Violence Information Aotearoa

Primary prevention of sexual violence:

Tāngata Tiriti evidence summary report

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Glossary

Communities: Refers to a broad range of groups of people. Communities may be groups of people who come together based on place (for example, schools or neighbourhoods), culture or ethnicity, identity (for example LGBTQ+ or migrant communities), shared activities (for example particular sports or performing arts or church groups) or any other shared interest (C. Campbell & Jovchelovitch, 2000; Our Watch, 2021).

Initiatives: Refers to a broad possible range of activities that may be initiated and developed by or with communities to support the primary prevention of sexual violence (Carmody et al., 2009). This may refer to direct participant programmes (such as workshops), campaigns, community mobilisation or anything else developed by or with communities to support the primary prevention of sexual violence (Gidycz et al., 2011; Our Watch, 2017).

Sexual violence: The term sexual violence refers to a range of unwanted, non-consensual, coerced and forced sexual behaviours. Types of sexual violence include sexual harassment, sexual coercion, sexual assault, rape, as well as childhood sexual abuse (Krug et al., 2002). These behaviours can occur in person and through digital communications (Henry & Powell, 2014; World Health Organization, 2004). They span serious criminal acts as well as more everyday forms of abuse. Sexual violence is a complex social problem, and is deeply embedded in the structures of our society and enabled by many taken-for-granted social norms and values (Gavey, 2019). Preventing it requires dismantling those foundations and building a new ethical landscape that makes all forms of sexual violence socially unacceptable. It is important to note that while sexual violence covers childhood sexual abuse (CSA), prevention pathways for the prevention of CSA are quite different to those for the prevention of sexual violence perpetrated between adolescents and adults.

Tino rangatiratanga: We use tino rangatiratanga to mean complete political authority, which has never been ceded by Māori. It includes sovereignty, decision-making power, and Māori control over things Māori.

Tauiwi: Non-Māori, including Pākehā and all other migrants and cultural groups that live in Aotearoa.

Tāngata Tiriti: People of Te Tiriti. Historically Pākehā but now includes all Tauiwi, who live in Aotearoa through the agreements and parameters of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (see Jackson et al., 2016).

Introduction

This document is designed to provide evidence and context to support the *Pou* and *Implementation Principles* for the for the primary prevention of sexual violence across Aotearoa (Dobbs et al., 2025). Developed in parallel, the *Pou* and *Principles* are designed to guide sexual violence prevention initiatives across Aotearoa and can be scaled to suit the needs of individuals, communities, regions, iwi, hapu, whānau or whoever is doing this mahi. We begin by presenting a glossary of terms, before providing a brief description of Primary Prevention and the Primary Prevention system situating this work within this system. From there, we describe *four* key principles to guide the creation and delivery of primary prevention initiatives: *Dismantling the foundations of sexual violence, Clear logic for change, Locally situated* and *Evidence based*.

Historically, sexual violence has its roots in patriarchal and colonial systems of power (Kessel, 2022; Pease, 2019; Pihama et al., 2016). Consequently, many taken-for-granted norms about sex and relationships act to support what is sometimes called rape culture (Gavey, 2019). Dismantling these power systems requires un-doing power relations that have existed in many Western, and some other cultures for centuries (Cavino, 2016; Pihama & McRoberts, 2009; Wilson et al., 2021). Without clearing space, we cannot build something new that doesn't either ignore or reinforce the very factors that enable and excuse sexual violence. Alongside this dismantling work, of course, we need to also foster innovative new ways of imagining and communicating what ethical, mutual and reciprocal relationships will look like.

What is primary prevention of sexual violence?

Primary prevention of sexual violence seeks to prevent acts of violence from happening before they occur (DeGue et al., 2014; Gidycz et al., 2011; McMahon, 2000; Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2013; Our Watch, 2021; Powell & Henry, 2014; VicHealth, 2007). Within a public health approach, primary prevention is one part of a three-part system of prevention, alongside secondary and tertiary prevention (e.g., Carmody et al., 2009; Our Watch, 2021; Powell & Henry, 2014; Webster & Flood, 2015). Secondary prevention focuses on reducing harm for those who have been identified as "at risk" while tertiary forms of prevention aim to prevent continued harm after violence has already happened (Carmody et al., 2009; Our Watch, 2021; Powell & Henry, 2014). Sexual violence is a complex and widespread problem. Of the three levels, primary prevention is necessary to create real and lasting change by preventing sexual violence before it is committed. It does this by targeting the social norms and structures that scaffold rape and enable a culture of sexual violence (Carmody et al., 2009; Our Watch, 2021; VicHealth, 2007; Wells et al., 2019).

CSA shares many of the foundations as other forms of sexual violence, however also has unique characteristics that require different approaches to prevention (see Brady & Lowe, 2020; Russell et al., 2020; Zeuthen & Hagelskjær, 2013).

Dismantling the foundations discussed in this report has the potential to contribute to the prevention of CSA. Yet, work targeting the prevention of CSA must be focused more on the specific drivers of perpetration of CSA (Gill & Begum, 2022; Krugman & Korbin, 2022). Initiatives for the prevention of child sexual abuse should draw on expertise that is specific to understanding the dynamics of child sexual abuse and appropriate prevention principles.

Primary prevention as a system

Primary prevention of sexual violence is likely to be most effective when it operates as a system of interconnected parts and encompasses multiple strategies that aim to challenge harmful social norms and behaviours and build knowledge and skills (Carmody et al., 2009; Powell & Henry, 2014; World Health Organization, 2004). Therefore, when thinking broadly, the primary prevention of sexual violence in Aotearoa can be seen as a system of interconnected parts made up of specific initiatives, funders, kaimahi, providers, communities, groups, leaders, and policies (ACC, 2023; Gidycz et al., 2011; Our Watch, 2021; World Health Organization, 1986). These initiatives will take place at multiple levels and take varied approaches, targeting organisational cultures, community norms and societal scripts to unpack and undo the foundations of sexual violence in all areas (Beres et al., 2019; Carmody et al., 2009; Powell & Henry, 2014; Rayne et al., 2023; World Health Organization, 2004).

Looking at primary prevention as a system helps to remind us that:

1. No single initiative, person or policy on its own can solve the complex entrenched problem of sexual violence. Each component (initiative) will be stronger by focusing on a key aspect of the problem and offering a tailored solution (Quadara & Wall, 2012).

2. The system will be strongest when its components are working together, with a shared overarching vision, to build the foundations of ethical, mutual and reciprocal relationships. Having a common set of principles or values that drive the system will ensure that the different parts are all building towards the same ultimate goal, and not inadvertently working against each other (Beres et al., 2019; Carmody et al., 2009; World Health Organization, 2004).

3. The system will flourish when it is built on evidence about what works and what doesn't work in diverse contexts (Charlton, 1998; Eketone, 2013; Fletcher, 2014). Different components of the system will collect feedback regularly and communicate with each other, feeding information and knowledge back into the system so the whole system benefits from the learnings of individual parts (Carmody et al., 2009).

Building a robust primary prevention system requires a focus on the development of a strong infrastructure to create initiatives and strategies that will shift cultures and result in the prevention of sexual violence. A robust primary prevention system requires a clear unified vision, strong leadership and governance, adequate funding and workforce development, good information flows and skilled health promotion practice (Baugh Littlejohns et al., 2019; Nutbeam, 1998). Within this structure the policy, funding and administrative functions engage with organisations and communities to deliver prevention initiatives (Schwarzman et al., 2019).

The sections below describe the purpose and function each of the four implementation principles:

- Dismantling the Foundations of Sexual Violence
- Clear Logic for Change
- Locally Situated
- Evidence Based.

Ideally, guided by the Tāngata Whenua Implementation Pou and these Implementation Principles, multiple initiatives will work together across communities and regions toward the broader goal reducing and ending sexual violence. Some initiatives may be small local projects focused on a particular group of people or area, while others may be larger in scale and incorporate a broader population across Aotearoa. As long as they all connect with the principles, and oversight is provided to ensure gaps in reach are addressed, it is possible to build a transformative cohesive system.

Principle 1:

Dismantling the foundations of sexual violence

Principle 1: Dismantling the foundations of sexual violence

All primary prevention initiatives work towards ultimately dismantling the foundations of sexual violence. Doing so opens up possibilities for creating new ways of building relationships free from violence.

The term sexual violence refers to a range of unwanted, non-consensual, coerced and forced sexual behaviours. Types of sexual violence include sexual harassment, sexual coercion, sexual assault, rape, as well as childhood sexual abuse[1]. They span serious criminal acts as well as more everyday forms of abuse.

> As a complex social problem, sexual violence is deeply embedded in the structures of our society and enabled by many taken-for-granted social norms and values (Gavey, 2019). Preventing it requires dismantling those foundations and building a new ethical landscape that makes all forms of sexual violence socially unacceptable.

The challenge of sexual violence prevention

Sexual violence has been embedded within our cultural frameworks for so long that it can be difficult to imagine what it could look like once dismantled. Many of the terms that are often used to inspire positive change are laden with contradictory meanings or unhelpful connotations. For instance, promoting respectful relationships sounds good, and could describe a relationship where people are valued equally and share power (what we might call mutual respect).
But the concept of respect is complex, as it can also be used in a hierarchical way. As an example, some patriarchal belief systems suggest that women should 'respect' their husbands, which typically means they should listen and obey (Hunnicutt, 2009). This use of 'respect' is not based on power sharing or mutuality, so does

1 SA shares many of the foundations as other forms of sexual violence, however also has unique characteristics that require different approaches to prevention (see Brady & Lowe, 2020; Russell et al., 2020; Zeuthen & Hagelskjær, 2013). Dismantling the foundations discussed in this report has the potential to contribute to the prevention of CSA. Yet, work targeting the prevention of CSA must be focused more on the specific drivers of perpetration of CSA (Gill & Begum, 2022; Krugman & Korbin, 2022). Initiatives for the prevention of child sexual abuse should draw on expertise that is specific to understanding the dynamics of child sexual abuse and appropriate prevention principles.

not create the kind of ethical landscape that will protect against sexual violence. Similarly, focusing too strongly on consent can be problematic because it ignores gendered power dynamics within relationships (Harris, 2018; Jeffrey, 2024). Norms around consent have shifted in the last ten years, with more people being explicit about what they do or do not want (Willis & Jozkowski, 2022). Yet, research is demonstrating that those same consent norms are being used to coerce people into sex (Hust et al., 2017). This is because a focus on consent education leaves the foundations of sexual violence intact (Beres, 2007, 2014b).

a. Gender inequality

People of all genders can be victims of sexual violence and can also perpetrate sexual violence. At the same time, sexual violence is gendered in important ways:

- **Women, trans and non-binary people are disproportionately affected as victims. The vast majority of perpetrators are men.**

  Sexual violence is a gendered issue, with women, trans and non-binary people disproportionately represented as victims and men as perpetrators (Fanslow & Robinson, 2004; Griffin, 1996; Gupta, 2001; Jewkes et al., 2015; Kirk-Provencher et al., 2023; Rozee & Koss, 2001). Despite the gendered statistics, men are not biologically predisposed to perpetrate sexual violence (Mardorossian, 2014; Pascoe & Hollander, 2016). Therefore, in prevention, it is important to focus on the social power structures of masculinity and femininity, rather than the binary gender groups of men and women (Dougherty, 2021). This can ensure the inclusion of victims of all genders, while also to identify as specifically as possible, the underlying causes of sexual violence (Gavey, 2019; Mardorossian, 2014).

- **Patriarchal power structures that uphold sexism and misogyny support rape culture.**

  Patriarchy is a gendered system of power and domination located within many different cultures (Jordan, 2022; Kaufman, 1987; Our Watch, 2019a; Pease, 2019). It is a system that is male dominated, male identified and male centred. This term does not mean that all men have power and all women do not, rather, patriarchy is a system of unequal gendered power relations, in which men are implicitly (and often explicitly) held to be superior and more important than women and people of other genders (Jordan, 2022; Pease, 2019). During colonisation, Europeans brought a patriarchal social structure to Aotearoa and many of the Pacific Islands (Le Grice et al., 2022; Pihama et al., 2016). Colonial patriarchy displaced Indigenous systems of gender, entrenching a gender inequality that persists today (Cavino, 2016; Kessel, 2022; Le Grice et al., 2022).

  Patriarchy organises our social world at both a structural (government, justice) level as well as a cultural (relationship norms, gendered expectations, cultural scripts) level (Le Grice et al., 2022; Pease, 2019), in ways that are mutually reinforcing. Structures enshrine the power of men, and traditionally masculine ways of being, to dominate while cultural scripts reinforce the structural relations

of power between men and women and masculinity and femininity. People of all genders tend to hold beliefs and act in ways that support a patriarchal system, and while all men generally benefit in some ways, some men benefit far more than others (Hunnicutt, 2009). A patriarchal social structure creates conditions that facilitate sexual violence, particularly because men's perceived sexual needs are considered more important than women's wishes and desires (Gilfoyle et al., 1993; Hollway, 1984b). Many patriarchal cultures have the following features that enable sexual violence (see Tables 1 and 2 for more detail).

- **Heterosexual norms underpin dynamics of sexual violence**

  A gendered understanding of sexual violence must include an understanding of heterosexual norms. This is not to say that sexual violence is unique to heterosex, rather, the heterosexual gendered norms impact people of all genders (Farvid & Braun, 2017; Fenaughty et al., 2006; Hockey et al., 2007; Hollander, 2018). Heterosexual norms encourage us to regard masculine and feminine sexuality as inherently different and in binary opposition to one another. They are key to perpetuating the patriarchal power structure that elevates traditional masculine desires and behaviours as more important than, and dominant over, women and others positioned as feminine (e.g., Pease, 2019). These norms of heterosexuality both enable and obscure a culture that tolerates sexual violence (Gavey, 2019).

Table 1: Gendered norms and gendered roles of heterosex that enable sexual violence

Gendered norm/role	Description	Scaffolds sexual violence
Feminine		
Women are conditioned to be passive	In some cultures, women are socialised to be passive in social scenarios and to have a passive sexuality and a passive role in heterosex (Gavey & McPhillips, 1999).	Twofold, firstly, women are taught not to speak up and fight back or stand up for themselves against aggressive men. Secondly, men expect women to be amiable and controllable. This sexual dynamic enables space for the transgression of boundaries (Bay-Cheng et al., 2018; Cunniff Gilson, 2016; Kettrey, 2018; Mardorossian, 2014).
Women are encouraged to be subservient/ compliant	Women are socialised to put other people's interests and 'needs' ahead of their own. For example, in Samoan culture, Christian values support conservative gender roles within marriage, whereas a wife should support and serve her husband (Boodoosingh et al., 2018)	Perpetrators of sexual violence can exploit this dynamic resulting in sexual assault or rape (Papp et al., 2017; Pilcher & Whelehan, 2017; Reed et al., 2021).
Have/hold discourse (Hollway, 1984b)	In dominant western heteronormative cultures, it is expected that women want commitment from men and therefore will 'give-up' sex in order to have men commit to them (Hollway, 1984b). Women are not seen to want sex for themselves (Gavey, 2019; Hollway, 1984b).	Sex is not seen as something women want and instead must use as a tool to keep men in a relationship with them. Sex is seen as something men must 'win' from women and therefore encourages the use of coercive tactics (Jeffrey & Barata, 2019).

Gendered norm/role	Description	Scaffolds sexual violence
Vulnerable	In many cultures, women are traditionally assumed to be the 'fairer sex' and must be protected by men. Femininity is seen as weak.	Femininity is socially constructed as vulnerable, especially to rape (Cunniff Gilson, 2016). Women don't think they can fight back. Men don't expect women to fight back (Marcus, 1992).
Caregiver	Women are taught to be emotionally open and responsive to others, particularly men. To be feminine is to be a carer, mother, wife and to look after a man or her children (Gatrell, 2005; Pilcher & Whelehan, 2017).	Women are taught to be responsible for the feelings of others, especially men. Therefore, when a man initiates sex, a woman may feel pressured to say yes to keep him happy or protect his feelings, even if she does not want to have sex herself (e.g., Gavey, 2019).
Permissive sex discourse (Hollway, 1984b)	Women are assumed to have natural sexual desires, just like men's. Women want sex outside of commitment and have a natural drive for sex (Gavey, 2019; Hollway, 1984b).	Gains in gender equality around acknowledging women's perceived 'natural' want for sex, have been used to judge women harshly for saying 'no' to sex. This can lead women to agree to sex they do not want out of fear of judgment or their partner pushing ahead anyway (e.g., Faustino & Gavey, 2022; Thorburn et al., 2021).
Masculine		
Violence, aggression and dominance	Aggression is a normalised part of masculinity, and many men experience and enact different forms of violence throughout their lives (Flood, 2008; Kaufman, 1987). Boys are encouraged to be 'physical' and are praised for their domination of others through sports and hobbies (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Kaufman, 1994; Kimmel, 1994). Mainstream pornography and popular culture normalise men's sexual dominance over women (see Antevska & Gavey, 2015).	Certain forms of violence are tolerated and sanctioned by men, this normalisation enables men to enact violence against women with very few consequences (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Kaufman, 1987; Kimmel, 1994; Lucero et al., 2014).

Gendered norm/role	Description	Scaffolds sexual violence
Male sexual drive discourse (Beres, 2014a; Hollway, 1984b, 1984a)	The 'male sexual drive' discourse naturalises men's 'need' for sex as an uncontrollable urge (Beres, 2014a; Gavey, 2019; Hollway, 1984b).	Men are seen to not be able to control their sexuality. Therefore if a man is asking for sex, it is rude/unfair for a woman (or a male sexual partner) to decline (Braun et al., 2009). The male sexual drive discourse is also used in defence of men following rape, implying that it is reasonable to believe that they could not have stopped themselves. An example of how the male sexual drive discourse scaffolds sexual violence is the way it can be used to discount the experiences of men as victims. Men who experience sexual violence are discredited as legitimate victims because men are expected to 'always want it' (see Pretorius, 2009; Scarce, 1997). Furthermore, men of all sexualities, and gay men in particular, are hypersexualised and further discounted or disbelieved when they experience sexual violence (Braun et al., 2009; Fenaughty et al., 2006).
Flight from the Feminine	Many men are taught from childhood taught to avoid behaviours seen as feminine, and that femininity is inferior to masculinity (e.g., Burrell et al., 2020; Gavey et al., 2021).	Men will distance themselves from behaviours seen as feminine, which can contribute to misogynist and homophobic behaviour (Bridges, 2014; H. Campbell, 2000; Pascoe, 2005).

- **Gendered scripts support rape culture**

  Rigid prescriptive elements of gender roles and gendered sexual scripts enable abuse and violence (Beres, 2014a; Hust et al., 2017; Mortimer et al., 2019; Muehlenhard & McCoy, 1991; Ryan, 2011; Thomas & Weston, 2020). Sexual scripts are conventional patterns of interaction that outline typical expectations about sex and relationships (Ryan, 2011). They are built on norms that shape expectations about what masculine or feminine people do in sexual relationships, and what behaviours are expected, in what order (Beres, 2014a). Dominant western cultural scripts are constructed and perpetuated within popular culture. Sexual scripts implicitly guide people about how to behave and what to expect. Sexual scripts change over time, and vary between cultures, and in specific social contexts. Much like a script used in theatre that tells actors what to do say and do, sexual scripts guide people ("actors") about how to behave and what to expect (Beres, 2014a). Different cultures will have scripts that are specific to that culture, that work with or against the dominant cultural scripts. Within our patriarchal society, gendered sexual scripts work to perpetuate inequality and enable sexual violence (Marcus, 1992). See table 2 for examples of current mainstream western sexual scripts that support rape culture.

Table 2: Gendered scripts of heterosex that enable sexual violence

Gendered script	Description	Scaffolds sexual violence
Dating		
Sex is expected in relationships, as well as casual situations (where people have met at parties or bars or online, for example).	Physical intimacy, in particular sex, is expected in romantic relationships. In come settings, sex is considered the goal for certain social situations such as parties or clubs (Allen, 2004; Duval et al., 2020; Jovanovic & Williams, 2018). This is particularly prevalent in younger populations, such tertiary education settings where drinking and "hook-up" culture are the dominant expectations (Beres et al., 2019; Jeffrey & Barata, 2019, 2020; Universities, U.K., 2016).	There are different forms of pressure to engage in sex. Social pressure from peers and family as well as the media and social institutions (such as expectations for marriage). Direct pressure from partners, this can range from light-hearted through to coercive and threatening. These pressures limit individuals' agency and can lead to harmful sex and sexual violence (Duckworth & Trautner, 2019; Gilbert, 2018; Thorburn et al., 2021).
If some sexual activity occurs that it "naturally" leads to (penetrative) sex.	Sexual acts are expected to follow a pattern, such as kissing leading to oral sex then onto penetrative sex (French & Neville, 2017).	Individuals can feel pressured to follow up any form of physical intimacy with progressive acts that lead to penetrative sex. This pressure can be used by perpetrators to initiate sexual acts that follow the script, assuming that their partner consents and/or ignoring their signs of non-consent. This could also make individuals feel as though they must follow through with acts they do not want because it is expected following a date or other forms of physical intimacy (French & Neville, 2017). Increasingly new behaviours are being introduced into traditional heterosexual scripts, including anal intercourse and 'rough sex' acts like 'choking' (Faustino & Gavey, 2022).
Feminine		
Sexual gatekeepers	Because men are assumed to always want sex, it is up to women to allow or deny a proposition for sex from a man (Beres, 2014a; Burkett & Hamilton, 2012). Women are seen to have a passive role during sex, where they will "allow" sex to happen to them.	This can create an environment where men might feel the need to convince women to have sex, sometimes using violence or coercive measures.

Gendered script	Description	Scaffolds sexual violence
Token no	Due to traditional feminine norms of purity and a high value on virginity in many cultures, women have traditionally been expected not to immediately say yes to sex. This can be associated with assumptions that a woman's refusal is a 'token' refusal, and a belief that she needs to be convinced. Religious communities and cultural groups that highly value virginity and purity are more likely to expect token resistance from women (Shafer et al., 2018; Sprecher et al., 1994; Veukiso-Ulugia, 2016).	This belief leads to men ignoring when a woman says no to sex, as it can be seen as what she needs to do to be a 'good' woman. Therefore, no matter how a woman attempts to communicate her unwillingness, men can read it as a 'false no' and proceed anyway.
Masculine		
'Boys will be boys'	Men generally, but young men specifically, are seen as not responsible for their actions or the consequences of these actions, including violence or coercive actions.	This narrative removes any blame from men who perpetrate violence, suggesting that they were just being boys and therefore should not be held accountable for their actions, including sexual violence. This term is used to excuse rape supportive attitudes and behaviour of groups of (usually young) men (Flood, 2008). This attitude is often used to dismiss harmful sexual behaviours.
Sexual initiator	Men are expected to initiate sex with women and assume the active role in heterosex.	Men have the active role in heterosex and therefore hold the power to decide when and how sex will occur, and what it will consist of. This power can be used to pressure, coerce or force a woman to have sex she does not want (French & Neville, 2017).
Men cannot stop themselves (connected to the Male sexual drive discourse)	Within some cultures it is believed that it is hard for men to stop once they have become aroused, and concepts like 'blue balls' further perpetuate the idea that men need sexual release (e.g., Jeffrey & Barata, 2020).	Twofold, first, this can lead women to go along with sexual activities that they do not want because they feel guilty for stopping their partner. Secondly, men use this as an excuse for ignoring a woman's signs of non-consent, by stating that they could not stop themselves.

Often these gendered scripts and norms are connected with rape myths. For instance common rape myths include statements such as:

- When a woman says no she really means yes
- Perpetrators are strangers to victims
- Men cannot control their sexual desires
- Men cannot be raped/sexually assaulted

- Women are responsible for resisting/stopping rape
- 'At least they didn't die'
- Only certain types of women can be true victims (sexually inexperienced, white, 'respectable') and others lack credibility ('sluts', not white, drinking)
- Only certain types of men can be perpetrators (for example, not 'nice guys')

The patriarchal structures created and maintained through gendered norms, sexual scripts and rape myths work with colonisation and other forms of power imbalances to create the foundations of sexual violence.

b. Colonisation

Tauiwi, colonisation and sexual violence

Colonisation is a structure of ongoing exploitation and domination of Indigenous people, their land and resources (Jackson, 2020; Mutu, 2019; Veracini, 2018; Wolfe, 2006). The British, along with some other European nations, colonised Aotearoa imposing 19th century Western values on Māori.

In Aotearoa, Te Tiriti o Waitangi underpins the relationship between Māori and Tauiwi:

> *"When iwi and hapū first discussed whether to treat with the Crown, it was on the basis that the stories of the land could be translated into Te Tiriti as a way to bring people together – mahi tūhono. Like the kawa on the marae, the kawa of Te Tiriti envisaged the cementing of relationships that recognised the facts of iwi independence and the hopes for an inherent interdependence. The words in the reo in Te Tiriti were an expression of that tikanga-based recognition and were signed by the rangatira on that basis. They reaffirmed that while interdependence was an honourable aim, it was always dependent upon the continuing independence of iwi and hapū. To contemplate forfeiting that independence would have been legally impossible, politically untenable and culturally incomprehensible" (Jackson, 2020, p. 144).*

A key part of the work Tauiwi generally and Pākehā specifically must do to dismantle the foundations of sexual violence is to fully embrace our role as Tāngata Tiriti. When communities and organisations that are largely Tauiwi are looking to engage in primary prevention activities it is important to centre values of Te Tiriti and embrace the foundation that it provides for mutually respectful and affirming relationships (Jackson et al., 2016). This also means developing initiatives that are careful to support decolonisation and resist practices that perpetuate colonisation (Jackson et al., 2016; Mutu, 2019; L. T. Smith, 2021). For example, projects that enforce Western practices and suggest they work for everyone are not appropriate. Engaging with Māori across all stages of development and dissemination is one way

to support decolonising goals. According to Te Tiriti, Māori have tino rangatiratanga, complete control and decision-making power over all things Māori, but they are also guaranteed under Te Tiriti, the same rights and privileges as all other citizens. Therefore, prevention initiatives in Aotearoa must be supported to consider needs of Māori.

> Further, Pākehā must acknowledge the whakapapa of colonisation, reflect on how we can dismantle the colonial gender power structures and imagine new possibilities that continually support Māori aspirations.

A central tool of colonisation is the displacement of Māori knowledges and ways of being, with a British, Pākehā worldview and system, therefore a key aspect of engaging in ethical practise in Aotearoa/New Zealand is hearing and prioritising the needs of Māori as Tāngata Whenua (Mahuika, 2015). In order to ensure Tāngata Tiriti initiatives are honouring Te Tiriti, every initiative should consider the place of Māori at each principle (Boulton, 2018; Came, 2013; Fraser et al., 2022). Across each principle developers should work with Māori to attend to the aspirations and concerns of Māori (Kline et al., 2013; Le Grice et al., 2022) and consider how the initiative will help to uplift Māori (J. Anderson et al., 2003; Carlson & Redvers, 2023; Ramsden, 2002; Tupara, 2012). Doing so includes being informed by Māori analyses of how colonial gender roles historically and currently impact Māori and work to continue the process of colonisation in Aotearoa. From there, Tāngata Tiriti must consider how best to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi in the dismantling of the foundations of sexual violence and ensure we are following the lead of Māori in the rebuilding, while also taking responsibility for our own communities.

Sexual violence for Māori

Colonial invasion, along with it the introduction of Victorian gender roles, is central to the historic and current manifestations and understandings of sexual violence in Aotearoa New Zealand. For Māori, the colonial/western understandings of sexual violence fall short of explaining its impact and experience (Pihama et al., 2016; Pihama & McRoberts, 2009; C. Smith & Tinirau, 2019; Wilson et al., 2021). Within Te Ao Māori, sexual violence is a cultural and spiritual transgression that violates "the mana of the person and the collective mana of whānau, hapū and iwi. It is a violent transgression against a person's whakapapa that reaches back to past generations and has direct impacts on future generations. Sexual violence for Māori is also understood in regards to the violence perpetuated upon whānau, hapū and iwi through colonial invasion" (Pihama et al., 2016, p. 48; see also Lindsay Latimer et al., 2022).

Along with Western gender roles, colonisation displaced whānau structures and tikanga which isolated Māori from support systems and prevented Te Ao Māori methods of managing and resolving transgressions. Furthermore, sexual violence was a tool of colonisation, used to control Māori and facilitate the theft of their land (see Cavino, 2016; Gabel, 2019; Hoeata et al., 2011; Le Grice, 2017; Mikaere, 2011; Pihama et al., 2016; C. Smith & Tinirau, 2019; Wilson et al., 2021). It is critical for anyone working in the sexual violence space, to seek out, include and listen to how Māori define sexual violence for themselves.

Colonisation and sexual violence prevention

- It is important to address ongoing colonisation directly, so that we can be careful not to inadvertently reinforce colonial messages and structures of power.
- The gendered norms that make up the foundation of sexual violence are direct results of the colonisation and imposition of western gendered structures onto Māori.
- The impacts of sexual violence are felt strongly and beyond the individuals involved in a single act.
- Māori cultural definitions of sexual violence should be acknowledged and upheld in the Primary Prevention System in Aotearoa.

c. Other forms of power

Power imbalances enable sexual violence. We have already discussed power imbalances created by patriarchy and colonisation, but there are other forms of power imbalance that provide the foundations for sexual violence. Power in this context includes forms of social status and dominance, as well as authority and influence and, in some cases, opportunity – all of which can both enable and disguise the abuse of power involved in sexual violence.

These forms of power fall into two main categories:

Structural power

Hierarchies around gender, sexuality, race or ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, ability and disability, and so on. Structural power refers to the power afforded to certain groups based on various intersecting identities and is created and maintained at the institutional and cultural level (Collins & Bilge, 2016). Gender inequality and colonization are examples of this, where the structures of our society work to uphold and support those already empowered, and further oppress those who are marginalized (Kessel, 2022; Pease, 2019; Pihama et al., 2016).

Another example of structural power is related to wealth and income. Those with money, capital and resources are empowered through structures such as government, education and justice to make their lives easier, while those with less can struggle to find stability and support. Financial inequality can create material conditions that reduce a person's agency and leave them vulnerable to sexual

violence (Anthias, 2014; De Schrijver et al., 2022; Jülich et al., 2013; Phipps, 2009). Someone's financial situation can impact if they can take time off to make police report, or perhaps they live with their abuser but cannot financially afford to leave. Similarly, in prevention, a community in a low-income area may find an initiative with full day workshops inaccessible (Terry, 2004).

Some communities are more vulnerable to abuses of power than others. For example, disabled people who rely on support workers to assist with intimate bodily care can be exposed to violations afforded by the access and power that of the support person in relation to the person they are caring for (Ledingham et al., 2022; McCabe et al., 1994; Willott et al., 2020). This, paired with the belief that disabled people do not experience sexuality and their lack of structural power disables them, leaving room for abuses of power by care workers, medical professionals and family/friends (Addlakha et al., 2017; Fraser-Barbour, 2018; Fraser-Barbour et al., 2018; Martin et al., 2006; McGilloway et al., 2020).

Role based power

Relations of relative power and authority associated with relationships like teacher–student, coach–athlete, church leader–church goers, youth group leaders–youth group members, doctor–patient, and so on.

Role based power is relational power that depends on a person having power over the other based on an appointed position or role. Hill Collins and Bilge note that "power relations are about people's lives, how people relate to one another, and who is advantaged or disadvantaged within social interactions" (2016, p. 7). A person in a dominant role, such as a church leader, coach or doctor, has the potential to misuse the power afforded to them in their role in order to exploit or abuse the person in a subordinate position (Fortune, 1983; Hardman-Cromwell, 1991). Those in trusted positions of power are also more likely to have people who are vulnerable, isolated or in crisis come to them for help and support (Robison, 2003). While legally, consent cannot be given if coerced, those with power over another can use their power to make the subordinate person feel as though they cannot say no.

A well-known example of this abuse of power is the abuse by priests in the catholic church (Fortune, 1983; Robison, 2003; Shupe et al., 2000). The power afforded to a priest or clergyman over the congregants, children and adults, allowed some priests to isolate, manipulate and abuse many people, with little to no repercussions.

Another example is sports coaches who, at all levels, hold power over the athletes they coach. Power and control dynamics can play out in abusive ways, for example in the elite sporting world, a coach has direct control over an athlete's future career, ability to succeed and often holds unquestioned authority (Brackenridge, 1994; Wilinsky & McCabe, 2021). This role-based position of power can be further exacerbated by intersecting structural power relations, such as ethnicity, age and gender – for example if a coach is an older Pākehā man and the athlete is a young Māori woman. It is not unusual for two or more of these forms of power to overlap to create circumstances of particular vulnerability, such as with an adult male teacher and their teenage female student.

Summary: Dismantling the foundations of sexual violence

> Without clearing space, we cannot build something new that does not either ignore or reinforce the very factors that enable and excuse sexual violence.

The foundations that we have describe here (Gender Inequality, Colonisation, and Other Forms of Power) are the conditions that facilitate and help to excuse sexual violence. To work effectively in preventing sexual violence, prevention initiatives require an understanding of, and willingness to address and dismantle these foundations. Only by doing so, can initiatives open up possibilities for creating new ways of building relationships free from violence. Accordingly, without addressing these foundations, the implementation of the principles to address sexual violence, to which we turn next, will be diminished.

Principle 2:

Clear logic for change

Principle 2: Clear logic for change

Effective primary prevention rests on a clear analysis of what change is to be targeted, how the initiative will create that change, and how we will know whether we are successful (Fletcher, 2014; Quadara & Wall, 2012; VicHealth, 2007). This is also called a theory of change or a programme logic (Knowlton & Phillips, 2013).

Identifying and describing expected change

Effective prevention initiatives will clearly identify the *specific* change or results expected from the initiative (Fletcher, 2014; Hawkins et al., 2009; McLaughlin & Jordan, 1999). This can be a shift in particular knowledge, social attitudes and/or behaviours (Bartholomew & Mullen, 2011). Alternatively, the desired results might include engagement with initiatives (including helping firm up our collective vision for an ethical new landscape), or building the capacity of the community, before targeting the foundations of sexual violence more directly (World Health Organization, 1986, 2004). No single initiative on its own can achieve the larger goal of eliminating sexual violence (Carmody et al., 2009). Also, if we are not clear on what changes we are aiming for it is unlikely to be effective.

> For the prevention system as a whole to be moving in the right direction, it is essential that we can all see what aspects of the foundations of sexual violence are being targeted, how that mahi contributes to the overall goal, and where there might be important gaps.

Furthermore, any prevention initiative needs a clear description of *how* it is expected to create the desired outcomes (Nock, 2007). When designing the 'logic for change,' it is helpful to think about how the activities could be experienced and interpreted, and therefore how this process will generate the planned results of the initiative (L. A. Anderson et al., 2006; Bartholomew & Mullen, 2011; Breuer et al., 2015; Dixon & Sindall, 1994; Women's Health Victoria, 2012). In other words, the activities must align with the desired outcomes. For example, if the goal is behaviour change, then there should be clear descriptions of desired behaviours and how the initiative will provide opportunities for practising any new skills (Fletcher, 2014; McLaughlin & Jordan, 2015).

Often, primary prevention approaches are developed by focusing on the overarching and long-term goal of reducing (or even ending) sexual violence. While this is an inspiring long-term collective aspiration, significantly reducing or ending sexual violence cannot be achieved by any single initiative. Instead, initiatives that target specific desired changes will create more achievable steps towards a violence-free society. Being specific at this point will also make it more possible to know whether or not the initiative is working, and to make changes if it's not (Angus et al., 2013; VicHealth, 2007). Primary prevention initiatives often set goals to change behaviour, but inadvertently design approaches that focus only on knowledge or social attitudes. Public health research shows that changes in knowledge or social attitudes will not automatically result in behaviour change, even though it is sometimes a necessary first step (see also Quadara & Wall, 2012).

Evaluating the success of an initiative

An effective programme will elicit feedback and evaluation on an ongoing basis. Such feedback should be connected to the expected outcomes so that it is clear whether or not the initiative is achieving the desired outcomes (Anh, 2018; Bonell et al., 2015). This will provide the opportunity to shift and change the initiative on an ongoing basis to ensure that it is best working towards the desired primary prevention goals (Moyer et al., 1997). Learnings from this process will also feed into other initiatives and the broader primary prevention system. It is important to gather good quality information about the specific desired outcomes (Minkler et al., 2003). Ideally, this is accomplished on an ongoing basis and is not a burden on those engaging with the initiative or those running the initiative (HealthWest Partnership Victoria, 2020; VicHealth, 2019).

Table 3: The two main types of evaluation

Type of Evaluation	When used	Strengths	Limitations
Developmental/ Formative (Also known as participatory, learning-oriented evaluations)	Early stages of development (Fagen et al., 2011). Adapting existing initiatives to new/ emerging contexts (Fagen et al., 2011). During the development or improvement of the initiative (Graham, Potterton, et al., 2021; Scriven, 1981). Can be seen as a precursor to formative and summative evaluation. This evaluation should be tied to the expected outcomes so it is clear whether or not the initiative is achieving the desired outcomes (VicHealth, 2016). This will provide the opportunity to shift and change the initiative to ensure it is meeting the needs of community on an ongoing basis. Learnings from this process will also feed into other initiatives and the broader primary prevention system.	Working with developmental evaluation means that initiatives grow and change to meet the needs of the community and to incorporate learnings from elsewhere in the primary prevention system. Prioritises innovation and learning (VicHealth, 2016). These evaluation methods include and encourage community participation through all stages of development and evaluation (VicHealth, 2016). Well suited when flexibility is required, for new and emerging initiatives in complex and changeable contexts (Fagen et al., 2011; HealthWest Partnership Victoria, 2020). Provides descriptive and assessment information that can lead to the improvement of the initiative while it is ongoing (Hall & Hall, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 1986, p. 550; N. L. Smith & Brandon, 2008). Provides interim feedback (Hall & Hall, 2004). Enables developers, stakeholders and evaluators to work together to improve initiatives (Fox et al., 2017).	Can be challenging for evaluators to distinguish between data gathering and recommendations (Patton, 1994). Lack of objectivity and independence as an evaluator (Scriven, 1996). Making small adjustments and improvements can shift the key targets of the initiative.

Type of Evaluation	When used	Strengths	Limitations
Summative (a summary of the initiative's effectiveness)	Occurs after an initiative is complete (Fagen et al., 2011; Fox et al., 2017; Hall & Hall, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Scriven, 1981).	Provides accountability of the initiative to the goals and objectives (Hall & Hall, 2004). Can determine the impact and outcomes by considering if change has occurred and the overall effectiveness of the initiative to meet its goals (Fagen et al., 2011; Fox et al., 2017; Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Can consider the change from an independent position (with external evaluators) and/ or holistically as the initiative has concluded (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 1985). Provides summaries of outcomes that can be used for funding, analysis and future investment considerations (Anh, 2018; Scriven, 1981).	Ensuring the information gathered is relevant to the specific desired changes. Ensuring the questions asked connect directly to what needs to be known. For instance, if the desired change is related to a behaviour then to the evaluation seeks to understand if that change happens (DeGue et al., 2014).

The importance of ongoing feedback (developmental evaluation)

Ongoing feedback is vital to ensure that any initiative is having the desired impact. According to VicHealth:

> "Attention should be paid not only to replicating successful techniques, but to testing, adapting and evaluating them in different contexts and settings – an approach that is not only evidence-based, but also evidence-building" (2016, p. 78).

Consistent and specific feedback is needed to monitor whether change is taking place or whether the initiative is working as designed (Fagen et al., 2011; Hawkins et al., 2009; McLaughlin & Jordan, 1999; Our Watch, 2017; VicHealth, 2016). Clear feedback on the outlined expected change will ensure that an initiative is responsive to the community's engagement with the initiative and drastically increases the likelihood of positive change resulting from it. Ongoing evaluation and sharing of learnings is particularly critical in prevention systems with multiple ongoing prevention initiatives and throughout community mobilisation, to ensure the strategies are coordinated and complimentary to one another (Our Watch, 2021; VicHealth, 2016).

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is the ongoing, iterative practice of where reflection informs actions, which shift and change the context or situation, which we then reflect on further and continue to adapt and change (Clarkson et al., 2003). Within the development of primary prevention initiatives, reflexivity can be used across all the development, implementation and feedback parts of the process. One important part of reflexivity is to consider the power dynamics between those developing and delivering an initiative and those accessing it (J. Anderson et al., 2003; Curtis et al., 2019; Lokugamage et al., 2023; Ramsden, 2000, 2002). For instance, reflecting on the cultural context and cultural diversity of the community is important. It can include empowering and celebrating of the cultural identities of the participants (J. Anderson et al., 2003; Aseron et al., 2013; Rousseau et al., 2022). Reflexivity places the responsibility on those creating and facilitating initiatives to acknowledge, address and actively dismantle any problematic power dynamics of an interaction (Carlson & Redvers, 2023; Mashford-Pringle et al., 2023).

Potential challenges

- Ensuring the information gathered is relevant to the specific desired changes.
- Ensuring the questions asked connect directly to what needs to be known.
- Ensuring the evaluations and learnings generated from the evaluations are employing intersectional methods to consider how initiatives are translating to different communities, where the gaps may be and how the outcomes can be applied beyond that context (Our Watch, 2017).
- Creating an environment where those involved with initiatives feel confident and comfortable in both celebrating their successes and taking accountability for learnings challenges and/or failures.

What evaluation isn't

Soliciting meaningful, constructive feedback can be challenging. There are some common approaches to evaluating an initiative that are unlikely to produce robust learning that can be used to improve the prevention system. Some of these approaches include:

- Asking people if they liked the initiative. While the answer to this question can be helpful for understanding engagement, it often does not say anything about the effectiveness of the initiative or whether the initiative is meeting the intended outcomes.
- Asking people if they learned something. People may say they learned something (which is a good thing) but that does not necessarily translate to changes in social attitudes or behaviours.
- Asking people if they will do something differently in the future. Again, while it can be good to know that people intend to do something differently, this does not mean they *will* do things differently.

These are just some examples of approaches to evaluation that will be unlikely to produce in-depth and meaningful learnings. It is important that developers and funders recognise the limitations of satisfaction surveys and are comfortable going beyond them. It may not be realistic to expect that community-based groups who develop and deliver initiatives will have the knowledge and skills to conduct meaningful evaluations. Funders need to consider the importance of supporting this process, through connecting and funding input from experienced evaluators.

Principle 3:

Locally situated

Principle 3: Locally situated

Successful primary prevention is carefully designed to connect with its intended audience (Our Watch, 2021; World Health Organization, 1998). In Aotearoa this means being a strong Te Tiriti partner as well as being responsive to the unique needs of the specific communities and organisations involved.

The Locally Situated principle highlights the importance of fine-tuning prevention work in relation to the context, culture and community (Eketone, 2013; Flood, 2006; Vargas et al., 2022). This applies whether the initiative is embedded in a well-defined community or whether it is designed to reach a more diffuse audience (such as through social media campaigns). Cultural and contextual responsiveness requires considering who the intended *audience* is for the initiative and who are its ultimate *beneficiaries*. In many cases these will be the same, but not always.

Culture and context

Many successful prevention initiatives are embedded within specific communities, such as culture and identity-based communities or place-based communities (Killaspy et al., 2022; McGowan et al., 2019). Others are situated within organisations like schools or universities as communities. The responsiveness principle highlights the importance of identifying the community that is served by the initiative and those who the initiative seeks to engage.

'Community' is a broad term that can mean a lot of different things (MacQueen et al., 2001). In its broadest sense, a community will consist of a group of people who are unified by a shared sense of belonging or purpose. Communities consist of a diverse range of people with varied backgrounds, knowledge, perspectives and experiences relating to sexual violence (and more generally). Alongside this diversity, those within a particular community often share values and ideas that are important to the shape of a successful initiative (C. Campbell & Jovchelovitch, 2000; Prapaveissis et al., 2022). When considering a community group, it can be easy to assume that everyone within that community is the same and holds the same values. However, diversity exists within communities as much as it does across our society as a whole. The *Clear logic for change*, and *Evidence Based* components of any initiative must consider diverse needs and values within the target community. (C. Campbell & Jovchelovitch, 2000; Prapaveissis et al., 2022). For example, a cultural community, such as Fijian people living in New Zealand, will include people of diverse genders, sexualities, religious backgrounds, dis/abilities and generational differences.

Some shared beliefs and values can be helpful to leverage in developing and supporting an initiative while others may inadvertently contribute to the foundations of sexual violence and require some work to understand and unpack (Khorram-Manesh et al., 2021; Watson-Thompson et al., 2008).

Cultural groups

One form of community is identity-based communities, within which individuals share a central part of their identity. Some examples of this are:

- Ethnic cultural communities – people from specific ethnic cultural groups or those who have migrated from specific countries and formed connected and supportive local communities in Aotearoa.
- The rainbow community – people of diverse gender or sexual identities.
- Disability communities.

Community groups

Another form of community is activity-based and interest-based groups and communities, where the connection is shared activities, interests or hobbies. Some examples of these communities include:

- Sports clubs
- Music groups and art collectives
- Political groups.

Inclusivity

Every community has diversity within it, being inclusive requires providing opportunities for all members of a community to participate and be heard, particularly members "living at the margins of society" (Terzi, 2014, p. 279).

> Being inclusive does not mean that any initiative has to be useful and open to everybody. There may be some good reasons why an initiative may be specific to particular groups of people, in those cases, it is important to think about the range and diversity within the groups.

For example, EAAA is a rape prevention programme designed specifically for first year university women (those most at risk of sexual assault on campuses). The focus of the programme is on heterosexual dating situations. This focus has the potential to exclude women who are not interested in dating men. To build inclusion, the workshop engages explicitly with scenarios and situations to include women who do not date men including lesbian women and women from various religious backgrounds where dating may not be something they engage in. Inclusion in the context of EAAA does not mean ensuring that men can participate. Instead, it is about ensuring that the broad range of people who are within the audience for the initiative feel that they can be part of the initiative (Senn, 2015).

Inclusive design (sometimes referred to as Universal Design) is a particular approach to design that originated out of work with disability communities (Moriña, 2019). Inclusive design refers to the process of creating physical and social spaces that allow everyone to participate. This means attending to a range of physical needs and abilities as well as neurodivergence. The concept is also used beyond disability sectors to include how social and physical spaces are created to facilitate inclusion of those with less power and/or privilege. Inclusive design refers to the process of creating physical and social spaces that allow everyone to participate. This means attending to a range of physical needs and abilities as well as neurodivergence. The concept is also used beyond disability sectors to include how social and physical spaces are created to facilitate inclusion of those with less power and/or privilege (Clarkson et al., 2003). To enable inclusive design some understanding of the potential barriers to participation is developed followed by thoughtful practices that open spaces for participation and inclusion. Rather than treating people differently, the task is to find a way to treat people such that those differences are not highlighted or emphasised.

Potential challenges

Because all communities are comprised of people with diverse views, experiences and identities, it is not possible to address all aspects of a community in any single initiative. Indeed, specific communities are nested within larger communities, while also being made up of multiple smaller communities (Kim-Ju et al., 2008). For example, while we might consider a rugby club a 'community', that community is situated within a local and regional community and might also contain its own sub-communities as well as members representing a variety of other external communities.

Within communities there may also be varying levels to resistance or readiness to change. Within the rugby club example, perhaps some of the team hold conservative values regarding gender roles while others understand gender inequality.

> When developing an initiative, it is important to acknowledge any varied levels of resistance, acknowledgment and interest.

Audience and beneficiaries

In designing, implementing and evaluating an initiative, it is important to distinguish between the audience for an initiative and the ultimate beneficiaries of the initiative.

The audience for an initiative refers to those people who are engaged directly with it. While in some cases they will also be the beneficiaries, that is not always the case. For example, if the initiative aims to develop outcomes for children (i.e., beneficiaries), then the audience could be children themselves, but it could also

be parents, teachers, or coaches, for example. Benefits for the community could be broader than the audience, and the ultimate beneficiaries may be those who are not directly engaged with the initiative. For example:

- Targeting university-aged men can benefit university-aged women.
- Targeting care-workers can benefit disabled people with high care needs.
- Targeting coaches could benefit players and other people they work with.

Clearly identifying the intended audience for an initiative, allows the *Clear logic for change* and the *Evidence based* principles to be specifically connected to the values, needs, interests and/or capacity of the intended audience (Flood, 2006). The audience may be the ones who gain knowledge and insights that shift away from social attitudes that support sexual violence. They could also be the ones who change their harmful behaviour.

The beneficiaries of initiatives are those who will ultimately benefit from the change, by encountering less coercive, harassing and abusive behaviour and more support for speaking out against rape culture. For instance children may benefit from the adults in their lives engaging with primary prevention initiatives.

Potential challenges

- **Decision making power:** Decision-making may not represent all members of a community, and sometimes those in positions of authority may set the agenda and determine the strategic direction of initiatives in ways that do not attend to the wider needs of the community. The primary prevention system may need to attend to the question of whose voices are not being heard within communities, and what they can do to support their needs, such that initiatives benefit them. In more formal organisations, such as schools and tertiary institutions, the visible support of senior leadership is essential to the success of an approach to primary prevention (Beres et al., 2019).
- Sometimes a focus on diversity – at the initiatives level – can lead to diluted or convoluted messages in an attempt to appeal to people of all backgrounds, identities and experiences (Wandersman, 2001). It is essential, therefore, to attend to diversity at the national primary prevention system level. When looking across the range of initiatives on offer they should address the needs of a range of people and communities. No single initiative can achieve everything, but they can work together to achieve transformative cultural change.
- While each initiative does not have to cater to all people (and indeed initiatives that try to are unlikely to be successful), it is critical that they do not reinforce harmful social attitudes or behaviours. For example, while there are good reasons why an initiative might engage a targeted audience of men in rugby club, it should not rely on and reinforce problematic gender tropes such as “be a man” or “man up” when attempting to deconstruct the foundations of sexual violence.

Principle 4:

Evidence based

Principle 4: Evidence based

This implementation principle highlights the importance of designing and delivering initiatives in a way that is consistent with the change logic and ensuring it is locally situated to the community and context, and audience of the initiative.

> There are three important components to design and delivery: the *content* (what people are engaging with), *structure* (the method of engagement), and a form of *delivery* that is consistent with the design.

Across all of these components it's important to have the necessary resources for success, including: people with relevant skills and expertise, suitable material resources and funding, relevant external connections, and appropriate context.

Designing initiatives is a complex and thoughtful process. Good design can be bold, courageous and imaginative. Across the national primary prevention system, as well as within particular regions, it is useful to have a range of approaches that may appeal to different audiences, and address different parts of the foundations of sexual violence.

Content, structure and delivery

This section focuses on the specifics of the initiative. What does it consist of and how will it engage with its intended audience?

1. Content

The content of an initiative includes information, and messaging about sexual violence, relationships, social norms or anything else connected to the subject. The following table outlines some common approaches to sexual violence prevention and what they focus on, including what they can achieve and what their limits are. While we present them here as discrete, in practice these different foci for content overlap. Any successful primary prevention system will need a combination of approaches in order to reduce and ultimately eliminate sexual violence (Carmody & Carrington, 2000).

Some of the approaches below also have elements or ideas typically associated with secondary and even tertiary forms of prevention. However they can all contribute to the primary prevention of sexual violence (Banyard et al., 2004; Gidycz et al., 2011; Jordan & Mossman, 2018). These approaches may do so by actively engaging in the dismantling of the foundations of sexual violence while also achieving other aims (such as supporting the development of resistance or bystanding skills).

Table 4: Approaches to prevention

Approach	What it is	What can it do	What the limits are
Consent Education	A very popular approach to sexual violence prevention that centralises consent and focuses on communication (Donat & White, 2000). Consent education is often delivered through social marketing campaigns (Beres, 2018; Haas et al., 2011; Ortiz & Shafer, 2018; Wills & Duncan, 2018) or direct participant programmes (Borges et al., 2008; Coy et al., 2016; Mennicke et al., 2020; Ortiz et al., 2015; Whittington, 2021). Programs aim to provide participants the tools needed to negotiate consent to their sexual partners. Some educational efforts focus on legal definitions of sexual consent, while others present a more idealised version wherein consent should be verbal and/or enthusiastic (Beres, 2018; Haas et al., 2011).	Consent education tends to focus on informing participants about definitions of sexual consent and teaching communication skills (Beres, 2018; Gilbert, 2018; Harris, 2018). The ability to educate on consent without explicitly discussing of the role of gender allows developers and facilitators to bypass challenges associated with acknowledging the gendered nature of sexual violence. Some consent education advocates claim that the model of explicit verbal consent is best practise for prevention programs (Hanebutt, 2021; Jozkowski et al., 2014; Willis et al., 2019; Wills & Duncan, 2018). These messages are that clear, direct and assertive communication is less prone to miscommunication or mistakes.	Consent education constructs sexual violence as a communication problem, making much of this approach consistent with the miscommunication hypothesis, that cites miscommunication as the cause of sexual violence. This hypothesis has been challenged in research (Beres, 2010; Frith & Kitzinger, 1997; McCaw & Senn, 1998). A focus on communication reinforces the misconception that there is an individualised solution to sexual violence and does not reflect the underlying causes of sexual violence: the social structures and norms that support violence (Fletcher, 2014; Gavey, 2019; Pease, 2019). Consent education usually lacks explicit discussion of how people of different genders may experience this negotiation differently (Donat & White, 2000). Some definitions of consent used in consent education are consistent with legal and policy definitions, while others are not. This can cause confusion as to what the law can do for people if they experience sexual violence. Note that some approaches use the term 'consent education' as an umbrella for a wider suite of interventions, or weave this into a more muti-faceted programme that also includes an emphasis on the role of gender norms (e.g., Cahill et al., 2023). However, this important dimension is not inherent to approaches that focus on promoting consent, and is often missing.

Approach	What it is	What can it do	What the limits are
Rape Resistance/ Self-Defence	Rape resistance/self-defence is an approach predominantly used in programs for women (Hollander, 2018; Jordan & Mossman, 2016, 2018; Murphy, 2018; Senn, 2011). Some programmes focus solely on teaching women physical strategies to resist an attack, based on gendered assumptions and stereotypical examples of sexual assault (Hollander, 2018). Others use a gendered approach, such as emancipatory or empowerment self-defense. These initiatives embed the rape resistance strategies amongst activities that explore anti-victim blaming, myth busting and bodily autonomy. These programmes focus on the social barriers to resistance, such as gendered expectations for sex and dating. Only emancipatory rape resistance programmes are consistent with the primary prevention of sexual violence because they focus on challenging social norms related to gender and violence alongside resistance or self-defence strategies.	Hollander (2018) summarises the components that make up empowerment (feminist, emancipatory) programs for women: "The core of empowerment-based self-defense classes, then, is these seven elements: They are evidence-based, comprehensive, hold perpetrators responsible, transform understandings of women's bodies, place violence in a social context, advocate social change goals, and empower rather than restrict women's lives" (Hollander, 2018, p. 229). By "placing violence in its social context" and "advocating for social change goals," emancipatory/ empowerment programme, is central to the cultural scaffolding of sexual violence (Hollander, 2018; Murphy, 2018).	Rozee and Koss (2001) for example, criticise rape/ resistance programs: "Resistance advice is often inaccurate and based on myths rather than on empirical evidence documenting the effectiveness of verbal and physical resistance in preventing rape (Rozee & Koss, 2001, p. 298). Others have suggested that rape resistance and self-defence for women is targeting individuals for, what many feminist theorists agree, is a problem of the societal level (Carmody & Carrington, 2000; Gavey, 2019; Hollander, 2016; Senn, 2011). Carmody and Carrington (2001) highlight the reliance of rape resistance strategies on neo-liberal values such as self-management and risk avoidance (Carmody & Carrington, 2000; Hollander, 2018; Murphy, 2018). They suggest that through focusing on the individual, the responsibility to avoid sexual violence is left on the shoulders of individual women, rather than looking at men who perpetrate (Carmody & Carrington, 2000; Senn, 2011). Note that some of these same authors, however, argue for the value of feminist/ emancipatory self-defense approaches that have a clear analysis of the wider social foundations of sexual violence and the potentially socially transformative ramifications of collective empowerment approaches. It is only emancipatory rape resistance programmes that are consistent with the primary prevention of sexual violence.

Approach	What it is	What can it do	What the limits are
Bystander Intervention	Sexual violence prevention programs that employ a bystander intervention approach seek to mobilise participants to intervene when they witness behaviours they perceive to be sexual violence or behaviours that support (Amar et al., 2012; Banyard et al., 2004). Bystander intervention approaches are usually skills based programmes that focus on the dispelling of myths and misconceptions about sexual violence and use direct examples to illustrate effective ways to intervene (Banyard et al., 2004; Katz et al., 2011a; Orchowski et al., 2020; Storer et al., 2016). These intervention approach aim to create community level change, taking an ecological approach to sexual violence. They address participants as potential bystanders, empowering them to intervene when they see sexual violence (Banyard et al., 2004).	Developers of this approach also argue that through education and increasing people's willingness to intervene in sexual violence, they may also experience a decrease in implicit rape supportive beliefs (Banyard et al., 2004; Storer et al., 2016). This approach allows programme developers and facilitators to minimise possible defensiveness, through focusing on the community's collective responsibility to eliminate sexual violence (Banyard et al., 2004). Bystander intervention programs primarily focus on building the skills of participants and providing skills to develop a greater situational awareness of sexually violent behaviours (Beres, 2020; Orchowski et al., 2020). Similar to some rape resistance strategies, bystander approaches are consistent with primary prevention when they also address and challenge underlying norms that support sexual violence.	Bystander intervention initiatives have been shown to increase intentions to intervene in sexual violence and improve attitudes of responsibility to do so, however there is little evidence that these attitude changes translate to behaviour change (Banyard et al., 2004, 2007; Krauss et al., 2023).
Social Norms	Based on social norms theory, people can "incorrectly perceive the attitudes and/or behaviors of peers and other community members to be different from their own" (Berkowitz, 2002a, p. 1). Social norms approaches aim to ensure that peer group members are on the same page regarding beliefs about sexual violence. Social norms approaches are often used in conjunction with bystander intervention models as they remain a popular way to engage men without addressing them as (potential) perpetrators (Fabiano et al., 2003).	Social norms approaches to prevention will use myth busting techniques to reduce victim-blaming attitudes. Addressing misconceptions about sexual violence has been found to have the potential to reduce rape proclivity, therefore programmes that work to debunk these norms may also be able to reduce offending rates of sexual violence (Bohner et al., 2006). Social norms approaches can empower men as allies, building their sense of responsibility and giving them the confidence to call out problematic behaviours in other men (Fabiano et al., 2003).	There are few ways of knowing if this translates to a reduction in perpetrating sexual violence (Bohner et al., 2006).

Approach	What it is	What can it do	What the limits are
Rape culture information sharing and rape myth busting	**Rape Myths:** 'Rape myths' refer to stereotyped and prejudicial ideas that distort the realities of sexual violence and "minimise and justify" rape, especially by white, 'respectable' men (Gavey, 2019). **Entitlement:** Heterosexual norms allow men to expect sex from women and to act as if they are entitled to women's bodies and that women owe them sex (Gavey, 2019, Mardorossian, 2014). The normalisation of such entitlement can be used to justify the actions of perpetrators of rape. **Victim Blaming:** Victim blaming myths can be barriers to reporting experiences of sexual violence and/or engaging support or prevention of sexual violence. Victim blaming attitudes include ideas such as that a victim was "asking for it" through their behaviour (drinking, flirting, "leading him on") or through what they were wearing and how they presented themselves. Rape culture relies on the normalisation of victim blaming and rape myths. Often people have not critically examined these beliefs, as they are pervasive and widely held. **Alcohol/drugs:** a common victim blaming belief is that women will have sex willingly when under the influence of drugs or alcohol and then regret that sex in the morning and call it rape.	Educating about – and countering – rape myths or common misconceptions about sexual violence is a necessary basic step in dismantling the foundations of sexual violence, as it helps to counter the minimisation, silencing and secrecy that enables it to continue. It can be woven into various different kinds of initiatives and is the direct objective of some educational interventions (e.g., Te Kura Kaiwhakawa I The Institute of Judicial Studies., 2023). Because many of the rape myths are connected to norms and scripts about sexual violence, engaging in myth busting that addresses the underlying source of these myths can also contribute to the primary prevention of sexual violence (Banyard et al., 2004; Our Watch, 2021; Senn, 2015).	Education approaches alone are unlikely to create meaningful change. People understanding a problem better does not usually translate to them knowing how to change it (Fletcher, 2014). Therefore, educating people on rape culture and myth busting alone is unlikely to lead to the prevention of sexual violence.

Approach	What it is	What can it do	What the limits are
Statistics	Some sexual violence prevention approaches incorporate sexual violence statistics. One reason for this is to demonstrate the high prevalence of sexual violence.	This can be helpful in situations where a group does not realise how big the problem of sexual violence is.	Reporting statistics alone is not enough to prevent sexual violence. People have known that sexual violence is a big problem for a long time, this does not give them the tools to change that. "Underpinning this facts-based approach are two key, flawed, assumptions: first, that people are ignorant about violence against women, when the reality is that many people already know about violence against women, often in deeply personal ways (for example, as a victim or a perpetrator); and second, that giving people facts will alter what are in fact deeply emotionally and societally embedded judgements and hierarchies – processes of gender" (Fletcher, 2014, p.135).
Relationship and sexuality education (RSE)	Relationship and sexuality education is a form of sexuality education that focuses on all aspects of sexual relationships including physical, emotional and social. It often includes information and activities that will help young people navigate relationships, discover what they want and engage in ethical relations. One of the goals of these programmes is for all people to understand their sexual and relationship rights.	Relationship and sexuality education can contribute to the primary prevention of sexual violence because when people know what they can have or want for themselves, they may more easily see what they do not want (Senn et al., 2011).	Relationship and sexuality education will not prevent sexual violence on its own. However when approaches to healthy relationship education embed the promotion of egalitarian relationships, consent, and a critique of rigid gender norms, they can contribute to dismantling the foundations of sexual violence.

Approach	What it is	What can it do	What the limits are
Engaging men in relation to masculinity and gender norms	Prevention initiatives have engaged men, aiming to address the adherence to rigid norms of masculinity (see Campaign for action on family violence, 2020; HealthWest Partnership Victoria, 2020; The Men's Project & Flood, 2020). Examples of this kind of work can direct participant programmes (e.g., Barker et al., 2007; Gavey et al., 2021) as well as broader social marketing campaigns.	Although not always, such interventions can focus on working with men to understand gendered dynamics of power, men's beliefs around norms of masculinity, and the ways that rigid norms of masculinity can lead men to act in ways that are harmful to others. By recognising the ways that traditional masculinity scripts encourage behaviours that make sexual violence more likely, or else disincentivise men to intervene, men can be encouraged to question and challenge these norms and act differently.	While a focus on encouraging a 'healthy masculinity' has a common-sense appeal, a focus on masculinity as divorced from broader structures of inequality risks reinforcing norms of men as saviours and protectors (Salter, 2016), or else casting men as simply victims (rather than beneficiaries) of patriarchal social structures (see McCook, 2022). Further, initiatives that work with boys and men in relation to masculinity without recognition of the systemic gender inequalities that structure society or the perspectives of those who are not men are unlikely to be as effective (Flood, 2011, 2019; Gavey et al., 2021; Hollander & Pascoe, 2019; Pease, 2017).

2. Structure

The structure of an initiative is the detail of exactly what will happen. For example, the initiative might take the form of a social marketing campaign, a direct participant programme such as a series of workshops, a theatre performance or an art installation, or something else entirely. Whatever form it takes, the design should reflect what we already know about how people learn, engage in new ideas and change.

The importance of structure for primary prevention initiatives

Change happens when people and communities are engaged with the topic and interested in participating. Without an appropriate delivery approach the best information could get lost, or the messages could get mixed up, so little change will happen.

Table 5: Methods of prevention

Method of Prevention	What it is	Strengths	Tensions/Weaknesses
Community Mobilisation	Community mobilisation is a collection if individual initiatives and approaches to prevention that connect together to create change (Abramsky et al., 2014; Donais et al., 2019; Michau, 2007; Our Watch, 2021; Wandersman, 2001). Community mobilisation works with the whole community, engaging with community stakeholders and works to unite and support all community groups (Lippman et al., 2016; Michau, 2007).	Responsive to communities and involving community members in all areas, allowing the ideas to be relevant to concerns and the knowledge level of the target audience (Abramsky et al., 2014; Michau, 2007). Brings together multiple strategies at various levels to include the whole community in the prevention activities (Abramsky et al., 2014; Donais et al., 2019).	Success of community mobilisation is dependent on the level of engagement and uptake from the community members themselves (Michau, 2007; Michau & Namy, 2021). As the process is broad-ranging and not straightforward, the results will likely not be immediately visible to the community members doing the work (Michau, 2007). Without the guidance and support of those with expertise on the foundations of sexual violence, initiatives can be of limited effectiveness or even harmful. Community groups require adequate support to participate in prevention efforts safely, such as knowledge of referral pathways (Michau & Namy, 2021).
Direct Participant Programmes	Direct participant programmes are learning environments within which facilitators share information and activities with groups in order to increase their insights, knowledge and/or skills around specific topics (Graham, Treharne, et al., 2021; Our Watch, 2019b, 2021; Rogers, 2010).	They can be in-person or online. Direct participant programmes like workshops have been shown to be effective in decreasing rape myth acceptance, change attitudes and beliefs around sexual violence and increase knowledge and awareness of the problem (DeGue et al., 2014; Graham, Treharne, et al., 2021).	Can be difficult to measure receptiveness to messaging (Banyard et al., 2004). A range of logistical challenges (location, time) and social/ cultural challenges (peer group acceptance, acknowledgment of the problem) can reduce likelihood of attendance and/or engagement (Graham, Treharne, et al., 2021)

Method of Prevention	What it is	Strengths	Tensions/Weaknesses
Social Marketing	Social marketing applies sales theories to social issues and creates campaigns to raise awareness or target and challenge specific ideas or attitudes in a population (Black & Smith, 1994; Graham, Potterton, et al., 2021; Our Watch, 2021).	Effective social marketing campaigns that are relevant to their target audiences have been shown to increase knowledge, and shape beliefs, attitudes and behaviours (Graham, Potterton, et al., 2021).	Social marketing campaigns have broad target audiences, however it can be challenging to maintain the key message while appealing to everyone. Knowledge base of target audiences is variable and therefore it can be challenging to ensure the messaging is pitched in the best way to be understandable and effective for the whole audience (Graham, Potterton, et al., 2021).
Applied Theatre	Applied theatre is an umbrella term for theatre that is applied to specific contexts, communities and issues. Sometimes run as workshops, applied theatre can happen in any location, not just a stage and should be responsive to the interests and needs of the community (Christensen, 2013; Kauli & Thomas, 2022; O'Keefe-McCarthy et al., 2022; Prentki & Preston, 2009, p. 9).	Applied theatre uses methods of communication and engagement, especially creative approaches such as drama, dance, music and creative writing (Kauli & Thomas, 2022; Prentki & Preston, 2009; Rich, 2010). These creative methods are applied to social issues such as sexual violence, to allow participants to experiment with solutions and expand their understand (Kauli & Thomas, 2022).	See workshop tensions/ weaknesses. While the goals of applied theatre are often broader societal changes, the direct results can be more individualised and lacking connection to a broader social change (Prentki, 2009).
Activism	Grassroots, community action such as awareness raising groups and protest movements (Armstrong et al., 2018).	Lobbying, social policy and law changes, awareness raised and support (Armstrong et al., 2018; Fileborn & Loney-Howes, 2019a, 2019b; Sills et al., 2016). Digital activism to protest rape culture, provide communities of peer education and support and take direct action against instances of misogyny, sexual violence and so on (Sills et al., 2016).	Activism and advocacy work can be at risk of unequal distribution of labour with the work falling to those already in marginalised positions (Our Watch, 2021). Activism can face more backlash and resistance because of it's public facing nature. This can have a negative impact on organisers (Our Watch, 2021).

Method of Prevention	What it is	Strengths	Tensions/Weaknesses
Awareness Raising (activism adjacent)	An education-focused method with the aim of sharing knowledge about the problem in order to increase conversations about sexual violence and support for survivors (Adams, 2007; Gidycz et al., 2011; Our Watch, 2021).	Awareness raising is often the first step for a community to become aware of and begin to confront a social problem.	Often awareness raising initiatives are expected to increase skills or create behavioural change. Increased awareness does not directly translate to changes in behaviour (Gidycz et al., 2011). Nevertheless, in certain contexts it is an essential step in building readiness for engagement.
Arts based	Using various forms of art to engage with a social issue. This can be outreach, awareness raising and healing (Campana, 2011; Moxley & Calligan, 2015; Sexual Politics Now, 2015; Timm-Bottos, 2006; Violence Transformed, 2024)	Can be community driven and responsive to the interests, skills and needs of a community (Campana, 2011; Moxley & Calligan, 2015; Timm-Bottos, 2006)	Art can be up to interpretation so any arts-based approach is inherently subjective and can potentially be challenging to evaluate (Moxley & Calligan, 2015; Purcell, 2007).

3. Delivery

Delivery involves putting the design and structure into action – performing the theatre piece, or rolling out the workshop, or sending the social marketing campaign out into the world. Delivery is the stage that brings everything together – the Clear logic for change, the design, the people and the ideas. It's where the change begins to happen.

Resources

The most creative ideas and best intentions will not come to fruition without the right resources. Resources include funding but go far beyond that – having adequate resources means having the right people, skills, materials, connections, support and context for the initiative to work.

People

Primary prevention of sexual violence is highly complex and requires in depth knowledge of the foundations of sexual violence and a team of highly skilled people to create, design, deliver and improve the initiative (Catalano, 2022; Suaalii-Sauni et al., 2022). The people who design an initiative will not always be the right people to deliver the initiative. Diverse perspectives are important for design, but when it comes to delivery it important to prioritise a good fit between those delivering the initiative and the audience.

It works best when people delivering initiatives have a connection to the audience (Catalano, 2022; Yoshihama et al., 2012). This will usually be through being members of the same community in some sense, or sharing a key identity with members of the audience. Research shows that when engaging in sexual violence prevention work with men, for example, the initiatives that are more effective are facilitated by men or by mixed gender facilitators with at least one man (Berkowitz, 2002b, 2002a; Edwards et al., 2019; Flood, 2006; Katz et al., 2011b). Similarly, queer people prefer queer facilitators (Wandrekar & Nigudkar, 2019).

When those delivering initiatives share social identities or community membership with the audience, they can understand the lived reality of the audience and better relate to them (Charlton, 1998; Rai et al., 2023). Through mutual understandings and shared circumstances, they can often build trust faster allowing the participants to feel safer and engage more deeply. In some cases, where initiatives to dismantle the foundations of sexual violence involve direct participant programmes that require challenging audiences in some ways, matching facilitators with the audience on key aspects of social identity might be important in managing the delicate balance of managing rapport alongside constructive challenging. For example, men moderating a men's discussion group (Berkowitz, 2002a, 2002b) or Pākehā/Tauiwi facilitating a decolonisation education session. Of course there will be many cases where this kind of 'matching' won't work – such as in delivering initiatives to groups of culturally and religiously diverse young people. In those cases the concept of cultural humility is helpful. Cultural humility requires that those engaging in prevention work understand they can never be fully competent in any specific culture or group, in part because of the diversity within any community (Ide & Beddoe, 2022). From this position of humility, practitioners take a naïve position, listening to those they are working with and working with them as they navigate through the topics that form part of any initiative.

Well-being

> It is important to ensure that all activities support the well-being of all people. This means looking after the people and places (whenua). Those developing initiatives should take care to be responsive and considerate to the communities that their audiences and beneficiaries belong to. (Brannelly & Boulton, 2017; Hudson & Russell, 2009)

It is critical for participants to feel safe and confident in their facilitators during an initiative (Adams, 2007). If participants are treated with respect and support, they will be more likely to engage with the content and contribute to the initiative (Adams, 2007; L. T. Smith, 2021). Any initiative designed to target sexual violence must expect and account for the possibility that members of the audience,

volunteers and staff may already be personally impacted by sexual violence (Senn et al., 2022). Those impacted could be survivors, friends and whānau of survivors or perpetrators, or perpetrators themselves. The way a survivor would interact with an initiative will depend on their individual experiences (Senn et al., 2022). All initiatives should ensure the proper training for staff (and volunteers) to understand how to support the well-being and agency of a survivor or their whānau throughout an initiative (Catalano, 2022); including how to respond to disclosures. Furthermore, the staff involved in the design and delivery of the programme should have access to appropriate support and supervision.

Materials

Material resources are often necessary to successfully deliver an initiative, and funding will be necessary in many cases to make this possible. Even the basics, like providing food for in-person events, can be expensive. In most cultural contexts in Aotearoa, food is an important part of hospitality, showing care and respect to visitors, participants and so on; and it can be a motivator for attendance at direct participant programmes, especially for young people (e.g., Gavey et al., 2021; Senn, 2015).

External considerations

The success of any initiative can be impacted by external constraints on contexts beyond the control of those creating or engaging with the initiative. This could include social contexts (like resistance to dismantling the foundations of sexual violence), funding constraints, resourcing constraints or unpredictable events. For some kinds of initiatives contingency plans will be important. In some cases, communities may not be ready for a particular initiative, or there is a lot of resistance to it, which may require adjusting plans to build readiness.

Conclusion

Conclusion

Sexual violence is a highly complex social problem. Primary prevention, which seeks to dismantle underlying power structures that enable sexual violence, is key to creating the social conditions in which everyone can flourish. This Evidence Summary brings together key literature and evidence from public health, gender studies, critical psychology, sociology, social work and systems thinking to chart a path for the development of initiatives for the prevention of sexual violence.

The four implementation principles: *Dismantling the Foundations of Sexual Violence, Clear Logic for Change, Locally Situated* and *Evidence Based*, work together towards dismantling patriarchy, colonisation and other power structures that enable the perpetuation of sexual violence.

Centring the dismantling of the foundations of sexual violence is key to ensure that initiatives at all levels support each other and work together. These principles were also designed to work in collaboration with te Pou (Dobbs et al, 2025).

The Pou and Principles work across all levels sexual violence prevention and can be used to chart the direction for individual initiatives and broader programmes or movements that work together to prevent sexual violence. At the community level they can support the creation of bespoke community initiatives that are attentive to the needs and context of those communities. The Pou and Principles provide a structure to ensure that local initiatives developed for specific contexts or communities will work alongside each other and alongside larger regional or national level initiatives and the national primary prevention system overall. Finally, the Pou and Implementation Principles will work alongside workforce development, policy, and funding contexts, to support a vibrant and cohesive primary prevention system.

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