

MEDIA RELEASE

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National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032 Released

Project Respect welcomes the release of the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032, and acknowledges the Federal Government's bold commitment to end gendered violence within a generation.

The National Plan is a significant improvement on the previous draft, and now recognises the specific experience of women in the sex industry. The Plan also now acknowledges the trafficking of women and girls as a form of gender based violence, and that trafficking in persons may involve sexual violence.

We support the Plan's acknowledgement that:

"Sex workers, like any other workers, deserve respect and a safe work environment, including online settings. Sex workers can be exposed to gender-based violence, as well as violence in their work settings perpetrated by clients, client procurers and managers or owners of establishments and online platforms."

We also assert that there are further considerations, such as the nuanced experiences of family violence, that need to be acknowledged as part of the experience of gender-based violence against women with experience in the sex industry.

The National Plan emphasises the building of the family violence workforces and the need to strengthen data collection systems, as well as increasing accountability for people who choose to use violence, and person-centred and holistic responses to support victim-survivors through their recovery and healing.

"It is heartening to see the release of an ambitious plan to end all forms of violence against women and children", said Project Respect Executive Director Carolyn Gowers. "By recognising the nuanced experiences of specific diverse communities who have been left out of previous National Plans, a more targeted and responsive action plan can be developed".

We look forward to the deeper exploration of these specific needs being reflected through the development of the first five-year Action Plan.

"As part of the implementation of the National Plan, it will be important to address the lack of funding for targeted specialised services, who have a specific understanding of diverse communities and an ability to support the capacity building of the wider prevention and response sectors", said Ms Gowers. "It will be important to see the needs of women with experience in the sex industry, and those who have experienced trafficking for sexual exploitation, understood and reflected in the detailed Action Plans – and funding provided to back up the good intent with concrete support. This funding support needs to include the recognition of the long-term nature of trauma recovery for those who have experienced violence".

We welcome the call to action in ending violence against women and children with a whole-of-society approach to end gender-based violence in one generation, and we commit to working across the sectors to ensure this includes violence against women with diverse experiences in the sex industry.

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