



RESPECTFUL
RELATIONSHIPS
AND VIOLENCE

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE SAID

MAY 2017

A TASMANIAN YOUTH FORUM REPORT
SHARING THE THOUGHTS AND IDEAS OF YOUNG TASMANIANS

About TYF

The Tasmanian Youth Forum (TYF) is Tasmania's peak youth consultative body. TYF is an initiative of the Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT), the peak organisation for the broader youth sector in Tasmania. TYF receives funding from the Tasmanian Government.

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Executive Summary

The Respectful Relationships and Family Violence consultation by TYF provided young Tasmanians aged 12 to 25 with the opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas on the topic. A State wide survey and focus groups were conducted as part of this process. The structure of this TYF consultation was changed from a State wide Forum to focus groups for this topic as it is considered to be best practice to mitigate potential risks discussing the topic. When talking about family violence with young people, it is also considered to be best practice to discuss how gender inequality influences the gendered patterns of family violence. Exploring gender stereotypes and relationships was therefore the foundation for focus group discussions. This Report communicates what young people said in the survey and focus groups, and provides some key findings based on information gathered from both of these.

Young people are aware of family violence as an issue in the community. Young people who participated in the consultation could identify some forms of violence easier than others and had an understanding about some of the potential effects of being a victim of family violence. In the survey, young people talked about respectful relationships involving considering the needs of another person, respecting their thoughts, ideas and beliefs, and caring about one another. However, in discussions in focus groups young people discussed stereotypical gender roles and often took some time to challenge these or start to develop ideas for how the gender expectations could be addressed. Young people were not aware of how gender inequality can lead to gender-based violence, but could identify that gender inequality is an issue and some of the factors that influence this. Young people want to prevent violence from happening in the community but were less likely articulate anti-violence messages unless promoted. Over half of young people said they did not know where to go to access support for family violence if they were to need it.

Due to the extra time required to explore gender stereotypes and inequality in groups, and the limited time in focus groups, young people did not get the opportunity to fully explore and discuss ideas. Of the ideas that were discussed, young people wanted gender inequality to be taught from an early age and encourage more men and women to try different activities and jobs.

There are limitations due to the way the consultation had to be structured to adhere to best practice approaches for this topic, although the information suggests further qualitative, face-to-face research and support for young people is needed.

Introduction

The TYF consultation on Respectful Relationships and Violence provided young people with the opportunity to share their thoughts on these topics. The consultation process included a State wide survey and focus groups, which focused on how inequality between men and women is linked to family violence. This is considered to be a best practice approach for discussing family violence with young people. This Report outlines the thoughts and ideas shared by young people who participated in focus groups and completed the survey. An analysis of both these consultations is presented along with key findings, which are formed as a result of the consultation process as a whole.

Background to the Topic

Violence is experienced by people of all ages, cultures, backgrounds, genders and groups; however, research shows women are at greater risk of experiencing violence, particularly violence in intimate relationships. For example, women are three times more likely than men to experience violence from their partner (Our Watch, 2017). Violence towards any person is a serious issue, regardless of who the victim and perpetrator are; however there are distinct gendered patterns in the perpetration and impact of violence. While there are a number of issues that contribute to domestic and family violence, gender inequality remains a key contributing factor and is the reason why women are more likely to experience domestic violence and why perpetrators of violence are more likely to be men (Our Watch, 2017). This inequality stems from the expectations and stereotypes of men and women in society.

Young people are particularly influenced by gender stereotypes and this contributes to their relationships and attitudes towards violence. This is because they are at a stage of development where they are discovering their own identity, interpreting and demonstrating gender, and trying to fit in. Many young women can feel pressure to have a boyfriend and may see controlling behaviour from their partner as an expression of love and be quick to dismiss abuse or harassment by either ignoring or forgiving the behaviour. Young men may also think that their partner wants them to take charge in the relationship and feel pressured to have sex even though they may not want to (ACYS 2015). Male-dominated relationships and sexist culture among peers contribute to women being at a higher risk of violence (Flood and Fergus 2008). This process shapes young people's relationships with others as they begin to enter adulthood (ACYS 2015) and contributes to younger people more than other age cohorts to have pro-violence attitudes (Phillips and Vandenbroek 2014).

In addition to the gendered patterns of violence, young people are also disproportionately affected by violence. Research shows young women aged 18 to 24 years experience significantly greater rates of physical and sexual violence than older age groups of women (Our Watch, 2017). Young people are also affected by violence in the home through witnessing family violence; with more than half of women who experience domestic violence having children in their care (Our Watch 2017). The impact of domestic and family violence on young people therefore needs to be considered and addressed.

Gender based violence, particularly domestic and family violence, has gained more awareness in the broader community in recent years. There have been plans and funding commitments made by State and Federal Governments to address family violence including the *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010-2022*, *Safe Home, Safe Families: Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan 2015-2020* and funding of organisations to provide support services in this space.

Consultation Process: Overview

The TYF consultation process on Respectful Relationships and Violence involved a number of focus groups and a Statewide survey. The face-to-face consultation structure for this topic was changed from the TYF Statewide Forum format to reduce the potential risks of discussing a topic that incorporates family violence without being able to provide the required support. These included risks such as young people disclosing personal

information, discussion of issues that may be traumatic for some participants and ensuring young people were aware of where to access support following the consultation if needed. The consultation process was developed by drawing on the expertise of TYF, research and input from academics and subject matter experts.

As gender inequality is a key contributor to violence against women, including domestic and family violence, the focus group discussions were centred around gender stereotypes and how this impacts work, school, home and relationships. This is recognised by experts as an appropriate way to approach the topic of violence, leading to broader discussions.

Focus groups were run with existing youth advisory groups or with groups young people involved with organisations where a worker was able to support the group and follow up with participants after the consultation if required. Smaller groups also provided a better opportunity for potential issues to be identified and manage this in the discussions and follow ups.

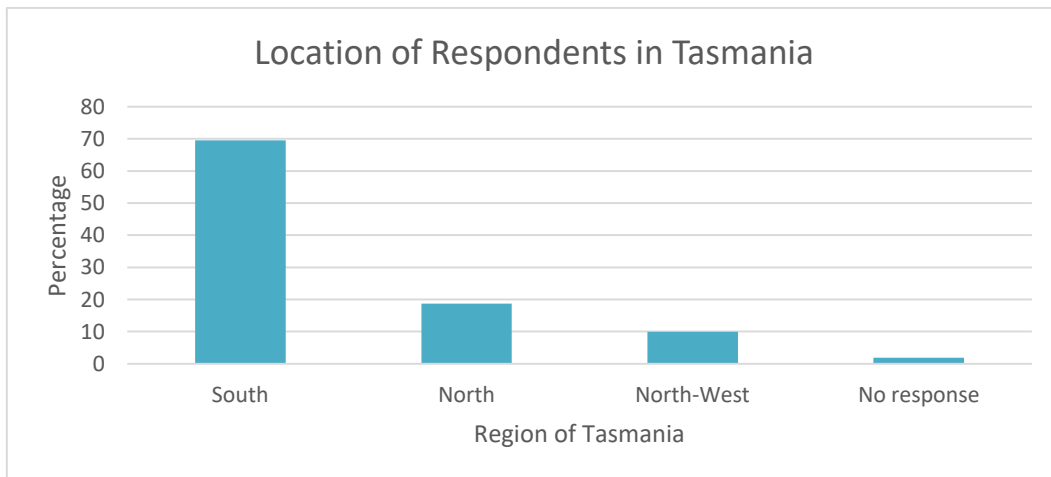
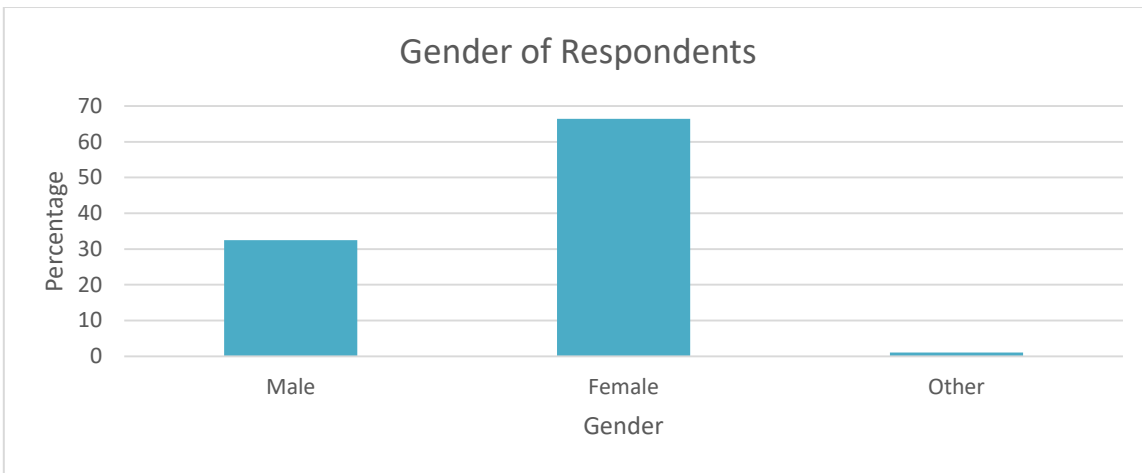
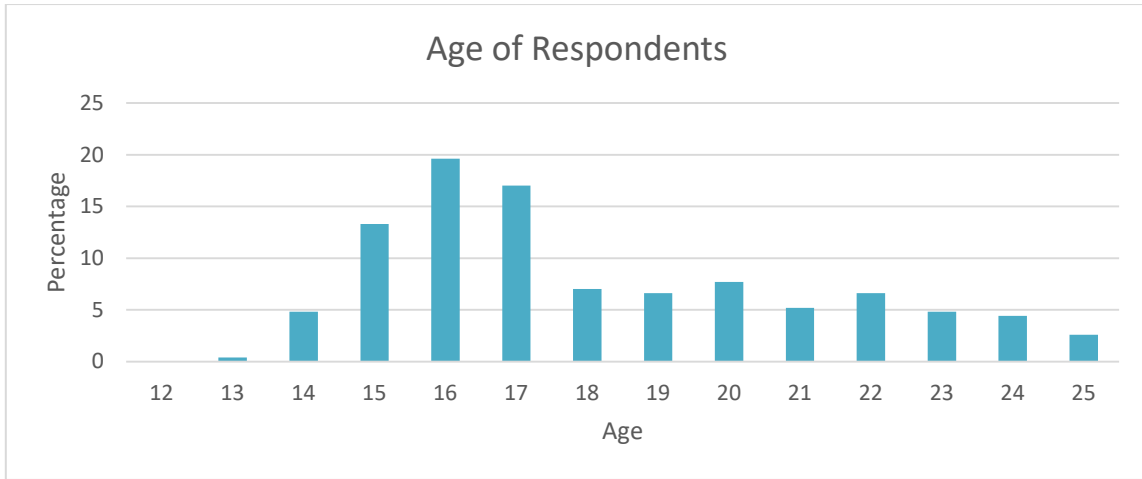
The survey component of the consultation process was also informed by subject matter experts to ensure questions on violence were appropriate. The survey explored young people's thoughts and attitudes towards violence.

Limitations

Due to the consultation structure required to cover this topic with young people, there was limited time available during the sessions to explore this topic with young people. This meant more time in the discussions with young people was spent exploring the concept of gender inequality and discussing examples of gender stereotypes, as this was required to provide the foundation for discussing ideas and solutions. This resulted in many groups focusing on issues, with some exploration of ideas, rather than a focus on solutions. The structure also reduced the number of young people who were able to participate in consultations and the diversity among participants than has been the case at previous TYF consultations.

Consultation Process: Survey

TYF conducted a survey to enable a greater number of young people to participate in the consultation and have their say on the topic. The survey was available online and hard copies were available on request. The survey received 278 responses but seven of these indicated the respondent was either under the age of 12 or over 25. These responses have been excluded from this analysis as TYF represents the views of young people aged 12 to 25. In total, there were 271 responses from young people aged 12 to 25.



The survey received a high proportion of respondents from Southern Tasmania. The survey was promoted Statewide, however, the absence of a Statewide Forum in the north of the State may have contributed to fewer responses from the area despite conducting three focus groups across the North and North-West for this consultation process.

The survey also had a high proportion of females who responded to the survey. TYF used targeted social media promotion to encourage males to complete the survey and promoted the survey among networks, encouraging adults to support young people to participate. This strategy did result in an increase of male respondents.

Of the survey respondents, 6.7% identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, 2.1% identified as Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and 4% identified as a young person with a disability.

Respectful Relationships

Young people were asked to describe what they thought made a respectful relationship. Two-thirds of responses referred to a respectful relationship needing respect for each other including their views, beliefs, opinions, preferences, goals, interests and thought, as well as consent, privacy, boundaries and personal space.

A third of young people said there needed to be trust and honesty for both people in the relationship. Another third of young people mentioned behaviours they thought should not be in a respectful relationship. This included not having abuse, violence, yelling, domination, manipulation, lies, power imbalance, and having one person feel they are taken advantage of, worthless or are harmed in any way.

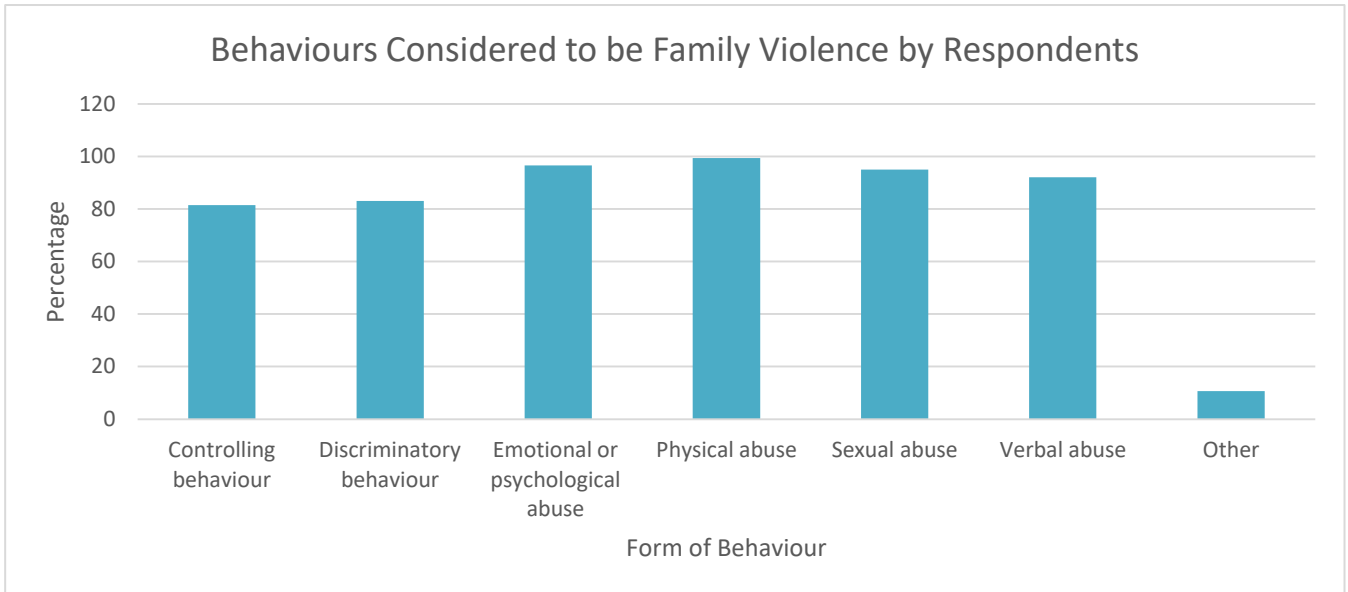
Other key aspects for a respectful relationship included kindness, care and love. A smaller amount of young people said communication is important in a respectful relationship and these people thought it was key to be able to share opinions, needs, ideas, views and listen to the other person to be able to address conflicts. Respondents also said both people in the relationship are equal and treated equally. They thought it was respectful when both people have equal power and status and can make an equal agreement.

Young people were asked about who they thought should be the decision maker in a relationship. Of the respondents, 95% thought it should decision making should be equal, 1% said either male or female, and 4% said other. Most of the respondents who said other said who should be the decision maker depends on who is in the relationship and the decision. This includes who the couple decide to be the decision maker and who is good at decision making. This demonstrates the majority of young people think people should be equal in a relationship when it comes to decision making.

Family Violence

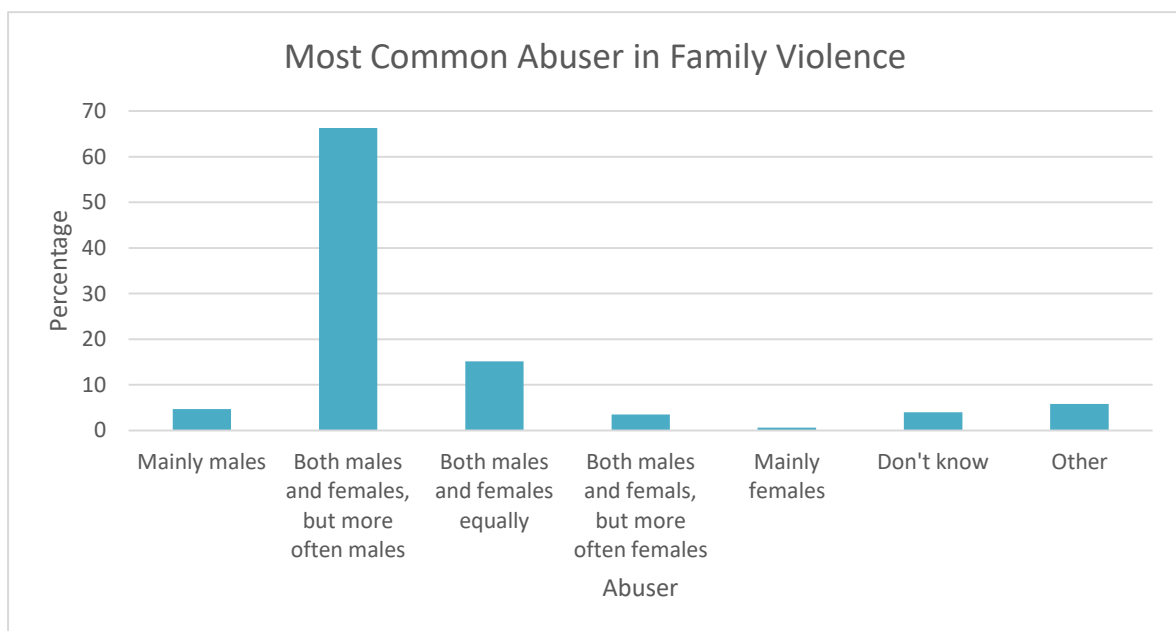
Young people were asked how they would describe family violence. Most of the responses had multiple parts. Just over half of responses referred to physical violence or abuse and just under half of responses referred to psychological or emotional abuse. A quarter of responses referred to abuse between family members but many did not refer specifically to what form of abuse. Other answers with several respondents included someone in the family using power and the control of others, sexual abuse and generally making family members uncomfortable.

Respondents were then asked to select behaviours from a list that they thought could be family violence.



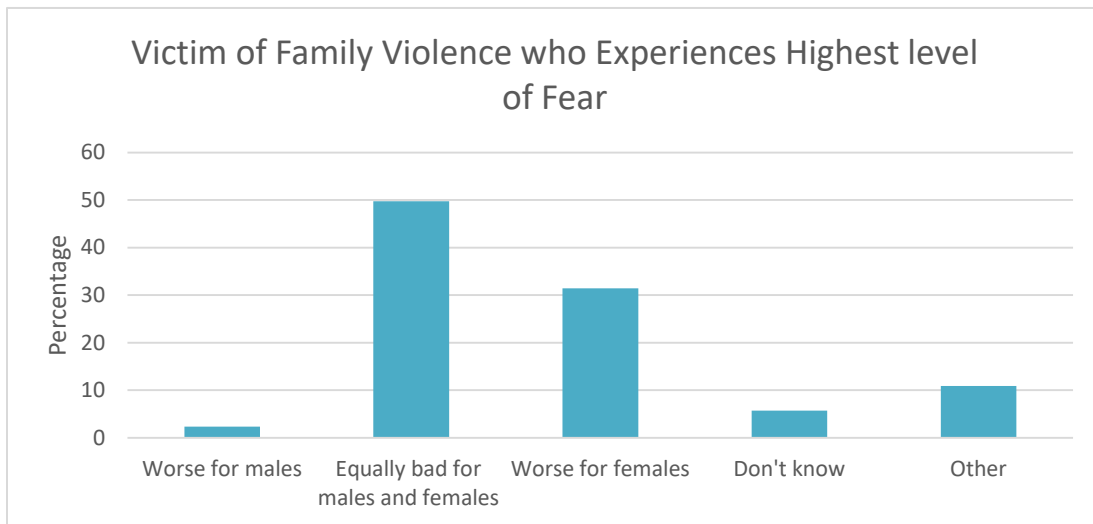
A high proportion of young people identified emotional or psychological abuse as a form of behaviour they considered to be family violence, but were less likely to identify controlling or discriminatory behaviour, although these still had a high number of responses. Of those respondents who listed another behaviour they thought would be a form of family abuse, the most common was financial abuse. There were also mentions of emotional blackmail, neglect, not respecting a person's beliefs, preventing a person from attending school or work, control of a person's actions and manipulation. Some of these could be considered as controlling or discriminatory forms of behaviour but may not have been identified in this way by young people.

Young people were asked if they thought family violence is a serious issue in the community with 88% saying they thought it was. While only 1% said they didn't think it was a serious issue, 11% said they were unsure.



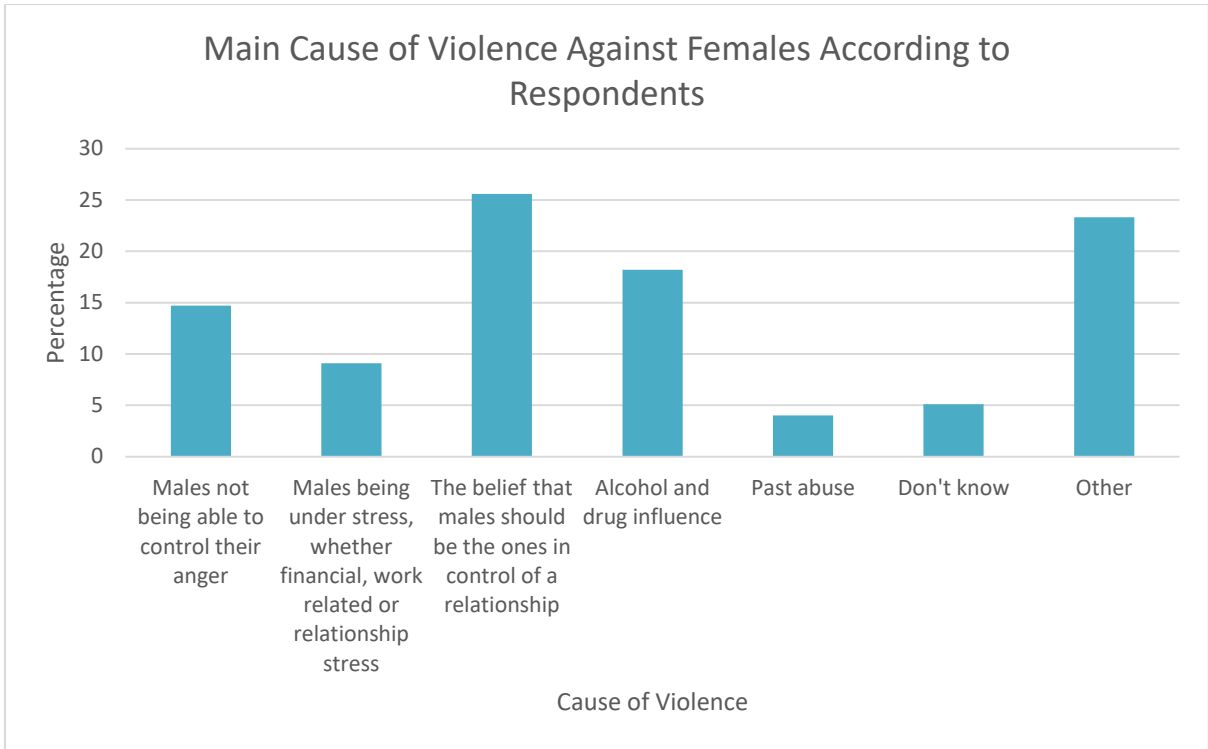
Over 65% of young people said they thought it was both males and females, but more often males were the most common abuser in family violence situations. The high responses to this answer show it is possible that young people demonstrate they are aware males and females can be the perpetrator of abuse in a family violence situation.

Young people who selected other were asked who they thought the most common abuser would be. Of these, a third of responses were about it depending on the individual, another third said it would depend on the violence used with one saying women would be more likely to use psychological abuse and men more likely to use physical abuse.



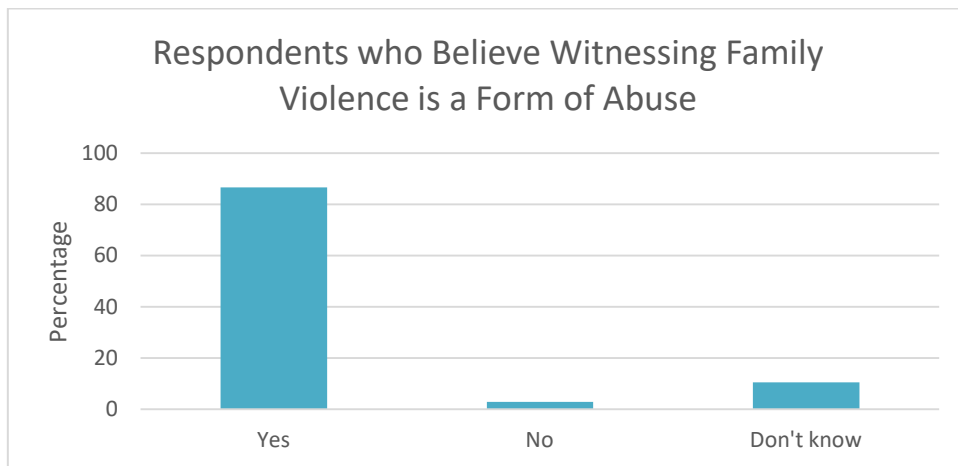
Half of young people who completed the survey thought males and females experience fear equally in family violence situations where they are the victim. Just over 30% said they thought female victims of family violence experienced greater fear. There were very few young people who said they thought males would experience greater fear as victims of family violence.

Of the young people who responded other, just under half said the level of fear depends on the type of abuse the victim experiences. A third of responses said it also depends on the individual person including who is abusing them, their relationship to them, their own situation and what they are suffering. Some responses mentioned men may be fearful of seeking help and not being believed and this fear can sometimes be worse due to the stigma associated with it. Others thought women and children experience greater fear because they are affected more by family violence.



Young people were quite varied in what they thought was the main cause of violence against females. The belief that males should be the ones in control of a relationship received the highest amount of responses but this was closely followed by other causes, which young people listed. A high proportion of these young people thought the main cause of violence against women was a combination of the listed options. A quarter of these young people said it was expectations that men should be dominant and not having respect for women. A further quarter of responses referred to personal issues of the perpetrator such as stress or drug and alcohol use, past abuse or their personality. While some of these were listed in the survey, young people may have wanted to put it in their own words.

Witnessing Family Violence



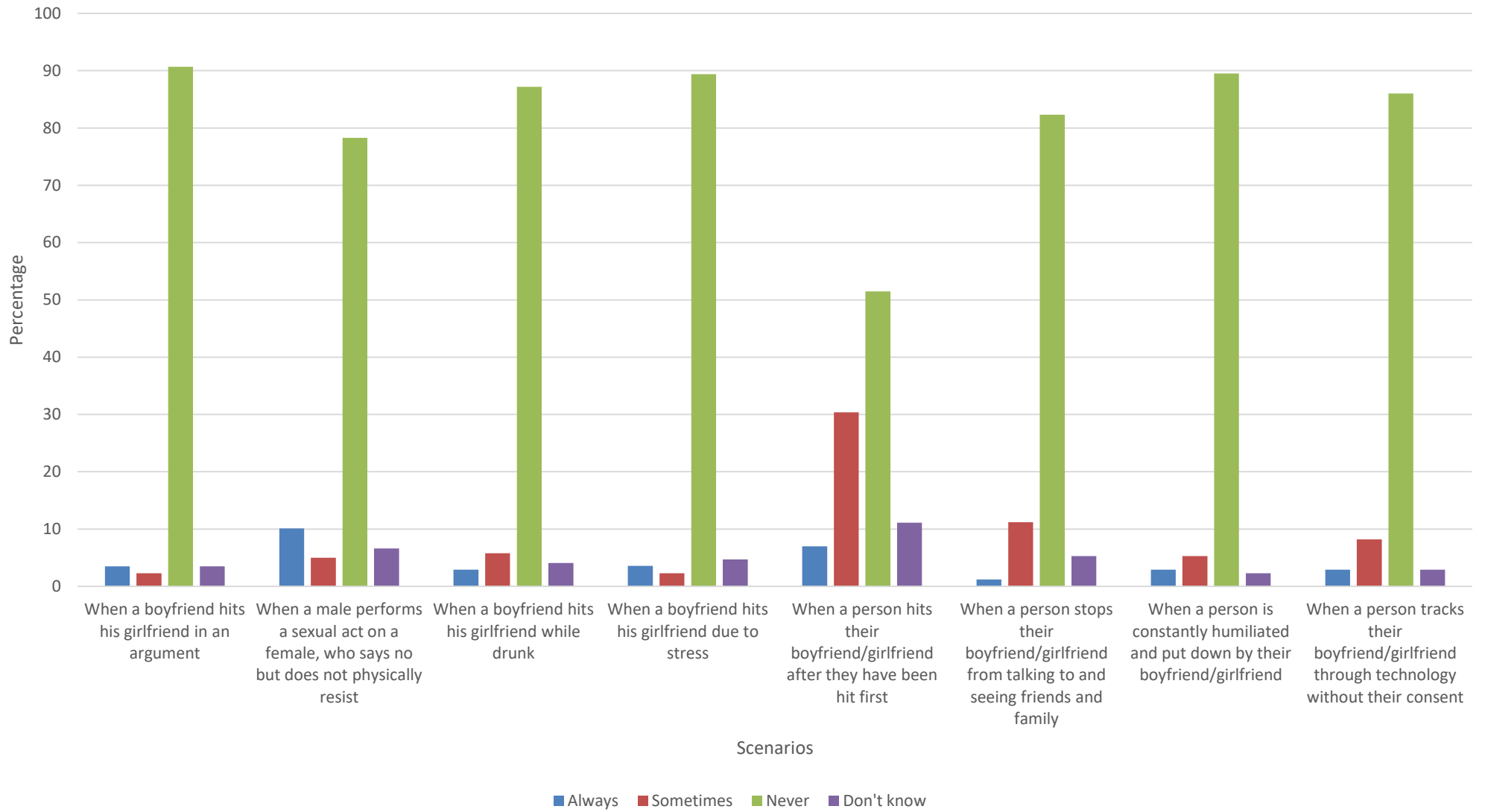
Young people were asked if they thought witnessing family violence could be a form of abuse in itself. Most young people (87%) said they thought witnessing family violence is a form of abuse. There were very few young people who thought this was not a form of abuse (3%), however there was a higher amount who were unsure (10%).

Young people were asked what they thought young people being a victim of family violence would be and most answers had multiple aspects. Over half of young people said they thought young people who are a victim of family violence would contribute to mental health issues such as low self-esteem, not feeling valued, being worried, stress, trauma and mental illnesses including depression and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Just under half of young people said being a victim of violence could lead to intergenerational issues where violence is continued because the behaviours are normalised. They thought young people might react the same way as the abuser in the future and carry this behaviour into future relationships.

A quarter of responses mentioned young people might have difficulty in trusting other people and forming relationships with other people. Another quarter of responses referred to the people experiencing issues into the future such as drugs and alcohol problems, homelessness, reduced self-esteem and how they feel about themselves. There was also a small group of young people who said they would not have a good role model or example of a healthy relationship and not know what behaviour is required in a relationship. There were a few responses that mentioned physical harm.

Scenarios and When Respondents think it is ok for the person in the following scenarios to use violence



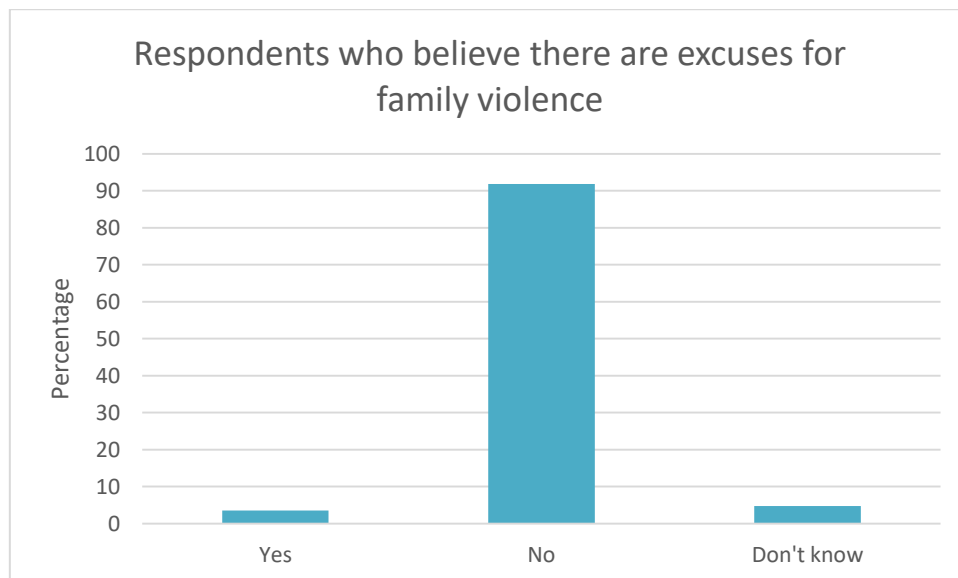
The Use of Violence

A high proportion of young people said they never thought violence was okay across the different scenarios presented to them in the survey, as demonstrated by the graph on the previous page. The exception to this was in the scenario when a person hits their partner after they have been hit first. While just over half of respondents thought violence in this situation was never ok, just over 30% said it is sometimes ok to use violence in this situation. This scenario also had the highest proportion of responses of people who indicated they did not know (11%).

For the scenario about a male performing a sexual act on a female who says no but does not physically resist, 10% of respondents said they thought it was always ok for the person to use violence in the scenario. There were also 11% of respondents who thought violence is ok sometimes for the person who prevents their partner from seeing their friends and family. It is possible some of the respondents responded to the scenarios where they thought it was ok to use violence as a response to the scenario, rather than seeing the behaviours as violent or abusive.

Across all the scenarios, young people for the most part did not think violence should be used.

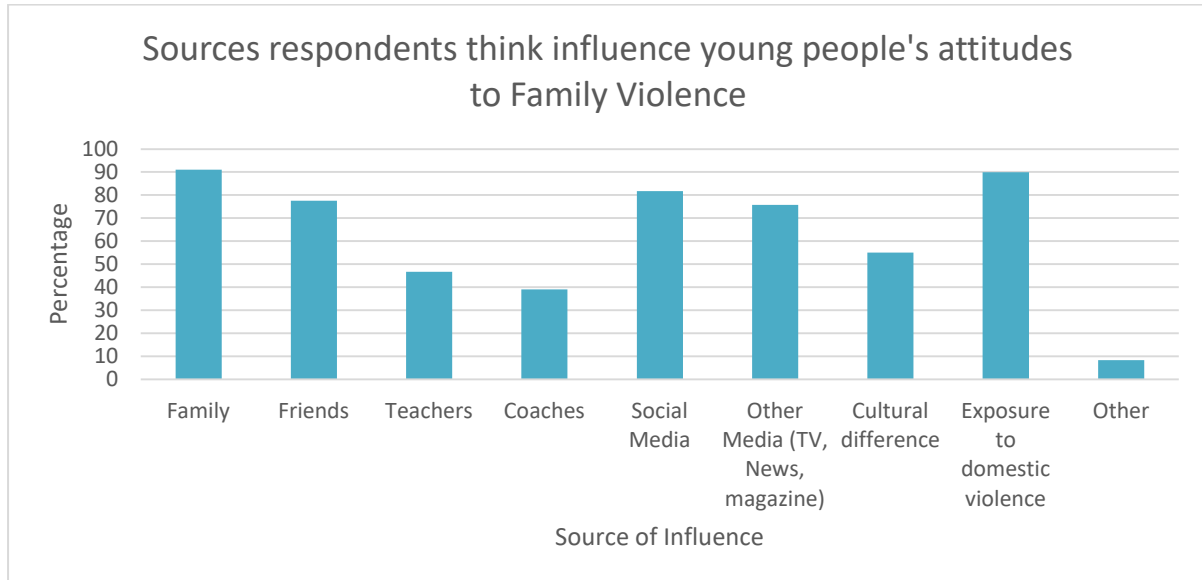
Young people were also asked if there were any other scenarios where they thought it is okay to use violence. Half of the responses to this questions said in situations where it is used for self defence, including when your own life at risk, all other options to escape have been used, someone else's life is at risk, needing to fight back to defend and to protect others. Several young people said they thought violence is never the answer and a couple of young people said violence was okay to use for discipline.



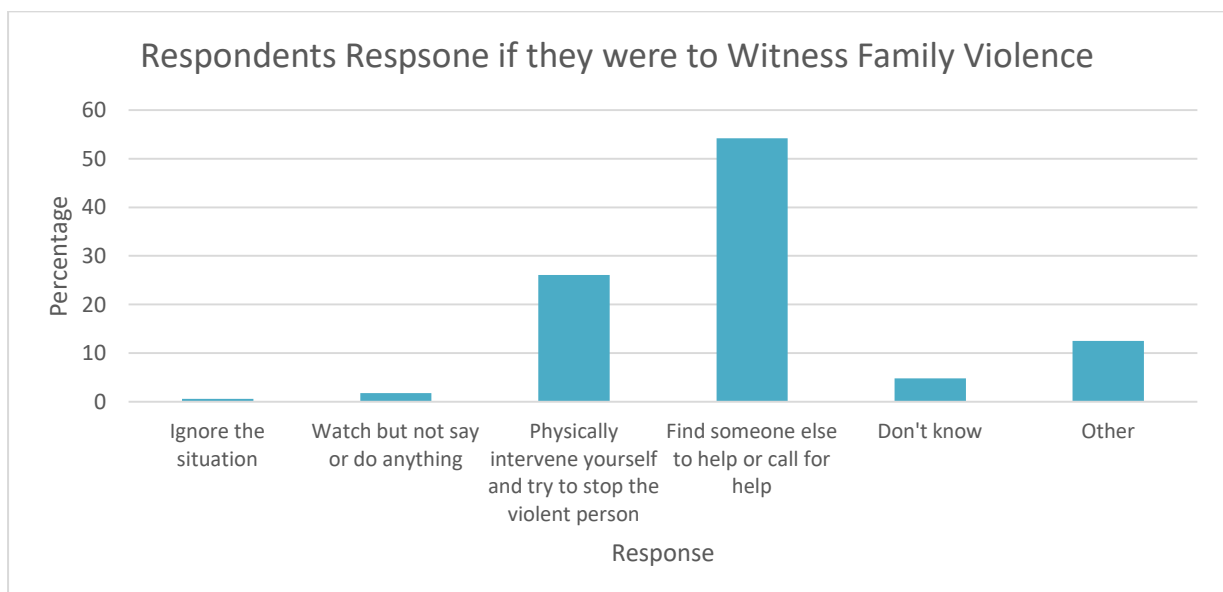
Young people were also asked if they thought there were any excuses for family violence. The majority of young people said no (92%), while 4% said they didn't know and 3% said there were. Of those who said they thought there was an excuse, half said it was ok in self

defence and other responses were about there were excuses but they are not valid or the abuser may need support for personal issues.

Attitudes to Violence and Help Seeking

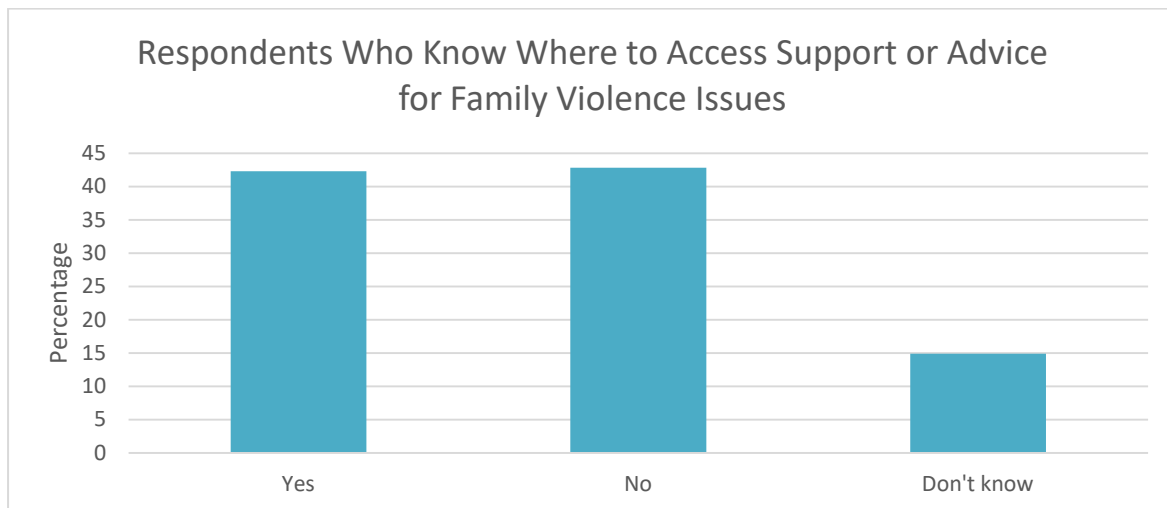


Nine out of 10 young people thought family and exposure to family violence influence young people's beliefs and attitudes towards family violence. This was followed by social media (82%), friends (77%) and other forms of media (76%). These sources are likely accessed or present in young people's lives daily. Of the young people who selected other, sources of influence they listed included religion, the history and culture of society and other people in a person's life.



Young people were asked what they would do if they were witnessing family violence, whether it was a stranger or someone they knew. Over half of young people said they would find someone else to help or call for help, but 26% of young people said they would try to physically intervene. A small proportion (2%) said they would ignore the situation or watch but not say or do anything. This indicates young people want to prevent violence from happening.

Most young people who selected other said they would do multiple things, usually a combination of intervening and getting help. This included 75% of young people saying they would physically step in and a couple said they would try to intervene verbally to distract the abuser. Two-thirds of young people said they would get help from someone else, with most saying it would be the police. Three respondents said they would support the victim after the incident.



Over 55% of young people said they did not know where they could access support or advice if they needed help for family violence issues.

Many of the young people who said they knew where to go listed multiple places they could access support. Around half of young people said they would go to police. Half of responses referred to a general community support service with some young people listing the name of an organisation or referred to a place where they already seek support or were familiar with. A third of responses mentioned Headspace and a quarter said they would go to family members, friends or adults they trusted. A small group of young people said they would seek support at school such as a counsellor or teacher and another small group of responses listed specific domestic violence service either broadly or their name specifically, such as the Domestic Violence Helpline.

Consultation Process: Focus Groups

YNOT identified 14 organisations across Tasmania who already had established youth advisory groups or worked with young people who could participate in a focus group, and had a worker who could be present for the focus group. Six of these were able to organise a time to host a focus group. Three focus groups were held in the south, two in the north and one in the north-west. A total of 47 young people participated in these groups.

Each focus group started with an explanation of YNOT and TYF, the purpose of the consultation, introductions of the TYF facilitators and participants, and setting some group rules for the discussion including where participants could go if they had additional questions or wanted to discuss anything that came up for them during the consultation.

The topic of respectful relationships and violence was explored through the concept of gender stereotypes. Short videos were used to prompt discussions and provide examples of the concepts being discussed (see appendix 1). This included one about gender stereotypes in the workplace, learning gender stereotypes through education and stereotypes in relationships and violence.

Although information presented to each group was consistent, some flexibility was required to engage and respond to the needs of each group. Each focus group responded differently to the consultation so the structure had to be adapted to meet the needs of each group. Overall, the concept of gender stereotypes and the roles of men and women in society required time and discussion of some more obvious examples in the workplace and school before talking about relationships and ideas. Some groups were able to identify stereotypes in different settings and move on to develop some ideas for improving gender inequality, which would address the key contributing factor of gendered violence patterns, while others spent more time exploring the topic.

At the end of the focus group, participants completed a feedback form and were provided with a thank you card with YNOT's contact details, the Domestic Violence Helpline and Headspace website, and reminded they could contact the worker within their organisation if they had any additional questions or concerns.

A summary of the discussions with all focus groups is outlined below. A more detailed summary of each focus group discussion can be found at the end of the Report (see appendix 2).

Focus Group Discussions Summary

Gender Stereotypes in Society

All groups had discussions about the different stereotypes and expectations of men and women they have seen or heard about. Some young people said they had not experienced gender stereotyping or seen it happen. A few young people across the groups thought it was acceptable to have gender stereotypes because men and women are different.

When discussing stereotypes associated with men, groups raised things such as men are more likely to be dominant, that they have no patience, are expected to be respectful towards women, shouldn't share their feelings or emotions, are bad at multi-tasking and use violence. Groups also discussed men being more likely to enjoy physical activities, be good

at sports and lift heavy items and get in car crashes. A few of the groups talked about how the stereotypes of men and thinking 'boys will be boys' may let men think violent behaviour is acceptable.

When discussing stereotypes of women, groups talked about women being expected to be kinder, more emotional, weak, not be leaders and bossy. Some groups also discussed the expectations of what women should look like, including that they should be pretty, wear make-up and dresses. One group talked about the expectations of women in other cultures can be different, such as covering their skin with their clothing.

Although young people could identify these stereotypes, many groups had discussions about examples where men and women had interests or did activities that went against gender stereotypes.

Not conforming to stereotypes

Some of the groups discussed how gender stereotypes can make people who don't identify or conform to these stereotypes feel uncomfortable. They discussed how the way you look can change how people treat you. Groups also discussed how people can be judgemental towards others based on stereotypes because they can give people ideas about what they think others should and shouldn't be.

Some groups also talked about the positives of media trying to challenge gender stereotypes and used celebrities, movies and campaigns as examples they had seen. Some young people also thought they could ignore stereotypes that are in the media because they are aware of what they are.

Young people talked about how gender stereotypes can make people feel like they have to live up to these expectations and behave in a certain way and they can't be themselves.

Some groups also talked about other assumptions that people make about others, such as their personality and appearance. They said when people have these expectations; people may think they have to be like that. Young people thought this could also make people feel uncomfortable.

School

A couple of the groups talked about uniforms and expectations of what students should wear at school. Some young people talked about having experiences of being told to wear items they are not comfortable wearing or not having the choice of what to wear.

Many of the groups talked about gender differences in sports at their school. This included what sports are available for girls and boys to play. Some young people shared experiences where they couldn't play a sport because of their gender and times when boys and girls played the same sport.

Group members said they had noticed differences in the way male and female teachers taught and communicated in schools. The group thought male teachers were more likely to tell students they have the answer wrong while female teachers were more likely to explain why the answer is wrong and communicate with them.

Several groups discussed gender stereotypes and expectations they see within school subjects. This included more girls in photography classes and more boys in mechanics

classes. Some young people thought university open day and jobs in these subject areas were becoming more inclusive. Others talked about subjects at school being for girls-only but no equivalent for boys.

Work

Group members discussed the stereotypes they had heard or seen examples of in the workplace. Some young people said they thought gender stereotypes can influence how employers treat their employees. The group also thought the language used to talk about different jobs can reinforce stereotypes, such as referring to police men rather than police officers. Another example that was discussed was women who may want to be a fire fighter but may not believe they can because men and family members tell them they can't do the job.

Some group members questioned whether women are truly paid less because they thought employers would want to put on lower paid workers so it is cheaper for their business, meaning more women would be employed.

Some young people said they had seen gender stereotypes at their work because girls were more likely to work in customer service roles while boys were more likely to work in the kitchen.

Many groups talked about the expectations of what jobs are considered more acceptable for men and women. Jobs and industries the groups said men were more likely to be employed in than women included the army, mining, engineering, plumbing, building, offices or as a tattoo artist, electrician, police officer, doctor, chef, taxi driver, fire fighter, boxer, CEOs, security, trades, doctors and leadership positions.

Groups said women are more likely to work as a child care worker, singer, baby sitter, baker, dancer, hairdresser, painter, nurse, hairdresser, secretary, stay at home mum, teacher, waitress and vet.

Groups talked about the different expectations of men and women in the workplace. Some groups talked about men being hired more than women, being hard workers and more likely to be a boss. One group discussed the stereotype of women being 'money hungry', and their behaviour being mean if they had a high paying job.

Some young people also thought that men want higher, better paid jobs and women are not as ambitious and therefore end up in lower paid jobs. Some group members thought men might get hired more because they are more likely to be able to do the job.

Despite these stereotypes and expectations, many young people talked about the importance of everyone having the ability to go to work and be paid the same amount for the same job.

Home, Chores and Parenting

When it came to roles within the household, young people said women are often expected to do housework, prepare meals, take care of children and take care of their partner. The expectations of men they discussed included repairing items around the house, managing the household budget, making bigger decisions and garden maintenance. Men have an expectation to support the household financially. Some young people could identify

examples where they or people they knew took on roles opposite to their gender stereotypes. One group did not specifically cover any of the topics relating to gender stereotypes in the home. In regards to parents, young people talked about the expectations of men and women in parenting with women usually expected to stay at home to care for children and men expected to work and be the main income provider.

Relationships

Groups talked about the different behaviours they thought were expected of men and women in relationships. Some groups thought gender stereotypes influenced friendships less than relationships, and there are more expectations in relationships about norms and stereotypes. When it comes to dating, young people said it is men who are expected to arrange dates and propose to women. Some young people thought the expectations and gender stereotypes could be harmful in a relationship because it could influence the way people behave. People might not communicate effectively and learn coping mechanisms.

Some of the groups talked about men expecting to get what they want in a relationship and thought if they didn't get what they wanted, they may become violent.

One of the groups discussed the influence of drugs and alcohol on domestic violence. They thought men are more likely to go out and drink alcohol and take out problems on women, which they thought was happening more now. The group talked about how women may think this behaviour is acceptance, but the group thought it wasn't. The group talked about these being choices about behaviour made by men and not because of the alcohol and drugs, although some young people said men might not realise what they are doing.

Young people said men often get what they want and do what they want in a relationship and thought that their partner might get hit if they don't do what they want. They said there is an expectation women are meant to do everything and look after the man in the relationship. This includes women staying at home to look after the children and cook, while the man works and provides the main source of income.

When it came to violent behaviours in relationships, some group members said they did not think anyone had the right to hit or hurt anyone while others said people don't think it is acceptable for women to hit men, it is more acceptable for men to hit other men.

The group also talked about the ways they thought gender stereotypes can influence how people react to violence they see. Some group members thought a woman hitting her boyfriend in public may not gain attention or have anyone intervene but if the boyfriend hits back to defend himself, people may be more likely to start intervening and saying it is wrong. They said women hitting men can be overlooked because we hear more about men hitting women. Some group members also said they thought men were less likely to be believed if they were sexually abused.

In relationships, young people said they thought women were more likely to verbally abuse their partner than physically abuse them. Some group members thought abuse with words was easier to go unnoticed.

When people are being abused in a relationship, young people said it could be embarrassing to talk about it, for both men and women, and seeking help is often seen as

weak. Group members said sometimes if someone is seeking help for abuse and their partner finds out, it could make them angrier.

A couple of the groups discussed how women who experience abuse and violence in a relationship may think it is normal behaviour.

Some young people said fighting in a relationship is always a problem but this does not have anything to do with gender roles.

Causes and Influences

Most groups touched on where they thought gender stereotypes come from and what influences these. A couple of the groups talked about gender stereotypes coming from history and traditions, and discussed how these had changed over this time. Most of the groups mentioned how the media portrays and replicates stereotypes, such as how men and women should look. This included through marketing, advertisements, movies, television and Hollywood.

Young people also discussed how gender stereotypes are passed on through people and generations. Groups talked about parents and older members of the community passing on beliefs and stereotypes, which some groups thought may have been out-dated.

The groups discussed school and home being key places that can influence young people. Many groups talked about gender stereotypes being learnt in these places from an early age with things such as education, employment, media, families and celebrities influencing more at a later age.

Ideas

A lot of the ideas from young people were about teaching children from an early age about gender stereotypes. Many of the groups discussed the influence adults, particularly parents, have on passing on gender stereotypes. Some of the groups wanted parents to be educated about this so they are aware of passing on gender equality, including doing different roles around the house that do not fit with their gender stereotype.

Young people said school is also an important place to learn about gender equality. Young people also wanted opportunities to learn about gender stereotypes and strategies for dealing with them at school. They said it is important for people to be able to openly express their thoughts and do what they want to do. Young people also wanted learning at school to focus less on reinforcing gender stereotypes.

Young people also wanted more people to stand up to stereotypes and expectations they see and experience. This included building their own confidence to have their voice heard and learning it is okay to be different. In friendship groups, be supportive of each other and call out behaviours that are not acceptable. Young people in one group said people needed to speak up when they saw violence and behaviours that are not acceptable, and particularly let men know this is wrong. They also wanted more people to participate in activities to let out negative emotions and support other people to do the same.

Some young people thought gender inequality could be addressed by not talking about gender or gender stereotypes so that they did not exist anymore. This included preventing

gender stereotypes being discussed and covered by the media and any subliminal messages about gender.

Some groups also had ideas for creating opportunities for men and women to experience subjects or work places that are dominated by the opposite gender to encourage them to try different things. One group said it is important to have men and women role models in all areas. At school, some young people wanted to ensure if there is a class for girls, there is an equivalent for boys and that separating girls and boys had benefits. Others wanted to remove these classes all together.

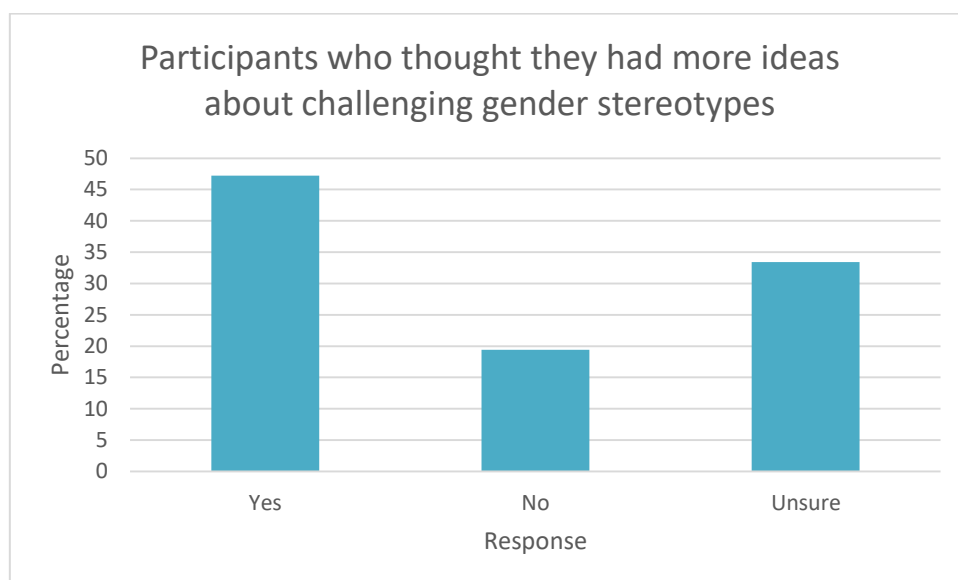
In the workplace, young people wanted to ensure men and women have equal rights and equal pay in the workplace and not have men or women dominate different jobs. Some groups talked about creating more opportunities for women to try jobs dominated by men and provide professional development opportunities. Others wanted to see more stories in the media about how women have succeeded and provide more opportunities for them to be leaders.

Some young people also wanted to have separate businesses and products for men and women so they are equal in terms of having an option for each gender. Another suggestion was to have a holiday break where people could go and have an experience that aligns with the opposite of their gender stereotypes.

Feedback

Overall, participants had positive feedback about the focus groups they participated in.

TYF aims to provide young people with information and the opportunity to have discussions with their peers about ideas on the topic so they take away some practical elements from TYF consultations.



Of the focus group participants, 47% said they had learnt something new that related to challenging gender stereotypes. This included when to call out anti-social behaviour, to stop making assumptions about gender and the ways the media, school and home can contribute to our thoughts. This proportion of participants who said they had learnt something new was

lower than usual for TYF consultations due to the length of time required to discuss issues with less time on ideas.

Over half of the participants said they enjoyed the opportunity to discuss the topic and share their ideas. They also enjoyed learning new things about the topic from their peers and particularly liked the videos and the information in these.

Young people were also asked how they thought the focus group could be improved. Over half of the participants thought it was good and didn't have any suggestions. Others said they wanted to have more time to share and discuss their ideas and some people wanted more information about what they could do to improve the issue.

The feedback survey used was similar to those used at other TYF consultations. The lower percentage of participants who said they had learnt something new, and participants wanting to have more time to discuss ideas and more information about the issue are all aspects that can be addressed in a State wide consultation format. This relates back to the limitations of the consultation process required for this topic (see page 6).

Analysis

The following section provides an analysis of the consultation process and has been categorised to identify themes.

Focus groups

Using focus groups as part of this consultation process proved to be an effective way to address this particular topic. In order to explore how gender inequality affects family and domestic violence, discussions with focus groups started with exploring gender stereotypes in work, school, home and society. This required more time in the focus groups than expected as the majority of young people needed additional time to break down the concept, explore the different ways gender stereotypes may manifest, what influences gender stereotypes and provide their thoughts.

Through these discussions, young people could identify gender stereotypes and recognised these, but said people should be equal, although some young people thought this was by treating men and women differently because they thought they are different and this should be considered. Each group included members who did not think gender stereotypes impacted them or that they had experienced or witnessed stereotypes.

As it took longer for most groups to explore gender stereotypes, there was not as much discussion about the sources and influences on this. This, combined with a limited amount of time, made it difficult for groups to develop ideas sufficiently.

Respect in Relationships

When young people described what they thought a respectful relationship was, the majority of young people mentioned people being able to have their own views, beliefs, goals, interests, thoughts, opinions and boundaries, and not have this compromised by the other person in a relationship.

Most of the focus groups identified stereotypes of men that they are expected to be dominant in relationships, whereas women are expected to be more passive. Despite this, 95% of young people thought decision making in a relationship should be equal.

Relationships and Violence

Only 1 in 4 young people said they thought the main cause of violence against females is the belief that males should be the ones in control of a relationship. Many young people said violence in a relationship is caused by a number of factors but this suggests more young people may be unaware of the impact of gender inequality leading to gender based violence.

Young people were able to identify different types of behaviour that form family violence, with 95% or more of the young people identifying physical, emotional or psychological, and sexual abuse as family violence. Controlling and discriminatory behaviour was identified by just over 80% of young people. These types of behaviours and abuse were also mentioned in discussions about the expectations of how men and women should behave in relationships.

Over 65% of young people said when it came to the most common abuser in family violence, they thought it is both males and females but more often males, and 15% said it is males and females equally. Young people were also more likely to identify men as violent when discussing stereotypes and talked about how this is often because they are expected to be more physical and share their thoughts and feelings less than women.

Young people who responded to the survey were able to articulate anti-violence messages but this was not as clear in discussion groups. This supports research that shows young people can repeat anti-violence messages but they do not always apply them in the relationships they have (ACYS 2015). This means young people may be able to recognise awareness campaigns but not act on them.

Impacts of Violence

Young people are aware of the lasting impacts of violence on young people, with many saying it could cause mental health and intergenerational issues. Despite many young people identifying family violence can lead to a victim becoming abusive themselves, very few young people identified this when asked about the causes of violence.

Causes and Influences on Attitudes

Family, exposure to domestic violence and social media were the top three sources that young people said influence young people's attitudes towards violence. Young people also talked about how gender stereotypes and expectations are passed on through generations and are informed by history and replicated through the media. This demonstrates young people have an awareness about how these attitudes toward violence and inequality develop.

Seeking help

Over half of young people do not know where they can access support for family violence. Of those that do, very few said they would access a domestic violence specific service. This demonstrates the need for specific interventions and support services for young people experiencing domestic or family violence. Given the impact family violence can have on a

young person as a witness, victim and perpetrator, it is important young people are their views and needs and included in discussions about domestic and family violence.

It was also raised in a discussion groups that people may not feel comfortable seeking help for domestic violence, demonstrating their awareness of the stigma and other barriers associated with this for many people.

Young people want to prevent violence from happening in the community. Over half of young people said they would find someone else to help if they witnessed violence in public, however, 26% of young people said they would step in to intervene. While it is positive young people want to prevent violence, it is concerning a significant amount of young people have identified they would be prepared to physically intervene in to a violent situation to stop the violent person.

Addressing Gender Inequality

For many of the young people, it took some time to identify gender stereotypes and the different expectations of men and women in society, and where inequalities between them exist. When young people identified instances of inequality between men and women, they said they wanted there to be equality.

While young people could identify examples of gender stereotypes, many could also identify examples either in their own behaviours or friends and family that went against the stereotypes. Young people discussed how this had been received by other people and the impact this had on the person. This included the person not pursuing activities or a job they wanted to do.

Two key themes emerged from ideas to address gender inequality. The first was to teach children from a young age that men and women are equal at home and in school. The second was to provide more opportunities for men and women to try different subjects at school and jobs to encourage them into areas that may be dominated by either men or women.

In previous TYF consultations, young people generally provide a range of ideas and solutions that cover what young people could do at an individual level to systemic approaches. While it took longer for young people to reach ideas to address gender inequality on this topic, there were very few ideas that reflected how individuals can address gender inequality. This could reflect young people thinking the issue is much bigger than they can address individually or make a difference on, and less awareness of the topic overall. This suggests more work is needed to support young people to address this issue as gender equality is something young people identified as important.

Conclusion

Young people want to have respectful relationships and prevent violence from happening at home and in the community. Part of having respectful relationships for young people is enabling people to have their own ideas, opinions and interests considered and respected by other people. However, young people are also aware of the different expectations of men and women in society and how this can influence people's experiences at school, work and

home, even though they may not explicitly talk about this. Young people want men and women to be equal in the community and in relationships. They have ideas for how the community can support this but need additional support to know how to contribute to working towards gender equality and seeking help if needed.

Findings

Finding 1: Young people identify family violence as a serious issue in the community.

Finding 2: Young people want to prevent family violence from happening.

Finding 3: Over half of young people do not know where to go to access support for family violence if they were to need it.

Finding 4: Young people have an awareness of gender inequality and some of the causes and influences of this.

Finding 5: Young people want to learn about gender equality from an early age.

Finding 6: Young people are able to identify some forms of violence easier than others.

Finding 7: Young people are less likely to be able to articulate anti-violence messages unless prompted.

Finding 8: Young people are unaware of how gender inequality can lead to gender-based violence.

Finding 9: Many young people hold stereotypical views of gender roles.

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Appendix 1

Videos used in focus group consultations as discussion prompts with young people.

Childhood Gender Stereotypes in Adult Life 2014, Buzzfeed, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=381belOZreA>>.

Primary School Children Reveal Reality of Gender Stereotyping 2016, Education and Employers, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNLml4B2euM>>.

Let's Change the Story: Violence against women in Australia 2016, Our Watch, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fLUVWZvVZXw>>.

Appendix 2

Focus Group 1

Gender Stereotypes in Society

Young people in this group talked about how gender stereotypes can impact young people if they do not conform to a gender that other people expect them to. Some group members said when they had been asked about their gender, they felt they had to be polite when they answered or they would be perceived as rude even though they didn't think it was polite for the person to ask. Some group members talked about how the way you are dressed can change the way people talk to you. One person gave the example of being dressed in a masculine way and having males treat you more like a buddy but they would treat someone differently if they were femininely dressed.

Group members thought it was positive to see there were more challenges to gender stereotypes. They used the new Ghostbusters movie as an example where the women play the powerful, lead characters and a man plays an unintelligent secretary. Another example

they discussed was a campaign that challenges the concept of doing things 'like a girl' and the negative perceptions this has.

Young people in this group said while they still saw gender stereotypes in the media, they thought they could ignore them. One group member said while they knew gender stereotypes exist, they had not personally experienced them.

School and Work

Some young people said they had seen gender stereotypes at their work because girls were more likely to work in customer service roles while boys were more likely to work in the kitchen. Young people said while they had noticed this they hadn't discussed it at work or challenged it. Other group members said they had experienced gender stereotypes at school. One person gave the example of a teacher offering other uniform items if they were wearing pieces that did not fit the stereotype the teachers expected them to be.

The group also thought the language used to talk about different jobs can reinforce stereotypes. They talked about the example of saying police men when women can be police officers too.

Home and Relationships

Young people in this group thought gender stereotypes could potentially be harmful in a relationship. Group members thought the pressure of trying to meet gender expectations could lead to men being isolated and not showing emotions in relationships, which could feed the stereotype of men not being able to talk about issues. They also said this prevents people from learning coping mechanisms and reinforces harmful behaviours.

Causes and Influences

Young people in this group thought gender stereotypes have been shaped by history and socialisation. Some thought they stemmed from the Victorian Era and have fluctuated and changed since this time. Others in the group thought older generations were more likely to stick to the gender stereotypes, particularly in the workplace, as they may have been working there for a long time and not really thought about how society has changed over time.

Ideas

Young people said it is important for people to stand up to stereotypes they see and experience. Having the ability and confidence to say no to these expectations is important but group members recognised some people are not raised to be independent and challenge them. They said you need to be okay with who you are and have a strong sense of self because this leads to self confidence and having confidence is important for being able to stand up for yourself. Some young people also said confronting someone and saying no might not be as bad as you think, so it is important to not let this get in the way of having these conversations.

Group members said sometimes they did not have the energy to challenge gender stereotypes they see and experience. Some group members mentioned it was easier for them once they stopped caring about problems with gender stereotypes, focused on other things and realised it is okay to be different.

Young people in the group said it is important to have support and encouragement from their peers. They said you need to feel safe in your friendship group in order to be able to say no to group norms and encourage your friends to call out behaviours among each other that are not acceptable. They also said it is important to call out patriarchy and nasty behaviours in society and to speak up about this when you feel okay to do so.

Young people said the best way to create change and acceptance is for education and society to work together. They said gender equality is learned in school and is followed through in the social environment so these are the places where change needs to start. Young people said they want the community to accept them because when the community accepts you for who you are, it is empowering.

Focus Group 2

Gender Stereotypes in Society

This group spent time talking about stereotypes associated with men and women. The participants said men are expected to not show their emotions, be big and buff, use violence, are stronger than women, get in car crashes and that 'boys will be boys'. Group members also said men are expected to be good at sports such as basketball and soccer although some young people said boys play other sports like netball too.

The group members said stereotypes of women included they are hypocrites, more emotional, bossy, 'soft fighters', cry and are sexy. Some group members said girls are good at looking good, and they are meant to be clean but boys aren't. Although some other young people said girls also like activities that are messy, such as riding dirt bikes in mud. The group also talked about how girls in their community are never at the skate park because boys say the girls are not good at skating. Some participants said girls have different qualities to boys and they should not be judged for the qualities they don't have, such as being able to skate.

The group also talked about how people can be judgemental because they have ideas about what people should and shouldn't be. Group members thought people can be whatever they want to be and one person used Caitlyn Jenner as an example because she transitioned to become a woman because it is what she wanted. Group members said everyone should have equal rights and people should respect women.

School and Work

This group said stereotypes of men in the workplace included men being hired more than women, being hard workers and more likely to be a boss. They said men were more likely to work in the army, mining, engineering, plumbing, building, offices or as a tattoo artist, electrician, police officer, doctor, chef, fire fighter and boxer. Group members said women are more likely to work as a child care worker, singer, baby sitter, baker, dancer, hairdresser, painter, secretary, stay at home mum, teacher, waitress and vet. Some group members thought men might get hired more because they are more likely to be able to do the job. Others thought men might also get distracted by women in the workplace.

Some of the young people in this group said people might have concerns if they go to the doctors or other professionals who do not fit the gender stereotype because it is not what they expect.

Group members thought everyone should be able to go to work and be paid the same amount for the same job. A young person used the example of women being paid less in the mining industry even when they are doing the same job as men.

At school, some group members said girls are not allowed to wear items like jeans and leggings because boys get distracted, but the boys have a choice about whether they think they look good and get distracted. Some group members also shared experiences at school where a teacher had said to a student they couldn't do something because they were a boy.

Home and Relationships

Young people said they recognised if there is a baby in a family, a parent needs to stay home to look after it. Some group members said when the baby is very young it would be the mum who looks after it, but when it is older the parenting roles should be shared between the parents.

Group members said domestic violence was happening more because people have access to drugs and alcohol. They thought men are more likely to go out and drink, and said when men have alcohol and drugs they take it out on women, which they thought is happening a lot more now. They thought sometimes women think this behaviour is ok when the group thought this wasn't okay. The group talked about these being choices about behaviour made by men and not because of the alcohol and drugs, although some young people said men might not realise what they are doing.

Young people said men often get what they want and do what they want in a relationship and thought if their partner might get hit if they don't do what they want. They said there is an expectation women are meant to do everything and look after the man in the relationship. This includes women staying at home to look after the children and cook, while the man works and provides the main source of income.

Causes and Influences

Group members said gender stereotypes are shown through advertisements, movies and television shows.

Ideas

Young people in this group said people needed to speak up when they saw violence and behaviours that are not acceptable, and particularly let men know this is wrong. Group members said men should be able to talk to sort out problems and not use physical violence. They said violence in relationships should be similar to bullying where if you see something, you say something. Some group members thought if people were filmed when they are behaving badly, and were shown this, it would help them understand and see what they are doing.

The group wanted people to participate in activities, such as kick boxing, that are positive outlets for emotions and support people to lead by example in doing this. They thought people need to talk about the issues more and start doing the things they want to. For example, they thought if one girl in their community started going to the skate park, more

girls would start going. They thought by going with a friend and leading by example would be a good way to start this, and ask others at the skate park to encourage new people joining in and be accepting of them.

Focus Group 3

Gender Stereotypes in Society

Group members said there were stereotypes for men and women and they talked about examples such as toys with fast food being pink for girls and blue for boys. They also said there are expectations that women are kinder and men can lift heavy items. Young people said this can lead to people making assumptions about others. An example they discussed was how people often think larger people eat too much and if they are skinny, they get called anorexic even though this may not be the case. The group did not think guys got called anorexic as often as girls. While the group thought stereotypes could be overused, they also thought they are true to a certain extent because of the jobs and experiences people have.

The group also had a discussion about the stereotypes of people who are gay, such as only wanting to be friends with other people who are gay. This included some people with religious views may find it awkward to talk to gay people and at school you are taught not to bully because people are different, but not taught how to understand other people and strategies for this.

School and Work

Young people thought it could be harder for women to get jobs when there aren't many women in the industry they are wanting to work in but they also saw this could be an advantage if there was a push to employ women as it could create more job opportunities for them. One group member said being a woman being a doctor or lawyer is still frowned upon, although it is improving.

In sports at school, a young person talked about netball being available for girls and football for boys. They said this prevented them from being able to play the sport they wanted because there wasn't a team for their gender and both genders can't compete together. This meant they had to stick with the sport that had been allocated for their gender.

Group members said they had noticed differences in the way male and female teachers taught in schools. The group thought men were more likely to tell students they have the answer wrong while women were more likely to explain why the answer is wrong and communicate with them.

Home and Relationships

The group did not specifically cover any topics relating to gender stereotypes in the home or relationships.

Causes and Influences

Young people said gender stereotypes had changed over time. One group member talked about the expectation that men would wear wigs, the colour pink and high-heeled shoes in different points in history, which is different to modern society. The group thought the school environment, home environment and other influences had impacted the stereotypes and expectations of men and women over time.

Ideas

The group talked about reverse gender stereotyping where there may be a focus on men or women to try and get them into the workforce in industries that are dominated by the opposite gender. For example, teaching more women metalwork and woodwork at school to encourage them to enter these industries or encouraging more men into day care roles. The group said men and women might be good at these jobs but may never thought of it or had people around them to explore it. Group members wanted more trial runs for everyone to take orientation classes at high school or college so that people can see what they might be able to do, regardless of what gender they are. They wanted learning to be generalised so it does not become gendered and everyone has equal opportunities. They also discussed how important it is to have men and women who are role models in each area to show people they can do anything.

Young people also wanted opportunities to learn about gender stereotypes and strategies for dealing with them at school. They said it is important for people to be able to openly express their thoughts and do what they want to do.

Group members said there are lots of subliminal messaging about gender. They talked about loyalty card names and a company that uses men on their advertisements on television but mainly have women working in store. They wanted to change what is shown in the media and change what is acceptable to show in the media.

Focus Group 4

Gender Stereotypes in Society

Members of this group talked about the personality traits that are expected from men. This included for them to be dominant, that they have no patience, are expected to be respectful towards women, shouldn't share their feelings and are bad at multi-tasking. Traits they said are associated with women included they need to be pretty, are jealous and suspicious, and are expected to wear dresses, skirts and makeup. The group was divided when talking about shopping with some group members said all women do is shop, while others said men enjoy shopping too. Some group members talked about the expectations of women in other cultures can be they can't show skin or look into other people's eyes.

Some group members said they thought it is okay to have gender stereotypes because males and females are different. They said they should be treated equally, but not the same.

School and Work

At school, group members said subjects such as mechanics have more boys in the classes and photography have more girls in the classes. Some participants had been to university open days and found subjects such as engineering, which have been dominated by men, had more women attending the open days than they had expected.

Group members said men are often expected to go to work and earn money while women stay at home and thought men not being able to access paternity leave contributed to this. The group also discussed how women have less pay in the workplace and there is a stereotype that women can't be leaders or do the same jobs that men do. Group members said stereotypes impact individuals because women might not be able to get a job even if

they have the same qualifications as men. By being paid less than men, it impacts women in other areas of their life including housing, travel and food.

Jobs they said were dominated by women included nursing, hairdressing, teachers, beauticians, politicians, aged care works. Jobs they thought were dominated by men included police officers, bouncers, security guards and taxis. Some group members talked about the stereotype that women can't drive and thought this is why taxi drivers are mostly men. The group also noted there are often different uniforms for men and women at work.

Some group members thought jobs are becoming more inclusive for men and women, such as more women becoming mathematicians which are jobs that have been dominated by men. Group members said women can lead if they want and should be taught they can do anything they want in terms of their jobs and careers. The group said they want women to have the same opportunities in the workplace, have equal pay for men and women, and let men have paternity leave.

Home and Relationships

Group members talked about the different impact they thought gender stereotypes have on relationships and friendships. Some young people in the group thought gender stereotypes influenced friendships less than relationships. Other group members talked about examples where they had seen boys act differently around their friends because they take more and show off when they are around girls. The group also discussed the expectation that girls and boys can't be friends without being in a relationship. Some group members discussed how they thought men often think their female partner cannot be friends with another male. In a relationship, young people said men are expected to arrange dates in and are often accused of liking a girl if they are just friends with them. They said in relationships men often propose but some group members questioned why women couldn't propose too.

Young people said there is an expectation for men to make the money for a household and for women to stay at home with children. Some group members said it was hard for men to get parental leave when their partner has a baby and this could contribute to these expectations. Some group members thought men earned money while women spend it, while others thought both men and women could control money in a relationship.

The group said women are expected to stay at home, clean, cook, do chores and take care of kids. There is an expectation woman should take care of men and men should do jobs around the house such as mowing lawns or fixing cars. Some young people thought women are often belittled because of this expectation to support men. One group member said while women do the majority of housework, he also did cleaning and cooking so it shows both men and women do these jobs at home.

When it came to violent behaviours in relationships, some group members said they did not think anyone had the right to hit or hurt anyone while others said people don't think it is acceptable for women to hit men, but other men could.

Causes and Influences

Young people talked about movies as a place where there are stereotypes of how men and women should look. Men are often shown as 'buff and muscly' while women are shown as

thin. Group members said the expectations of men and women come from sexism, homophobia and Hollywood.

Ideas

This group said they want people to have an open mind and encourage them not to follow social standards. They thought this could start by teaching kids at a young age that men and women are equal. Group members also said showing people you care, asking how they are and letting them know it will be ok can encourage people, particularly men, to talk about their feelings. Young people in the group wanted to get rid of the stigma associated with gender stereotypes, such as doing jobs that go against gender stereotypes.

Focus Group 5

Gender Stereotypes in Society

This group talked about how gender stereotypes can make people feel that they have to act in certain way or like certain things and that they can't be themselves. Group members said people have different traits regardless of their gender and if they are locked in to stereotypes they may not reach their potential. Young people thought this could make people feel uncomfortable. A young person used the example of someone being told weak will often feel like they are weak.

Group members talked about stereotypes they have seen around sport. This included men being expected to play sport although young people recognised not all men play sport. Some group members said the stereotypes in sport could encourage people to be violent and the 'boys will be boys' thinking may encourage violent attitudes and behaviours. They said both of these attitudes might let men think violent behaviour is ok.

Group members also talked about how gender stereotypes can also make people who don't identify as male or female uncomfortable and used gendered toilets and school uniforms as an examples of this. There were also some members of the group who said they had never experienced gender stereotyping or seen it happen.

School and Work

The group talked about the ways gender stereotypes can impact an individual's life because men are expected to be masculine and women are expected to be feminine and can stop people from being who they want to be. A group member shared an example of someone they knew who wanted to be a hairdresser but was discouraged because he was stereotyped as 'gay' for wanting to do this. Another example that was discussed was women who may want to be a fire fighter but may not believe they can because men and family members tell them they can't do the job.

At work, group members said gender stereotypes can influence how employers treat their employees. This included women not doing jobs where there is any heavy lifting involved because employers think women cannot handle the weight. A couple of group members also had experienced this in their workplace where women work in service desk roles and men work in the kitchen.

The group discussed the stereotype of women being 'money hungry' and mean if they had a high paying job. Some group members questioned whether women are truly paid less because they thought employers would want to put on lower paid workers so it is cheaper for their business, meaning more women would be employed.

Some young people said at their school there were subjects for girls-only but no equivalent for boys. Young people also talked about the stereotypes associated with single-sex schools, such as students from these schools more likely to be gay.

Home and Relationships

Young people recognised households with children often require one parent to stay home and one to work, and both men and women could do either of these roles. They said it is often women who are expected to be the parent to stay home in the majority of cases. Young people said it can be hard for parents to have time off after having kids, both men and women.

The group thought the expectation of women at home is to do housework and take care of the house hold and kids. They thought men are expected to do the hard work around the house and support the family financially. Young people discussed how accurate they thought these stereotypes were and one person said she hated cleaning, which goes against the stereotypes of women at home.

The group also talked about the ways they thought gender stereotypes can influence how people react to violence they see. Some group members thought a woman hitting her boyfriend in public may not gain attention or have anyone intervene but if the boyfriend hits back to defend himself, people may be more likely to start intervening and saying it is wrong. They said women hitting men can be overlooked because we hear more about men hitting women. Some group members also said they thought men were less likely to be believed if they were sexually abused.

In relationships, young people said they thought women were more likely to verbally abuse their partner than physically abuse them. Some group members thought abuse with words was easier to go unnoticed.

When people are being abused in a relationship, young people said it could be embarrassing to talk about it, for both men and women, and seeking help is often seen as weak. Group members said sometimes if someone is seeking help for abuse and their partner finds out, it could make them angrier. Those women who experience abuse may begin to think abuse is normal and they way a relationship is meant to be.

Some young people said fighting in a relationship is always a problem but this does not have anything to do with gender roles.

Causes and Influences

Some group members discussed how gender stereotypes are learnt and formed from an early age and it becomes more entrenched as people get older and more structural influences start to influence them. The structural influences they discussed included education, employment, the media, family and celebrities. Young people also talked about the role parents have in passing on beliefs, which contributes to gender stereotypes. Some

young people thought these beliefs may be out-dated due to society becoming more accepting over time.

Ideas

Some group members wanted society to stop talking about gender and gender stereotypes so that they did not exist. They also thought using gender neutral terms and stop assuming other people's gender would help stop gender stereotypes. Group members wanted more gender neutral clothing for young children and not having people force kids to wear 'boy and girl' clothes to support this. They also wanted gender stereotypes to stop being discussed and covered by the media.

The group was aware young children are taught gender stereotypes by adults, such as a boy playing with a doll can be told not to play with it by a parent. They wanted parents to be educated on this so their children do what they want instead of exposing them to fit the stereotype of their gender.

Some young people said classes with mixed genders can mean boys and girls show off in front of one another and it can make people of the same gender uncomfortable. They said separate classes for girls and boys would be a good way to address this.

In the workplace, young people wanted to ensure men and women to have equal rights and equal pay in the workplace and not have men or women dominate different jobs.

Focus Group 6

Gender Stereotypes

Young people in this group identified traits they thought were stereotypes of men and women. They said men are expected to be stronger, enjoy physical activities, good at sports, good at playing games and planning. Some group members mentioned they thought sometimes men think they have better ideas and are expected to show how to do things rather than talk and give instructions. The stereotypical traits for women they identified included being emotional, weaker, not leaders and not as physical.

Group members also said there are assumptions that skills are predetermined by gender and the personalities people have. For example, an introverted or extraverted person can be perceived to have certain confidence and intelligence, which then can be perceived to be a good leader.

School and Work

Participants said there are lots of industries and jobs that are dominated by a gender. Jobs they identified as being male-dominant included military, CEOs, scientists, police, fire fighter, trades, doctors as well as any leadership positions. An example given was that there has nearly always been a male Prime Minister of Australia. The group identified women are dominant in aged care, as secretaries, in restaurants as waitresses, nurses, hairdressers and teachers. They said it was more acceptable for women to have jobs in modelling and dancing.

Group members said men earn more income and are expected to be the main source of income. Some members also thought that men want higher, better paid jobs and women are not as ambitious and therefore end up in lower paid jobs.

Home and Relationships

The stereotype of women's roles in households they identified included their job come second and they are expected to do housework, such as cleaning or preparing meals, and look after children at home. Some group members talked about expectations of women to provide for their partner while they relax and it is difficult for women to return to work after being the primary caregiver.

Stereotypes of men in the household they identified included men controlling the household budget, making bigger decisions, repairing items around the house, doing the gardening, looking after cars. Some group members also discussed how men then to use force rather than talk to communicate in relationships while women talk a lot.

Causes and Influences

The group thought these stereotypes have been passed on through history and traditions and replicated through the media, marketing and social media. They also thought gender stereotypes are learnt from an early age through home and school.

Ideas

The group talked about how gender stereotypes are learnt from an early age at home. In order to help challenge these stereotypes, parents could do things that did not fit within gender stereotypes such as men cooking and cleaning at home. They also wanted the challenging of gender stereotypes to continue in school by removing classes or subjects that separated genders, such as sport classes.

Young people wanted to see more stories in the media about how women have succeeded and provide more opportunities for them to be leaders, such as being the first woman as the leader of a country.

Group members want more opportunities to be created for women to try jobs that are dominated by men and for government to encourage more women to apply for jobs that are dominated by men to try and get more equality. They also wanted more targeted development opportunities for genders which form minorities in different workplaces and industries, whether this is men or women. The League of Extraordinary Women was used as an example of this.

Other ideas included having separate businesses and products for men and women so they are equal in terms of having an option for each gender, such as men going to barbers and women going to hairdressers, and a holiday where people can go and have a different experience that aligns with the opposite of their gender stereotypes.