

WEAVE Inc. (Women Everywhere Advocating Violence Elimination)

MEDIA RELEASE

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WEAVE Alliance (Women Everywhere Advocating Violence Elimination) welcomes the government's announcement of its draft National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children.

Women Everywhere Advocating Violence Elimination (WEAVE), formed in 2009, as a National Women's Alliance that aims to eradicate gendered violence (including sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, sexual exploitation and trafficking). As a non-partisan coalition WEAVE brings together sexual assault services, women's health services, women's legal services, domestic and family violence services and organisations working against trafficking.

Convener, Dr Elspeth McInnes said the National Plan was keenly awaited by groups and organisations dealing with violence in Australian society. 'We know that women and children are affected every day by domestic violence and sexual assault and it is vital that we have a long-term coordinated strategy across government to reduce and prevent violence.'

Dr McInnes said gender-based violence was one of the most serious issues facing women and girls in Australia today. It is a major factor impacting on women's equality, and has devastating effects on women's health, as well as women's economic standing and workforce participation. A 2004 Victorian study found that intimate partner violence is the leading contributor to death, disability and illness in Victorian women aged between 15-44 years.

Dr McInnes said that whilst ABS data identified that one in three Australian women had experienced physical violence and nearly one in five had experienced sexual violence, the impacts of violence and sexual abuse on children also created intergenerational harm. She welcomed the plan to have health, education, police, courts, community services and the community working together and the additional commitment of \$44.5 million in spending over 4 years.

'The new spending will hopefully make a huge difference to one of the most serious social problems facing Australians,' she said.

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