



Victorian Election 2026

A safer Victoria starts with ending family violence



Fear shouldn't live here: A safer Victoria starts with ending family violence

Too many Victorians are living in fear because too little is being done, too late, to stop family violence. Police and courts should be the last resort but for far too many victim-survivors are the first system response they receive - too often only after years of enduring violent and controlling behaviour.

Yet government investment overwhelmingly flows to late interventions - police, courts and prisons. These responses may offer brief risk containment but rarely reduce recidivism and can increase risk. Last year 80% of family violence incidents responded to by Victoria Police **involved people with a history of perpetrating violence** and **82,029 incidents were assessed as likely to continue or escalate**.¹

² Legal responses have devastating inequitable impacts on First Nations peoples and other marginalised people and communities and do almost nothing to support victim-survivors.

Approximately 1,120,337 Victorian men, 35% of the male population, will use violence over their lifetime.³ Only a fraction of men using violence (2%) received a **meaningful behaviour change response** and too often only after high levels of violence.⁴ Victoria denies victim-survivors crucial support when it does not provide earlier responses to reduce and end men's use of family violence. The current government **funding model for Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCPs) does not value victim-survivor safety**, creating gaps and loopholes in critical risk-related safety schemes.

Without earlier responses, **Victoria enables the cycle to repeat**. Devastatingly, **nearly 1 in 3 Australian 18-19-year-olds report experiencing IPV in the past year**. In the past five years, Family Violence Intervention Order cases related to intimate partner violence have surged by 33% in the Children's Court, disproportionately impacting young girls.⁵ There is no dedicated response for children and young people as victim-survivors in their own right and no government funding for young people already using intimate partner violence.

Responding earlier is not only good social policy. It is good economic policy. No area of government is untouched by the impacts of men's use of family violence – health, legal, police, child protection and even transport systems are responding to impacts of family violence.

¹ Crime Statistics Agency (2025) *Justice System Data Tables, 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2025: Table 33. Number of family violence incidents with risk factors recorded on L17 Risk Assessment and Risk Management Report, 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2025.*

² Crime Statistics Agency (2025) *Justice System Data Tables, 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2025: Table 31. Number of family violence incidents by total risk assessment score and likelihood of future violence, 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2025.*

³ *Ten to Men* (Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2025) found 1 in 3 men in their study self-reported using violence and estimate 120,000 men start using violence every year. The most recent Australian Bureau of Statistics census (2021) recorded 3,200,963 males in Victoria. Assuming 35% of Victorian males use violence in their lifetime, 1,120,337 men at 2021 population levels could be expected to use violence in Victoria at some point in their life.

⁴ 22,574 unique clients received perpetrator interventions since record collecting began between 2020 and 2025 according to Crime Statistics Agency (2025) *Service Sector Data Tables*

⁵ Crime Statistics Agency Victoria (2025), *Justice System Data Tables 2025: Table 18: Number of unique victims on original FVIO applications by relationship to respondent, victim gender, and court, 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2025.*

New modelling estimates **police alone are spending \$8 billion/year nationally in misdirected funds** to continue responding to the same men over and over instead of investing in breaking cycles of violence before they worsen.⁶

Acting earlier gives victim-survivors, including children, adult parents, partners and ex-partners a real chance at recovery and healing to stop violence in its tracks.

Invest earlier to break the cycle: Stop Victorians living in fear

1. Commit to a new 10-year strategy. Shifting Victoria's system towards reducing harm earlier requires a governance mechanism to embed it.

Victoria's current strategic framework is due to expire next year.

- Commit to a new, expanded 10-year strategy to end family violence to ensure ending family violence remains a central focus and enable a longer-term vision to end violence earlier.

2. Invest in targeted supports for young people to break cycles of violence before they become entrenched.

The cost of inaction early is measured in shattered lives and lost futures. Bold, targeted investment is urgently needed to stem the alarming rise in youth intimate partner violence.

- Invest in a co-ordinated and evaluated pilot programs to develop dedicated responses to youth intimate partner violence: one ACCO-led, one led by an organisation working with culturally and racially marginalised people, one led by a mainstream youth provider.
- Immediate cross-sector workforce training to equip youth, early parenting, health and mental health workers who are already in contact with young people to recognise and respond to youth IPV while longer-term infrastructure is built.

3. Stop the funding shortfall to genuinely centre child and adult victim-survivor agency and safety.

Victoria needs to provide victim-survivors with the dedicated advocacy and support they deserve. MBCP funding models must reflect this but currently do not.

- Allocate dedicated funding for family safety contact work within MBCPs for all victim-survivors affected by men's violence.

4. Connect the dots through an integrated framework to stop men's use family violence.

Men using family violence engage with all government systems but Victoria's response to men using violence is fragmented, meeting neither the scope nor scale of the problem. Right now, opportunities to ensure systems are strong and keep victim-survivors safer are routinely missed. There is an urgent need for integrated ecosystem of responses to men using violence. Queensland and New South Wales already have state strategies to put those using violence at the centre of their response.⁷

- Develop a dedicated strategy to end men's use of violence

⁶ New draft modelling commissioned by No to Violence, currently in preparation for publication, estimates the value of preventing first-time DFV offences alone at \$2.05–\$2.66 billion per year over the next decade. Including the cascading effect of avoided re-offending, the combined value rises to approximately \$83.0 billion over the decade — around \$8.3 billion per year. These estimates exclude prosecution, legal aid, courts administration and corrections costs, meaning they likely understate the true value of earlier intervention.

⁷ Queensland released [Broadening the Focus](#) in 2024 and in 2025 New South Wales launched [Building Better Responses: NSW Strategy to Respond to the Use of Domestic and Family Violence 2026-2030](#).