

Living free from violence and feeling safe at home are basic human rights. But for too many Australians, that is not their reality. Violence changes lives. It affects our health, our relationships, our sense of self, and its impact can span generations.

As a government, we're working tirelessly to end family, domestic and sexual violence. The National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children is our 10-year roadmap to get there. And in the months ahead, we'll be developing the Second 5-year Action Plan as part of the National Plan. To get it right, we're inviting people across Australia to share their insights, their expertise and their ideas.

We know that people often need support from multiple services, from health and justice, housing, education, community services, and we know that when those systems don't work together well enough, people slip through the cracks. Some people are asked to tell their story over and over. Others are not heard at all. So we're responding to these challenges with a coordinated, national approach. Our government's already invested well over \$4 billion to improve the safety of women and children under the First Action Plan. That work's already supported more than 1400 organisations and helped over 440,000 people across Australia who are experiencing family, domestic or sexual violence.

Thanks to the sustained decades-long effort from people committed to ending violence, there has been real progress. There's certainly broader awareness and better understanding across the country. Governments at all levels are committed to evidence-based solutions and more people are reaching out for help. But despite the fact that our culture is shifting, too many lives are still being taken and too many people continue to suffer. And that's why it's critical that we do more. We need to better support our children who live with the experience of violence so that they can recover and rebuild. We need to work harder to stop sexual violence and help victim-survivors heal. And we need to activate more systems and services capable of intervening early to disrupt cycles of violence and strengthen safety.

There are no simple answers, but we have to be unified in our goals across governments, communities, workplaces, schools, health and justice systems, and of course, our frontline services. Together, we can identify and implement high impact solutions. The development of the Second Action Plan under the National Plan is an opportunity to refocus our efforts.

We want to hear from anyone who wants to engage, whether that's victim-survivors, advocates, service providers, frontline workers, other levels of government, employers, financial services systems and community leaders. What we hear through these consultations will shape the next action plan, turning conversations into action.

We promise to build on what works, respond to emerging challenges, and keep learning from the lived experiences of victim-survivors. Because we know we can't get this right unless we listen better.

Please visit the DSS Engage website to get involved. Through events, online sessions, surveys, or to share your ideas in writing. However you choose to take part, know that your voice matters and that preventing and ending violence is everyone's business.