

Prevent. Support. Believe. Queensland's Framework to address Sexual Violence

Content Warning

The contents of this document may bring up strong feelings in some readers. Be assured you are not alone, and that there are many services and support groups available to assist in dealing with these.

Advice and support is available through:

- Sexual Assault Helpline (www.dvconnect.org/sexual-assault-helpline/) on 1800 010 120 (7.30am to 11.30pm, 7 days a week)
- 1800 Respect (www.1800respect.org.au) on 1800 737 732 (24/7 telephone and online crisis support)
- Lifeline (www.lifeline.org.au) on 13 11 14 (24 hour crisis support and suicide prevention)

Acknowledgements

The Queensland Government would like to thank and acknowledge the hundreds of Queenslanders who took part in the consultation process which was central to developing this document. In particular, our thanks go to the many people with lived experience of sexual violence who shared their experiences with us. We recognise your strength in doing so. Your input guided us as we drafted this Framework to help ensure Queenslanders live free of the threat or experience of sexual violence.

Acknowledgement of First Nations peoples

The Queensland Government respectfully acknowledge the First Nations peoples in the state of Queensland, and acknowledge the cultural and spiritual connection that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have with the land and sea. We respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people as two unique and diverse peoples, with their own rich and distinct cultures, resilience and strengths. We specifically acknowledge the unique history and cultural heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples of Australia.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present. We honour the legacies of Elders as we strive to strengthen this culturally responsive and inclusive framework to prevent and respond to sexual violence.

We are dedicated to the inclusion of cultural knowledge and values as critical factors in the development, implementation and evaluation of strategies and actions to support First Nations people.

We acknowledge and thank the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, men and young people who contributed to the development of this Framework, both through public and stakeholder consultation and through the Sexual Violence Prevention Roundtable.



Do you need an interpreter? If you need an interpreter, call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 13 14 50 and request to be transferred to Multicultural Affairs Queensland on 13 QGOV (13 74 68).

Minister's message



Earlier this year, I travelled across Queensland speaking with people about sexual violence. I was deeply affected by the many personal stories people shared with me, and the strength and resilience of many survivors. The message was clear — we need to do more to prevent sexual violence from happening in the first place, and to support those who have experienced it to recover, heal, and seek justice.

The statistics confirm what I heard. Sexual violence is one of the most under-reported forms of violence, yet in 2017–18 the number of reported sexual assaults in our state increased for the seventh consecutive year, and sexual offences made up 15.5 per cent of all crimes reported to the Queensland Police Service.¹ Almost one in five women, and almost one in 20 men have experienced sexual assault or the threat of sexual assault since the age of 15², and many more have experienced sexual harassment or other forms of sexual violence. Tragically, 36 per cent of reported victims of sexual assault in Queensland in 2018 were children under the age of 15.³

We need to continue and build on our existing efforts to address sexual violence, and I am very pleased to release *Prevent. Support. Believe. Queensland's Framework to address Sexual Violence* to guide us moving forward — the first of its kind in our state.

The Framework builds on significant progress we have made over the past five years in addressing other related and overlapping forms of violence, such as domestic and family violence, through the *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026*. We have also made progress on addressing sexual violence, especially violence against women, through the *Queensland Women's Strategy 2016–21* and the *Violence against Women Prevention Plan 2016–22*.

We have committed to taking further action to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse, including providing support for people who experienced historical child sexual abuse, by implementing recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. We are also focused on preventing and responding to sexual violence against children through major reforms to Queensland's child protection system, and through work to address youth sexual violence and abuse.

We have also increased investment in sexual assault services by more than 80 per cent since 2015, invested \$12 million in responses to youth sexual violence and abuse, introduced a range of new approaches in the justice system to support victims, and provisioned approximately \$500 million to support Queensland's participation in the National Redress Scheme for victims of institutional child sexual abuse.

To support implementation of the Framework, we will be releasing a comprehensive whole-of-Government Action Plan to address sexual violence. I am pleased to highlight some new initiatives ahead of the release of this Action Plan.

I look forward to continuing to work with all Queenslanders to end sexual violence in our state.



Di Farmer

Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and
Minister for Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence



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Executive summary

Sexual violence is an issue of major concern to the Queensland community. Over recent years, we have observed a rising community-led movement against norms of gender inequality and violence that drive sexual harassment, sexual assault, child sexual abuse and youth sexual violence. The time to harness this change is now.

Prevent. Support. Believe. Queensland's Framework to address Sexual Violence (the Framework) outlines the Queensland Government's overarching approach to preventing and responding to sexual violence in Queensland. It brings together the progress we have made so far and sets out our vision for a Queensland where everyone lives free of the fear, threat or experience of sexual violence. It identifies three priority areas we will focus our attention on, each with an objective to work towards, and sets out specific strategies that will guide the Queensland Government's future actions to deliver on the Framework.

The Framework addresses all forms of sexual violence including sexual assault, sexual harassment, technology-facilitated sexual violence, child sexual abuse and youth sexual violence. It has been designed to include prevention and responses to all people who experience sexual violence, including women, men, children and young people. It also recognises that sexual violence is a gendered issue, and that the majority of victims and survivors are women and girls.

There are three main sections in this document. The section — Towards a shared understanding — sets out what we know about sexual violence, including what drives it, who experiences it, and where it occurs. The next section — The Framework — sets out our vision, objectives, priority areas and strategies that will guide Government's future action. The final section — Implementing the Framework — outlines how we will work to achieve our vision and monitor progress towards our objectives.

The Framework strongly reflects what we heard during consultation. We have listened to the voices of people with lived experience of sexual violence, and understanding their experiences has been critical to shaping where we need to focus efforts going forward.

Key issues we heard about were:

- increasing community awareness of sexual violence, and believing victims and survivors
- ensuring all Queenslanders know how to, and are able to, access specialist support when and where they need it
- coordinating efforts so that different parts of the service system work together better
- reducing barriers to reporting sexual violence
- improving support and choice for victims and survivors as they navigate the justice system
- holding perpetrators to account.

Further information about our consultation and key findings is available in the *Consultation Summary* and throughout the Framework.

Highlights

The Queensland Government is committed to responding to sexual violence across the state through our support for prevention and education initiatives, investment in specialist support services, and legislative reform.

Since 2015, the Queensland Government has done much to implement what works to address sexual violence. The following new initiatives will build on our strong foundation and will support implementation of the Framework.

- Conducting a pilot of a dedicated sexual violence liaison officer within the Townsville QPS District, and conducting a comprehensive evaluation to determine the feasibility of the model and resourcing needs for expansion across QPS regions.
- Developing an online reporting form to provide another avenue for victims of sexual assault to make reports to police.
- Strengthening a victim-centric focus in the Queensland Police Service.
- Making respectful relationships education compulsory in all Queensland state schools via strengthening implementation of the Australian curriculum, and ensuring the quality of programs delivered.
- Developing a list of recommended programs to support schools to implement respectful relationships education.
- Strengthening professional development to support all state schools to implement respectful relationships education.
- Planning actions taking into consideration the key findings from the context specific *Our Watch* whole-of-school approach to respectful relationships education pilot conducted in partnership with the Department of Education.
- Creating partnerships with the corporate and community sector to build on prevention initiatives for children and young people.
- Elevating the profile of Sexual Violence Awareness Month in October each year, including an annual grants program, to increase community awareness and knowledge.
- Working with the Queensland Sexual Assault Network to enhance their online sexual violence information hub as a key resource for people impacted by sexual violence.
- Establishing a sexual violence prevention champions group to guide cultural change across communities.
- Strengthening sexual violence prevention initiatives and responses at key events and locations involving young people, including Schoolies events.
- Developing a whole-of-government position statement that highlights our commitment to an inclusive and equitable service system.
- Considering recommendations of the Queensland Law Reform Commission in relation to the issue of consent in sexual assault and rape cases.

These initiatives build on past achievements and work underway, including:

- Making the Prep to Year 12 *Respectful Relationships Education Program* available to all Queensland schools
- Providing professional development to support state schools to implement respectful relationships education
- Piloting, evaluating and taking into consideration findings from the context-specific Our Watch Pilot — *Creating a Violence Free Future* — conducted in partnership with the Department of Education
- Supporting the Sexual Assault Response Team trial in Townsville between 2017 and 2019; and providing \$3.2 million in capital funding for a new Townsville Women’s Centre
- Passing new legislation to give victims of a sexual offence who are to give evidence in a criminal proceeding against the accused automatic status as a special witness (in addition to other persons, including children under 16 years)
- Passing new legislation to criminalise the non-consensual sharing of intimate images (including, but not limited to, what is often called revenge porn, and sexting without lawful permission)
- Releasing *Queensland’s Framework for Action: Reshaping our Approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Domestic and Family Violence*
- Leveraging the work being undertaken to prevent and respond to domestic and family violence to include broader prevention strategies for other forms of violence against women
- Increasing investment in specialist sexual assault services by over 80 per cent since 2015 — to \$10.8 million across 31 services in 2019-20
- Investing in nine child sexual abuse counselling services for children and young people in the child protection system
- Providing victims of sexual assault with the option of having a ‘just-in-case’ forensic examination if they are yet to decide whether to report their assault to police
- Referring the issue of consent in sexual assault and rape cases to the Queensland Law Reform Commission, with a report and recommendations due on 17 April 2020
- Providing \$1.2 million for dedicated youth sexual violence and abuse responses in West Cairns and Aurukun from 2017-2020, with additional funds committed to June 2022
- Providing \$12 million over four years for priority responses to youth sexual violence across Queensland, including new and enhanced services targeting children and young people, place-based initiatives, and research and evaluation
- Providing a Tackling Cyberbullying Grants Program to encourage young people and community organisations to develop and deliver local initiatives to address cyberbullying
- Supporting 24 community-led awareness and prevention activities through the Sexual Violence Prevention Grants Program in 2019
- Implementing recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, including provisioning approximately \$500 million to support Queensland’s participation in the National Redress Scheme, and contributing to the development of the *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations* and a *National Strategy to prevent Child Sexual Abuse*
- Establishing the Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Taskforce to ensure the voices of people with lived experience of child sexual abuse are heard, as well as a grants program to promote healing and cultural change
- Establishing a new workforce capacity and capability building service to strengthen the domestic, family and sexual violence workforce, including a strong focus on working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities
- Introducing a sexual assault counselling privilege and establishing a new Counselling Notes Project service to ensure victims’ private counselling records can’t be used against them in court
- Redeveloping the *Response to sexual assault and sexual abuse: Queensland Government Interagency Guidelines for responding to children, young people and adults who have experienced sexual assault or sexual abuse.*

A comprehensive Action Plan to address sexual violence will detail actions across all priority areas of the Framework. The Action Plan will be released in 2020.

What we know about sexual violence

The statistics and data available about sexual violence tell us that it is a widespread issue that affects all Queensland communities. Sources such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics' *Personal Safety Survey*, undertaken every four years, and state and territory reported crime data provide us with a solid starting point for identifying where we should concentrate our efforts and for tracking change. However, there are still gaps in what statistics can tell us — both because of significant under-reporting, and gaps in data collection, particularly in relation to men and diverse population groups.

Ending sexual violence is a long term goal — one that will take sustained action and time to achieve. As such, we can't expect to see significant changes in overall rates of sexual violence in the shorter term.

In fact, as awareness of sexual violence increases and more people start to report their experiences, rates of reported sexual assaults are likely to increase.

Rates of sexual violence are high:

- Around **1 in 5 women** and **1 in 20 men** experienced sexual violence since the age of 15 (PSS 2016)
- In 2017–18 sexual offences made up **15.5% of all crimes** reported to the Queensland Police Service (QGSO 2019)
- In 2018, reported **victims of sexual assault** in Queensland rose for the **seventh consecutive year to 4,849** (ABS 2019)
- Australian domestic and family violence workers believe that **90–100% of their female clients have experienced intimate partner sexual violence** (ANROWS 2019)



Children and young people are particularly vulnerable:

- In 2018, children and young people **between 0 and 24 years** made up **71.5% of reported sexual assaults** in Queensland (86% of these were female) (ABS 2019)
- **48%** of reported **male victims** of sexual assaults in 2018 were **boys aged under 15 years** (ABS 2019)
- **1.4 million** people who are now adults experienced **childhood sexual abuse** — 10.7% of women and 4.6% of men (PSS 2016)



Sexual violence is a gendered issue:

- In 2018, there were almost **six times more female victims** of reported sexual assault than male victims in Queensland (ABS 2019)
- In 2017–18, **95.8%** of reported perpetrators of sexual offences in Queensland were identified as male (QGSO 2019)



Discrimination and disadvantage can place certain groups of people at higher risk of sexual violence:

- In 2018, **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people** in Queensland were **more than three times as likely** to be reported as a **victim of sexual assault** than non-Indigenous people (ABS 2019)
- More than **70% of women with disability** have been **victims of violent sexual encounters at some point in their lives** (ACDA 2015)
- **Sex workers** experience **high rates of sexual assault** (ACSSA 2008)
- **Women in the custodial system** have experienced **high rates of sexual violence**. **89%** of female prisoners in Queensland have experienced sexual violence, and **85%** have experienced child sexual abuse (Kilroy 2016)

Few instances are reported or prosecuted:

- **87%** of women who experienced sexual assault by a male since the age of 15 **did not report** their most recent incident to the police (PSS 2016)
- Of the women who did report, **only 27%** reported their perpetrator was **charged**; even fewer reports result in conviction (PSS 2016)
- The University of Queensland's 2017 pilot study on prosecution of rape and sexual assault in Queensland found that **rape myths and negative attitudes** towards victims by police, judges and juries are one of the **biggest hurdles** that **stop victims feeling believed and supported** (Scott et al 2017)

Worrying attitudes and beliefs about sexual violence persist:

- **1 in 3** Australians believe rape is a result of men not being able to control their need for sex (NCAS 2017)
- **2 in 5** Australians believe that women make up false reports of sexual assault in order to punish men (NCAS 2017)



Towards a shared understanding

What is sexual violence?

Sexual violence is any unwanted sexual behaviour towards another person. It can happen in public, private, or institutional settings and can be carried out by people known to the victim (including family members, partners or former partners), or by strangers. Sexual violence often has lifelong impacts on people who experience it. When we use the term sexual violence in this Framework, we are referring to all the behaviours discussed below.*

Please note: the following definitions may be distressing to some readers.

- **Sexual assault** refers to any unwanted sexual act that is forced on a person without their consent — including where intimidation, physical force, or coercion are involved. Sexual assault includes rape and attempted rape, as well as unwanted sexual touching or groping, or being forced to perform a sexual act on another person. Rape is a term used when sexual penetration is involved.
- **Child sexual abuse** is any act which exposes a child to, or involves a child in sexual acts. It also includes child grooming, which refers to deliberate actions to establish an emotional connection with a child in order to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child. The production, consumption, dissemination and exchange of child sexual exploitation material is also child sexual abuse. In Queensland, a child is a person under the age of 18.
- **Child sexual exploitation** occurs when a child is manipulated or coerced to participate in a sexual activity in exchange for, or on the promise of, rewards including affection, attention, gifts, food, accommodation, material items or money. Child sexual exploitation can also include the production, consumption, distribution and exchange of child sexual exploitation material.
- **Youth sexual violence and abuse** is defined as sexual contact between persons where either the perpetrator or the victim is under 18 years of age and where that contact is non-consensual. Such contact is non-consensual if either person is under 16 or lacks the capacity to consent, or if a situation of imbalance of power exists, and if there is the presence of a threat or coercion to either person.
- **Sexual harassment** is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that is carried out either to offend, humiliate or intimidate another person, or where it is reasonable to expect the person might feel that way. It includes uninvited physical intimacy such as touching in a sexual way, uninvited sexual propositions, and remarks with sexual connotations.
- **Technology-facilitated sexual violence** is a range of behaviours where digital technologies are used to facilitate both virtual and face-to-face sexually based harms. This can include unwanted sexting, cyberstalking using mobile phones and social media technology, harassing and repetitive text messages or phone calls of a sexual nature, using technology to record sexual activity without consent, creating fake sexual images or videos, and sharing sexual images or video without consent of those involved, often called image-based abuse.
- **Intimate partner sexual violence (IPSV)** refers to the perpetration of sexual acts without consent in intimate relationships (including by cohabiting and non-cohabiting partners, boyfriends/girlfriends, spouses or dates). It may involve physical force or psychological/emotional coercion, unwanted sexual acts, or tactics used to control decisions around reproduction. Intimate partner sexual violence often occurs alongside other forms of domestic and family violence, and puts a victim at much higher risk of being killed.⁴

* *The definitions of these terms vary across contexts and jurisdictions, however these are the meanings used for the purposes of the Framework.*

Who experiences sexual violence?

Sexual violence can happen to anybody, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, socioeconomic status, ability, sexual orientation or location. However, it is important to recognise that some population groups are disproportionately impacted.

- **Women and girls** — we know that women and girls are disproportionately affected. In 2018, 85 per cent of reported sexual assaults in Queensland were against females; 61 per cent were against girls and young women under the age of 24.⁵
- **Children** — in 2018, children aged 0-14 years accounted for 36 per cent (1,741) of victims of reported sexual assaults in Queensland; 1,400 (80 per cent) were identified as female.⁶
- **Young people** — young people, especially young women, are at increased risk of experiencing sexual violence, including intimate partner sexual violence and sexual harassment. In 2018, young people aged 15-24 years accounted for 36 per cent (1,725) of victims of reported sexual assaults in Queensland; 1,578 (92 per cent) were identified as female.⁷ Young people may also be at risk of youth sexual violence and peer-to-peer sexual offending.
- **Boys and men** — boys and men also experience sexual violence. In 2018, 15 per cent of all reported sexual assaults were against males with nearly half (48 per cent) of these against boys aged 15 or under.⁸ Like girls and women, men and boys also under-report sexual violence.⁹

Evidence shows that some population groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people,¹⁰ people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTIQ+ people,¹¹ people with disability,¹² sex workers, and people in the custodial system are disproportionately represented or at a higher risk of experiencing sexual violence.

Population groups disproportionately represented in data or at a higher risk of experiencing sexual violence

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
— 12.9% of all reported victims of sexual assaults in Queensland in 2018
(85.3% female) (ABS 2019)

People with disability

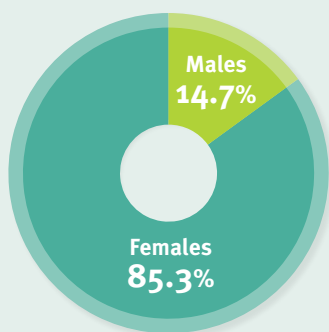
LGBTIQ+ people

People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

Sex workers

People in the custodial system

Gender of victims of reported sexual assaults in Queensland in 2018 — 85.3% identified as female (ABS 2019)



Age of victims of reported sexual assaults in 2018 (ABS 2019)

Children (0-14 years) — 35.9% (80.4% female)

Young people (15-24 years) — 35.6% (91.5% female)

Adults (25-64 years) — 27.4% (83.7% female)

Older persons (over 65 years) — 0.7% (85.3% female)

Not specified — 0.4%

While data sources capture incidents reported to authorities, sexual violence remains one of the most under-reported crimes in Australia. The 2016 ABS *Personal Safety Survey* estimated that 87 per cent of women did not report their most recent incident to the police. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse found that it took survivors of childhood sexual abuse on average 24 years to report, if they reported at all.¹³ The Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing’s report on *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019* also highlights challenges in measuring the true extent of sexual violence, due to under-reporting.

Research clearly demonstrates that there are many reasons sexual violence is significantly under-reported, particularly by certain population groups. This was also emphasised in consultation. Reasons include:

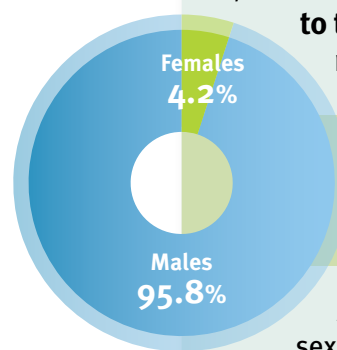
- fear of discrimination
- distrust of the police, justice system and other institutions, particularly if the violence was in an institutional context
- language and cultural barriers
- fear of the perpetrator
- not recognising that the sexual violence experienced was illegal.

Who perpetrates sexual violence?

“Perpetrator” refers to an individual who has committed an act of sexual violence, even if they have not necessarily been charged with, or convicted of, the act.

There is a perception that sexual assault is perpetrated by strangers and in public spaces. However, data on sexual assault in Queensland in 2018 highlights that a significant majority of assaults (72 per cent) are perpetrated by a person known to the victim, including family members (32 per cent), current or former partners, relatives, friends and acquaintances.¹⁴

Of the total reported perpetrators in 2017–18, 96 per cent identified as male.¹⁵ Sexual violence is committed by perpetrators of all ages, with the majority (53 per cent) being in the 25–59 year age group.



Perpetrators — 72% of perpetrators of reported sexual assaults in 2018 were **known to the victim**; 32% were **family members** (ABS 2019)

Gender of reported sexual offences in 2017–18 (QGSO 2019) — 95.8% identified as **male**

Age of perpetrators of reported sexual offences in 2017–18 (QGSO 2019)

10–17 years — 20%

18–24 years — 14%

25–29 years — 9%

30–39 years — 17%

40–49 years — 17%

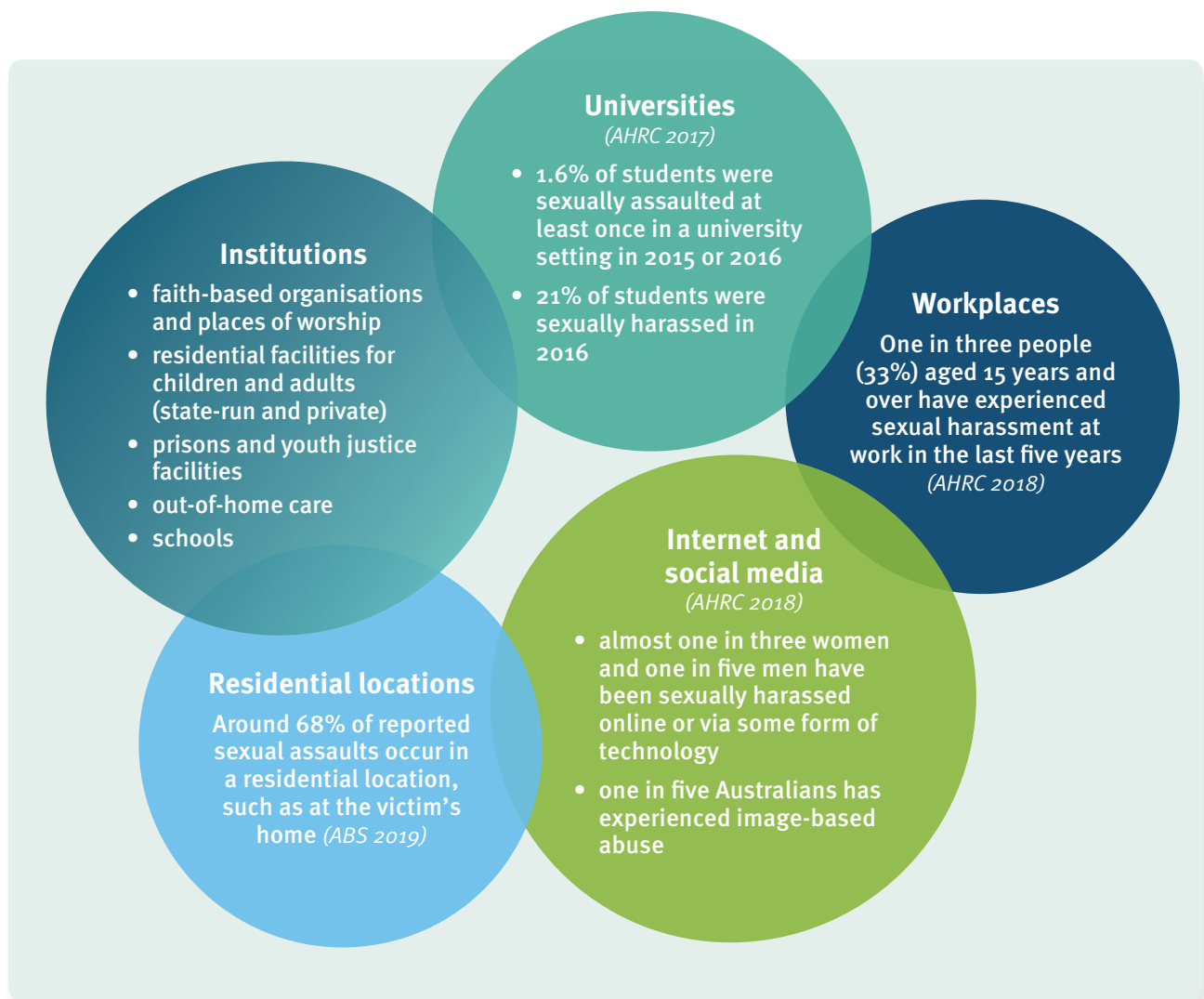
50–59 years — 10%

Over 60 years — 13%

Where sexual violence occurs

Sexual violence can occur anywhere, but the majority (68 per cent) of reported sexual assaults happen in a residential setting, often a victim's home.¹⁶

Sexual violence also occurs in schools, universities,¹⁷ workplaces,¹⁸ religious institutions, aged care and other residential care facilities, health and hospital facilities, community groups, sporting clubs and venues, other public spaces, in prisons, and on the internet and social media.¹⁹



What leads to sexual violence?

Sexual violence does not have a single, clearly defined cause. A number of drivers and factors come together to create an environment that enables sexual violence to occur, including at individual, community, institutional and societal levels.²⁰

There are also drivers that contribute to specific types of sexual violence, or sexual violence perpetrated against different population groups such as women, young people and children, and people with multiple forms of discrimination or disadvantage.

There is no such thing as a “typical” perpetrator of sexual violence, however research suggests that for many perpetrators, sexual violence is about a need to assert power and dominance over another person.²¹

Research has also identified several factors which may increase the risk of a person becoming a perpetrator of sexual violence, such as: exposure to parental violence; excessive alcohol and drug use; early sexual initiation and sexual risk-taking behaviour; association with sexually-aggressive peer groups; a history of child physical and/or sexual abuse; poverty or low socioeconomic status; male sexual entitlement and hyper-masculinity; exposure to community crime and violence; social norms that are supportive of sexual violence; and, weak laws and policies related to sexual violence.²²

The following issues are critical to understanding what drives sexual violence overall, and particularly in relation to certain groups:

- **Power** — value placed on claiming and maintaining power, manifested as power over others.²³ An understanding of the dynamics of power, and the abuse of power, is essential for understanding the environments that can give rise to sexual violence. This is particularly important in understanding sexual violence perpetrated against children or people with impaired capacity (such as a person with intellectual disability or a person with dementia), or where there is another type of power imbalance.

- **Privacy** — notions of individual and family privacy that foster secrecy and silence.²⁴ Privacy and secrecy can contribute to creating environments where sexual violence can occur, and can increase stigma for victims, and inhibit other people from intervening. This is particularly important in understanding sexual violence perpetrated against children and within families.

- **Normalisation of violence** — the presence of physical violence in personal or family relationships and communities can be linked to vulnerability to experiencing or perpetrating sexual violence.²⁵ This is particularly important in understanding sexual violence in the context of domestic and family violence, or within communities where violence of all kinds is common.

For offences against children, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse found that institutional cultures and practices can affect the likelihood of children being sexually abused, and the likelihood that the abuse will be identified, reported and responded to appropriately. As the Royal Commission identifies, this includes instances where institutions have prioritised their own reputation over the safety of children by systemically ignoring abuse, and failing to report or take action. This issue is also relevant for institutions which care for people with disability (including intellectual disability) and aged care facilities.

For sexual violence or problematic sexual behaviour that occurs between young people, or by a young person, there are a range of other potential drivers. These may include exposure to pornography, being a victim of physical and/or sexual abuse, emotional neglect, witnessing incidents of family violence, drug use or alcohol abuse by parents or caregivers, chronic lack of parental supervision or age appropriate behaviour boundaries, and circumstances where children are required to assume parental or caregiver responsibilities for younger siblings.²⁶

Children and young people with intellectual disability or who are developmentally delayed are over represented in the population of young people displaying problematic or sexually abusive behaviours.²⁷

For adults, as noted above, women make up the significant majority of victims of sexual violence. Australia's national prevention framework *Change the story: a shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children*, identifies gender inequality as the leading and underlying cause of violence against women, including sexual violence.²⁸

Change the story lists four primary gendered drivers of violence against women:

- **Condoning of violence against women** — including attitudes that justify violence against women, excuse violent behaviour, trivialise and downplay the impact and experience of violence, and shift blame from perpetrators to victims
- **Men's control of decision making and limits to women's independence in public and private life** — including unequal power in relationships, understandings of masculinity that encourage male dominance and control, autonomy or access to resources, and social norms and attitudes that women have lower social value than men or are less worthy of respect
- **Rigid gender roles and stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity** — including sexist and stereotypical views of men's and women's roles and identities, rigid ideas about acceptable female and male behaviour, and a sense of entitlement associated with masculinity and men's treatment of women
- **Male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women** — including attitudes among men that emphasise sexual conquest, encourage aggression and disrespect towards women, and make it less likely men will stand up to their peers when faced with sexist or violent behaviour or comments.²⁹

For many people in our community, gender inequality intersects with other forms of discrimination to create additional drivers of sexual violence. Recognising that many people experience multiple and overlapping forms of disadvantage or discrimination (often referred to as intersectionality) helps us to understand the drivers of sexual violence for different population groups. For example, gender inequality intersects with racism, intergenerational trauma and other ongoing impacts of colonisation causing disproportionate levels of sexual violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. This understanding also helps support the development of services, education and prevention programs that are responsive to the needs of all population groups.

Impact of sexual violence

Experiencing sexual violence can have devastating and long lasting impacts on the health, well-being and life outcomes of victims, and the trauma can also impact families and supporters. A history of sexual violence is associated with an increased incidence of long term physical and psychological health problems, social challenges, risk taking behaviours and premature death.³¹ Research shows that experiencing sexual assault impacts on mental health and can include increased rates of depression, anxiety, self-harm and drug use.³²

Young people who have experienced sexual abuse or assault at some point in their life are more likely to have thoughts of suicide than those who have not.³³ Experience of sexual abuse as a child is also a factor in the experience of sexual violence as an adult, with 43 per cent of women and 14 per cent of men who experienced childhood abuse (physical and/or sexual) going on to be sexually assaulted as adults.³⁴ A history of childhood sexual abuse may be a contributing factor for some perpetrators of sexual violence or abuse, however, the research in relation to how directly this experience may impact on the development of abusive behaviours is limited. It is important to note that the vast majority of people who experience childhood sexual abuse do not go on to perpetrate sexual violence.³⁵

Ongoing shame and stigma within the community, driven by people claiming sexual violence is not a problem or actively victim-blaming or condoning violence, may limit the victim's capacity to disclose experiences of sexual violence. This is particularly true for those who are experiencing sexual violence in their family or home. These factors may also impact negatively on the victim's ability to recover and heal from their experience. Research shows that many women in the custodial system have a history of experiencing sexual violence; 89 per cent of female prisoners in Queensland have experienced sexual violence, and 85 per cent have experienced child sexual abuse.³⁶ Another research report suggests 60 per cent of female prisoners and 13 per cent of male prisoners experienced sexual coercion prior to their imprisonment, while sexual coercion within prisons was far less common with 4 per cent of women and 3 per cent of men reporting they had been forced or frightened into sexual activity in prison.³⁷

The impact of sexual violence may be more complex or severe for some people due to intersecting discrimination and disadvantages that arise across social identifiers such as gender, class, ethnicity, ability, sexuality, gender identity, religion and age. Recognising the impact of social structures of privilege on whether a person is more or less likely to experience sexual violence, how the trauma may be exacerbated by disadvantage or whether they face obstacles to accessing support is central to this Framework.

Access to timely and culturally responsive services tailored to the particular needs of a person in the immediate aftermath of experiencing sexual violence, together with ongoing support services to aid long-term recovery and healing can mitigate the impact.

Queensland's Framework t

OUR VISION: *Everyone in Queensland lives free o*

What do we mean by sexual violence?

- Sexual assault and rape
- Child sexual abuse
- Child sexual exploitation
- Sexual harassment
- Technology-facilitated sexual violence
- Intimate partner sexual violence
- Youth sexual violence and abuse

Our pri

Sexual violence is a violation of human rights and will not be tolerated

Preventing and responding to sexual violence is everyone's responsibility and requires shared accountability, partnerships and local responses

Preventing sexual violence begins with addressing the cultural norms, structures and practices that condone and enable violence to occur

Addressing gender inequality and power structures that enable sexual violence is critical to ending it

Our priorities f

Priority 1: Prevention

Objective: Everyone works together to bring about cultural, behavioural and structural change to prevent sexual violence

Strategies:

- Increase knowledge and understanding of sexual violence and its drivers in the broader community
- Equip families, children and young people with accurate information on healthy relationships, consent and sexual violence
- Challenge attitudes, practices and structures that lead to sexual violence and stop people speaking out
- Strengthen the capacity of workplaces and institutions to prevent sexual violence
- Implement targeted prevention and early intervention activities tailored for and designed by specific population groups

Priority 2: Support and healing

Objective: All people who are impacted by sexual violence are believed and supported to recover

Strategies:

- Provide timely, integrated and accessible support to people who have experienced sexual violence
- Increase the capacity and cultural responsiveness of specialist and mainstream services to better meet the diverse needs of people with lived experience of sexual violence
- Expand access to early intervention and support for young people displaying harmful behaviours and at risk of experiencing sexual violence

Core element: An integrated

Objective: service systems are integrated and effective so everyone impacted by sexual violence is supported

Core element: building

Objective: activities to prevent and respond to sexual violence

Outco

Communities are safe and free from sexual violence

People who have experienced sexual violence are believed and supported

Relationships are respectful

How to address Sexual Violence

Addressing the fear, threat or experience of sexual violence

Responding to all Queenslanders

- Children and young people
- Women
- Men
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- People from culturally diverse backgrounds
- LGBTIQ+ people
- People with disability
- Older people
- Sex workers
- People in the custodial system

Principles

Prevention activities and responses should recognise and address the diversity and lived experiences of all people in Queensland	The choice and dignity of people who have experienced sexual violence should be at the centre of all responses	Systems and services should be accessible, integrated, trauma-informed and culturally responsive	Interventions and responses must be informed by evidence, data, ongoing evaluation and supported by resources
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Actions for future action

<p>Priority 3: Accountability and justice</p> <p>Objective: The justice system is responsive to the needs of victims and survivors, and perpetrators are held to account for their actions</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and seek to address barriers to victims and survivors reporting sexual violence and accessing justice responses • Continue to strengthen support to navigate the criminal justice system for people who are impacted by sexual violence, and investigate expansion of alternative justice responses • Continue to provide and strengthen interventions that help perpetrators of sexual violence to take responsibility for their actions and change their attitudes and beliefs to prevent re-offending • Continue to review and evaluate justice processes and relevant laws in Queensland to ensure that victims of sexual violence are supported and perpetrators are held accountable 	<p>People impacted by sexual violence are supported to recover and heal</p> <p>Victims and survivors receive victim-centric support for sexual violence</p> <p>Specialist services have the cultural capability of specialist services, are trauma-informed and meet the needs of people who have experienced sexual violence</p> <p>Prevention programs for children and young people who engage in harmful sexual behaviours or who are impacted by sexual violence</p>
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Supporting a safe and effective service system

People impacted by sexual violence can access support where and when they need it

Strengthening the evidence base

Interventions and responses are underpinned by robust data, evidence and evaluation

Outcomes

Services meet the needs of all people impacted by sexual violence	The justice system is responsive to victims and survivors	Perpetrators are held to account and stop committing sexual violence
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Prevention

OUR OBJECTIVE:

Everyone works together to bring about cultural, behavioural and structural change to prevent sexual violence

Evidence tells us that —

- Attitudes that enable sexual violence to occur persist in our community.
- To prevent sexual violence, we need to understand why it happens and what allows it to continue.
- Drivers of sexual violence include:
 - negative perceptions of gender equality
 - attitudes supporting male domination of women
 - tolerance of aggression and violence
 - treating sex and sexual violence as taboo and secret.
- The 2017 *National Community Attitudes to Violence Against Women survey* found that:
 - 1 in 7 think it's ok for a man to force a woman to have sex if she kisses him first
 - 2 in 5 think it's common for sexual assault accusations to be used as a way to get back at men
 - 1 in 3 think it's partially a woman's fault if she shares an intimate image with a man and he shares it without her permission.
- To prevent sexual violence, we need to target the broader community, and particularly focus on educating children from a young age.
- We can also target particular population groups by working alongside community groups, community services, workplaces, sporting clubs and the media.

During consultation we heard that —

- We need to start by believing and supporting victims and survivors when they speak up.
- We need community-wide prevention activities to create cultural change, promoting respect for diversity, zero tolerance of sexual violence, equality across the community and positive role models.
- School and pre-school based relationships education programs should be compulsory, and include comprehensive and inclusive sex education.
- Broad community education campaigns are needed, with content targeted at hard-to-reach groups, such as older people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and LGBTIQ+ people.
- Sex and relationships education campaigns and programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities should be co-designed, use local language where appropriate, and focus on culture and community strengths. Campaigns and programs should overcome taboos associated with sex and sexual violence and use local channels.
- Generalist services like doctors, community services and legal services should gain increased awareness and knowledge about sexual violence, to better support victims and survivors when they come forward.

“Just as we say ‘child protection is everyone’s business’, we should be making ending sexual violence a whole of community responsibility.”

Sexual violence response sector worker

To achieve this objective, we will —

- Increase knowledge and understanding of sexual violence and its drivers in the broader community
- Equip families, children and young people with accurate information on healthy relationships, consent and sexual violence
- Challenge attitudes, practices and structures that lead to sexual violence and stop people speaking out
- Strengthen the capacity of workplaces and institutions to prevent sexual violence
- Implement targeted prevention and early intervention activities tailored for and designed by specific population groups

We are already —

- Implementing the *Queensland Women's Strategy 2016-21* and the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-22*, which work towards a community that respects women, embraces gender equality and promotes and protects the rights, interests and wellbeing of women and girls.
- Committing \$500,000 over two years for the Tackle Cyberbullying Grants Program, which encourages young people and community organisations to develop and deliver local initiatives to address cyberbullying.
- Hosting CONVO2019, bringing together young Queenslanders, social media influencers and social media platforms to lead the design of a new state government campaign to stop cyberbullying.
- Undertaking education campaigns for children and parents about safe and unsafe online behaviour, such as *Who's Chatting to Your Kids?*, *Surf Safely* and *Your Selfie: Keep it to Yourself*.
- Providing Queensland Health school-based youth health nurse services for assessment, support, health information and referral about a range of issues, including sexual health.
- Supporting *Love Bites*, an interactive, workshop-based education program on domestic and family violence and sexual violence prevention to be delivered in some Youth Justice Service Centres.
- Making community education a key element of new initiatives addressing youth sexual violence, for example in the three place-based trials being rolled out in 2019 and 2020.
- Supporting Our Watch to implement *Change the story*, hold information sessions and workshops, and develop a primary prevention model — *Changing the picture* — to address violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.
- Participating in the development of the *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations* and supporting endorsement of the National Principles by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG).
- Continuing to deliver elder abuse prevention initiatives and work with the Australian Government and other states and territories to implement the *National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians*.
- Providing guidance for health clinicians to improve recognition of factors impacting on sexual safety of clients of mental health and alcohol and other drugs services to identify and appropriately respond to sexual safety risks and allegations of sexual assault.

New initiatives to achieve this objective include

- Elevating the profile of Sexual Violence Awareness Month in October each year, including an annual grants program, to increase community awareness and knowledge.
- Making respectful relationships education compulsory in all Queensland state schools via strengthening implementation of the Australian curriculum, and ensuring the quality of programs delivered.
- Developing a list of recommended programs to support schools to implement respectful relationships education.
- Strengthening professional development to support all state schools to implement respectful relationships education.
- Planning actions taking into consideration the key findings from the context specific Our Watch whole-of-school approach to respectful relationships education pilot conducted in partnership with the Department of Education.
- Establishing a sexual violence prevention champions group to guide cultural change across communities.
- Strengthening sexual violence prevention initiatives and responses at key events and locations involving young people, including Schoolies events.
- Creating partnerships with the corporate and community sector to build on prevention initiatives for children and young people.

Support and healing

OUR OBJECTIVE:

All people who are impacted by sexual violence are believed and supported to recover and heal

Evidence tells us that —

- Sexual violence can have far-reaching, life-long and damaging consequences for victims, survivors and their families.
- With the right support, victims can be empowered to recover from their experiences and heal.
- Support for people who have been impacted by sexual violence must be timely, integrated and focused around the specific needs of victims and survivors.
- Appropriate services must be available and accessible, no matter where people live, what their background is, or what their specific needs are.
- Services may be either generalist (such as health, police, housing or community services), or specialist sexual assault services, but should be welcoming and supportive of people impacted by sexual violence, have an understanding of key issues and causes of sexual violence, and be trauma-informed so they do not further victimise people.
- Children and young people displaying or engaging in harmful sexual behaviours have different needs to adults, and require different therapeutic and justice responses.
- Targeted, early intervention is critical to ensure children and young people with harmful sexual behaviours can lead healthy and respectful lives as adults.

During consultation we heard that —

- We need a more integrated service system, with all relevant organisations working together to support people impacted by sexual violence (including perpetrators, where appropriate).
- More specialist sexual assault services are needed — especially in rural and regional areas.
- Additional funding is needed for existing specialist sexual assault services — to meet rising demand and reduce waiting lists.
- There is a great need for specialist support for victims of child sexual abuse and their parents/carers, especially outside the statutory child protection system and for children under 12 years old.
- Services should be more accessible for people with diverse needs, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, men, LGBTIQ+ people, older people and people with disability.
- Consultation stressed the importance of trauma-informed practice, which should be a central part of any services provided to victims and survivors. More training is needed for service providers such as police, first responders, teachers, medical professionals and judges.
- More services, including early intervention and rehabilitation, are needed for children and young people displaying problematic or harmful sexual behaviours.

“Improve services by improving the timelines for ... follow up after the initial response. Ensure that there are check-ins and follow up services for people so that they don't feel neglected or feel that the situation or attack was their fault.”

Survey respondent

To achieve this objective, we will —

- Provide timely, integrated and victim-centric support for people who have experienced sexual violence
- Increase the capacity and cultural capability of specialist and mainstream services to be trauma-informed and meet the diverse needs of people who are impacted by sexual violence
- Expand access to early intervention programs for children and young people displaying harmful sexual behaviours or who are at risk of experiencing sexual violence

We are already —

- Implementing multi-agency responses to sexual assault (including child sexual abuse) and exploring innovative approaches including trialling local models for multi-agency service responses to child sexual abuse in Townsville and on the Gold Coast.
- Funding the DV Connect Sexual Assault helpline.
- Providing victims of sexual assault the option of having a 'just-in-case' forensic examination, whether or not they have made the decision to report the assault to police and training nurses around the state in forensic procedures.
- Contributing to implementation of Royal Commission recommendations, including the development of the *National Strategy to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse*; a *National Framework for Child Safety*; and the establishment of a national centre to raise awareness and understanding of the impacts of child sexual abuse, support help seeking and guide best practice advocacy, support and treatment.
- Provisioning approximately \$500 million for Queensland's participation in the National Redress Scheme for victims and survivors of institutional child sexual abuse, including \$22 million for counselling.
- Establishing the Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Taskforce to ensure the voices of people who experienced institutional sexual abuse continue to be heard.
- Delivering the Truth, Healing and Reconciliation grants program to recognise the harm caused by institutional abuse and support victims and survivors to heal.
- Continuing to invest in Women's Health and Wellbeing Support Services to support survivors of domestic and family violence, including sexual violence on their recovery journey.
- Providing trauma-informed practice training to youth justice staff to strengthen the ability of staff to identify harm impacting on a young person's psychological or emotional wellbeing.
- Providing specialised training to Queensland Corrective Services' Community Corrections staff on managing female offenders, including a component that focuses on women as victims of trauma and abuse.
- Delivering tailored one-on-one programs to young people in youth detention centres to develop strategies to manage difficult and complex behaviour, including referrals to specialist support for young people identified as being a victim of sexual abuse.
- Delivering group programs to high-risk young men on youth detention orders with a focus on relationships, including consent, gender stereotypes, sexual respect, violence prevention and mental health.
- Providing access to subsidised training and skills development opportunities to disadvantaged Queenslanders, including people who have experienced sexual violence.
- Enabling appropriate responses to support healing and sexual violence prevention by updating and making available the Department of Housing and Public Works Domestic and Family Violence Practice Guide.
- Redeveloping the *Response to sexual assault and sexual abuse: Queensland Government Interagency Guidelines for responding to children, young people and adults who have experienced sexual assault or sexual abuse*.

New initiatives to achieve this objective include

- Working with the Queensland Sexual Assault Network to enhance their online sexual violence information hub as a key resource for people impacted by sexual violence.
- Developing a whole-of-government position statement that highlights our commitment to an inclusive and equitable service system.

Accountability and justice

OUR OBJECTIVE:

The justice system is responsive to the needs of victims and survivors, and perpetrators are held to account for their actions

Evidence tells us that —

- Sexual violence often occurs between trusted individuals, behind closed doors, and without evidence of its occurrence.
- The number of sexual assaults or attempted sexual assaults that actually occur is significantly higher than statistics of reported sexual assaults suggest — up to 87 per cent of incidents are never reported to police.³⁸ It can take many victims years or even decades to report their experiences.
- There are significant barriers to reporting, including concerns about not being believed, being judged harshly by police or courts, and having to re-live trauma repeatedly through the justice process.
- Attrition rates are highest at the police investigation stage — a 2010 study across five countries, including Australia, showed that around 65 per cent of cases never make it past this stage.³⁹
- Of the 13 per cent of Australian women who reported their most recent sexual assault to police, only 27 per cent reported that the perpetrator was charged.⁴⁰
- The University of Queensland's 2017 pilot study on prosecution of rape and sexual assault in Queensland found that rape myths and negative attitudes towards victims by police, judges and juries are one of the biggest hurdles that stop victims feeling believed and supported.⁴¹
- The way the criminal justice system responds to perpetrators of sexual violence can play an important role in setting community attitudes about sexual violence, and what is and is not acceptable.

During consultation we heard that —

- Victims and survivors of sexual violence need more support through the justice system, from reporting to court.
- Court processes were seen by many victims and survivors as onerous and traumatic, due to the length of the process, the experience of giving evidence and cross examination, and poor communication by police and court staff.
- There are concerns about the legislative framework under which sexual violence operates.
- Training in sexual violence and trauma-informed practice was raised in relation to police, judges, prosecutors and other justice staff, as well as broader generalist services.
- It was considered that evidence-informed, effective behaviour change programs for perpetrators of sexual violence was a gap in the service system, and critical to breaking the cycle.
- There is a strong perception, particularly amongst people with lived experience of sexual violence, that perpetrators are often not held to account for their behaviour.

“... believe survivors. Give people the benefit of the doubt — it is extremely difficult to come forward with allegations of sexual violence, no one would do it for fun or for money.”

Survey respondent

To achieve this objective, we will —

- Investigate and seek to address barriers to victims and survivors reporting sexual violence and accessing justice responses
- Continue to strengthen support to navigate the criminal justice system for people who are impacted by sexual violence, and investigate expansion of alternative justice responses
- Continue to provide and strengthen interventions that help perpetrators of sexual violence to take responsibility for their actions and change their attitudes and beliefs to prevent re-offending
- Continue to review and evaluate justice processes and relevant laws in Queensland to ensure that victims of sexual violence are supported and perpetrators are held accountable

We are already —

- Working to implement legislative reforms, and strengthen the accountability of organisations in preventing and responding to child sexual abuse, in response to recommendations of the Royal Commission.
- Amending the *Queensland Criminal Code* to address the increased use of technology to promote and distribute offending material and conceal offending.
- Managing reportable offenders according to the risk they pose to the lives and sexual safety of children using a range of prevention, disruption and enforcement strategies.
- Training police officers, including specialist detective training, to support appropriate responses to people who have experienced sexual violence and other vulnerable people.
- Delivering the Crime Scene Investigation Skills Enhancement Program to upgrade skills to support investigation of serious crime scenes, including for rapes and sexual assaults in remote/rural areas.
- Providing perpetrator intervention programs for sexual offenders in prison through Queensland Corrective Services.
- Supporting the delivery of specialist therapeutic services to young people who have sexually offended, their families and communities, and persons harmed and their families, and the provision of training for Youth Justice staff and other people engaging with or providing services to these young people.
- Continuing to enhance behaviour change programs, with a focus on young people.
- Referring the issue of consent in sexual assault and rape cases to the Queensland Law Reform Commission, with a report and recommendations due on 17 April 2020.
- Implementing legislative changes that have:
 - added a circumstance of aggravation with a mandatory minimum penalty to apply when the nature of offending was organised
 - provided special witness status to victims or alleged victims of sexual offences in criminal proceedings
 - given sexual assault victims protection to ensure their private communication with a counsellor cannot be easily accessed by the offender in court proceedings
 - created a Charter of Victim's Rights
 - created new offences relating to the non-consensual sharing of intimate images.

New initiatives to achieve this objective include

- Conducting a pilot of a dedicated sexual violence liaison officer within the Townsville QPS District, and conducting a comprehensive evaluation to determine the feasibility of the model and resourcing needs for expansion across QPS regions.
- Developing an online reporting form to provide another avenue for victims of sexual assault to make reports to police.
- Considering recommendations of the Queensland Law Reform Commission in relation to the issue of consent in sexual assault and rape cases.
- Strengthening a victim-centric focus in the QPS.

Core element:

An integrated and effective service system

Objective:

Service systems are integrated and effective so everyone impacted by sexual violence can access support where and when they need it

We know that —

The service system that prevents and responds to sexual violence includes both specialist services (specifically targeting sexual violence prevention and response) and generalist services (such as those which provide services to a range of people, including those affected by sexual violence).

These specialist and many generalist services are already providing significant support to people who have been impacted by sexual violence. Continuous improvement, including taking on board new evidence and research, is critical to ensuring these services meet the needs of those who access them.

We also want to see services and systems working together, collaborating and integrating where possible to make sure they are achieving improved outcomes for victims and survivors. Strategies which work towards this goal are embedded across all three priority areas of the Framework.

Core element:

Building the evidence base

Objective:

Activities to prevent and respond to sexual violence are underpinned by robust data, evidence and evaluation

We know that —

Sexual violence impacts Queenslanders of all ages, genders, backgrounds, abilities, socioeconomic status, education levels, and occupations, and that sexual violence is predominantly a gendered crime with women and girls as primary victims. We also know that sexual violence remains one of the most under-reported crimes in Australia.

Strengthening the data and evidence base is central to enhancing our understanding of the full scope of sexual violence in Queensland, how sexual violence is experienced by different population groups, and where services, education and prevention programs are most needed.

Implementing the Framework

Implementation

To achieve the Framework’s vision that everyone in Queensland lives free of the fear, threat or experience of sexual violence, the Queensland Government will develop a series of whole-of-government Action Plans to address sexual violence, the first of which will be released in mid-2020.

The Action Plan will include Government actions, aligned to the priorities and strategies set out in the Framework. Actions will continue to develop and evolve as progress is made and new opportunities are identified, with a formal review of the Action Plan every three years (in 2023 and 2026).

The Framework complements a range of strategies that consider responses to sexual violence. For example, the *Third Action Plan 2019-20 to 2021-22* of the *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016-2026* provides existing actions to address sexual violence in intimate and family contexts. These actions are noted within this Framework to provide a comprehensive overview of government action to address this issue.

Governance

Governance arrangements for the Framework will align with those in place across the Queensland Government’s broader violence prevention portfolio, as outlined in the diagram below.

The Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women (DCSYW) is the coordinating agency for implementation of the Framework. However, all agencies have a critical role to play in leading the implementation of supporting actions and initiatives at the policy and local level.

At a national level, the Framework also contributes to Queensland’s implementation of the *Fourth Action Plan of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-22*. The Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence participates in the Women’s Safety Ministers group overseeing implementation of the National Plan, supported by DCSYW’s participation in the National Plan Implementation Executive Group.

It is anticipated that the Framework will also contribute to Queensland’s implementation of the forthcoming *National Strategy to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse*, being developed in response to recommendations of the Royal Commission.



Monitoring and reporting

The change required to fully realise the vision, objectives and outcomes outlined in the Framework will not happen overnight. Major goals, such as reducing the prevalence of sexual violence in our communities, will take time to achieve. They can be measured through broad-scale data sources such as the ABS *Personal Safety Survey* and the *National Community Attitudes to Violence against Women Survey*, which are undertaken every few years. At the same time, progress against many of the outcomes in the Framework may be seen in the shorter and medium term, and measured through Queensland and national data sources.

In addition to the Framework's three objectives, which reflect our medium term goals, the long-term outcomes of the Framework are:

- Communities are safe and free from sexual violence
- People who have experienced sexual violence are believed and supported
- Relationships are respectful
- Services meet the needs of all people impacted by sexual violence
- The justice system is responsive to victims and survivors
- Perpetrators are held to account and stop committing sexual violence.

These long-term outcomes broadly align with the outcomes of the *Fourth Action Plan of the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2019–2022*.

We will outline how we will monitor and evaluate our progress in more detail in the Action Plan to address sexual violence — including specific indicators and measures to align with the Framework's objectives and long-term outcomes.

Policy context

The Framework sits alongside other state and national reform agendas, strategies and plans that support the safety and wellbeing of all Queenslanders. This Framework and other reforms contribute to the Queensland Government's Keep Communities Safe priority under *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities*.

The key reports, strategies and plans that work together with the Framework and support its implementation are outlined below. In addition, the Framework's goals and priorities overlap with a number of broader policy and reform agendas, which are mapped in the diagram on the next page.

The **Youth Sexual Violence and Abuse Steering Committee** (The Committee) was announced in March 2016 to examine youth sexual violence in West Cairns and Aurukun⁴² and more broadly across the state. The Committee's Final Report found that the issue is state-wide, affecting young people in urban, regional and remote communities.⁴³

It highlighted that communities most impacted also experience greater levels of social, economic and intergenerational disadvantage, and that girls, young women and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are disproportionately affected. The Government broadly supports the Committee's findings and in July 2018, committed \$12 million for priority responses to youth sexual violence.

The **Queensland Women's Strategy** provides a framework for government, the private sector and the wider Queensland community to take significant action to achieve gender equality in Queensland. Its vision is that the Queensland community respects women, embraces gender equality, and promotes and protects the rights, interests and wellbeing of women and girls. The Strategy includes four priority areas for action: Leadership, Economic Security, Safety, and Health and Wellbeing. The collaborative Community Implementation Plan identifies initiatives delivered by government, business and community organisations to achieve the goals of the Women's Strategy.

The **Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026** outlines Queensland's commitment to ending domestic and family violence, encouraging partnerships between government, community and business, and reforms for implementation over a staged ten-year plan.

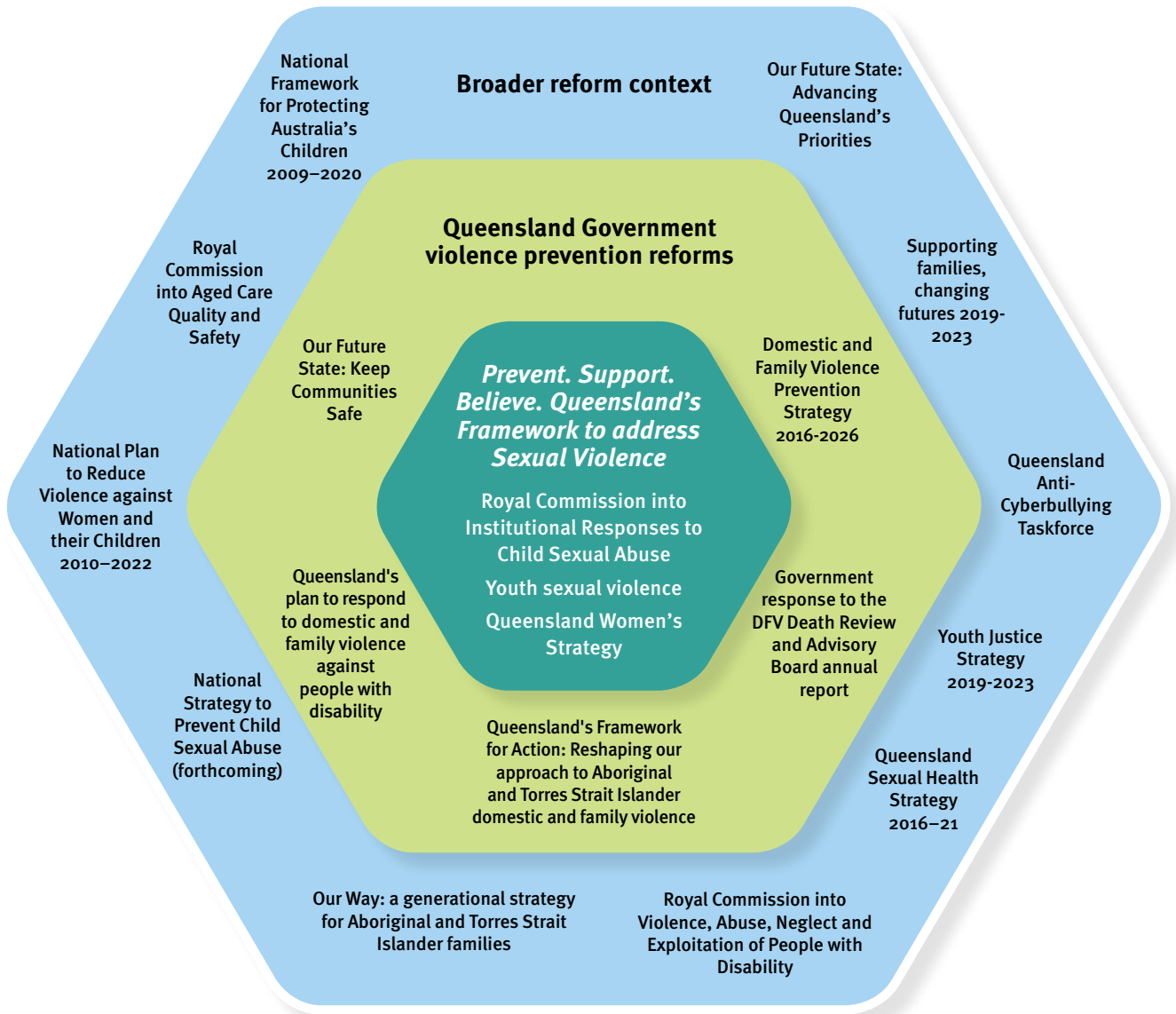
The *Third Action Plan 2019–2022* strengthens the foundations of Queensland's reform by focusing on real action to address domestic and family violence, continuing to evolve the Strategy to meet the needs of the community, seeking to further embed cultural change and system reform, and encouraging a move away from government-led action to community ownership.

The **Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse** (the Royal Commission) exposed the widespread abuse of children in institutions and the failings to protect and respond to children who have been abused. The Royal Commission also found that sexual abuse of children and young people continues in the present day and occurs in many contexts. The Royal Commission made a total 409 recommendations,⁴⁴ the majority of which have been accepted or accepted in principle by the Queensland Government.

Volumes 9 and 10 of the Royal Commission have particular relevance for this Framework. Volume 9 focuses on advocacy, support and therapeutic services for people who have experienced child sexual abuse. Volume 10 focuses on responses to children with harmful sexual behaviours.

The **National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–22** (The National Plan) focuses on violence experienced by women and their children. The National Plan's vision is Australian women and their children live free from violence in safe communities. The National Plan is supported by a series of Action Plans. The current Fourth Action Plan (2020–2022) includes a renewed focus on addressing sexual violence in its own right, and includes nationally-led actions relating to: preventing sexual violence before it happens; delivering client-centred, trauma-informed, specialised support to victims and survivors; and, strengthening capacity to address sexual harassment. The actions supporting this Framework also support Queensland's contribution to the National Plan, alongside actions in the *Third Action Plan (2019–20 to 2021–22)* of the *Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026*.

Broader policy reform agendas, strategies and plans



How the Framework was developed

The Framework has been informed by extensive engagement with the community, service sector, academic experts, advocacy organisations and peak bodies. Importantly, we have heard the voices of people with lived experience of sexual violence, who have shared their experiences and views on how to make a difference. The Framework has been developed with these voices at the centre.

Public consultation

From late 2018 to June 2019, a range of consultation activities took place:

- 17 written submissions were received from a range of organisations and individuals
- 278 people completed an online survey
- 61 people shared their thoughts through the Youth e-Hub (focused on young people aged between 13 and 25)
- 370 people attended face-to-face consultation events across the state, including public consultation forums, focus groups, and closed sessions with victims/survivors.

Throughout the consultation, particular consideration was given to engaging with people from diverse population groups in the community. Targeted consultation was undertaken with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and men, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disability, LGBTIQ+ people, older people, and people with lived experience of childhood sexual abuse.

More information about how we consulted and what we heard from the community is provided in the *Consultation Summary*.

Sexual Violence Prevention Roundtable

The Sexual Violence Prevention Roundtable was established in February 2019 to further inform the development of the Framework. The Roundtable includes sector and community representatives, academic experts, and senior government representatives, and is chaired by the Deputy Director-General, Strategy, Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women.

The Roundtable provided insight on sexual violence issues, helped identify priority areas of need, and provided advice on evidence-informed approaches for addressing the causes of sexual violence, and will provide ongoing advice to inform development of the Action Plan.

Targeted consultation with the sexual violence prevention and response sector, including those not represented on the Roundtable, has also been undertaken.

Research and analysis

In addition to the public and targeted consultation, the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women has undertaken extensive research and analysis of the literature and evidence base on sexual violence prevention and response, reviewed research and other report recommendations, and looked at interstate and international work in this field. The Framework is the result of combining findings from public and targeted consultation, expert advice from the Roundtable, and research and analysis.

Sexual Violence Prevention Roundtable

The Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women gratefully acknowledges the members of the Sexual Violence Prevention Roundtable, whose expertise, practice knowledge and advice has made a significant contribution to *Prevent. Support. Believe. Queensland's Framework to address Sexual Violence.*

Leona Berrie

Secretariat, Queensland Sexual Assault Network

Karni Liddell

Disability advocate and National Disability Insurance Scheme Ambassador

Di Macleod

Director, Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence

James Edney

Youth Empowered Towards Independence

Cecilia Barassi-Rubio

Director, Immigrant Women's Support Service

Karren Aspinall

Laurel Place

Angela Lynch

CEO, Women's Legal Service Queensland

Rachael Pascua

YFS and R4Respect Ambassador

Professor Patrick O'Leary

Griffith University

Helen Ferguson

Assistant Director-General, Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors

Charmaine Law

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David Harmer

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Clare Guilfoyle

Interim CEO, Protect All Children Today

Liza Windle

Executive Director, Programs, Housing and Homelessness Services, Department of Housing and Public Works

Glossary and abbreviations

- **ABS** — Australian Bureau of Statistics
- **Accessibility** — refers to the ability of people of all abilities, backgrounds, cultures, and geographical locations to access the services they need, when they need them.
- **AIFS** — Australian Institute of Family Studies
- **AHRC** — Australian Human Rights Commission
- **AIHW** — Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- **ANROWS** — Australia’s National Research Organisation for Women’s Safety
- **Consent** — means consent freely and voluntarily given by a person with the cognitive capacity to give the consent.
- **DFV** — Domestic and family violence
- **DCSYW** — Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women
- **Early intervention** — approaches that aim to change behaviours or build skills of individuals or groups who are displaying signs of problematic sexual behaviours, or are at risk of becoming perpetrators of sexual violence; or targeted approaches that aim to prevent sexual violence for groups that are at a heightened risk of experiencing sexual violence.
- **Evidence-informed** — approaches that combine well-researched interventions with clinical experience, ethics, and client preferences and culture to guide and inform the delivery of services.
- **Image-based abuse** — when someone takes or shares a nude or sexual image of another person without their consent or permission and includes threatening to share images with other people, such as friends, family, workplaces, or on social media. Sometimes called ‘revenge porn’.
- **IPSV** — Intimate Partner Sexual Violence
- **Intersectionality** — the complex, cumulative way in which multiple forms of discrimination and disadvantage combine, overlap or intersect, especially in the experiences of marginalised individuals or groups.
- **LGBTIQ+** — refers to a person identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or other diverse sexual orientation or gender identity.
- **National Plan** — National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-22
- **Perpetrator** — an individual who has committed an act of sexual violence, even if they have not necessarily been charged with, or convicted of, the act.
- **Perpetrator programs** — aim to reduce the risk of re-offending and change the attitudes and behaviours of perpetrators of sexual violence.
- **Problematic sexual behaviour** — describes behaviour of a sexual nature irrespective of age that is both outside behaviour accepted as “normal” for a child or young person’s age and level of development and occurs to the detriment of the person’s engagement in activities of normal functioning.
- **PSS** — ABS Personal Safety Survey
- **QCS** — Queensland Corrective Services
- **QGSO** — Queensland Government Statistics Office
- **QLRC** — Queensland Law Reform Commission
- **QPS** — Queensland Police Service
- **Queenslander** — for the purposes of this Framework, a ‘Queenslander’ includes anyone who lives, works or travels in Queensland, either permanently or temporarily.
- **Residential locations** — defined by the ABS as a permanent or semi-permanent dwelling used for private or commercial residential purposes.
- **Restorative justice** — an innovative approach that operates as an alternative to court processing to bring all the parties relevant to an offence together in a facilitated and structured process that provides a forum to discuss and resolve the impact of the offence; requires the willing and informed participation of victim and offender who must take responsibility for their behaviour.
- **Royal Commission** — Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
- **Trauma-informed practice** — a strengths-based framework grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma, emphasising physical, psychological, and emotional safety for everyone, that creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.
- **Victim/survivor/people who have experienced sexual violence** — these terms have been used interchangeably in the Framework. Generally, ‘victim’ signifies that a crime has taken place against a person, and is most often used when describing official statistics. ‘Survivor’ refers to someone who has begun to heal or has gone through the recovery process. ‘People who have experienced sexual violence’ is a broad term that may refer to victims and/or survivors.

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