



## Boys don't cry: The role of men in preventing gender-based violence

Wednesday 13 March 2024, 10:00 - 11:15 EST

Venue: UN, room CR 12

Registration form: <https://rb.gy/6v6llc>

Contact: [czechdelegation.csw@vlada.gov.cz](mailto:czechdelegation.csw@vlada.gov.cz)

*The side-event is organised by the Czech Republic, Australia, Mexico and Alternative to Violence.*

*All CSW68 delegates are invited to attend.*

*Registration is open only to people having a UN grounds pass.*

### **Opening remarks:**

— H.E. Mr. Jan Lipavský, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Czech Republic

### **Speakers:**

- H.E. Ms. Nadine Gasman, President of the National Institute for Mexican Women
- Ms. Klára Šimáčková Laurenčíková, Czech Government Commissioner for Human Rights
- Ms. Barbra Jakobsen, clinical psychologist, Norwegian NGO Alternative to Violence
- Ms. Kristýna Pešáková, Director of SPONDEA, Czech NGO representative
- Dr. Anna Cody, Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Australia
- Dr. Gary Barker, President and CEO, Equimundo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice (TBC)

### **Moderator:**

— Ms. Taťána Kuchařová, SDGs ambassador, UN, Czech Republic

### **Objective:**

The event will focus on finding common solutions to prevent gender-based violence through sharing good practice by focusing on the development of boys and youth and engaging men in the work on violence against women, challenging traditional negative masculine patterns, and the work with men who use violence.

### **General information:**

Gender-based violence (GBV) continues to be one of the most serious human rights violations. Without its elimination, human rights of women and girls enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women cannot be enforced in practice. However, despite the intensified international efforts to prevent violence, it remains to be a part of the everyday lives of many women and girls of all ages. While women and girls bear the burden of this injustice, men also play a critical role in perpetuating and addressing GBV.



Traditional masculinity, often characterized by dominance, aggression, and emotional stoicism, has been linked to GBV. The psychological development of boys who grow up with violence and control in their family of origin is negatively affected by the trauma such violence inflicts. At the same time, they are socialized into not acknowledging the emotional, relational and social consequences of such trauma, allowing for patterns of minimization, externalization and victim-blaming to unfold. Boys and men who are socialised into these rigid norms may perceive violence as a legitimate means of control and expression, reinforcing a culture of tolerance and acceptance of this harmful behaviour. These patterns of behaviour are often observed and learned by boys early in their childhood from their male members of the family and transferred from generation to generation. Enabling systems to systematically prevent, address and treat the consequences of violence and neglect on boys is therefore one of the keys toward ending GBV.

However, men also need to contribute to challenge these harmful norms and pave the way for a more equitable and violence-free society. Challenging traditional masculinity begins with providing a safe and violence-free environment for children to grow up in, and education of children and youth about gender equality, violence and healthy relationships.

Men can also play a transformative role in educating and empowering their fellow men. By openly discussing GBV, challenging harmful stereotypes, promoting respectful relationships and violence-free care for children, men can help foster a culture of non-violence that extends beyond individuals to broader social norms. Men should also recognise their potential to contribute to the healing process by actively challenging those who use violence, by encouraging them to seek help and stop violence, and by advocating for survivors' rights. By taking such actions, men can help create a more supportive and just environment for all.

Effective prevention programmes are crucial in addressing GBV. These programmes can be categorised into three primary levels:

- **Primary Prevention:** Aims to address the root causes of GBV by promoting gender equality, challenging harmful gender norms, providing a safe and violence-free environment for children to grow up, and educating people about GBV and healthy relationships. This should include pre-school and school-based education, community-based programs, and media campaigns as well as mental health services, and family services including support for becoming parents.
- **Secondary Prevention:** Focuses on identifying and supporting individuals who are at risk of experiencing GBV and individuals who are at risk to use GBV. This can involve identifying children who are exposed to violence and neglect, adopting trauma sensitive approaches for children who are exposed to violence in families, and working with youth displaying aggressive behaviour.
- **Tertiary Prevention:** Seeks to reduce the negative consequences of GBV for survivors. This can include providing economic support, child care services, safe shelters for survivors,



mental health services, reintegration programs to help survivors rebuild their lives, and offering legal assistance and programmes for men who use GBV.

GBV is a costly issue for individuals, families, and societies as a whole. Direct costs include medical expenses, lost wages, and legal fees incurred by survivors. Indirect costs include lost productivity, increased crime rates, and reduced economic growth. The financial burden of GBV is estimated to reach trillions of dollars every year. This is a cost we can no longer afford. By investing in prevention programmes and support services, we can work together to end GBV and create a safer and more just world for all.

Approximately one in three Czech women experiences GBV during her lifetime. Combating GBV is one of the priorities of the Czech Government. Czech initiatives to address GBV include the Action Plan for the Prevention of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence 2023-2026 and a project of the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic to prevent GBV co-funded from the Norway grants. The project includes educative workshops at schools for students and training of professionals in contact with survivors of GBV. One of the key systemic changes to break the cycle of violence is to ensure the availability of programmes for people who use violence.

GBV is prevalent in Australia and is driven by gendered norms and stereotypes. Australia is committed to addressing and eliminating GBV and creating a more equal and just society for all. Examples of Australia's initiatives to address GBV include the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032, and the development of a National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality. As Australia's Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Dr Cody is committed to critically analysing how patterns of power and privilege intersect to create distinct, compounded experiences of discrimination for women due to race, sexuality, class, gender, disability, age, etc.

The event will bring together representatives of national governments, civil society, and international organisations. The speakers will share their experiences and up-to-date approaches to tackle gender-based violence, engage men in the work against violence against women, and challenge traditional negative toxic masculinity. Special attention will be paid to work with men who use violence against women.