key facts related to experiences and impacts of family and gender-based violence and changing social attitudes towards these.

Overcoming resistance and backlash This resource brings together and adds to existing resources by providing tips on effective strategies and ways of overcoming resistance, and other more extreme forms of backlash.

Safe and Equal resources A library of all resources and publications developed by Safe and Equal in partnership with organisations from across the sector.

Change the story Change the story is an evidence-based national framework to guide a coordinated and effective approach to preventing violence against women. There are several key documents available on the website.

Intersectionality matters A guide to engaging immigrant and refugee communities to prevent violence against women, developed by the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health.

Pride in prevention evidence guide A guide to primary prevention of family violence experienced by LGBTIQ+ communities produced by Rainbow Health Victoria.

Passing the message stick A guide on self-determination and justice for First Nations peoples. Visit the website to access a range of information.

Gender compass Gender compass is a tool through which we can design targeted communications that effectively shift the dial.

Safe at home, community languages Access information, advice, and support for people experiencing family violence, and their friends and family. Available in easy English, Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Farsi, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Karen, Hindi, Khmer, Macedonian, Punjabi, Somali, Turkish, and Vietnamese.

LGBTIQ+ inclusive language guide The Victorian Government has just released an update to the LGBTIQ+ Inclusive Language Guide.

Evaluation

Evaluation helps your organisation learn about and report on outcomes, impacts and areas you can improve on in the future. It can also support Together For Equality and Respect to pilot a shared outcomes evaluation.

Appendix 1 provides a simple evaluation survey that you can adapt to your own evaluation purposes. It can also provide the basis for Together For Equality and Respect partners, interested in being part of the partnership's shared evaluation pilot, to collect shared evaluation data. More information on the shared evaluation pilot and how to get involved is in our [Guidelines document](#), or please contact Women's Health East.

More information and support

For more information and support for your community conversations, please contact:

Roshika Kumar

Health Promotion Coordinator, Prevention of Violence Against Women

RKumar@whe.org.au

Catherine D'Arcy

Manager Prevention of Violence Against Women

CDarcy@whe.org.au

Thank you

In 2023, Respect Victoria and Safe and Equal are working together to support local community engagement with the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.

Women's Health East has been funded under Respect Victoria's 16 Days of Activism grassroots initiative.



SAFE + EQUAL



**TOGETHER FOR
EQUALITY & RESPECT**

How confident are you that you understand the gender factors that lead to family violence?

Before this session					After this session				
Not at all confident	Not confident	Fairly confident	Confident	Very confident	Not at all confident	Not confident	Fairly confident	Confident	Very confident

How confident are you to safely challenge sexism, sexual harassment, gender inequality and other forms of discrimination in social situations?

Before this session					After this session				
Not at all confident	Not confident	Fairly confident	Confident	Very confident	Not at all confident	Not confident	Fairly confident	Confident	Very confident

2. Questions about you (these optional questions help us to understand the information we receive overall).

Gender (please circle)

Woman	Man	Non-binary or gender diverse	Self-describe:
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Age range – please circle (optional)

< 20	21 – 30	31 - 40	41 - 50	51 - 60	61+
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Do you identify as – please circle as many as apply (optional)

Person with disability	Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	LGBTIQ+	Person with English as an additional language
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