



## Blog Article

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### Day 9 - 16 Days of Activism

## How can I be an active bystander in Domestic and Family Violence, and support social and cultural change?

The ARC Gender Relations team at the Men and Family Centre runs Active Bystander Conversations Training to support people to take action against Domestic and Family Violence (and other forms of violence) in a safe and respectful way.

This training explores how bystanders can intervene in gender-based (and other forms of) violence, in everyday conversations and situations. It shows how gendered social norms and subtle sexist attitudes are linked to disrespectful and abusive behaviours. The training invites reflection and supports participants to develop practical, active bystander intervention skills.

People attending this training are supported to practice having “curious conversations” about gender equity that do not shut down healthy discussion, but instead open up conversation. Opening up conversations is key to encouraging respectful engagement with this very important issue.

The training supports people to understand the drivers of violence such as:

- **Condoning of violence against women** – for example, the idea that it is excusable for men to use violence in certain circumstances, that they cannot always be held responsible, or that some kinds of violence (such as sexual harassment) are not serious. Trying to shift blame onto the victim is another way violence is often condoned
- **Men’s control of decision-making and limits to women’s independence in public life and relationships** – for example, the idea that men make better leaders than women, or that men should be the head of the household and decide how money is spent
- **Rigid gender roles and stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity** – the idea that women and men and girls and boys should act in certain ways or fulfil certain roles
- **Male peer relationships or ‘male bonding’ that emphasizes aggression and disrespect towards women** – for example, the way some groups of men seek to prove their ‘manhood’ or ‘masculinity’ through actions that are disrespectful, hostile or aggressive towards women.

People often ask what I can do about domestic and family violence. How can I make a difference? Well, this is a great place to start.

Visit ARC Gender Relations, Men and Family Centre website for more information

<https://menandfamily.org.au/arc-gender-relations/>

Or go to <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/>