

A close-up photograph of two hands clasped together in a firm grip. The hand on the left is wearing a white short-sleeved shirt with thin blue horizontal stripes. The hand on the right is wearing a plain white t-shirt. The background is a solid, deep blue color. The text 'Theory of Change 2026 — 2028' is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

Theory of Change 2026 — 2028

TEACH US
* CONSENT

22% of Australian women are subjected to rape (ABS, 2021).

15-19 years is the most common age for sexual violence to occur (ABS, 2021).

Adolescent boys are now the most common perpetrators of child sexual abuse (ACMS, 2021).

45% of sexually active 14–18-year-old girls have experienced ‘unwanted sex’ (La Trobe, 2022).

LGBTIQA+ women are five times more likely than heterosexual women, and women with disability are twice as likely as women without disability, to experience sexual violence (Our Watch, 2023).

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Drivers of Normalised Sexual Violence

Sexual violence and the harmful attitudes that enable it are rising, particularly among young people, and disproportionately impacts priority populations, including LGBTIQ+ individuals and women with disability. **This violence is normalised and enabled by both socially constructed attitudes, and entrenched structural policies and legislation.**

Young people frequently encounter messaging across all aspects of their lives that reinstates a gendered hierarchy. This occurs across most forms of media, and pornography, as well as from their parents/caregivers, educators, peers, and other spaces beyond school. These factors have been recently amplified by algorithm-driven online spaces, and a resurgence in the normalisation of oppressive gendered norms.

Inadequate formal and informal sex and consent education has allowed these factors to proliferate, and sexual violence has become not only normalised, but encouraged among youth.

Structurally, public policy is inconsistent and there is a lack of legislative and social accountability for sexual crimes. Globally, prevention is underprioritised, underfunded or not considered at all.

We shift cultural norms, shape systems and build individual capabilities, by influencing:



Theory of Change Summary

We achieve our vision of a world free from normalised sexual violence where healthy intimacy is the norm by:

1. Shifting cultural norms to embed consent into mainstream youth culture;
2. Shaping systems through youth- and expert-informed policy and legislative change prevent sexual violence and promote accountability; and
3. Building individual capabilities of all young people to practice healthy intimacy.

Our Theory of Change 2026-2028 has been developed with the support of Equality Institute and Minderoo Foundation via extensive consultation.

We Shift Norms

Harmful norms, attitudes, narratives, and oppressive gendered expectations that enable sexual violence cannot persist in a world where consent is normalised within youth culture across both online and offline environments.

Cultural-change outcomes through mainstreaming consent into youth culture:

- Increased willingness to intervene as bystanders
- Greater recognition and reflection on past harms
- Decline in harmful norms across music, sport, gaming, dating, digital spaces and youth culture
- Increased presence of consent messaging in the mainstream
- Normalisation of consent in online and offline youth culture globally
- Reduction in oppressive gendered expectations, victim-blaming, and harmful gender norms

Activities:

- Deliver global consent and culture-change education campaigns through consistent messaging
- Partner with media, sport, festivals, brands, and influencers
- Amplify diverse youth voices via advisory groups, co-designed content and values aligned networks and coalition
- Make consent 'cool'

Outputs:

- High-reach digital education campaigns
- Festival, sports, cultural and arts engagement
- Youth-led content and advocacy
- Private sector and corporate partnerships
- Impactful partnerships with values-aligned brands, organisations, and influential voices

Assumptions:

- Cultural change, not just individual knowledge, is essential for preventing sexual violence
- Cultural norms shift when messages are disseminated in spaces and ways that are valued by young people, including social media, music, gaming, sport, and civic spaces
- We are a trusted partner for brands, events, and influencers who are open to co-learning and co-creating safer norms
- We are a trusted partner for organisations who work to promote healthy masculinities and/or advance gender equality
- Intersectional approaches are essential to meeting the needs of different communities
- Sustained messaging on affirmative consent drives behaviour and norm change, encourages self-reflection and accountability
- Normalising conversations about consent reduces stigma, increases help-seeking and promotes accountability

We Change Systems

Legislation and policy are designed and improved to promote affirmative consent, gender equality, accountability, safety, and the prevention of sexual violence.

Systems-change outcomes through policy and legislation change:

- Adoption of evidence-informed respectful relationships and consent education
- Strengthened digital safety regulations and algorithmic protections
- Youth-led and expert informed policy solutions taken up by government and institutions
- Greater institutional accountability for addressing sexual harm both online and offline
- Positive changes in legislation that create better accountability mechanisms, primarily for deterrence, prevention, and victim-survivor justice

Activities:

- Advocate for policies and legislation that prevent sexual violence on/offline
- Influence laws, education frameworks, and institutional policies to embed gender equality and consent
- Translate research for public education
- Engage experts and young people, including those with diverse lived experiences
- Reimagine accountability, alternative reporting mechanisms and restorative justice

Outputs:

- Policy briefs, submissions, and consultations
- Campaigns and joint advocacy efforts for legal and policy change
- Research translation and youth-led, evidence-informed recommendations and information
- Engagement in advocacy coalitions and leadership in active sector convening
- Participation in national and global governance forums

Assumptions:

- Government priorities can shift quickly, requiring sustained advocacy to maintain policy progress
- Policymakers respond to evidence when paired with youth voice, experts and public pressure
- Technology companies respond to regulatory requirements on sexual harm, with advocacy helping shape those regulations
- Education is a critical factor in primary prevention
- Joint advocacy, with like-minded coalitions, networks, and organisations is an effective way to create sustainable change and strengthen movements for gender equality
- Tone and messaging are essential to effectively reach different audiences

We Build Capabilities

Young people are confident in practising affirmative consent and holding themselves and others accountable. They are equipped with the capabilities to understand the power dynamics and structures in the world around them. Education results in a critical mass shift in attitudes and behaviours.

Capability building outcomes through skills, knowledge and confidence:

- Young people develop skills and confidence to understand consent and advocate for themselves and others, practising affirmative consent and respectful relationships
- Parents and caregivers model conversations and behaviours that reinforce respect
- Increased empathy and emotional literacy among young people
- Educators, young people, and communities access culturally safe and evidence-informed resources

Activities:

- Design and scale youth-focused digital education
- Develop resources for parents, caregivers and educators
- Deliver co-designed locally-led models in global settings
- Consult with priority groups who have diverse lived experience
- Partner with education programs to amplify impact

Outputs:

- Digital learning modules
- Parent and caregiver resource guides
- Co-designed and culturally safe resources
- Tailored materials for persons with disabilities and special needs, and priority populations
- Supporting other movements, organisations, and sectors to create or improve their own consent and respectful relationship resources

Assumptions:

- Prevention is stronger when multiple environments including school, home, peers, media, online, sport, civic and third spaces, reinforce the same messages
- Digital-first education increases reach, scalability, and accessibility
- Young people want to build their skills and knowledge through engaging with respectful relationships education
- Strengths-based approaches can effectively engage all young people
- Youth-led and co-designed content increases authenticity and uptake
- Parents/caregivers influence early behavioural and norm development
- Consulting with priority groups who have diverse lived experience creates resonant tailored content
- Community-led approaches build legitimacy, trust and relevance

Spheres of Influence



Victim-Survivors of Sexual Violence

People Who Use Sexual Violence

Cultures That Normalise & Excuse Violence

Structures & Systems That Normalise Violence

We build capabilities to:

- Challenge harmful myths, including victim-blaming
- Normalise help-seeking through public messaging
- Clarify what constitutes harm through consent education
- Increase community understanding and reduce shame
- Ensure that victim-survivors experience safer, more responsive environments
- Decrease social stigma around disclosure
- Pioneer prevention-first approaches improving individual agency

We influence behavioural change by:

- Making consent the “normal” behaviour in youth culture
- Challenging norms that excuse or minimise sexual harm
- Creating public pressure on individuals to take accountability
- Reducing the social acceptability of coercion, pressure, and entitlement
- Creating an environment that encourages perpetrators to reflect on their past harms and change their behaviour
- Increasing the likelihood that perpetrators are held accountability and change their behaviour

We reshape cultural norms and values:

- Highlighting the harms of ‘minor’ acts of sexual violence, demonstrating how they establish the foundations for more ‘major’ acts of sexual violence
- Delivering high-reach content, creative campaigns, public commentary, and mainstream youth-led partnerships
- Producing a mix of ever-green and topical content that keeps the issue relevant
- Contributing to a society where sexual violence is not tolerated, and challenges gender and all other forms of inequality and discrimination

We influence structures through:

- Government and media advocacy, policy submissions, engagement with departments, ministers and committees to create public pressure
- Sustained visibility of sexual violence prevention in national conversations
- Reference groups and committees
- Improved legal accountability
- Advocating for effective legal and policy frameworks that prevent sexual violence and promote a culture of respect and consent
- Institutions invest and embed sexual violence prevention and gender equality initiatives within their work