

COMMUNITY
RESPECT
EQUALITY &



#ViolenceIsNEVEROk
WORKPLACE

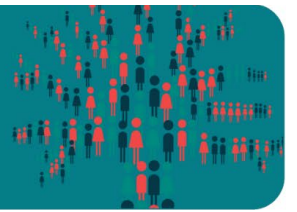


COMMUNITY, RESPECT & EQUALITY AGREEMENT
For Organisations and Businesses



Everyone deserves to feel safe and be respected in the workplace.

#Safeinyourworkplace



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#dontsilencetheviolence #AFLS #makingourcommunitiessafer





Background

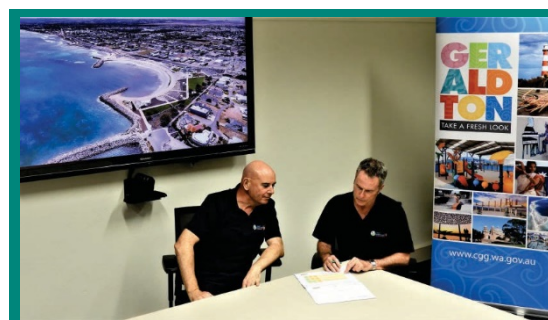
The Community, Respect & Equality (CRE) Agreement is a key primary prevention initiative in the CRE Strategic Action Plan for Family Violence Prevention in Geraldton, identified by the community during the engagement and planning phase for the Plan. The Plan is a local project which aims to inspire, innovate and connect individuals, community leaders, organisations, businesses and government to work together on creative and sustainable strategies for the prevention of family violence in our community.

The Plan can be downloaded at: <https://www.communityrespectandequality.com.au/action-plan>

The CRE Agreement is for organisations and businesses to acknowledge and recognise family violence as being a key social and health issue. The term 'organisations' will be used throughout this document and will cover both organisations and businesses.

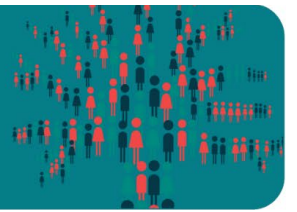
In July 2018, Desert Blue Connect received funding from the Western Australian Police Community Crime Prevention Fund to enable the CRE Agreement project to commence. Through community consultation with key stakeholders and a dedicated CRE Agreement sub-committee, the CRE Agreement was developed to include five agreed values and five codes of behaviour. They were developed considering local context and understanding of family violence, the specific gendered drivers of violence against women and the actions that prevent violence against women as per the Our Watch - Change the Story framework. They were also based around the Community, Respect and Equality key messages of #RespectRules and #ViolenceisNEVERok.

The CRE Agreement values and codes of behaviour were ratified by the CRE Reference group in October 2018. They are now available to organisations for endorsement. This document sets out further information about what the CRE Agreement is, why it has been developed and how organisations can become involved. Additionally, it provides some basic family violence information to inform and educate managers and employees in the workplace.



#nosenseinviolence





CRE Reference Group

The CRE Reference Group consists of key agencies and representative bodies who continue to provide high level community leadership in the CRE project. The current CRE group members are:

City of Greater Geraldton
Department of Communities
Department of Education
Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
Aboriginal Family Law Service
MEEDAC (Midwest Employment and Economic Development Aboriginal Corporation)
headspace Geraldton
360 Health and Community
WA Country Health
Women Inspiring Better Business
Ngala Mid West-Gascoyne
WA Police
Desert Blue Connect Inc.
Western Australian Centre for Rural Health
Mid West Ports Authority

We thank Geraldton Aboriginal Streetwork Association, Aboriginal Family Law Service and Geraldton Aboriginal Sporting Corporation for their cultural input regarding content for the CRE Agreement and individuals who attended sub-committee meetings to develop the values and codes of behaviour.



#safespacesfeedthemind #spreadthewordstothecycle

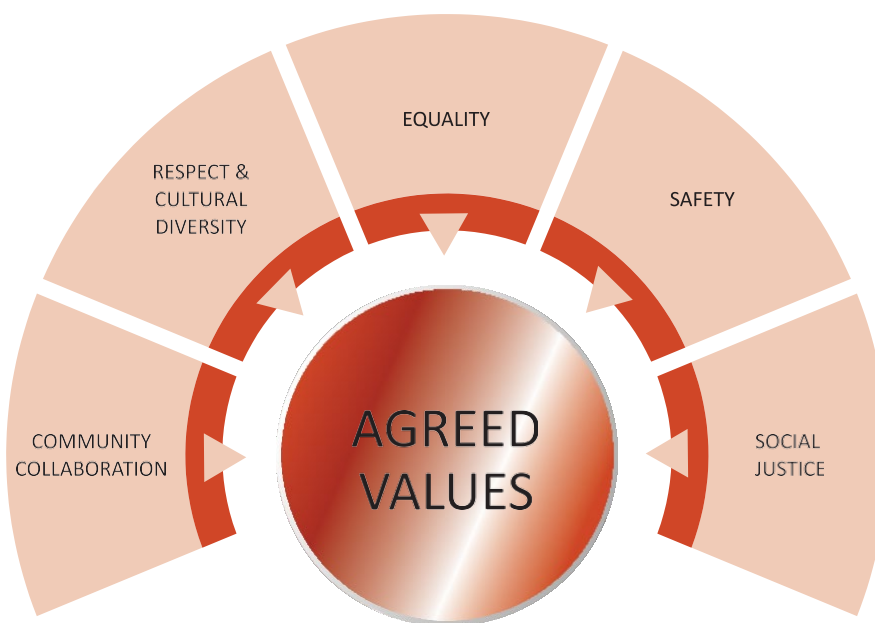




What is the CRE Agreement?

The CRE Agreement aims to highlight the need for a community approach to prevention, to gather support for action that stops family violence and inspire people to act at an organisational level to eliminate the attitudes that support family violence.

The CRE Reference Group and Desert Blue Connect are encouraging Geraldton organisations to adopt the CRE Agreement as a commitment to the prevention of family violence. By adopting the CRE Agreement, organisations pledge to take action to prevent family violence before it occurs and commit to the following codes of behaviour for their workplace.



AGREED VALUES	CODES OF BEHAVIOUR
Community Collaboration	We will stand up, speak out and work together with others for a violence free community
Respect and cultural diversity	We will acknowledge and value traditions and cultural differences, and demonstrate respectful relationships with family, friends, work colleagues and other community members
Equality	We will support gender equality by promoting women's independence and decision making in the workplace
Safety	We will promote non-violent attitudes, language, and behaviour to create a safer community
Social Justice	We will work together to address unequal norms, practices and structures that lead to increased family violence





Why do we need the CRE Agreement?

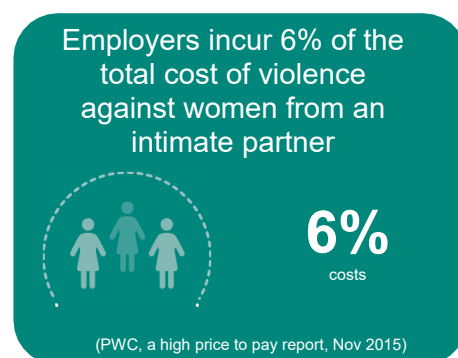
WA Police Mid West-Gascoyne District Superintendent Mike Bell states, "Family violence is one of the highest priorities for WA Police, but we need your assistance to surface incidents of family violence - if you see or experience family violence, report it." September 2018

For the purpose of the CRE Agreement, family violence will be understood to be 'behaviour which results in physical, sexual and/or psychological damage, forced social isolation, economic deprivation, or behaviour which causes the victim to live in fear' (Department for Child Protection & Family Support [DCPFS], 2013).

In the 2021/22 financial year the Mid West - Gascoyne Police Family and Domestic Violence Response Team received an average of 141 family violence incidents a month, totaling 1702 incidents for the year (WA Police Force Crime Data). According to the ABS Personal Safety Survey conducted in 2012, only 33% of women who experience physical violence from a current partner contacted Police (Cox, 2016). This reveals that there are a high number of family violence incidents experienced by women that go unreported to Police.

It is evident that there is a need to start working towards the prevention of family violence to make substantial change, and the CRE Agreement has been developed based on core prevention concepts and drivers of violence against women. However, it will additionally increase knowledge of family violence and organisations will be better equipped to support employees and their families in the workplace who have or are experiencing family violence.

Relevance to organisations





The importance of organisations in the prevention of family violence

Organisations have an important role to play in addressing the practices, attitudes, norms and behaviours that underpin and create violence against women and their children.

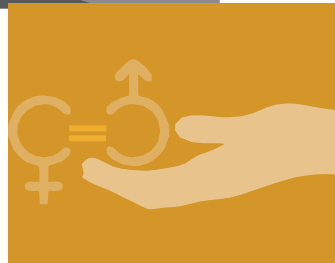


Supporting employees who are or who have been victims of violence that occurs out of the organisation, in their private lives (most commonly family violence and sexual assault)

Taking action to prevent and respond to sexual harassment in the workplace



Addressing the underlying causes of violence against women by promoting gender equality in the workplace



Creating a culture where employees feel confident to take bystander action if they see or hear about sexism, harassment, discrimination, or violence in the workplace



(Our Watch, 2018)





What can your organisation do to promote safe, equal and respectful workplaces?

Our Watch (2018) provide the following suggestions that can be implemented in the workplace.

Support employees who are or have been victims of family violence that occurs outside of work:

Develop an organisational 'responding to family violence' policy in consultation with a family violence service.

Train staff who have management responsibilities on how to respond to disclosures of family violence and support an employee who may be experiencing family violence to help them stay at work

Take action to prevent and respond to sexual harassment in the workplace:

Ensure that all staff understand what sexual harassment looks like and what harassing behaviours are most common.

Actively promote and implement policies around equality opportunity, diversity, sexual harassment and sex discrimination at work.

If you see or hear something that makes you think a workmate might be experiencing sexual harassment, tell them you've noticed and ask what you can do to help.

Address the underlying causes of violence against women by promoting gender equality in the workplace:

Conduct a gender audit to bring to light the ways in which your organisation policies and practices might be inadvertently having a negative impact on women, men and gender equality.

Look at your attitudes towards and expectations of women and men at work. Do you treat men and women differently in the workplace? Do you expect men and women to do different kinds of tasks, like assuming that female staff will organise all the social functions?

Promote flexible work practices at all levels of your organisation, because supporting women and men who have family or other caring responsibilities will have a positive impact on creating an equal and more productive workplace.

Create a culture where employees feel confident to take bystander action:

Take reports of discrimination, harassment or violence seriously and actively encourage your staff to bring these issues to your attention.

If someone makes a sexist comment or joke at work, say something. You're probably not the only one who thinks it's wrong. Let the person know that what they say is unacceptable and get the support of your colleagues.

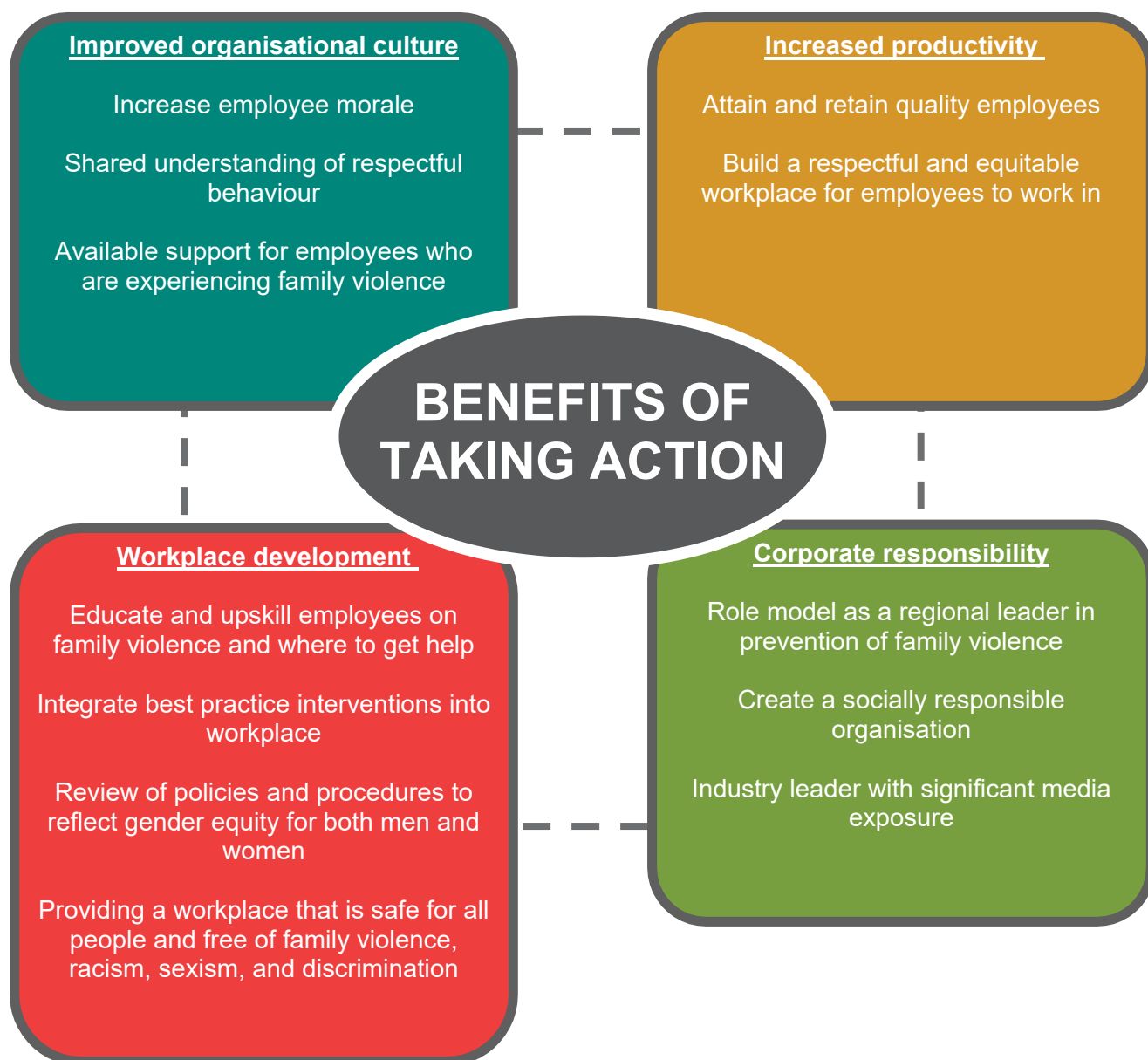




What are the benefits of taking action for your organisation?

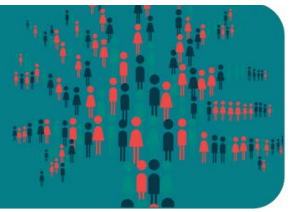
Family violence is preventable, and organisations can play a critical role in making change and providing a safe and healthy workplace. We can build a regional community that shares a culture of a violence free environment in both the workplace and community.

Benefits and actions include:



(VicHealth, 2012)





How can your organisation endorse the CRE agreement and embed within the workplace?

Organisations are encouraged to endorse the CRE Agreed Values and Codes of Behaviour and be committed to the long term goal of prevention of family violence in our community. Signing up to the CRE Agreed Values and Codes of Behaviour is a commitment to completing Level 1 (introduction and awareness of family violence) within a six month period. Once the endorsement certificate has been signed, the CRE Agreement workplace logo will be distributed for use by the organisation. The CRE workplace logo recognises that the organisation is working towards actions to prevent family violence.

LEVELS

The CRE Agreement for workplaces will be developed across three levels and progress of the project will be according to capacity and funding into the future.

The three levels include:

Level 1 Introduction and awareness of family violence

Level 2 Education and preparing for policy

Level 3 Implementation and leadership

Each stage will have a defined number of actions to be completed and signed by the CRE Project Officer or another CRE Agreement organisation that has already achieved accreditation of the level. Once these actions have been signed and endorsed, the workplace will receive a completed Level 1 Accreditation Workplace Certificate. This certificate recognises that the organisation has completed Level 1 and implemented actions to prevent family violence in the workplace.

It is acknowledged that for some organisations adopting and implementing change as proposed in the CRE Agreement may be a huge undertaking. We have therefore allowed a substantial period of time to concentrate on community readiness. We will increase knowledge and awareness of family violence as a whole of community gendered issue prior to rolling out Level 2 and 3.

It is expected that Level 1 will remain available for organisations during 2022 and 2023. However, organisations are welcome to advance with further embedment of family violence prevention policies and interventions independently. Desert Blue Connect will develop Level 2 and 3, subject to acquiring further funding however organisations who have the knowledge and capacity are encouraged to work collaboratively with the CRE Reference Group to develop Level 2 and 3.

To sign and endorse the CRE Agreed Values and Codes of Behaviour, organisations can:

Download the next page and sign and email info@desertblueconnect.org.au or visit the Community Respect and Equality website at www.communityrespect&equality.com.au

Organisations can receive support from Desert Blue Connect Project staff by phoning 9964 2742 and supporting resources, information and templates are available on the Community, Respect and Equality Website at <https://www.communityrespectandequality.com.au/>





ENDORSEMENT CERTIFICATE

..... (name of organisation or business)
pledge to prevent family violence before it occurs and commit to the following actions:

- 1. We will stand up, speak out and work together with others for a violence free community.**
- 2. We will acknowledge and value traditions and cultural differences, and demonstrate respectful relationships with family, friends, work colleagues and other community members.**
- 3. We will support gender equality by promoting women's independence and decision making in the workplace.**
- 4. We will promote non-violent attitudes, language and behaviour to create a safer community.**
- 5. We will work together to address unequal norms, practices and structures that lead to increased family violence.**

.....
Please print name and sign

To be completed by Director/CEO/Board of Management of the business or organisation

Print, complete and email to info@desertblueconnect.org.au

Email address for organisation: _____



Level 1. Actions for accreditation

Introduction and awareness of family violence in the workplace

PROMOTIONAL

- The CRE Agreement workplace posters and family violence brochures will be displayed in reception, staff areas, rest rooms and general workplace and public areas.
- The CRE Agreement workplace logo and hashtags will be displayed on the organisation or business website and in social media.
- The CRE Agreement workplace logo and hashtags stickers are used on stationary, letterhead, promotional material and email signature.
- The CRE Agreement workplace logo is displayed on indoor and outdoor signs.

INTERNAL AWARENESS

- The CRE Agreement Agreed Values and Codes of Behaviour for the Workplace are included in employee induction packages.
- Family violence information and resources are available to employees via Intranet or other methods.
- Family violence information and resources and CRE prevention concepts are embedded into employee and toolbox meetings and training and professional development is offered.
- The organisation has a designated representative for family violence to provide support and leadership and review occupational health and safety.

ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITY

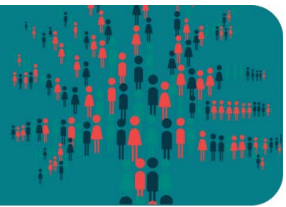
- Participate in safe work month with a focus on family violence prevention.
- Organisational commitment function (i.e. White Ribbon event or similar) that raises awareness of prevention of family violence.
- Participation of managers and employees in community family violence events

ADDITIONAL ACTION BY THE ORGANISATION

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- **Organisations must complete a minimum of seven actions in Level 1 to qualify for the Level 1 Accreditation Workplace Certificate. However, organisations can complete all actions if they have the capacity.**
- **To seek accreditation organisations can contact Desert Blue Connect project officer or another CRE Agreement organisation that has already achieved accreditation of the level (see CRE website for further details).**
- **For any assistance, please contact Desert Blue Connect on 9964 2742 or email info@desertblueconnect.org.au**





References

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#NgalaSaysNoToViolence #StrongerFamiliesWithoutViolence



"Sadly, the need for primary prevention is evident in much of our work, where we see the harm to people exposed to family violence, particularly when it is severe and protracted. WACRH staff share a common vision of a world where every child, woman and man can fulfil their potential - and this depends upon them feeling safe, valued and having opportunities. This has to start in our homes and local community." Dr Sandra Thompson, Director, WA Centre for Rural Health.



For further information

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