

MEDIA RELEASE

22nd of May 2019

NCAS youth findings are crystal clear: We cannot stop prevention work.

Today the Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) has released the findings of the 2017 National Community Attitudes Towards Violence Against Women Survey (NCAS) based on the responses of 1,761 young Australians aged 16-24 years.

NCAS is the world's longest running survey of its kind, with responses from 17,500 Australians aged 16 years and over and provides an understanding of Australians' beliefs and attitudes towards violence against women, as well as gender equality – mapping shifts in perception and knowledge over time. A number of findings are of concern to Gender Equity Victoria (GEN VIC), the Victorian peak body for gender equity, the promotion of women's sexual and reproductive health and the prevention of violence against women.

Commenting on the findings, GEN VIC Chair, Kit McMahon said, "The NCAS youth report makes clear that a disturbing number of young men don't understand that controlling behaviours in relationships are a problem. Twenty-percent of young men not understanding that repeatedly keeping track of location, calls or activities through mobile phone or other devices without consent is a form of violence against women. Young people's lack of understanding about consent is also alarming and in some instances supports victim-blaming".

McMahon is referring to the finding that around 1 in 7 young Australians believe a man would be justified to force sex if the women initiated it, but then changed her mind and pushed him away and nearly a third of young men believe that 'a lot of times, women who say they were raped had led the man on and then had regrets'.

"Relatedly, over 2 in 5 young Australians (43%) support the statement 'I think it's natural for a man to want to appear in control of his partner in front of his male friends'. We know that gender inequity is a key driver of violence against women and this makes clear that the attitudes we need to tackle are starting young."

Despite the negative findings, there has been an improvement in young people's attitudes to violence against women and gender equality in 20 of the 36 questions asked in both the 2013 and 2017 surveys.

McMahon believes that the improvement is the result of greater prevention of violence against women work but that this work must not stop: "people believe that improvements in gender equality mean that men and women are now equal. We need to educate people in the structural barriers that women continue to face and the social and cultural norms around masculinity and femininity that do such damage to young people, particularly those who are gender diverse."

"It is more important than ever that governments take note of these findings and provide long-term and consistent funding for the prevention of violence against women", concluded McMahon.

–ENDS

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Kit McMahon

GEN VIC Chair

Ph. 9851 3700

genvic@genvic.org.au

ABOUT GENDER EQUITY VICTORIA

Gender Equity Victoria (GEN VIC) the Victorian peak body for gender equity, women's health and the prevention of violence against women.

Our vision is equality, wellbeing and freedom from violence for every women and girl in every community of Victoria.

GEN VIC's strategic priorities are to:

- Advance gender equity
- Promote women's sexual and reproductive health
- Prevent violence against women and
- Build an influential and sustainable peak body.

www.genvic.org.au