

## **Statement on the prevention of family violence and violence against women**

*The Faith Communities Council of Victoria (FCCV) has issued the following statement on the prevention of family violence and violence against women:*

As faith community leaders, we oppose family violence and violence against women in all its forms, and call upon people of faith to play a role in its elimination.

In Australia, one woman is killed on average each week by a current or former partner, and one in four children witness their mother being abused. Violence is not just physical, it can be psychological, emotional, sexual, financial or spiritual. The roots are abuse of power and the control of one person over another.

Violence against women and their children takes a profound and long-term toll on women and children's health and wellbeing, on families and communities, and on society as a whole. It is a violation of basic human rights that affects people in all social, economic, racial, religious and ethnic groups.

Across our faith traditions, we declare:

- Sacred texts, scriptures and cultural traditions should not be used as a way to justify or excuse violence against women.
- We commit ourselves to changing community attitudes that accept violence toward women. We undertake a journey together to raise awareness in our communities and to stop violence against women before it occurs.
- We stand against all forms of violence and discrimination. We see preventing family violence and violence against women as a key entry point for addressing all forms of violence and promoting human rights.
- Every human being should be seen as valued, important and equal. To live in a world where our families and communities are free and safe from violence, we must treat all individuals – women, men, girls and boys – with dignity, equality and respect.
- Promoting equality and respect in our communities benefits us all and strengthens our communities. A strong community is one where we can all contribute and participate equally.
- Our faiths affirm that love, respect, equality and living well together are goals to aim for.

*Promoting a Harmonious Multifaith Victoria*

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In Victoria we have benefitted from the insight of the [Royal Commission into Family Violence](#) which tabled its findings with a 1900 page report and 227 recommendations. The report includes a ten-page section on ‘Faith Communities’, highlighting the important role faith-based communities and organisations can play in the lives of Victorians affected by family violence (recommendations 163-165).

We welcome this report, and the Victorian Government’s prompt and positive response to its recommendations. Our hope is that the implementation of these recommendations brings about positive changes within the Victorian community, and we are pleased to join as faith communities to be part of that change.

*Faith Communities Council of Victoria (FCCV) is comprised of the following peak bodies: Baha'i Community of Victoria, Brahma Kumaris Australia, Buddhist Council of Victoria, Hindu Council of Australia (Victoria), Islamic Council of Victoria, Jewish Community Council of Victoria, Sikh Interfaith Council of Victoria and Victorian Council of Churches.*

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