

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

Handbook

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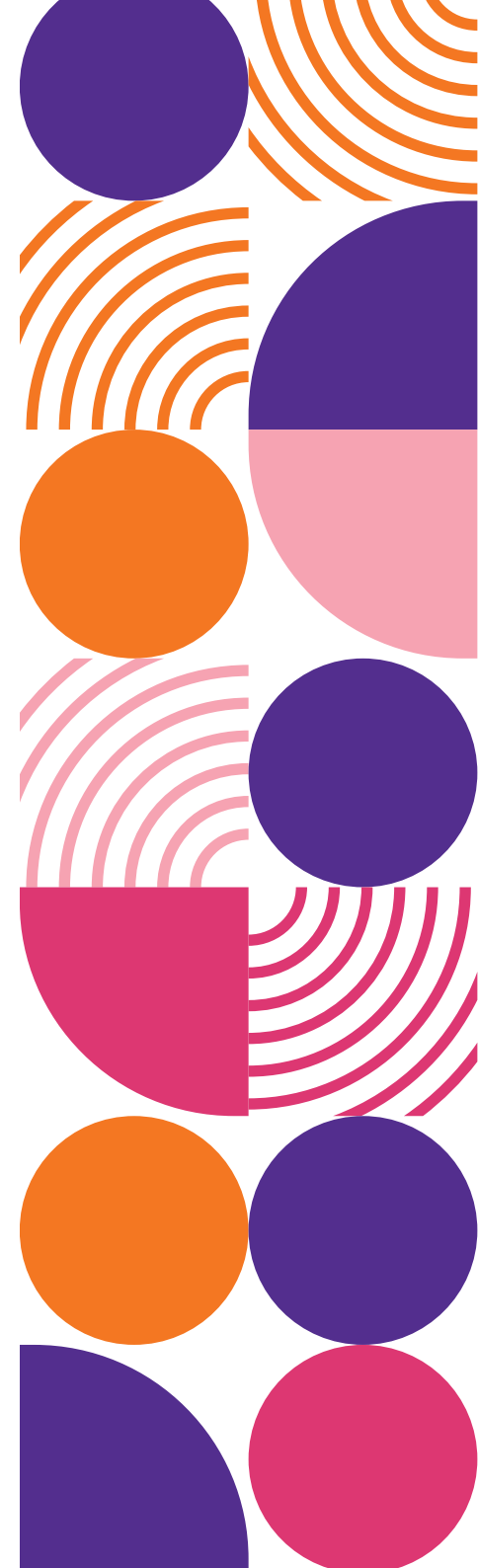
In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 'Indigenous' or 'Koori/Koorie' is retained when part of the title of a report, program or quotation.

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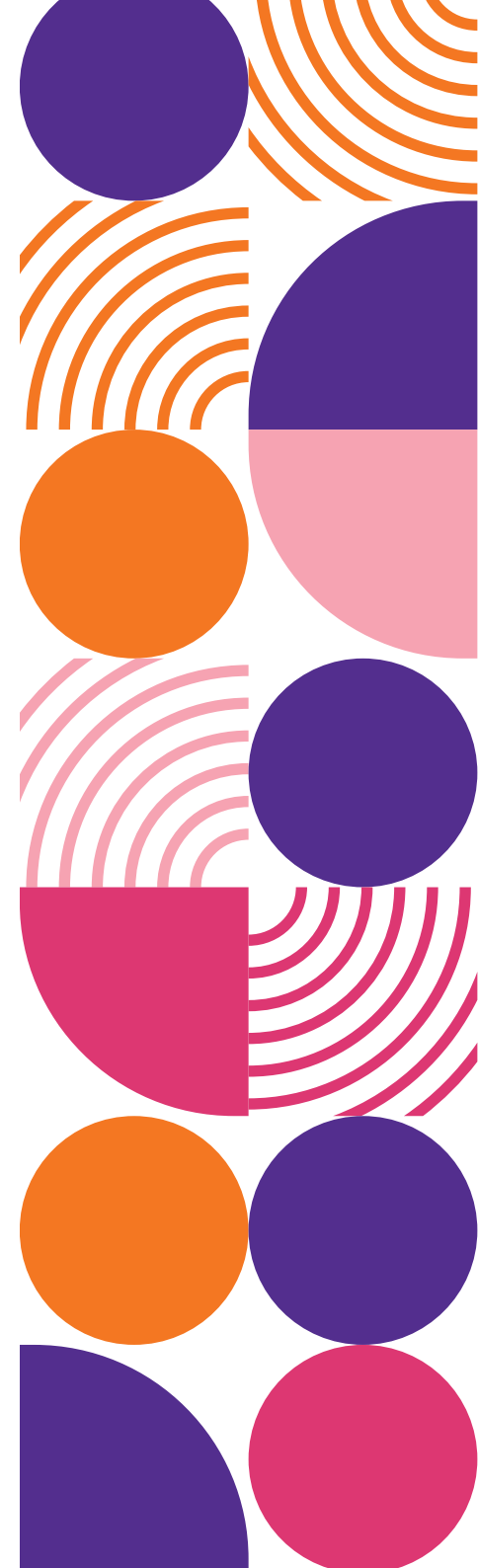
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# Introduction

Respecting and valuing older people: Victoria's Primary Prevention of Elder Abuse Framework is for professionals working to prevent elder abuse from happening in the first place.

The framework has 2 parts:

- handbook
- companion guide.

This handbook steps you through the core framework. It provides a structure for designing primary prevention of elder abuse actions informed by the available and emerging evidence base.

It can be used flexibly and can also support:

- strategic planning
- program development
- community engagement
- workforce capability building
- organisational reform.

The framework has guiding principles and 4 key themes for action. These themes address ageism and gender inequality. The available and emerging evidence suggests these are the underlying drivers of elder abuse, alongside other intersecting forms of discrimination.

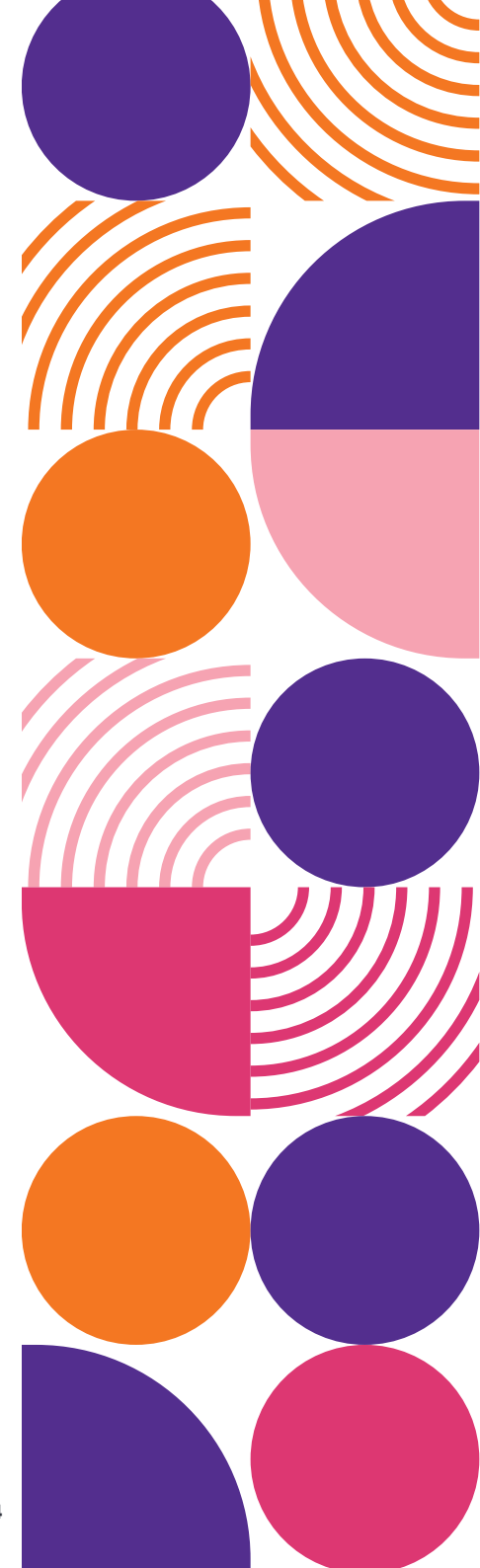
Examples of possible actions span a 3-level socio-ecological model to support change across all society. The 3 levels are:

- individuals, families and relationship actions
- communities and organisational actions
- societal actions.

The examples range from general to targeted. They give professionals a sense of what primary prevention of elder abuse action can look like.

Professionals are not limited to the example actions listed. They are encouraged to innovate and also address intersecting forms of discrimination. Some actions may also apply to more than one theme.

The framework also includes example settings and population groups to consider targeting when designing actions. This broad list encourages action across society to help create the cultural change needed to prevent elder abuse from happening in the first place.



# Framework for the primary prevention of elder abuse in Victoria

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

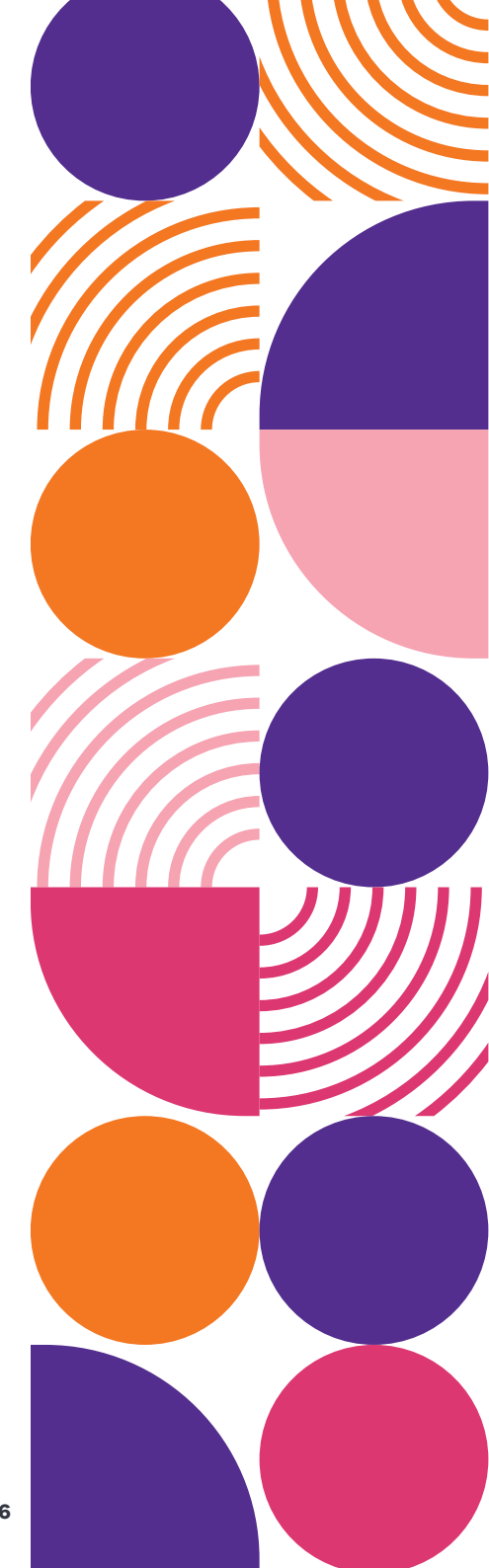
- Gender equality is promoted and sexism against older women and gender diverse people is addressed
- Rigid gender stereotypes are addressed
- Women's independence and decision making is promoted
- People challenge condoning of violence against older women
- People encourage healthy expressions of masculinity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

## Example actions for change

# Respect

Table 1: Example actions by theme across 3 levels

Individual, family and relationship action	Community and organisational actions	Societal actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help peers reflect on internalised ageist beliefs, language and behaviours</li> <li>• Support older people to have a voice in family contexts, with kind and sincere respect for opinions, views and decision-making capabilities</li> <li>• Use age-positive language and imagery in everyday communications</li> <li>• Read and tell stories that respect and value older people and diversity of age</li> <li>• Promote the value of older people's wisdom</li> <li>• Address attitudes of ageist entitlement towards older people by adult children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update organisational communications to remove ageist language and imagery</li> <li>• Educate community groups to address ageism and promote age positive messaging</li> <li>• Teach school-aged children about addressing ageism against both younger and older people</li> <li>• Showcase the strengths and contributions of older people in community settings and workplaces</li> <li>• Train workplaces on ageism to address ageist work practices</li> <li>• Review service systems to support older people's self-determination</li> <li>• Run adult education programs on interpersonal ageism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with media outlets to include positive ageing messaging in guidelines</li> <li>• Update ageist public messages about older people</li> <li>• Replace negative media imagery stereotyping older people with age-positive imagery</li> <li>• Share and promote older people's stories publicly to address ageist stereotypes and assumptions about interests and abilities</li> <li>• Normalise and promote positive messages about ageing with social media influencers</li> <li>• Run public behaviour change campaigns to address ageist stereotypes and promote respect for older people</li> </ul>

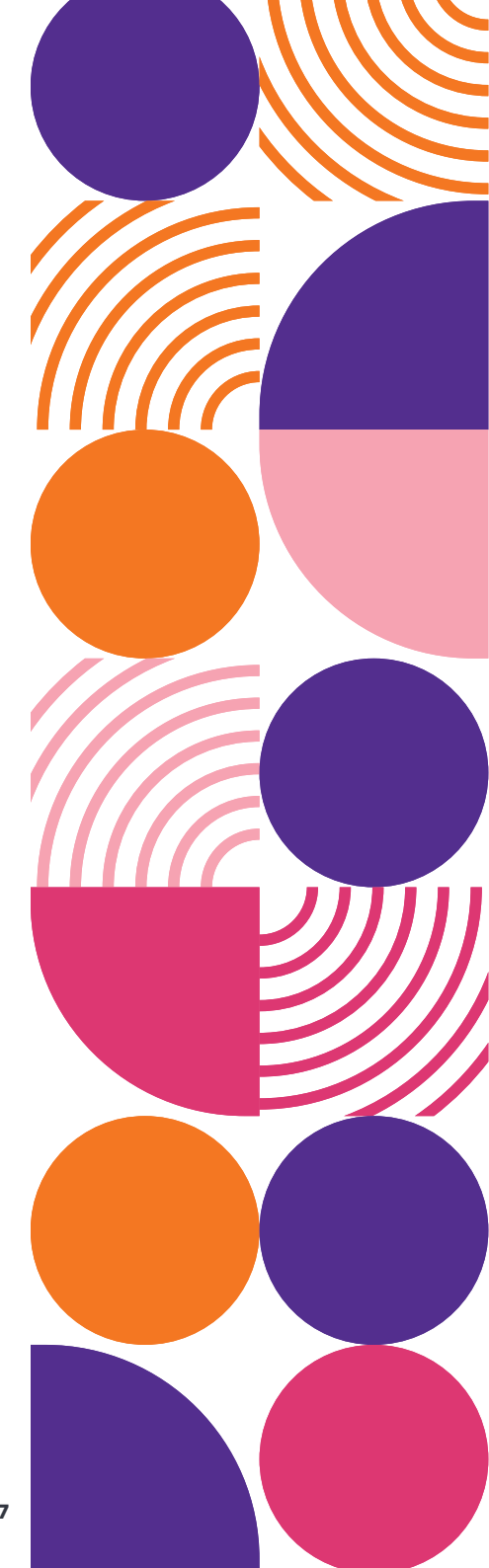


## Example actions for change

# Intergenerational connection

Table 1: Example actions by theme across 3 levels continued

Individual, family and relationship action	Community and organisational actions	Societal actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold positive family gatherings with people from different generations including older people</li> <li>• Develop positive relationships with older neighbours of a different generation</li> <li>• Share stories to encourage positive conversations between younger and older generations</li> <li>• Set up regular videocalls between children and grandparents that foster positive interactions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish skills exchange and companionship programs with older people and other generations</li> <li>• Put in place older people mentorship programs for younger generations in workplaces</li> <li>• Develop intergenerational sessions in recreation and sport clubs</li> <li>• Involve older people involved in early years intergenerational library story time, play or music groups</li> <li>• Give families tools, education and support to foster positive intergenerational relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showcase positive intergenerational relationships in news reporting, public advertising and media</li> <li>• Publish and publicise children's storybooks with positive and respectful relationships between younger and older people</li> <li>• Broadcast positive panel discussions and interviews in the media with younger and older people</li> <li>• Develop social policy promoting positive intergenerational connections and communities</li> </ul>

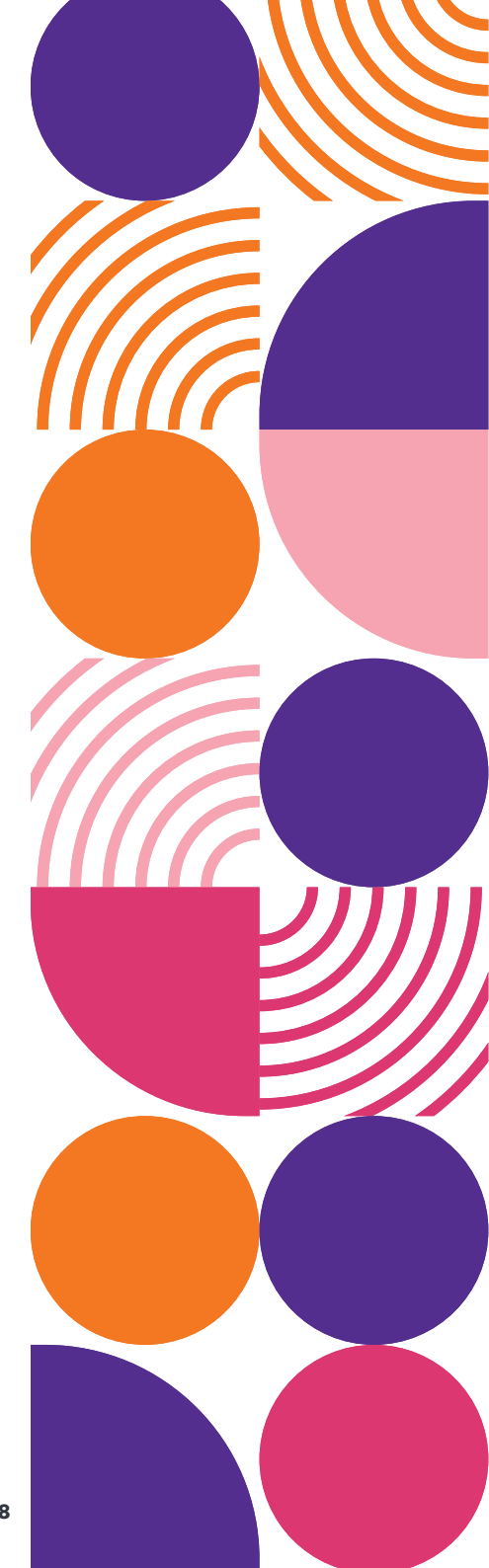


## Example actions for change

# Inclusion

Table 1: Example actions by theme across 3 levels continued

Individual, family and relationship action	Community and organisational actions	Societal actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster older people’s sense of belonging among family by embracing and celebrating older members, including diverse identities and cultures</li> <li>• Support inclusive family activities and discussions with older people, including on digital platforms</li> <li>• Reflect on own assumptions about older people’s preferences for participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit policies and processes for ageism and other forms of discrimination.</li> <li>• Appoint local decision-making groups using population parity ratios for older people</li> <li>• Work on fair inclusion of older people with:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Aboriginal community-controlled organisations</li> <li>– culturally and linguistically diverse organisations</li> <li>– disability services</li> <li>– LGBTIQ+ services</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Design built environments for fair access and participation across all generations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up advisory groups with older people, including people facing multiple forms of discrimination, to inform policy</li> <li>• Create laws and policies that are fair for and reflect the diversity of older people</li> <li>• Review imagery and language on social media to ensure positive and diverse representation of older people</li> <li>• Strengthen age discrimination protections policies</li> </ul>

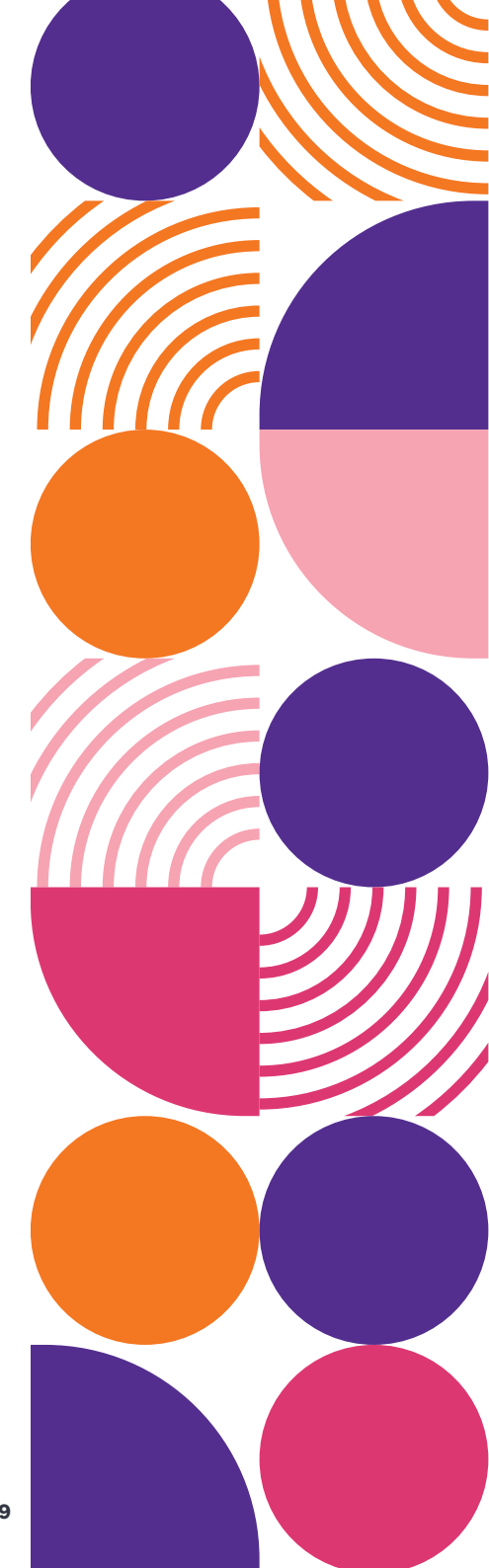


# Example actions for change

## Gender equality

Table 1: Example actions by theme across 3 levels continued

Individual, family and relationship action	Community and organisational actions	Societal actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have respectful conversations to address harmful gender stereotypes and sexist remarks across generations</li> <li>• Reflect on own beliefs of rigid gender stereotypes about older people</li> <li>• Show allyship and support for trans and gender diverse older people in social circles</li> <li>• Invite respectful conversations when peers minimise or excuse violence against older women and gender diverse people</li> <li>• Break down the belief that only young people affirm their gender and/or transition</li> <li>• Show support to older people exploring their gender identity if it is important to them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include older women in strategies, research and actions around preventing violence against women</li> <li>• Develop policies that support proportional representation of older women and trans and gender diverse people in leadership positions</li> <li>• Run community sessions that support older women’s independence and decision making</li> <li>• Promote the diversity of older women’s interests, achievements and careers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social policies and laws that promote gender equality for older women, trans and gender diverse people</li> <li>• Publish positive depictions of older women, trans and gender diverse people that embrace ageing</li> <li>• Social media influencers teach healthy expressions of masculinity to boys and men of all ages</li> <li>• Develop journalist guides for reporting on the seriousness of violence against older women, trans and gender diverse people</li> </ul>



# Settings and population groups

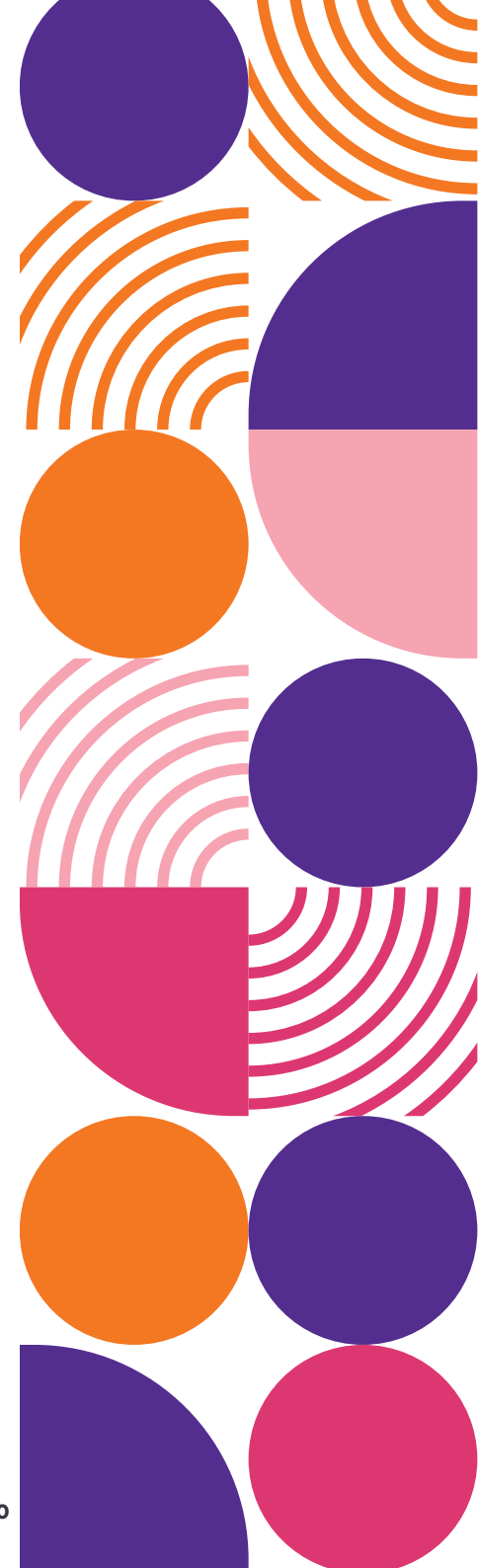
Table 2 and Table 3 list possible settings and population groups for professionals to consider when designing or expanding the reach of elder abuse primary prevention actions. They can also be used to identify useful partnerships.

The breadth of settings reflects a whole-of-community approach – reinforcing that primary prevention messages and activities are most effective when they reach people across multiple settings. This helps to create meaningful, collective change at a population level to shift culture.

When designing primary prevention of elder abuse actions, it is important to remember that people’s experiences differ based on their many different identities, circumstances and experiences of privilege or marginalisation. These identities can expose people to more forms of inequality. These include, but are not limited to:

- racism
- colonialism
- ableism
- cisnormativity
- heteronormativity.

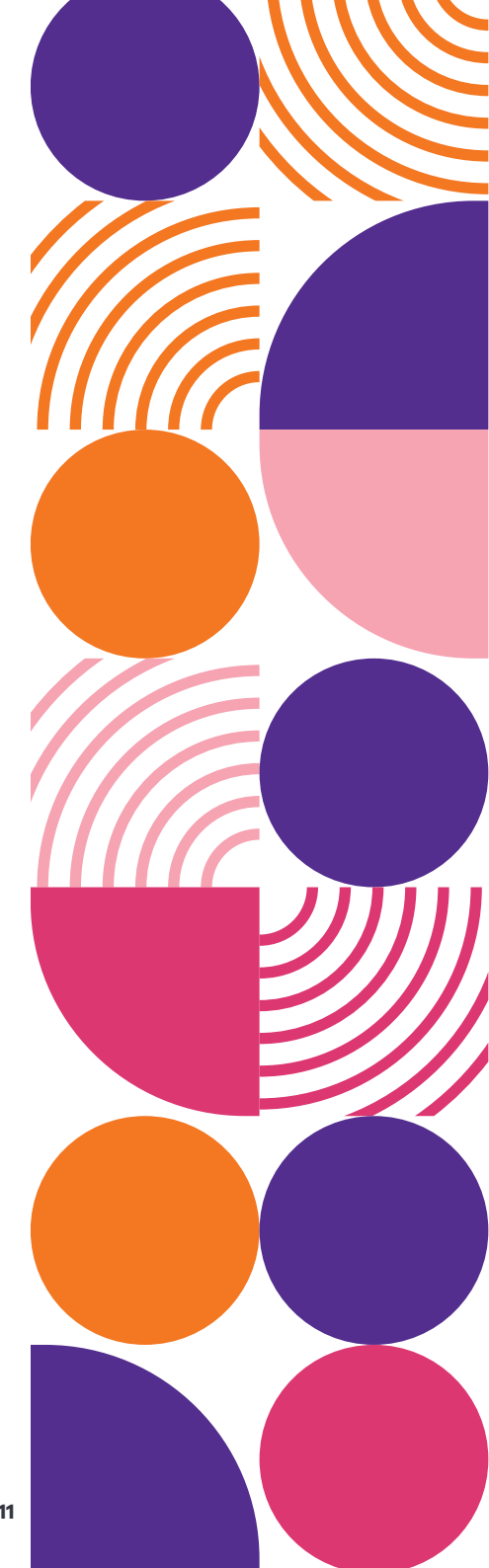
Understanding how identities and inequalities intersect is sometimes called **intersectionality**. Professionals should take an intersectional approach by recognising and addressing overlapping forms of discrimination that worsen experiences for marginalised communities. This requires acting meaningfully, in solidarity with communities leading this work.



# Settings

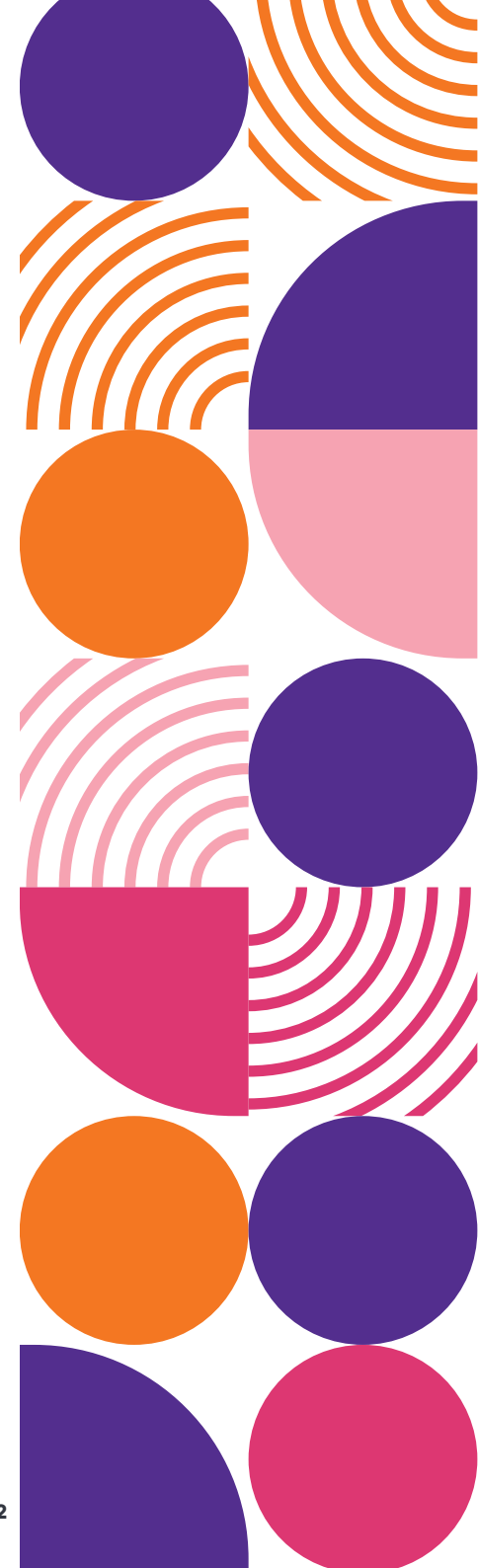
**Table 2: Possible target settings when designing primary prevention actions**

Setting	Example
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public transport</li> <li>• Public spaces (such as community squares, parks, promenades)</li> <li>• Libraries, including story time and community classes</li> <li>• Community centres</li> <li>• Shopping centres</li> <li>• Gathering places, including cafes</li> <li>• Yarning groups</li> <li>• Community events (such as cultural or religious festivals, Seniors Festival, Pride events)</li> </ul>
Culture and faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural groups, networks and associations</li> <li>• Faith-based networks and associations</li> <li>• Places of worship (such as temples, mosques, synagogues, churches)</li> </ul>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Childcare and kindergartens (early years)</li> <li>• Primary and secondary schools</li> <li>• Tertiary institutions including universities and TAFEs</li> <li>• Research institutions</li> <li>• English language learning organisations</li> </ul>
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community health</li> <li>• General practitioners</li> <li>• Pharmacies</li> <li>• Allied health</li> <li>• Hospitals</li> <li>• Maternal and child health</li> <li>• Health professional training colleges</li> </ul>



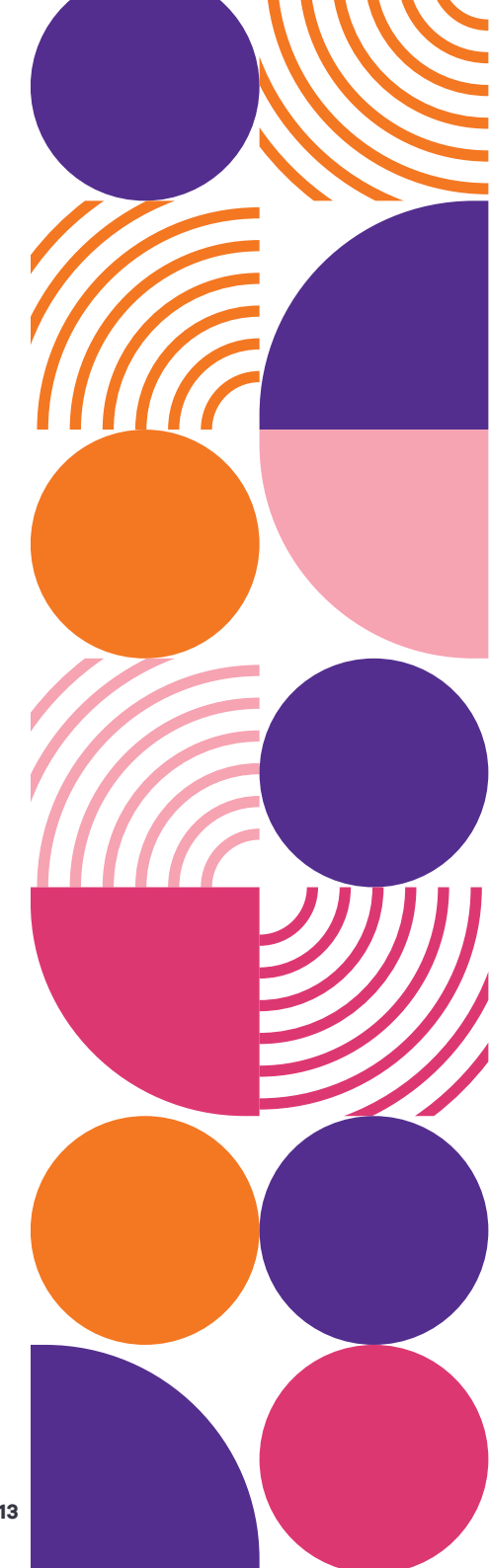
**Table 2: Possible target settings when designing primary prevention actions continued**

Setting	Example
Media and communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community broadcasting radio and television stations</li> <li>• Traditional media (such as news items, radio), including community, ethnic and independent media</li> <li>• Online and social media, including websites (such as Seniors Online), apps, eLearning, webinars</li> <li>• Advertising and campaigns, including online and in public places (such as billboards, public toilets, street posters, bus shelters, shopping centres and storefronts)</li> </ul>
Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retirement villages</li> <li>• Boarding schools</li> </ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-government organisations (NGOs) and charities</li> <li>• Aboriginal community controlled organisations (ACCOs), including health organisations</li> <li>• Faith-based organisations</li> <li>• Cultural, multicultural and settlement organisations and services</li> <li>• LGBTIQA+ organisations and services</li> <li>• Family violence organisations and services</li> <li>• Women’s organisations and services</li> <li>• Welfare and social services</li> <li>• Disability organisations and services</li> <li>• Aged care services</li> <li>• Emergency services</li> <li>• Financial services, including banks</li> <li>• Unions</li> <li>• Transport infrastructure and facilities</li> <li>• Legal, justice and corrections services</li> </ul>



**Table 2: Possible target settings when designing primary prevention actions continued**

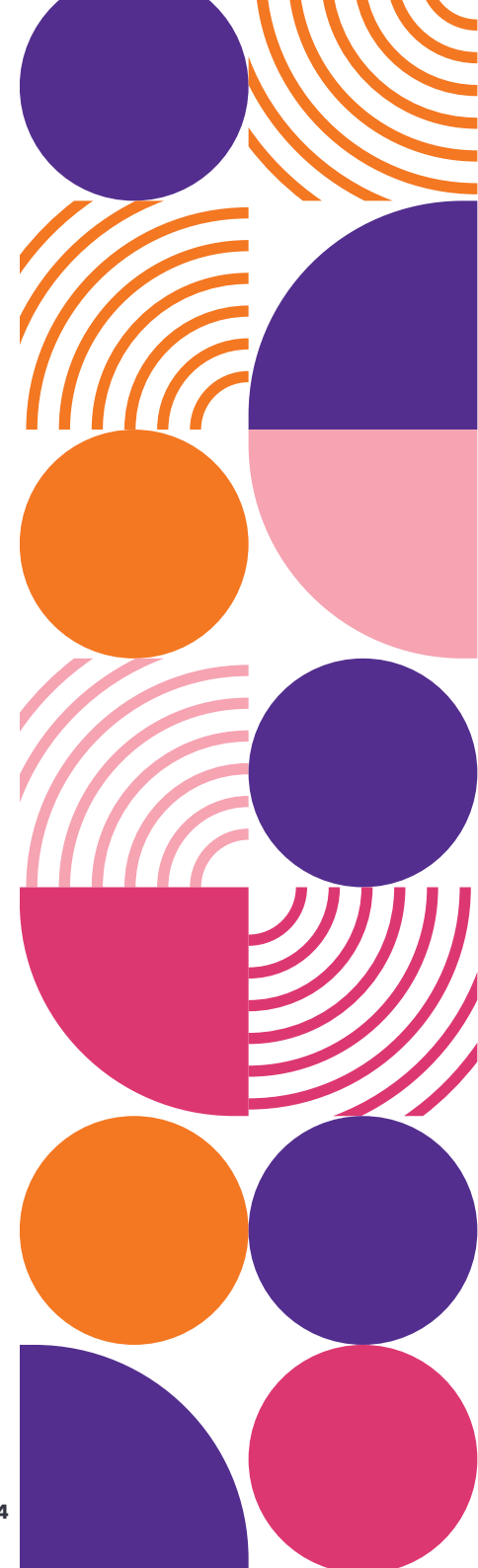
Setting	Example
Sports, recreation and community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport and leisure clubs</li> <li>• Sporting events (including community based)</li> <li>• Community and veterans service clubs (such as Lions, Rotary, Returned and Services League (RSL))</li> <li>• Senior citizen clubs</li> <li>• Volunteer organisations</li> <li>• Neighbourhood houses</li> <li>• Men’s sheds and women’s groups</li> <li>• Gathering places</li> <li>• Youth groups and movements (such as Scouts and Guides)</li> <li>• Champions of change groups in organisations</li> <li>• Other community groups</li> </ul>
The arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art galleries and exhibitions</li> <li>• Theatre, live performances, television and film</li> </ul>
Workplaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government and councils</li> <li>• Research institutes</li> <li>• Sector institutions and industry associations, including entertainment, trades, fashion, beauty and hairdressing</li> <li>• Private sector businesses, including banking and superannuation</li> </ul>



# Population groups

**Table 3: Possible target groups when designing primary prevention actions**

Category	Example
First Peoples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Peoples communities, including Elders</li> </ul>
Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents</li> <li>• Grandparents</li> <li>• Unpaid carers including adult children</li> </ul>
Diverse communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBTIQ+ communities</li> <li>• People with disabilities</li> <li>• Multicultural, including migrants, refugee and faith-based communities</li> </ul>
Education and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students (kindergarten, school and tertiary)</li> <li>• Teachers (primary, secondary and tertiary)</li> <li>• Educators (including early years)</li> <li>• Mentors and coaches</li> <li>• Conference attendees</li> <li>• Professors</li> <li>• Researchers</li> </ul>
Gender identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men</li> <li>• Women</li> <li>• Trans and gender diverse people</li> <li>• People born with variations of sex characteristics or intersex</li> </ul>
Life stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children (including early years)</li> <li>• Young people</li> <li>• Young adults</li> <li>• Adults</li> <li>• Older people</li> </ul>



**Table 3: Possible target groups when designing primary prevention actions continued**

Category	Example
Media and communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content creators and social media influencers</li> <li>• Journalists and media presenters</li> <li>• Communications, visual design, marketing and advertising professionals</li> </ul>
The arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artists and creatives</li> <li>• Comedians</li> <li>• Authors and illustrators</li> <li>• Film and television writers and directors</li> </ul>
Roles, professions and positions	<p><b>Example roles:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers and employees</li> <li>• Leaders (such as in education, organisations, unions, sports, business, government and politics, communities, cultural groups, faith leaders)</li> <li>• Commissioners</li> <li>• Advisory groups</li> <li>• Public figures and celebrities</li> <li>• Advocates</li> <li>• Volunteers, including community care</li> <li>• Carers</li> <li>• Frontline workers</li> <li>• Customer service workers</li> </ul> <p><b>Example professions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and care professionals, including aged care workers</li> <li>• Emergency services professionals, including police, fires and flood</li> <li>• Disability workers</li> <li>• Government employees and public servants</li> <li>• Legislators</li> <li>• Family violence and prevention practitioners</li> <li>• Human resources (or people and culture) professionals and recruiters</li> <li>• Trades people</li> <li>• Public spaces and facility planners</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Researchers</li> </ul> <p><b>Example positions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board directors</li> <li>• Governance officers</li> <li>• Community connectors</li> <li>• Policy, program and grant advisers</li> <li>• Equity, diversity and inclusion officers</li> <li>• Health promotion officers</li> <li>• Ageing well and positive ageing officers</li> <li>• Union members</li> </ul>

