Respecting and valuing older people: Victoria's Primary Prevention of Elder Abuse Framework

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Acknowledgements

- Traditional Owners
- Victim-survivors
- Stakeholders and community members

Towards a vision

A future free from elder abuse is one where older people are valued, respected and treated equally

- As our population ages, creating this future is more critical than ever
- Together we can change the underlying culture that allows elder abuse to occur

Learning points

- Primary prevention of elder abuse: what is it?
- The context and development
- Victoria's framework
- How to use the framework and what's next

Prevention continuum

Prevention

Primary prevention

Address likely underlying drivers including ageism, gender inequality and other intersecting forms of discrimination.

Early intervention

Secondary prevention

Targeted action to reduce risk and prevent escalation for people more likely to experience or use abuse.

Response

Tertiary prevention

Coordinated action after abuse to address harm and prevent recurrence.

Recovery

Ongoing, long-term holistic support for victim-survivors after abuse.

About the framework

- Victoria's first dedicated primary prevention resource for elder abuse
- **Provides** a structure to help professionals and organisations plan effective action at all levels of society.
- **Informed by** emerging available evidence, sector stakeholders and lived experience.
- **Released in 2 parts:**
  - Handbook (featuring the core framework, published 15 June 2026)
  - Companion guide (planned for release in the coming months).

Key users

Professionals:

- working in prevention, community development, health promotion and related sectors
- in a position to influence attitudes, cultures, policies and practices that affect older people

Sectors:

- health and community services
- education
- local government
- family violence services
- aged care and seniors services
- peak bodies
- community and not-for-profit organisations

What it looks like

Towards a future where older people are valued, respected and treated fairly

Addressing ageism and gender inequality, alongside other intersecting forms of discrimination

Guiding principles

- Human rights
- Aboriginal self-determination
- Lived experience
- Intersectionality
- Multigenerational change
- Community-led and culturally safe
- Evidence-informed
- Socio-ecological approach

Themes for action

Respect

- Older people are valued, honoured, treated with respect and supported to live a life that reflects personal preferences
- Ageist stereotypes and prejudices are addressed
- Common attitudes, beliefs, language and imagery about older people and ageing are positive
- Harmful assumptions about older people are dismantled

Intergenerational connection

- Positive connections between older and younger people are fostered
- People of all ages have positive experiences with older people
- Respectful relationships between generations are built via:
  - understanding
  - commonality
  - working with families as partners in prevention

Inclusion

- Older people are fairly included, in all their diversity, to address age discrimination
- All older people are visible, represented and recognised
- Diverse voices and perspectives are heard and valued equally
- Participation is fair and accessible for older people, including on digital platforms

Gender equality

- Gender equality is promoted and sexism against older women and gender diverse people is addressed
- Rigid gender stereotypes are addressed
- Women's independence and decision making is promoted
- People challenge condoning of violence against older women
- People encourage healthy expressions of masculinity
- Transgender and gender diverse older people are supported, validated and celebrated, no matter what age they affirm their gender.

Focusing on underlying drivers

Research into what drives elder abuse is still developing

Emerging available evidence suggests targeting:

- ageism
- gender inequality
- other intersecting forms of discrimination

Collective action

3 level socio-ecological model

Individual, family and relationship action

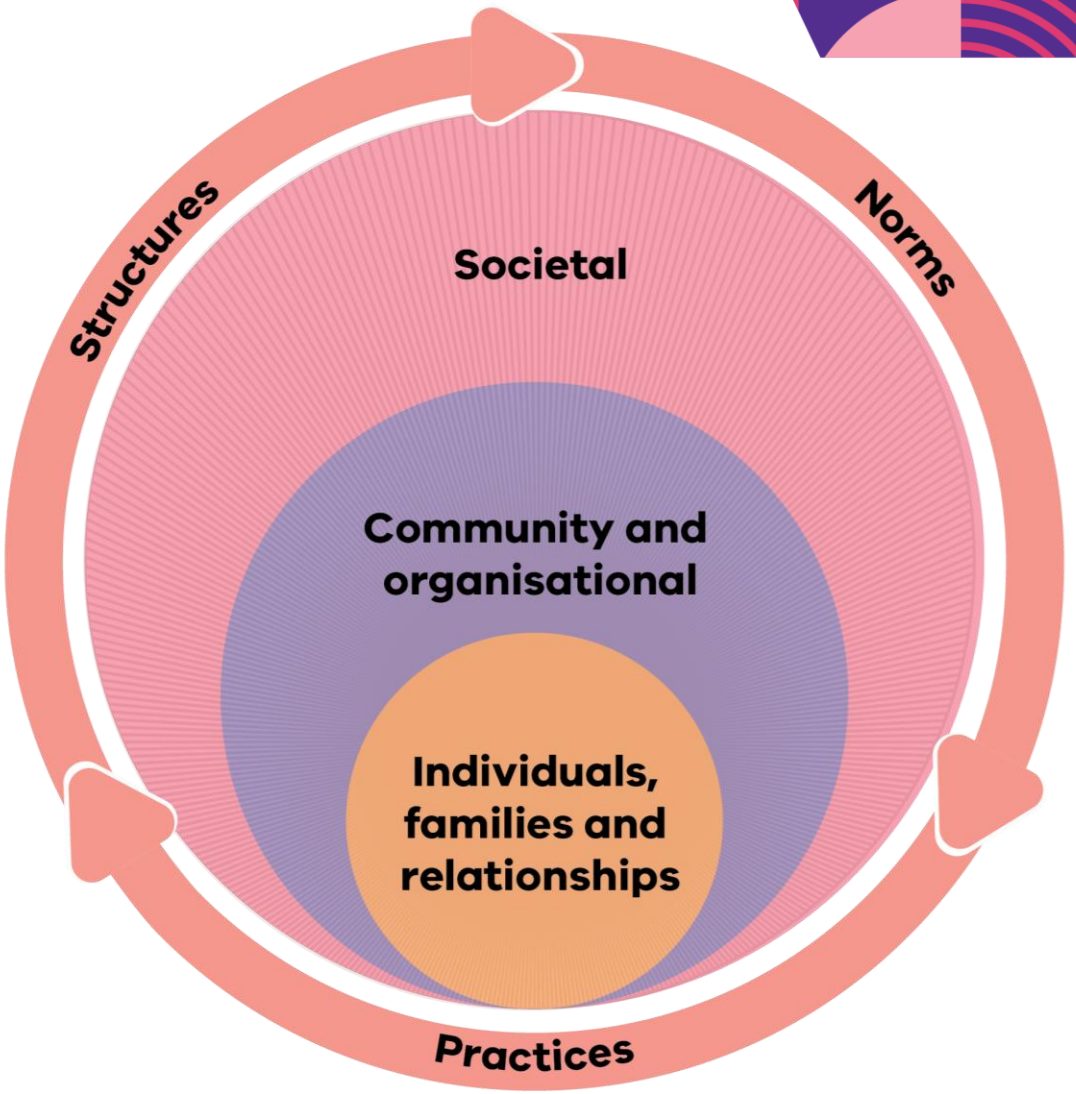
- People's relationship to themselves and others

Community and organisational actions

- Community life, including volunteering, education, services, organisations and businesses

Societal actions

- The broader social, structural and cultural environment shaped by public institutions, policy settings, legislation, media and community norms



Actions for respect

- **Older people are valued, honoured, treated with respect and supported to live a life that reflects personal preferences**
- **Ageist stereotypes and prejudices are addressed**
- **Common attitudes, beliefs, language and imagery about older people and ageing are positive**
- **Harmful assumptions about older people are dismantled**

Example actions

Individual, family and relationship action

Help peers reflect on internalised ageist beliefs, language and behaviours

Community and organisational actions

Review and update organisational communications to remove ageist language and imagery

Societal actions

Partner with media outlets to include positive ageing messaging in guidelines

Actions for intergenerational connection

- **Positive connections between older and younger people are fostered**
- **People of all ages have positive experiences with older people**
- **Respectful relationships between generations are built via:**
  - **understanding**
  - **commonality**
  - **working with families as partners**
  - **in prevention**

Example actions

Individual, family and relationship action

Hold positive family gatherings with people from different generations including older people

Community and organisational actions

Establish skills exchange and companionship programs with older people and other generations

Societal actions

Showcase positive intergenerational relationships in news reporting, public advertising and media

Actions for inclusion

- **Older people are fairly included, in all their diversity, to address age discrimination**
- **All older people are visible, represented and recognised**
- **Diverse voices and perspectives are heard and valued equally**
- **Participation is fair and accessible for older people, including on digital platforms**

Example actions

Individual, family and relationship action

Foster older people's sense of belonging among family by embracing and celebrating older members, including diverse identities and cultures

Community and organisational actions

Audit policies and processes for ageism and other forms of discrimination

Societal actions

Set up advisory groups with older people, including people facing multiple forms of discrimination, to inform policy

Actions for gender equality

- **Gender equality is promoted and sexism against older women and gender diverse people is addressed**
- **Rigid gender stereotypes are addressed**
- **Women's independence and decision making is promoted**
- **People challenge condoning of violence against older women**
- **People encourage healthy expressions of masculinity**
- **Transgender and gender diverse older people are supported, validated and celebrated, no matter what age they affirm their gender**

Example actions

Individual, family and relationship action

Have respectful conversations to address harmful gender stereotypes and sexist remarks across generations

Community and organisational actions

Include older women in strategies, research and actions around preventing violence against women

Societal actions

Social policies and laws that promote gender equality for older women, trans and gender diverse people

Embedding change across society

Primary prevention is most effective when messages and activities reach people across multiple settings

The framework includes an extensive list of possible settings and population groups to consider

Supporting:

- greater reach
- partnership approaches

61 settings	58 population groups
• Community • Culture and faith • Education • Health • Media and communications • Residential • Services • Sports, recreation and community groups • The arts • Workplaces	• First Peoples • Carers • Diverse communities • Education and skills • Gender identity • Life stages • Media and communications • The arts • Roles, professions and positions

What’s next

- Victoria’s 8 Elder Abuse Prevention Networks will embed the framework into their work
- **Companion guide** with further context and supporting guidance is planned for release in the coming months
- **We encourage professionals to:**
  - Use the framework to help plan evidence-informed action
  - Share the framework with colleagues, networks and partners
  - Access and use the companion guide when released

Download the framework

Call to action:

1. Choose an example action to work on
2. Think of your own idea that aligns with the themes for action:
   - respect
   - intergenerational connection
   - inclusion
   - gender equality

providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/preventing-elder-abuse

Thank you

A poster presentation of the framework is on display