

BUILDING RESPECT AND EQUITY AMONG YOUNG CHILDREN

PILOT PROJECT REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS





Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land, the Boon Wurrung and Woiwurrung (Wurundjeri) people of the Kulin Nation and pays respect to their Elders, past and present.

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Disclaimer

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MESSAGE FROM THE LORD MAYOR OF MELBOURNE



City of Melbourne is proud to present valuable insights for educators, early childhood services and families, arising from an important research project.

The first of its kind in Victoria, the pilot project is titled *Building Children's Resilience through Respectful and Equitable Relationships*. The project was trialled in a City of Melbourne children's centre, and was designed to promote respect and gender equity among children – and to evaluate the pilot for potential improvement.

The project's aims recognise that sexism and gender stereotypes contribute to violence against women. Research tells us that by the time children start primary school, many stereotypes are already forming. Families and all those working with children have an important role in bringing about long-term cultural change.

The recommendations in this report offer well-informed guidance for educators and the community as a whole. I invite you to read and reflect on the report's insights and recommendations as we all redouble our efforts to promote respect and gender equity.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally Capp". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lord Mayor
Sally Capp

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Building Children's Resilience through
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Pilot Project Advisory Committee Members,
including:

- Associate Professor Sue Dyson (Retired),
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

City of Melbourne is committed to preventing violence against women and promoting gender equality.

One in four women has experienced intimate partner violence in Victoria (Cox, 2015) and almost one woman a week is killed by a current or ex-partner (Cussen & Bryant, 2015). In addition, since 2012, Victoria Police family violence incident reports increased from approximately 47,000 to 77,000 in 2016 (Crime Statistics Agency, 2016) and violence against women cost the Australian economy around \$21.7 billion in 2015 (PwC, 2015).

Research tells us that in addition to gender inequality, some of the key drivers of violence against women are structures and cultures, attitudes and behaviours that reflect disrespect for women, low support for gender equality, and the acceptance of stereotypical gender roles and norms (Our Watch, 2015a). These attitudes, behaviours and cultures can excuse, condone or lead to violence against women.

Purpose of the pilot project

With no existing project of its kind in Victoria, the purpose of the *Building Children's Resilience through Respectful and Equitable Relationships Pilot Project* (BCR Pilot) was to trial a respectful relationships and gender equity program in an early childhood service, offering long day care and a kindergarten program for zero to five year olds. The primary aim was to positively influence the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours of children, their parents/carers and centre educators to promote respect and equity between the genders. The secondary aim was to evaluate the pilot program to measure the degree to which knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours had changed and how the program and parent/carer engagement could be improved.

With sexism and gender stereotypes playing such a significant role in driving violence, one of the aims of the City of Melbourne's three-year [We Need to Talk - Preventing Violence against Women Strategy](#), released in 2013, was to change those attitudes and to stop them forming in the first place.

The Victorian Government endorsed the [Royal Commission into Family Violence](#) recommendation to work with children and young people by mandating respectful relationships education in all Victorian Government primary and secondary schools from 2016. However, by the time children start primary school, many sexist beliefs and gender stereotypes have already formed (ANU, 2016). Increasingly, policymakers and prevention of violence against women specialists are recommending the need to find age-appropriate ways to foster respectful relationships and gender equity in younger children in early childhood settings.

The BCR Pilot forms part of this cultural change and by extension, a larger body of work that is being conducted by governments, community organisations and workplaces to reduce the unacceptably high levels of violence against women and children in communities.

Value of this report

By sharing the experiences and learnings of the BCR Pilot, the report aims to provide other early childhood services with guidance on how to embed respect and equity practices into their work. The recommendations in this report will help City of Melbourne in its future work and offer other professionals and organisations a way forward to undertake similar cultural change.

This report is made available along with the following companion resources:

- Pilot project literature review summary
- Promoting respect and equity in the early years tools and resources for early years professionals and community organisations
- Fact sheets for early childhood educators and parents/carers.

This project has demonstrated that it is by promoting respectful relationships and gender equity through everyday practices that the cultural shift needed to change attitudes, understanding and behaviours will occur and help lead to a more gender equitable society.

In early childhood services this can be done through programming, policy and procedures development, building educators' knowledge and skills, communicating with and supporting families and re-orientating the physical environment. We understand this is long-term work and, as with the nature of cultural change itself, will require ongoing and sustained effort over many years.

You can find more resources on our website at melbourne.vic.gov.au/respectandequity/

WHERE WE STARTED

Policy context

The BCR Pilot was designed to align with several existing policies and strategies developed at a council, state and federal level.

City of Melbourne

In addition to the direction set out in *We Need to Talk*. Preventing violence against women strategy City of Melbourne's [Council Plan \(2017-21\)](#) contains the following goals under A City of People:

- children and families have access to quality early years programs
- promote gender equity and prevention of violence against women and children, including in the home.

The organisation's [Statement of Commitment to Gender Equality](#) (2018) also supports the prevention of violence against women by stating:

"Achieving gender equality supports Melbourne City Council's aim that all forms of violence against women and girls and persons of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities are eliminated in the city's public and private spaces.

This Statement of Commitment establishes an expectation that gender equality is considered and prioritised in all current and future Council planning, policy, service delivery and practice."

Victorian Government

Along with the recommendation to introduce mandatory respectful relationships education for all primary and secondary school students, the Victorian Government's Royal Commission into Family Violence, resulted in the development of two key strategies:

- [The Victorian Gender Equality Strategy: Safe and Strong](#) (2016), with the expected outcome of: "Victorians do not tolerate attitudes and behaviours that support gender inequality" (page 33).
- [Free from Violence - Victoria's Strategy to Prevent Family Violence and All Forms of Violence against Women](#) (2018-21). An expected outcome outlined in this strategy is: "Victorians actively challenge attitudes and behaviours that enable violence. Victorians discuss and condemn violence through challenging rigid gender roles, gender inequality, sexism and discrimination, to break the cycle of violence" (page 50).

Australian Government

The Third Action Plan associated with [The National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children](#) (2010 - 2022), includes the following action: "Driving nationwide change in the culture, behaviours and attitudes that lead to violence against women and their children, embedding gender equality in workplace culture" (page 6).

National and state early years frameworks

The BCR Pilot aligns with both federal and state early years frameworks, particularly the learning outcomes of Australian Government's [Australian Early Years Learning Framework](#) (2009), including; Outcome 1: Children develop a strong sense of identity and Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.

The [Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework](#) (2016), includes practice principles of respectful relationships and responsive engagement and equity and diversity, where educators are required to be "committed to equity and avoid practices that directly or indirectly contribute to gender inequality, prejudice and discrimination" (page 12).

As well as taking into account the government policy context described above, the BCR Pilot was greatly influenced by [Change the Story: A National Framework for the Primary Prevention of Violence against Women and their Children](#), released by Our Watch in 2015. As the national organisation established to drive change in the culture, behaviours and power imbalances that lead to violence against women and their children, this framework builds on the foundations laid by VicHealth's [Preventing violence before it occurs: A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women](#), published in 2007.

VicHealth's original framework identified the key determinants of violence against women and the most effective way to prevent violence against women is to work towards greater gender equality in both public and private life.

The Our Watch framework reiterates the evidence that violence against women is serious, prevalent and driven by gender inequality. It clearly identifies four gendered drivers of violence and the corresponding actions to prevent violence against women:

GENDERED DRIVERS	CORRESPONDING ACTIONS
Condoning of violence against women	Challenge the condoning of violence against women
Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence	Promote women's independence and decision-making in public life and relationships
Stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity	Challenge gender stereotypes and roles
Disrespect towards women and male peer relationships that emphasise aggression	Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relationships between women and men, girls and boys

A theory of change

A theory of change was developed based on the Our Watch framework, to guide the direction of the BCR Pilot:

If we

Conduct a pilot of activities to promote reflection, understanding and skill and knowledge to promote respectful relationships and gender equity in a children's centre,

▼ Then

1. We contribute to the evidence base in promoting respect and equity in early childhood services.
2. We improve awareness and skills among educators and parents/carers to promote positive attitudes, practices and behaviours.
3. Children question gender biases, norms and stereotypes.

▼ Then

1. We can advocate for preventing violence against women to the early childhood sector and governments by outlining program effectiveness/benefits/ impact.
2. There are improved and more positive attitudes, practice and behaviours in relation to respectful relationships and gender equity at the centre.
3. There is a reduction in gender stereotyping and acceptance of rigid gender norms at the centre.
4. Children have better social skills and are more resilient.

▼ Then

If these approaches are up-scaled and embraced across a number of early childhood services, this will led to:

1. A reduction in attitudes that excuse or condone violence against women
2. Reduced acceptance of gender stereotypes
3. Rigid roles being challenged more often
4. More respectful and equitable relationships between women and men and girls and boys.

In addition, these actions will in turn play a role in promoting and normalising gender equality in public and private life.



WHAT WE DID

Overview

Work began on City of Melbourne's *Building Children's Resilience through Respectful and Equitable Relationships Pilot Project* (BCR Pilot) in early 2016. The Pilot was trialled in a Council-managed children's centre in 2017, with the objective of positively influencing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours of children to promote respect and equity between the genders.

Supporting children to have healthy and respectful relationships was expected to help them become resilient and well-functioning adults and, in line with the evidence, play an important role in preventing violence against women into the future.

As the most effective way to conduct respectful relationships education is to take a 'whole of service' approach (Our Watch, 2015b) the project team sought to apply this principle in the children's centre setting. This meant giving everyone the chance to be involved including children, parents/carers and educators.

This approach involved a broad range of activities to reinforce key concepts and help develop knowledge, skills and confidence, including:

- co-design and delivery of a program for educators including workshops, individual mentoring, room reflections, readings and follow-up resources.
- engagement with children, educators and parents/carers in the co-design of the program.
- development of tools and resources for educators.
- an environmental scan that looked at learning and play equipment and resources, the set-up of rooms and play spaces, educators' planning practices and visual materials on display, and
- an audit and recommendations made on relevant policies and procedures.

The BCR Pilot also included a literature review and a comprehensive program evaluation.

The University of Melbourne, led both the co-design and delivery of the program and the environmental scan. The Australian National University led the development of the literature review and Victoria University led the program evaluation.

Project Advisory Committee

A Project Advisory Committee was established to guide the BCR Pilot and provide advice to the City of Melbourne project team. It was comprised of key internal stakeholders and external experts, drawn from the women's health, preventing violence against women and university sectors.

Resources

The pilot was resourced by a project lead, a program delivery working group, input from other key City of Melbourne family services and communications staff and the Project Advisory Committee. Project costs were met through City of Melbourne's budget and a grant from the Inner North West Primary Care Partnership (INWPCP) Member Grants round 2016.

Human ethics approval to conduct research

Both the University of Melbourne and Victoria University received human ethics approval to conduct research. This was necessary as both institutions were collecting data from children and adults as part of the scope of their work on the project.

Consequently, all those involved in program design, delivery and evaluation had to give their permission to be involved in the BCR Pilot including educators, parents/carers and children (on permission from a parent/carer). Some opted not to take part in either the program or the evaluation or opted to take part in the program but not the evaluation.

The pilot site

The identity of the centre where the pilot project took place is confidential due to the risk of individual educators, children and parents/carers being identified. The human ethics approvals granted to both universities were on the basis that participants could not be identified.

Pilot project timeline

A number of supporting activities were required to deliver the pilot program including establishing governance structures to guide the pilot components, securing funding to undertake the work, developing a program logic map, commissioning a literature review, and drawing on relevant expertise to deliver the pilot program and evaluation.

2016

- Project Advisory Committee established
- Australian National University Centre for Social Research and Methods appointed to conduct project literature review
- Awarded grant from Inner North West Primary Care Partnership (INWPCP) to assist with funding the program development and delivery
- Project literature review completed
- Pilot program logic map completed.

2017

- Victoria University appointed as program evaluator
- University of Melbourne appointed to undertake co-design and delivery of program
- Human ethics approval to conduct research granted to both universities
- Victoria University conducted pre-program evaluation
- Program delivery working group established
- Co-design and delivery of program
- Post-program evaluation
- University of Melbourne conducted environmental scan at the centre
- Review of policies and procedures
- Draft evaluation and program design and delivery and environmental scan reports received.

Literature review

The literature review was commissioned to inform the structure and content of the BCR Pilot, looking at studies conducted over the last 10 years in western countries to:

- evaluate the effectiveness of any programs aimed at promoting gender equity and addressing gender bias in preschool children
- examine the development of gender roles, bias and stereotypes in preschool children (aged three to five years old).

A key function of the literature review was to provide recommendations for program planning.

A total of 28 studies were found to meet these selection criteria including 'grey literature' or material that had not been published in a traditional academic format. [A summary of the literature review](#) is published as a companion to this report.

Some of key findings and corresponding recommendations from the summary of the literature were:

- As preschool children are very sensitive to gender classification, (as they are to classification in general) avoid making distinctions on the basis of gender. This makes them attuned to the gender stereotypes and norms they observe around them. For example, instead of having a boys and girls team, have a red and blue team.
- The media and popular culture play an important role in forming stereotypes around gender and can cause children to develop unhealthy gender attitudes.
- Playing with overly 'gendered' toys can have an impact on how children see themselves and their gender. This can then have an effect on how they view their career choices and future aspirations. Encourage outdoor play as it can have a positive effect of levelling out gender.
- The way language is used fundamentally affects how children think about the world. Engage children in discussions using storybooks where they can explore language and ideas.
- Educators can have a significant influence on the development of attitudes towards gender stereotypes in preschool children. Supporting educators to understand their unconscious bias is as important as helping develop respect and equity skills and knowledge.
- When children see adults performing tasks it influences their ideas about gender roles, such as who does the majority of the housework. Encourage all children to undertake a broad variety of tasks or play to widen their experience.
- Avoid bombarding young children with counter-stereotypical examples, such as female mechanics or stay-at-home dads. As well as not being effective in breaking down gender stereotypes, they can reinforce them by drawing attention to them.

Pilot program co-design and delivery

The University of Melbourne was commissioned to undertake the program co-design and delivery and adopted an action research approach. As the co-design of the program took place while the program was being delivered, this enabled continual feedback from participants to enhance the program as it progressed.

In line with the pilot aims, the BCR Pilot program focused on:

- enhancing the knowledge, awareness and skills of educators to promote respect and equity.
- encouraging children to develop social and emotional skills including recognition, self-regulation of emotions, development of empathy, and positive problem-solving and coping skills.
- assisting children to question and challenge rigid gender norms and stereotypes.
- improving the knowledge of parents/carers about the importance of respect and equity for their children and the impact of gender bias, rigid norms and stereotypes and boosting their confidence and motivation to promote respectful relationships and gender equity with their children.

Running from July to November 2017, the program consisted of:

- Four themed workshops conducted every month:
 - Introduction to the aims of the pilot program, its delivery format and prevention of violence against women theory
 - Focus Area 1: Emotions and empathy
 - Focus Area 2: Positive coping skills and problem solving
 - Reflecting on where to next.
- Support between the workshops:
 - Individual mentoring sessions and exploration of related readings
 - Small group reflection sessions
 - Co-design with children through observations, children's drawings and individual and small group discussions
 - Co-design with families via individual meetings and email.
 - Development of tools and resources to support educators to promote respect and equity with their roles.

In all, 12 educators, seven parents/carers and 24 children (two aged zero to two years), (12 aged two to three years) and (10 aged four to five years) participated in the program co-design and delivery of the BCR Pilot.

Ensuring the safety of participants

At the start of every workshop, external support for families and individuals experiencing family violence was outlined. This was an important safety measure when discussing how to prevent violence against women. With such a high prevalence of violence in the community, talking about violence can trigger past experiences or have an impact on those currently experiencing violence. Documentation included the City of Melbourne's [Child Safe Standards](#) procedures and family violence policies, as well as the City of Melbourne's Employee Assist Program, which offers all City of Melbourne employees support and counselling through an external provider.

Program evaluation

As the BCR Pilot was intended to build understanding about how to promote respectful and equitable relationships in an early childhood setting, a comprehensive evaluation was essential. The evaluation questions were:

1. To what extent can a respectful relationships and gender equity program, run in a selected early childhood centre, influence the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours of educators, children and parents/carers?
2. How can the program be enhanced and modified to better achieve these aims?

The program evaluation was conducted between June and November 2017 and was designed to determine both the impact of the BCR Pilot (summative evaluation) and how it could be improved for future work (formative evaluation). The researchers collected both qualitative and quantitative data from all the target groups, however only children aged three to five years old were included in the evaluation because of their level of language and cognitive development.

To measure impact, evaluation activities were conducted before the program to establish baseline data, referred to as 'Time 1' or 'T1' and after the completion of the program, referred as 'Time 2' or 'T2'.

In summary, the evaluation tools (see Appendix 2) used were:

- Standardised measures and written questionnaires (parents/carers and educators)
- Interviews at Time 1 and Time 2 (parents/carers)
- Interviews at Time 2 (educators)
- Twenty minutes play-based interview at Time 1 and Time 2 (children).
- Capture and recording gender moments via text message on mobile phone.

Where needed, interpreters were employed to make sure all families could fully participate in the evaluation. The number of participants in the pre-program and post-program evaluation is outlined below.

PRE-PROGRAM EVALUATION (TIME 1)	POST-PROGRAM EVALUATION (TIME 2)
22 children	22 children
22 parents/carers	11 parents/carers
11 educators	9 educators

The University of Melbourne and Victoria University worked together to plan how to conduct their respective activities to minimise the disruption to the centre for the duration of the pilot.

Environmental scan

The BCR Pilot's environmental scan was designed as a point in time review of the centre's equipment, resources and visual materials, and the use of individual spaces during one week in November 2017.

The researcher sought to find out if these items, or spaces promoted or discouraged respectful relationships and gender stereotypes/norms, using a template developed by the Project Advisory Committee. The items reviewed were:

- storybooks (one in ten)
- toys, games, puzzles
- play resources such as music and art materials
- visual displays
- resources catalogues
- educators' planning texts (one in five).

Assessment of the items was informed by contemporary research into representations of gender and relationships, such as:

- Images of gender and relationships
- Gender roles portrayed
- Use of colour to convey gender stereotypes
- Storylines in books and other media
- Absence of particular representations of gender or relationships.

The use of learning and play spaces (indoor and outdoor) and equipment and resources was also observed as part of the scan. About six hours was spent observing how children played, with what and with whom (other children or educators).

Policy review

Policies at the centre were reviewed through a respectful relationships and gender equity lens.

Recommendations were made on how to update existing centre policies to include respectful relationships and gender equity or, if necessary, draft a stand-alone policy to embed respectful relationships and gender equity principles into the centre's everyday practice.

The documents reviewed were:

- Centre philosophy and centre philosophy in action
- Children's services policy – inclusion and equity
- Children's services policy – interactions with children
- Children's services philosophy
- Children's services code of conduct.

These documents were reviewed using the principles outlined in the following guiding documents:

- City of Melbourne's policy framework to promote gender equity and prevent violence against women
- [City of Darebin's Creating Gender Equity in the Early Years: a Resource for Local Government.](#)

Other considerations when reviewing policies were:

- alignment with centre values
- relevant legislation and frameworks
- consideration of the intended audience of the policy and their roles and responsibilities
- related City of Melbourne policies
- evaluation of the policies and their review date.

WHAT WE LEARNT

Project limitations

There were a number of limitations to the BCR Pilot project. For the purposes of the evaluation, it would have been ideal to have a 'control' site to compare results with the 'active' site. Although the initial project brief included a control site, it was not possible to set a site up for evaluation in the short timeframe available.

As there was only one centre in the pilot and participation was by consent, there were low numbers of participants in each target group. Although this makes the quantitative evaluation results less robust, the evaluators were able to identify some strong data from the qualitative evaluation results, particularly in understanding how the program worked and how it could be improved.

Initially the BCR Pilot program was planned to run for six months. However, it ran for just over four months, mainly due to the amount of time it took for the participating universities to be granted human ethics approval to conduct their research.

In addition, a strategy employed to recruit more male parents/carers may have helped to address the low levels of participation of this group.

Program co-design and development

Workshops with educators

Between July and October 2017 four, 45 minute workshops were held to give educators an opportunity to increase their knowledge about gender equity, obtain more information about how to build and promote respectful relationships among young children, and to reflect on their own practice. The workshops were designed to explore how educators could work with each other, with children and their families.

While there were clear benefits to running these workshops, four main issues were identified:

- There was a limit to how much material could be covered in a 45 minute session.
- The timing did not suit all educators.
- As there was wide variation in the levels of knowledge and interest in the educator group, it was hard to 'pitch' the content at a level that was equally useful for everyone.

Individual mentoring

One-hour individual mentoring sessions were held between the researcher and educators every month over four months. These sessions allowed educators to engage more deeply in the theories and practices of promoting respect and equity through their roles. Learning techniques used during these sessions included case studies, reflection on intentional teaching and observation practices, and reading to prompt further discussion and build knowledge.

Overall learnings from mentoring were that:

- Educators appreciated the investment in their professional development.
- Mentoring enabled educators to raise questions and clarify meanings and commonly used terms.
- The researcher was able to identify the individual learning needs of educators.
- Mentoring provided a 'safe space' where individuals did not need to worry about having a lack of knowledge compared to their peers.

Group reflections

Group reflections were organised with small groups. An audit of educators thoughts about gender, what attitudes and behaviours relating to gender they witnessed, and how they promoted gender equity in their everyday practice was undertaken.

Feedback included:

- The format of the small group reflections by room worked well as it allowed the researcher to actively support educators based on the age of the children and the educator's skills and interests. Educators could consider the setup of their room including books and equipment.
- The audit revealed the centre philosophy and policies did not identify gender equity as one of its aims although equity and respect were discussed in general terms (for example, when considering ethnicity or cultural background).
- Educators did not necessarily have a shared understanding of key terms such as 'gender identity' and many didn't consider gender when choosing resources and materials such as books and toys.

Activities with children

- Activities with children contributed to the co-design of the program. This included observing and mapping children at play in both indoor and outdoor environments. As a snapshot in time, these maps made an easy outline of relationships between gender and how spaces were used by children.

Important observations included:

- Children often move to where the educators are. This highlighted the importance of educators being more intentional in where they position themselves in a room in order to bring children into particular experiences they may not otherwise choose.
- 'Walking interviews', where children walked around the centre and talked to the researcher about how they interacted with their environment. Children used a variety of spaces and materials that supported and challenged gender stereotypes and norms.
- Children shared ideas about gender through their own observations and drawings.
- Using books to engage children about their assumptions of gender and gender roles highlighted how important books are for reflection in both children and educators.

Co-design with parents/carers

- Due to time constraints, parents/carers were only able to participate in program activities via email rather than as a group. Generally they expressed the wish for their children to have equal opportunity to play with whatever and whoever they wanted.
- Parents/carers views were noted as:
 - a desire for their children to behave respectfully towards other children and educators.
 - a desire for their children to enjoy friendships with children, no matter if they were boys or girls.
 - concerns about the way products were gendered such as clothes, toys and food packaging.

- a desire to be supported to role model respectful relationships for their children.
- a desire to find ways to have conversations about gender with other parents, particularly when they felt gender stereotypes and rigid gender norms were assumed.

Development of tools and resources

Educators, children and parents/carers were valuable contributors to the direction of the program and the development of tools and resources. For example, the development of a [parent information sheet](#) came about because some parents/carers wanted to know more about the program and the kind of discussions educators were having with their children.

General findings

Overall program co-design and development learnings were:

- **Implementing a program while it is being co-designed is difficult:** The program planning schedule needed to be updated continually which resulted in some delays in delivering aspects of the program. This was due to some activities and supporting materials (such as readings) needing to be approved or activities being put on hold due to educator absence or illness. It also resulted in less time to cover some material.
- **Evening workshops made it difficult for everyone to attend:** Holding 'whole of centre' evening workshops did not suit everyone. In addition, as educators were at different levels of understanding and learning, it was hard to pitch the workshop at the right level.
- **No clear, shared policy on gender equity:** The centre had an Equity and Inclusion policy, which included a paragraph on gender equity. However, the policy did not have enough detail about what this meant in terms of how the centre operated.
- **Allow more time to explore ideas about gender and implement changes to practice:** More time is needed to help educators and parents/carers to develop their understanding of gender development, gender stereotypes and norms. Once shared understandings are established, links to social and emotional development can more easily be made.
- **Share expertise in gender development:** Educators with expertise in gender and/or social and emotional development should be given opportunities to provide training and mentoring to others.
- **Educators need more time to develop the confidence to work with parents/carers on respectful relationships and gender equity.** Four months was not enough time to fully develop a deep understanding of the concepts, implement relevant activities and document play and learning observations. The program evaluation strongly supports embedding the program permanently in the everyday running of the centre.

Environmental scan

The environmental scan included the assessment of 70 storybooks, 81 toys, games and items of play equipment, 10 planning texts (out of 50 from the educator's planning room), and 13 posters and images in the foyer and central hall.

In addition, four learning spaces were observed over six hours over a three-day period, providing an opportunity to see these spaces in action and how children and educators engaged with them.

Key findings are outlined below:

Storybooks: Key findings

- Assessing books was difficult as many books had both positive and negative characteristics. For example, a book may promote respectful relationships (e.g. messages about listening to each other or sharing) while at the same time reinforcing gender stereotypes and rigid roles (for example, girl characters wearing pink dresses and doing homebased chores).
- Most books had a male as the lead character, with female characters as secondary characters
- While most books did promote respectful relationships (for example, helpfulness, kindness and empathy), most also depicted gender stereotypes (for example, girls described as 'pretty').

Toys, games and play equipment: Key findings

- Puzzles were more equitable and addressed stereotypes by depicting women in traditionally male roles, although very few placed men in traditionally female roles
- Clothing and colour are strong indicators of traditional gender roles. Toys assessed showed evidence of this, with girls' toys made to look 'pretty' (for example, long eye lashes on Lego figures) while boys' toys were more neutral in colour with a de-emphasis on appearance. The centre also had blue and pink birthday hats, inviting a choice based on gender
- Even when toys and games were gender neutral, the packaging they came in often reinforced gender stereotypes
- Often toy figures connected emotions with gender in a stereotypical way. For example, smiling or crying female characters and angry male characters
- Resource kits, such as the human body kit, tended to depict the human body as male.

Planning texts: Key findings

- Planning texts mostly promoted respectful relationships, depicting characters of different genders playing cooperatively together, but also reinforced gender norms by depicting girls and boys in gender stereotypical ways.
- The equipment catalogue depicted girls and boys in stereotypical roles (for example, boys in construction situations, girls making flowers).
- Although not seen by children, texts can influence educators regarding what is considered boys and girls 'normal' play and what they are capable of according to their gender.

Posters: Key findings

- The centre displayed a diverse range of images of activities, with children portrayed in non-stereotypical ways such as clothing and participating in cooperative play.

Room set-up: Key findings

- Generally rooms were set up in a gender neutral way, with non-stereotypical images.
- The equipment and resources available represented a wide range of interests that would appeal to most children of any gender.
- The types of play undertaken by children often represented gender stereotypes such as boys building a fort and girls cooking in the home corner and using jumping sacks as shopping bags.
- In both the indoor and outdoor learning spaces, observations were made of apparently gender neutral play equipment being used to marginalise other children or prove dominance by groups of boys (over girls and other boys). This behaviour would not be considered to be respectful.
- The main climbing frame in the outdoor space (rooms 2 and 3) was used by girls and boys alike
- Observations of the room set-up enabled the researcher to understand the pivotal role of educator practice in both indoor and outdoor environments.
- Where educators position themselves in the room, and how they engage with the play equipment and the children, provides an ideal opportunity to encourage respect and equity through play.

Program evaluation

The program evaluation findings offer insights into shifts in knowledge, attitudes and behaviours and how successful the program was as a vehicle for promoting respect and equity in the centre. As a reminder, T1= Time 1 (pre-program) and T2 = Time 2 (post-program).

Children – Key findings

At T1, of the 22 children who participated in the program evaluation, 13 identified as boys and nine identified as girls.

Results for all children at T2 showed a change from T1 towards choosing pro-social responses and behaviours in difficult or challenging situations. For example, fewer reported using aggression or avoidance and more reported being assertive towards peers rather than hitting back or running away crying.

Other findings included:

- At both T1 and T2 emotional recognition was high (for example, correctly identifying a picture portraying a sad, happy, angry, scared person).
- As compared to T1, both girls and boys at T2 reported there would be a less negative outcome if a girl or boy dressed in a non-stereotypical way
- At T2 both boys and girls reported enjoying a broader range of activities at the centre.

Parents/carers – Key findings

There was a significant participation drop-off from 22 parents/carers at T1 to only 11 at T2, with nearly all parent/carers being women. At T2, just over half of parent/carers agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with the pilot program and would recommend implementing it at other centres.

There was no significant change in parents/carers reporting any change in their children's toy preferences, media consumption, behaviour or ideas about gender roles from T1 to T2. This backs up other findings from the pilot program that attitudinal and behavioural change towards gender equality requires a consistent, long-term focus and happens in a wider societal context.

Other findings including qualitative data from parent interviews and text messages:

- While parents/carers were in general supportive of the program, only two were aware of the details.
- Many parents/carers believed the program needed to address and take into account broader societal issues, not just children and respectful relationships and gender equity.
- The confidence of educators to discuss the content with parents was paramount.
- Out of eight mothers interviewed at T1 and four interviewed at T2, all reported that respect and equity in early childhood was an important issue.

Educators – Key findings

A total of 11 educators completed questionnaires at T1 and nine at T2. Several educators left the centre during the pilot period. Overall educators agreed the program had an impact on how they understood gender and they were actively thinking about changing their practice. They also felt the multiple entry points (mentoring and group activities) provided an opportunity for more educators to engage according to their level of knowledge and skill.

Other findings:

- Educators indicated they had an increased awareness of identifying and intervening in 'gender power relationships'
- There was a shift in educators towards less traditional gender role attitudes
- While nearly 75 per cent of educators said they would recommend the program to other centres, less than 50 per cent agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with the program
- Very few educators reported noticing a change in the behaviour or attitudes of children or parents/carers
- Based on interviews with seven educators, they were surprised at the variation in their colleagues' understanding of gender and the focus and content of the program itself
- Educators reported needing significantly more time to see hoped for improvements at the centre

Policy review

The following observations were noted about the centre's existing policies and philosophies related to gender equality.

Children's services policy – inclusion and equity

This policy contains a section on gender equity which covers aspects of educators' responsibilities, programming and demonstrates an understanding of the importance of language and the role equipment, materials, resources and play in promoting equality of opportunity for all genders. It also recognises the influence of roles undertaken by different genders observed by children as an important influencing factor. However, the policy lacked detail on promoting respectful relationships and gender equity, the link to preventing family violence, the importance of leadership and the responsibilities of educators in specific roles to ensure gender equity is promoted.

Centre philosophy and centre philosophy in action

These documents contain the principle of respect for culture, diversity and rights of others but does not specifically refer to respectful relationships and gender equity.

Children's services philosophy

This philosophy contains a principle on promoting respectful relationships and gender equity through the curriculum and through interactions with children.

Children's services policy – interactions with children

This policy document states that children should:

'experience relationships that are built on respect, fairness, cooperation and empathy and are given the opportunity to develop these qualities themselves. When children have positive experiences of interactions they develop an understanding of themselves as significant and respected, and feel a sense of belonging.'

Respect is also covered in the strategies and practices used to enact the policy values and the principles of behaviour management. Gender equity is not discussed.

Children's services code of conduct

Respect is frequently referred to in the policy statement, strategies and practices of this policy. Reference to respectful relationships and gender equity is not made.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the experiences, observations and evaluation of the BCR Pilot, and intended to guide organisations planning to introduce respectful relationships and gender equity into their work with children and families.

- 1. Ensure strong leadership to embed respectful relationships and gender equity work into everyday practice.** Assign a person or team to lead this work so it can grow and be sustained. This may be the Centre Coordinator, the Educational Leader or an educator who can act as a respect and equity champion.
- 2. Allow time to embed respectful relationships and gender equity into everyday practices rather than delivering a one-off program.** Provide sufficient time to secure lasting gains for everyone involved in the program and for trialling resources and embedding the key content into everyday practices.
- 3. Introduce a staged approach to allow educators to develop the confidence and competence to carry out their respectful relationships and gender equity work effectively and sustainably.**
 - Employing a gender pedagogue to lead the program, apply best practice principles and skills, establish robust monitoring and evaluation practices, and champion the program with other early years' services.
 - Upskilling the Centre Coordinator and Educational Leader in gender equity theory and policy issues, and risk management and mitigation.
 - Appointing educators who express a passion for gender work as 'Centre Champions' and offering them additional training.
 - Building educators' confidence to communicate with parents/carers about gender equity and better integrating this thinking into their everyday behaviour.
- 4. Use a mix of individual learning and reflection to facilitate group discussion and discovery, including mentoring.** Allow time for educators to reflect, talk and listen to each other before implementation and provide multiple entry points for educators to engage at their own level of understanding.
- 5. Work on a shared understanding of key concepts and terms.** Support educators to develop a shared understanding of key concepts such as gender identity and gender equity.
- 6. Embed respectful relationships and gender equity and into policies, philosophies and procedures.** Review organisational policies and procedures to ensure respectful relationships and gender equity are explicitly named in the principles of an early childhood service. Ensure these policies are highlighted during the induction of new educators and include:
 - the rationale for promoting gender equity to prevent violence against women
 - definitions of key terms
 - proposed strategies and practices
 - proposed roles and responsibilities.
- 7. Use indoor and outdoor spaces and play equipment to promote respectful relationships and gender equity with children.** Make use of the physical environment and equipment to actively role model and teach respectful relationships and gender equity. This may involve educators actively engaging children who are excluded or marginalised in certain play areas.
- 8. Use tools and resources to support learning and practices.** Support educators to translate their learning into concrete practice such as intentional teaching, observation and documentation, and talking/working with parents.
- 9. Use innovative techniques to engage with parents.** Support educators to engage with parents/carers in a meaningful way as parents rely heavily on them for information about how their child is developing socially. Use text messaging techniques to engage parents/carers in a conversation about gender stereotypes and what to do when encountering stereotypes in everyday life.
- 10. Use books, toys and other resources to engage children in discussions about respect and equity.** Although some toys, books and resources may be rigid in their representation of gender roles, they can be useful to foster discussion about gender with children.
- 11. When purchasing new resources, toys and books, apply a respectful relationships and gender equity lens to their selection.** Actively seek resources that promote respect and challenge gender stereotypes.

CONCLUSION

As an organisation providing early years services, City of Melbourne has an opportunity to make a significant contribution to the prevention of violence against women by challenging gender stereotypes and promoting respectful relationships and gender equality.

City of Melbourne committed to resource this pilot to understand how a respectful relationships and gender equity program delivered in an early childhood service could best be done. The overall intention of conducting and evaluating the BCR Pilot was not so much about providing an example of the perfect approach but more about what could be learnt from doing it. In addition this work contributes to the relatively new but growing evidence base on the need to promote respectful and equitable relationships in young children.

It is hoped observations and findings contained in this report will not only guide our future work but provide an example of promising practice to other providers of early childhood services.

Although the data collected through the BCR Pilot program, evaluation and environmental scan represents a small sample size, findings indicate a shift away from gender stereotypical play and a greater acceptance of non-stereotypical appearance in children. For educators, there was an increase in awareness of gender power relations and a shift towards less traditional gender role attitudes. Parents/carers involved in the pilot demonstrated support for the pilot and its aims and a desire for their children to have the same opportunities in life regardless of their gender.

The process of conducting this pilot has also deepened our understanding of how to embed respectful relationships and gender equity principles into the fabric of how a service operates.

A staged approach is required to first build confidence in the leadership of the early childhood services sector and to create the right environment for respect and equity work to flourish. Champions could then be skilled up to mentor and support other educators. With an increase in knowledge and skill, educators would then have the confidence to engage parents/carers and families and become more intentional in their teaching practices with children.

We have a role to play making a strong and sustained commitment to respectful relationships and gender equity with the children and families we work with, as our contribution to the cultural shift needed to create a truly equal, safe society for everyone.



GLOSSARY

Discrimination

Behaviour towards a group and its members that can be either positive or negative.

Gender

The socially learnt roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for men and women; gender defines masculinity and femininity. Gender expectations vary between cultures and can change over time.

Gender based violence

Violence that is specifically directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately.

Gender equality

Refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men.

Gender equity

Is the process of being fair to women and men. Gender equity recognises that within all communities, women and men have different benefits, access to power, resources and responsibilities. To ensure fairness, strategies and measures must often be available to compensate for women's historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on a level playing field. Gender equity leads to gender equality.

Gender identity

A person's deeply felt, inherent sense of being a boy, a man, or male; a girl, a woman, or female; or an alternative gender (e.g., genderqueer, gender nonconforming, gender neutral) that may or may not correspond to a person's sex assigned at birth or to a person's primary or secondary sex characteristics.

Gender inequality

The unequal distribution of power, resources, opportunity, and value afforded to men and women in a society due to prevailing gendered norms and structures.

Gender lens

Deliberately examining how a particular policy, strategy, approach or decision might impact differently on people of different genders.

Gender norms

Behaviours, interests and roles expected of boys and girls, women and men based solely on their gender.

Gender power relations

The way that gender shapes the distribution of power at the various levels of society; for example in individual relationships, within communities and organisations, systems and institutions, and in society as a whole.

Gender stereotypes

Assumptions and ideas about people based on their gender.

Intimate partner violence

Behaviour by someone in an intimate relationship (including current or past marriages, domestic partnerships or dating relationships) that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm to those in the relationship.

Resilience

The ability to cope with, and bounce back from the everyday challenges of life and/or adversity.

Respectful Relationships

Relationships that demonstrate non-violence, equality, mutual respect and trust.

Sexism

Discrimination based on gender, and the attitudes, stereotypes and cultural elements that promote this discrimination.

Sexual orientation

A component of identity that includes a person's sexual and emotional attraction to another person and the behavior and/or social affiliation that may result from this attraction.

Unconscious bias

Beliefs and attitudes we are not aware of or have not been acknowledged that affect our behaviour towards certain people or groups of people. These behaviours are the result of judgements we make based on these beliefs and attitudes.

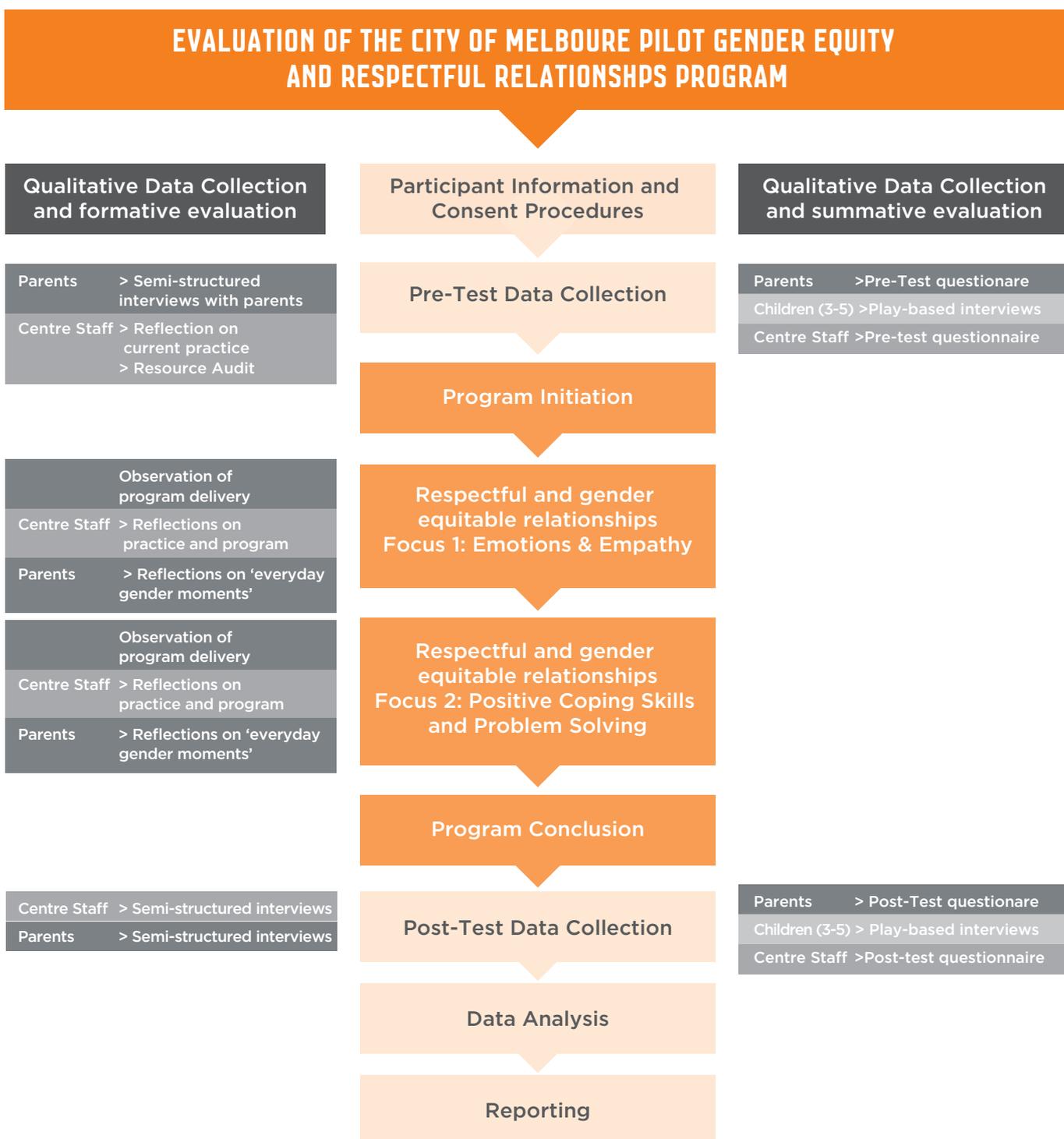
Violence against women

Any act of gender based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or in private life. This definition encompasses all forms of violence that women experience (including physical, sexual, emotional, cultural/spiritual, financial, and others) that are gender based. See also gender based violence.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Relationship between BCR Pilot evaluation activities and design and delivery activities

This diagram demonstrates how the program evaluation activities and program design and delivery activities were designed to fit together.



Appendix 2: Evaluation tools including standardised measures

Table 1: Summary of quantitative measures

VARIABLE	MEASURE AND SOURCE
Child measures	
Gender awareness and intergroup attitudes	Asks children whether they are a boy or a girl, what they like about being a boy/girl, and what boys/girls are good at.
Gender stereotypes about appearance	Asks children to build a boy and a girl felt doll with hair, dress, and accessories. Open-ended questions are asked in relation to choices, and dolls are used in later activities.
Gendered peer preferences	Who are your favourite people to play with at kinder, why they like playing with them, and whether they are a boy or a girl.
Gender stereotypes about toys and games	Pictures of stereotypically male (Digger), female (tea set), and neutral (tambourine) toys were shown to children and they were asked to indicate whether they are for girls, boys, or both.
Gender stereotypes about domestic roles	Images of typical domestic duties that are stereotypically male (fixing things), female (laundry), and neutral (cooking dinner) were shown to children and they were asked to identify whether they should be done by males, females, or both.
Emotional recognition	The Affect Knowledge Test (Deham et al., 2003) assesses a child's emotional competence, in particular their ability to identify four basic emotions (i.e., happy, sad, angry, and scared/afraid). Responses are measured expressively and then receptively. Children were presented with four felt faces (happy, sad, mad/angry, scared/afraid) and were firstly asked for a verbal response to "how does he/she feel". Secondly, children were asked to "point to the (fill in emotion) face".
Empathy	This extension of the Affect Knowledge Test involves the interviewer acting out three situations with puppets, and asking children to identify how the victim might feel (Denham, 2003).
Social problem solving skills	The Challenging Situation Tasks (CST) (Denham, Bouril, & Beloud, 1994) assesses young children's emotional and behavioural responses to hypothetical situations. Children were presented with pictures of six peer scenarios and were asked to select from four options regarding how they would feel, and what they would do in that situation. Responses are coded as competent (appropriately asserting oneself or calmly negotiating a solution), aggressive (responding with verbal or physical antagonism, intimidation, or force), or inept (passive avoidance).
Gendered play preferences	Direct questions asked children to identify their favourite toys and games to play with at kinder.

VARIABLE	MEASURE AND SOURCE
Parent questionnaire	
Demographics	Age, gender, ethnicity, relationship status, level of education, hours of work outside the home were collected in order to be able to control for these demographics, and describe the sample.
Information about the child	Age, birth order, number of siblings, and diagnosed conditions were asked in order to describe the sample.
Parent report of child play preferences	The Coyne et al., (2014) modified version of the Preschool Activities Inventory (PSAI) (Golombok & Rust, 1993) was used. This is a 14-item parent report measure of gender stereotyping in relation to preferred play of pre-schoolers, in which participants respond from 1=never to 5= very often. PSAI asks questions about whether a child plays games such as 'wrestling or fighting', 'playing house', 'dressing up', etc. A higher score indicates more masculine behaviour, and a lower score, more feminine behaviour.
Parent report on child media consumption	Asks parents to identify the number of minutes (None, 1-30 minutes, 31-60 minutes, 1-2 hours, 2-3 hours, more than 3 hours) that their child spends on a range of media (TV, video games, movies, music, books, computer) on a typical day (Coyne, Linder, Rasmussen, Nelson, & Collier, 2014). These questions were asked because research conducted by Coyne et al. (2014) suggests that media exposure may relate to some aspects of gender behaviour.
Parent report of aggression and pro-social behaviour	Parent Adaptation of the Pre School Social Behaviour Survey (Crick, Casas, & Mosher, 1997). The Coyne et al. (2016) adaptation of the Pre-school Social Behaviour Survey is a 48-item scale that asks parents to report how often their child engages in examples of pro-social and aggressive behaviour (39 items) and how often they are on the receiving end of pro-social and aggressive behaviours (9 items). There are four subscales in this measure - overt aggression, relational aggression, pro-social behaviour, and depressed affect. This measure was included to reflect any changes in prosocial and aggressive behaviours over time.
Gender roles in childrearing	The Childrearing Sex Role Attitude Scale [CSRAS] (Lee Burge, 1981) measures adult attitudes about emotional expression, gender-appropriate activities and career goals for girls and boys. This modified 19-item version is taken from Freeman (2007), who originally adapted the scale to explore parental beliefs about gender-typed toys. The modified version maintains the original scoring system with low values reflecting a more traditional gender role attitude (Freeman, 2007).
Gender-role beliefs	10-item short version of the Gender Roles Beliefs Scale [GRBS] (Brown & Gladstone, 2012) maintains the original scoring system on a seven point scale with scores ranging from 10 to 70. Participants respond to a range of items asking about their beliefs in relation to gender. Higher values represent more feminist gender-role beliefs. This measure was included to reflect any changes in parental gender norms over time as a result of the program.

VARIABLE	MEASURE AND SOURCE
Questionnaire for centre staff	
Demographics	Gender, age, ethnicity, number of children, age and gender of their children, highest level of education.
Skills items	Asks educators how often they engage in specific gendered practices. Included to reflect change in educator practice as a result of the program.
Gender roles in childrearing	The Childrearing Sex role attitude scale [CSRAS] (Lee Burge, 1982). The CRAS measures adult attitudes about emotional expression, gender-appropriate activities and career goals for girls and boys. This modified 19-item version is taken from Freeman (2007), who originally adapted the scale to explore beliefs about gender typed toys. The modified version maintains the original scoring system with low values reflecting a more traditional gender role attitude. This was included in order to determine how educators' attitudes might have changed as a result of the program.
Gender-role beliefs	10-item short version of the Gender Roles Beliefs Scale [GRBS] (Brown & Gladstone, 2012) maintains the original scoring system on a seven-point scale with scores ranging from 10 to 70. Participants respond to a range of items asking about their beliefs in relation to gender. Higher values represent more feminist gender-role beliefs. This measure was included in order to determine any change in educator's gender beliefs as a result of the program.

Table 2: Semi-structured interview schedule for centre staff at post-program interviews

<p>Introduction</p>	<p>Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in this study. Today we are going to have a chat about you, and your experiences of the gender equity and respectful relationships program. The aim of the interview is to explore how some of your own understandings about gender and relationships might have changed, and how your practice as an early childhood educator might have changed since participating in the program.</p>
<p>Elements of the program</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Let's start by reflecting back to the professional development sessions that you had with Kylie. Can you tell me what was some of the most important messages that you took from those sessions? 2. What were your experiences of the co-design of the program?
<p>Response to the program</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. What were the most positive aspects of the program? 4. What has been the biggest surprise you have had during the program? 5. Was there a pivotal moment for you? Can you describe that? 6. How do you think your practice as an educator has change as a result of the program?
<p>Impact of the program</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. What impact has the program had on you personally? 8. What impact has the program had on you the children? 9. What impact has the program had on you and the families? 10. What impact has the program had on you and your colleagues?
<p>Feedback about the program</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. What has been the biggest challenge for you and your practice in relation to the prevention of gender-based violence? 12. What were some of the unexpected surprises that came up for you while taking part in the program? 13. What do you think could be changed for next time?

Table 3: Semi-structured interview schedule for parent baseline interviews

Introduction	Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in this study. Today we are going to have a chat about you, and your child. The aim of the interview is to explore some of your own understandings about gender and relationships that might come from your own childhood, and how this might impact on your parenting.
Childhood experiences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can you tell me about your childhood- where did you grow up and what was it like? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Number of siblings and gender of siblings? b. In the country or in the city? c. Somewhere other than Australia d. Mum and Dad? Occupations? 2. How would you describe the gender roles of your parents? 3. How would you describe the ways that you and your siblings were treated in respect to gender? (Were there different rules for brothers and sisters?)
Parenting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Can you share the gender roles of your current relationship? 5. What are your thoughts about gender equitable parenting?
The program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. What are your expectations of the program? 7. What are your concerns about the program?
Introducing 'everyday gender moments'	During the building respectful relationships program, we are asking parents to capture 'everyday gender moments' that take place outside of the children's centre. We simply want you to notice, and briefly record the moment as this will be really valuable data for us to be able to see the far-reaching effects of the program. An example of an 'everyday gender moment' might be that you pack the blue drink bottle instead of the pink one that your son wants to take to kinder as you don't want him to be teased... or it could be that your daughter is told that she can't play on certain equipment at the park because she is a girl... There are no right/wrong answers here. If you like, you can take a photograph of something that represents that moment (but not a picture of your child) if you have time. If you would like to take part in this part of the project I will give you the text line - just add this as a contact in your phone and you can text through your responses any time. We will access the texts and de-identify it before we store it as data.

Table 4: Semi-structured interview schedule for parent post-program interviews

<p>Introduction</p>	<p>Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in this study. Today we are going to have a chat about you, and your child, and your experiences of the gender equity and respectful relationships program.</p>
<p>Everyday Gender Moments</p>	<p>We would like to start by having a chat about some of the 'everyday gender moments' that you have sent through...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First of all, I would like you to have a look at the moments that you sent through to us, and decide on which one was a significant moment for you. 2. Can you explain what the situation or the 'moment' was? 3. And why was this significant for you? 4. What did this teach you about gender?
<p>The program</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Did you notice anything different about what was happening at kinder during the program? In the physical or social environment? In the way that the educators spoke to you? 6. Did you notice anything that was different in terms of your child? Was there any observable difference in your child's knowledge or behaviour during this program? 7. What have you learnt about gender and respectful relationships since the centre started the project? 8. And how does this relate to your parenting?

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