

To the Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence in South Australia.

Please find the below submission in response to the Issues Paper.

Raiise is proud to provide our contribution to the Royal Commission into domestic, family and sexual violence with a focus on **Prevention** from the July 2024, Issues paper. [Raiise](#) is a primary prevention education program focused on highlighting the importance of gender equality, challenging stereotypes, and empowering participants to actively support others in promoting respectful behaviour in their organisation, sporting club, school and community. Raiise is on a mission to contribute to the reduction of violence against women and girls, which unfortunately, has become more prevalent in the society and the media over the past 12 months.

Raiise was born off the back of the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, as an important legacy of the tournament in Australia. The Hon Katrine Hildyard MP through the Office for Women supported the program. It was identified that this once in a generation event would change the landscape of women's sport in our country, unfortunately many sporting clubs weren't equipped with the education and infrastructure to ensure women and girls could participate in sport equally and fairly. This is still an ongoing challenge for our community.

Raiise aligns its mission to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #5: to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. At the current rate, it will take an estimated 300 years to end child marriage, 286 years to close gaps in legal protection and remove discriminatory laws, 140 years for women to be represented equally in positions of power and leadership in the workplace, and 47 years to achieve equal representation in national parliaments (United Nations, 2024).

The Raiise Respectful Club Environments Program was designed with the input of stakeholders from the domestic and family violence sector and the sport and recreation sector. The stakeholders that were included in this consultation included the Office for Women, Women's Safety Services South Australia, KWY, Zahra Foundation Australia, Office for Recreation Sport and Racing and Football South Australia.

This stakeholder group identified and agreed that this proposed program and workshop with sporting organisations would focus on and include the following:

- Educate, encourage and create respectful sporting club environments.
- Topics in the program must include:
 - Gender equality vs gender inequality
 - Gender based violence
 - Diversity and inclusion
 - How to be an active bystander
 - Unconscious bias
 - Values
- 90 minute education session co facilitated by a female and male presenter.
- Targeting participants aged 16 plus.
- Targeting board members, executive, coaches, players, volunteers, parents and community members.
- Pre engagement completed for each organisation on gender roles, gender split within the board, executive, playing group, policies in place, any issues or disclosures of gender based violence and organisational values.
- Real life stories shared within the presentation such as Arman Abrahamzadeh's story.

- Policies are provided to clubs on domestic and family violence and respectful club environments. We designed these policies in consultation with our stakeholders.
- Post engagement includes useful links, supports and references and a post program evaluation.
- Deliver the program to 56 sporting organisation's including State Sporting Organisations to community sporting groups.

We have predominantly been delivering our program as a 1 off, 90-minute interactive workshop. Moving forward we believe this could be improved upon, by offering the workshop as a 2 x 1.5hr offering, allowing us to be more interactive and encourage more dialogue with participants, also allowing them time to reflect and ask more questions during the program.

We have received overwhelmingly positive feedback, via our participant feedback form as well as direct interactions with individuals who have participated. Many of these people who have sought us out individually, have shared with us their own lived experience either as an adult or child survivor of domestic and family violence. These individuals have been welcoming of these types of programs to encourage conversation within communities, as well as bringing to light the types of behaviours of that can lead to violence against women and girls. In most sessions, there has been a disclosure or a reach out for support for an individual or an acquaintance which tells us these types of programs are necessary to create a safe place where people can seek this support.

Through out the program we have been challenged along the way, this has been very positive for this program and our facilitators – asked to acknowledge and reflect on the impacts gender-based violence has in the LGBTQIA+ community and that domestic and family violence also affects men. We have armed ourselves with as much knowledge as we can to embrace and these perspectives and answer their questions with evidence informed responses. We have found there is a distinct lack of specific data surrounding the impacts of domestic and family violence in these more marginalised or minority populations.

This is the feedback that we have on the RAIISE program:

- 97% of participants agreed or strongly agreed the program was helpful and relevant
- 95% of participants agreed or strongly agreed the facilitators were engaging and relatable
- 93% of participants agreed or strongly agreed they felt more empowered to be an active bystander after the workshop
- 94% of participants would recommend the program to others

Participant testimonials

“During the program, we realised that, despite our best efforts, there's still work to be done in creating a safe and inclusive space for all our members. Our eyes have truly been opened, and we now see an exciting road ahead to make a meaningful impact in the realm of gender equality.”

“To make progress, you have to be willing to challenge the status quo, and that's something I pride myself on. The RAIISE program has been an invaluable tool in our journey towards fostering a more inclusive and respectful environment within our organisation.”

██████████ Adelaide United

Thank you for your informative and thought provoking presentation at West Beach SLSC tonight. Speaking as someone who has survived systemic domestic violence whilst growing up, it is so important that the narrative surrounding domestic violence is changed and your work in doing just

that and enlightening people on actions that can negate the behaviour that leads to domestic violence is a positive step. I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Male participant from West Beach Surf Life Saving Club

Brilliant preso – loved it. Some confronting information in there but it is real and it needs to be addressed. Having two girls highlights everything you covered even more.

Male participant from the SANFL

Why aren't here more clubs involved in this training session, it is needed in our community clubs. Has the Government considered mandating this education for community clubs before receiving funding?

Female participant from Zonta International in a regional forum

At Raiise, we believe our program, similarly to the community education initiatives such as Our Watch, Stop it at the Start and the Power to End Violence Against Women, gets people talking about the taboo topic that is gender based violence. We want people thinking about what gender equality really is and challenge the behaviours and attitudes that can lead to violence against women and girls. We aspire that participants of the Raiise program challenge gender stereotypes and outdated beliefs of women's and men's roles in society and what it means to be a man or a woman, a boy or a girl.

We see the benefits of our program to not only exist within the sporting club or school where the program is delivered, also creating meaningful impact within the broader community. We would like to see it mandated, that when sporting and recreation clubs receive funding, particularly funding that is intended to benefit women and girls in sport, that they must participate in a program such Raiise.

The benefits we've identified for sporting clubs who participate in an education program like Raiise include:

- Attract and retain talent.
- Expand sponsorship opportunities and increase revenue.
- Save money for the economy through health and wellbeing and the prevention of domestic and family violence.
- Enrich the culture and create a better-connected sporting community.
- Increase community support and public image.
- Ensure the wellbeing of players, club officials and volunteers.
- Support positive change and enhance reputation.
- Ensure consistency in 'walking the talk' to meet your strategic objectives and aligning to your values.
- Increase governance, risk management, and meet sport regulatory obligations.

Another benefit of participation in the Raiise program specifically, is that we provide a template Respectful Club Environments Policy and a template Domestic and Family Violence policy for clubs to consider implementing. We understand that clubs don't always have the knowledge and resources to develop relevant and meaningful policies. We have created these policies, with relevant stakeholder support, to ensure clubs to have the scaffolding in place if disclosures are made or inappropriate behaviours are noticed, they have a point of reference to safely and appropriately deal with these issues.

It is hard for us to quantify specifically whether our program, or similar programs are having an impact in driving down the prevalence of violence against women and girls. We believe increasing the conversation around gender equality and inequality, the statistics on domestic and family violence and highlighting the 4 drivers of violence against women and girls, along with supporting people how to speak up and call out inappropriate behaviour is beneficial to society as a whole. We believe, anecdotally, the impact our program has had, will be beneficial within the communities these clubs exist in.

We are nearing the launch of the second phase of Raiise, which will be a 6-module eLearning program available to schools, to deliver to their students from year 8-10. The content aligns with the Health and Physical Education Australian Curriculum (version 9), and could be delivered by teachers within this discipline, or within the pastoral care/home room class time.

This program lessons are:

- Gender equality
- Gender based violence
- Diversity and inclusion
- Respectful relationships
- Being and active bystander
- Values

This program has been developed by Raiise within an interactive elearning resource created by South Australian company Monkeystack.

Thank you for reading this submission and we wish you good luck for this project.

To obtain further information on the Raiise project please feel free to contact Ross Wait, Director, [REDACTED] or visit the Raiise website (www.raise.com.au).

This submission has been prepared by Ross Wait, Director of Raiise and Charlotte Davis, Community Program, Coordinator.