

# Be The Hero! PROGRAM

[www.bethehero.com.au](http://www.bethehero.com.au)



*Be the Hero!* is a web-based violence prevention program.

We think that most men lead good, decent, honourable lives. This program encourages young men to build respectful relationships with women. It demonstrates that anyone can *be the hero* by simply respecting women and choosing to live a life free of violence.

The website content has been designed for use in small groups of young men (about 15 years old), led by a male teacher or group leader, over at least four sessions.

## Development of the program

Developed by the Victorian Women's Trust, the website materials have been shaped by research, consultation with experts who work in the area, as well as a group of young men at Northcote High School (NHS).

NHS students had direct input into the program content, as well as the look and feel of the website. In particular, the students helped test the basis of an interactive part of the website, 'Situations to Consider', which encourages participants to think about how they can safely respond to situations involving violence.

Along with this interactive element of the program, the website also includes:

- Definitions of violence, recent statistical data, and myths commonly associated with violence against women,
- Relationship stories, and what to do if you know someone who needs help,
- Video links, a gender quiz, links to other youth programs, resources and activities,
- Information on how to seek help and access services.

The Victorian Women's Trust is proud to have the support of the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth), which provided funding to develop the web-based materials and to trial the program in nine school groups across Victoria. The feedback from these trials has informed changes to the website which is now ready for wider use. Thanks to additional private donor support, the Trust has been able to fund the YWCA Victoria to help roll out the program.

## Be the Hero! Program Goals and Learning Objectives

There are two important goals and learning objectives that underpin the program:

- The first goal is to promote real and effective **engagement**. We want the website to:
  - Encourage discussion
  - Interest group participants
  - Assist group leaders to confidently facilitate discussion
- The second goal is to provide materials that are genuinely **informative**. These should:
  - Provide a greater understanding about violence against women
  - Help participants navigate a range of ways they can safely intervene and actively reject all forms of violence

## Be the Hero! Be Involved!

Thanks for your interest in the *Be the Hero!* program.

We've been encouraged by comments from Prime Minister Kevin Rudd about the need for more men to speak out against violence against women. At a White Ribbon Foundation dinner, he said:

*Violence against women needs to move from the great silence to be part of a continuing national conversation. Why? Because we need to change the way many men think. We need to change the way some boys think. And that cannot be done in silence.*

The Prime Minister also nominated schools-based violence prevention programs that engage “the whole school community and helps all students and teachers to take responsibility for their part in preventing violence against women” as being critical to changing attitudes and ultimately behaviours.

Violence against women is a widespread problem in society. As VicHealth found in 2004, intimate partner violence is the leading preventable cause of death, disability and illness in Victorian women aged 15-44, responsible for more of the disease burden than many well-known factors such as high blood pressure, smoking and obesity.

A growing number of men have had enough of violence against women perpetrated by a minority of men, and are prepared to do something about it.

We believe young Australians have a good understanding of what it means to be a good, decent bloke and what it will take to help end the violence.

Let's all think and talk about this and see what solutions we can find.

**We can all be part of the solution!**

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