

Australian young people deem domestic violence as commonplace in Australia today

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More than three quarters (76%) of Australian young people feel that domestic violence is common in Australia

- Only half of high school students (54%) report receiving information about domestic violence in school
- Over one in four young males (28%) believe ‘girls like guys in charge of the relationship’

The majority of Australian young people believe domestic violence to be common in Australian society according to a survey conducted by Youth Action NSW and White Ribbon Australia released today.

The survey of over 3000 respondents examined attitudes of young people aged between 16-25 years and explored young people’s views toward gender stereotypes and violence in Australian society, including online domestic violence.

The study, designed to develop an understanding of young people’s awareness of and attitudes towards domestic violence, has revealed 83% of young females believe it to be common or very common in Australia and 60% of males.

Gender Stereotypes

CEO of White Ribbon Australia Libby Davies said, “*The survey shows that young people have a good awareness of domestic violence, but they also show that some young people, particularly young men, hold attitudes that support gender stereotypes that lead to violence against women.*”

The research revealed that males were more likely to agree with gender stereotypes, with key differences of perception and interesting gaps around the nature of power and dominance in relationships including:

	Male	Female
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Girls like guys who are in charge of the relationship	28%	11%
Men are usually better at more things than women	15%	3%
Men are supposed to be head of the household and take control of the relationship	19%	4%

Youth Action NSW Director, Policy & Advocacy, Eamon Waterford, said: *“There are a lot more young Australian men out there who think women want them to take charge than there are women who agree with that. If one in five Australian men thinking they’re meant to be head of the household and controller of the relationship, when only one in 25 Australian women agree, then we have a hugely concerning situation. That’s why we think it’s vital to start exposing these gaps in understanding so a conversation can be started.”*

Interpretations of Domestic Violence Explored Online

The research study also examined interpretations of what constitutes domestic violence with the majority less likely to consider more subtle behaviours, particularly those online as controlling, dominating or employed to instil fear.

Percentage of respondents who don’t consider the following as domestic violence:

	Male	Female
Checking a partner’s email or phone without consent	33%	26%
Not showing a partner any love or affection	66%	45%
Constant yelling at partner	10%	4%

Respondents were found to get information about domestic violence from a vast array of sources including the general news (71%), television (59%) and newspapers (54%), but only 54% indicated that they received information about domestic violence at their school.

White Ribbon Australia CEO Libby Davies said: *“Violence against women has a clear and negative impact on children and young people’s behavioural, cognitive and emotional functioning, and social development. Schools must play a key role in educating young people and breaking the cycle of violence but only 54% of young people are getting information about domestic violence from their school. There is a critical need for collective action. It is everyone’s responsibility to make this happen: schools, workplaces, sporting clubs, politicians, and local communities alike must all play a role in ending men’s violence against women.”*

For more information visit <http://www.whiteribbon.org.au/understand-domestic-violence/research/> or www.youthaction.org.au

ABOUT WHITE RIBBON

The White Ribbon Campaign is the largest global male-led movement to stop violence against women. It engages and enables men and boys to lead this social change. In Australia, White Ribbon is an organisation that works to prevent violence by changing attitudes and behaviours. The prevention work is driven through social marketing, the Ambassador Program and initiatives with communities, schools, universities, sporting codes and workplaces.

ABOUT YOUTH ACTION NSW

Youth Action is the peak organisation representing young people and youth services in NSW. Youth Action works towards a society where all young people are supported, engaged and valued.

For media interviews contact Sally Burleigh: Sally@sbpr.com.au and 0419 516 889

This policy statement represents the organisational position of White Ribbon Australia. It does not represent the individual opinions and views of our stakeholders, including, but not limited to, our Ambassadors, Advocates, Partners and staff members.