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Investigating Australians' interpretation of women's reports of sexual violence

Participant Information Statement

(1) What is this study about?

The National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) is the world's longest running population-level survey of community attitudes of its kind. This research study is being undertaken to further understand some key results from the 2017 NCAS survey. This study will investigate how people interpret women's reports of sexual violence. What we learn from this study will be used to inform education and primary prevention programs to help reduce violence against women into the future.

We are interested in speaking to people over the age of 18 from a range of different backgrounds and areas. You have been invited to participate in this study because you have been selected by QRA.

Participation in this research study is voluntary. Please read the information on this statement carefully to help you decide if you want to take part in the research. Please ask questions about anything that want to know more about.

By giving your consent to take part in this study (by signing the consent form), you are telling us that you:

- ✓ Understand what you have read on this information statement.
- ✓ Agree to take part in the research study as outlined below.
- ✓ Agree for us to collect some personal information from you, which will be kept confidential, as described below.
- ✓ Agree to the use of your personal information, as described below.

(2) Who is running the study?

The study is being carried out by the following researchers at Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS):

- Dr Christine Coumarelos, Director, Research Program (NCAS)
- Kate Minter, Senior Research Officer (NCAS), and
- Dr Erin Carlisle, Senior Research Officer (NCAS).

This study is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services (DSS). The Department will not receive any information from this study that could identify you.

(3) What will the study involve for me?

You will be asked to participate in a focus group discussion with up to 5 other people. All the participants and the moderator will be the same gender as you. The discussion will be centred around two case study stories about women who have made a report of sexual assault. You will be asked to discuss your thoughts on the particular cases and the people involved.

Before the group discussion begins you will be asked to complete a short version of the NCAS survey.

The group discussion will be held online using WebEx meetings. The discussion will be audio- and video-recorded. The survey will be run on SurveyGizmo. Any personal information that you share (such as your name and age) will be kept confidential. You will be asked to give yourself a pseudonym (an alternative fictional name), which we will use in all publications resulting from the study. This will keep your contributions anonymous.

(4) How much of my time will the study take?

The total time commitment for this study is about 2 hours, including approximately:

- 15 minutes to review the Participant Information Statement and consent form
- 15 minutes to complete the survey, and
- 70-90 minutes for the group discussion.

(5) Who can take part in the study?

We will be speaking to people over the age of 18 years across Australia from urban and rural areas. People from all backgrounds (e.g. cultural, racial, religious, dis/ability, financial, gender and sexuality backgrounds) are encouraged and welcome to participate.

(6) Do I have to be in the study? Can I withdraw from the study once I've started?

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relationship with the researchers, anyone at Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety or anyone from QRA.

If you decide to participate in the study and then change your mind later, you are free to withdraw at any time by following one of the steps outlined below:

- (1) If you wish to withdraw before the group discussion, please email or call QRA.
- (2) If you change your mind during the focus group discussion, please let the moderator know.
- (3) If you change your mind after the focus group discussion, please email or call Kate or Erin (see contact details on page 4).

Should you withdraw after the group discussion has started (methods 2 or 3 outlined above), it will not be possible to remove your individual comments from the audio-video recording. This is because of the group and online nature of the discussion.

If you withdraw from the study, any personal information that we have already collected will be kept in our study records, unless you contact Kate or Erin before we have analysed and published the results (see page 4 for contact details).

(7) Are there any risks or costs associated with being in the study?

We do not expect that there will be any risks or costs associated with taking part in this study. However, while unlikely, some participants may at points feel uncomfortable given the sensitive nature of topic under discussion. We have kept your comfort and wellbeing at the forefront of our research planning. We will be discussing fictional rather than real scenarios and asking questions in a general way to minimise any potential discomfort. We will not be asking you about your own experience or that of your friends and family. As already noted at item (6), you can withdraw from the study at any point in time.

If any of the questions or the discussion raise concerns for you, we encourage you to seek support.

Confidential helplines and referral services are available for anyone experiencing sexual domestic violence, or anyone supporting someone who has experienced this violence. A list of these services is provided at the end of this information statement.

Please note that this research will discuss violence that may include illegal activities. We will not be asking participants about their personal experience or knowledge of violence. However, if you choose to disclose specific information about criminal activity you or someone else has been involved in, the research team may be required to report that information to comply with legal requirements. You should consider this possibility before deciding to participate in this research and the information you choose to share with researchers.

(8) Are there any benefits associated with being in the study?

To thank you for your time and input, you will be provided with a \$100 gift card payment for participation in the study. Payment will only be made to those who attend the focus group discussion and will be emailed following the discussion.

More generally, your input will be beneficial by helping to shape policy and programs to reduce violence against women.

(9) What will happen to information about me that is collected during the study?

By providing your consent, you are agreeing to us collecting personal information about you for the purposes of this research study. Your information will only be used for the purposes outlined in this Participant Information Statement, unless you consent otherwise. All personal information that you share with us (such as your name, age and where you live) will be kept confidential. Your identity and information will be securely stored.

The survey and the focus group discussion will **not** collect any personal information about you. The responses that are collected in the survey are kept confidential and securely stored by both the research team, WebEx and SurveyGizmo. Both WebEx and SurveyGizmo encrypt all data collected. Encrypted data collected by SurveyGizmo is transferred in aggregate form to a secure server in the United States of America. By consenting to participate in this survey, participants agree to this information transfer. The audio-video meeting data collected will be stored in encrypted form in a WebEx data centre in Sydney, Australia, before the data is downloaded and saved on the ANROWS server at the conclusion of each focus group. After the completion of the study, de-identified data will be securely archived in the ANROWS server indefinitely. You will not be individually identifiable in any published reports.

We will keep your information confidential and you will not be identified in any reports that are published from the study. There might however be an instance where we would need to break confidentiality, including if: we reasonably believe you are going to seriously harm someone else; if there is an indication that a child may be at risk of harm, abuse or neglect; or if we are legally required to do so, including if you have disclosed illegal activity. While unlikely, agreeing to participate in this study means you acknowledge this potential use of your information.

Findings from the study will be published (e.g. in reports/papers), and you may hear about the research findings through media outlets. You will not be individually identifiable in these publications.

(10) Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you are welcome to tell other people about the study. However, we ask that you please help to maintain the privacy of the other members of the discussion group. Please do not share the names of the other people involved in your discussion and please do not share their stories or contributions with others.

(11) Will I be told the results of the study?

As noted at item (9) above, the results will be published. If you would like us to send you a short summary of the overall results of the study, please tick the relevant box on the consent form, and we will do so after the study is finished.

(12) What if I would like further information about the study?

When you have read this information, Kate Minter and Erin Carlisle will be available to discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. The contact details for Kate, Erin and the lead researcher, Christine Coumarelos, are below.

Kate Minter, Senior Research Officer (NCAS)	Email: kate.minter@anrows.org.au Phone: 02 8374 4029
Dr Erin Carlisle, Senior Research Officer (NCAS)	Email: erin.carlisle@anrows.org.au Phone: 02 8374 4011
Dr Christine Coumarelos, Director, Research Program (NCAS)	Email: christine.coumarelos@anrows.org.au Phone: 02 8374 4088

(13) What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the study?

Research involving humans in Australia is reviewed by an independent group of people called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the HREC of the University of Sydney [Approval reference number: 2020/444]. As part of this process, we have agreed to carry out the study according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*. This statement has been developed to protect people who agree to take part in research studies.

If you are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or you wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the university using the details outlined below. Please quote the study title and protocol number.

The Manager, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney:

- **Telephone:** +61 2 8627 8176
- **Email:** human.ethics@sydney.edu.au
- **Fax:** +61 2 8627 8177 (Facsimile)

This information statement is for you to keep.

Referral Information

The following services may also be useful if you are looking for support options for friends or family members, or it might be a service you're contemplating accessing yourself.

Anyone experiencing violence can call the 24 hour confidential helpline **1800 RESPECT (National Sexual Assault, Domestic Family Violence Counselling Service) on 1800 737 732.**

If you, or another person (adult or child) are in immediate danger call 000.

Sexual Assault and Domestic Family Violence Support Services

There are services situated around Australia that provide specialist counselling support and other assistance to victims of sexual assault and/or family violence, their non-offending partners, and/or family and friends. Contact the service in your state/territory to access counselling support, to obtain information in relation to legal options, physical health concerns, or referrals to other services. The services listed below are free and confidential. You don't have to identify who you are or what you do.

National Services

1800 RESPECT

The national sexual assault, domestic and family violence information and support line, 24 hours.
1800 737 732

Lifeline

Crisis support and suicide prevention, 24 hours.
13 11 14

Kids Helpline

Will listen to kids, teens and young adults for any reason, 24 hours.
1800 551 800

Bravehearts

Provides specialist therapeutic services and support to children and young people, adults and non-offending family members affected by child sexual assault. 8.30 am – 4.30 pm AEST, Monday - Friday.
1800 272 831

Blue Knot Foundation (formerly Adults Surviving Child Abuse)

Professional phone counselling, information and support for adult survivors of child abuse with referral database of experienced professionals and agencies, 9am-5pm AEST, 7 days.
1300 657 380

Better To Know AMS

Local Aboriginal medical and other health service details.

bettertoknow.org.au/AMS.html

Relationships Australia

Online counselling with a professional counsellor using a confidential, text-based chat service.

onlinecounselling.relationshipsvictoria.com.au/

Australian Capital Territory**Canberra Rape Crisis Centre**

Crisis Support and Advocacy, 7 am -11 pm, 7 days.

(02) 6247 2525

Domestic Violence Crisis Service A.C.T

Domestic and family violence information, support and referrals, 24 hours.

(02) 6280 0900; TTY: (02) 6228 1852

Care and protection services

For children and young people considered 'at risk' of serious harm, 24 hours.

1300 556 729

Women's Legal Centre ACT

Domestic violence legal aid for ACT and region, 9.30 am – 12.00 noon, Monday – Friday.

From Canberra: (02) 6257 4377; Outside Canberra: 1800 634 669; TTY: 133 677 and ask for (02) 6257 4377.

New South Wales**NSW Rape Crisis Centre**

Telephone and online crisis counselling for anyone who has experienced, or is at risk of, sexual, family or domestic violence, 24 hours.

1800 424 017

Domestic Violence Line

Domestic and family violence information, support and referrals, 24 hours.

1800 656 463; TTY: 1800 67 14 42

Child Protection Helpline

To report suspected child abuse or neglect, 24 hours.

132 111

Legal Aid NSW

Specialist domestic violence legal aid for south-west Sydney and the Central Coast regions.

1300 888 529

Western NSW Community Legal Centre

Specialist domestic violence legal aid for the Dubbo region.
1800 655 927

Northern Territory**Sexual Assault Referral Centred**

Crisis support for women who have experienced sexual assault. You can call Darwin and Alice Springs 24 hours a day to get help for recent incidents of sexual assault.

Darwin: (08) 8922 6472

Alice Springs: (08) 8955 4500

Alice Springs after hours: 0401 114 181

Katherine: (08) 8973 8524

Tennant Creek: (08) 8962 4361

Women's Information Service (Alice Springs)

(08) 8951 5174 or 1800 508 051

Dawn House (Darwin)

Provides services to women and children escaping domestic and family violence in the Top End.
08 8945 1388

NPY (Ngaanyatjarra Pitijantjatjara Yankunytjatjara) Women's Council Domestic Violence Service

1800 180 840

East Arnhem Domestic and Family Violence Counsellor

(08) 8987 0403

Katherine Domestic and Family Violence Counsellor

(08) 8971 0777

Darwin Aboriginal and Islander Women's Shelter

Provides safe and culturally appropriate services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who are homeless or escaping family violence.

Business hours: (08) 8945 2284; afterhours 24/7: (08) 8945 1852

Child Abuse / Child Protection Hotline

To report child abuse and / or neglect, 24 hours.

1800 700 250

Alice Springs Women's Shelter

24 hour support for women and children at risk of domestic and family violence

(08) 8952 6075

Central Australian Women’s Legal Service – Alice Springs and Tennant Creek

Specialist domestic violence legal aid for the Alice Springs and Tennant Creek regions.

1800 684 055

Queensland**The Queensland Sexual Assault Helpline**

Telephone support and counselling to any Queenslanders who has, or thinks they may have been sexually assaulted or abused, 7.30 am – 11.30 pm, 7 days.

1800 010 120

DVConnect Women’s Line

Free crisis counselling and support for women experiencing domestic and family violence, 24 hours.

1800 811 811

DVConnect Men’s Line

Specialist assistance for men who would like to address their own use of violence and men who have been victims of violence in their own relationships, 9 am – midnight, 7 days.

1800 600 636

Women’s Legal Service Queensland

Free domestic violence legal aid assistance for women in Queensland.

State-wide: 1800 957 957

Regional and remote: 1800 457 117

North Queensland Women’s Legal Service

Free domestic violence legal aid assistance for women in north Queensland – covering Sarina to the Torres Strait, and west out to the Northern Territory border, 9.00 am - 5.00 pm, Monday - Friday.

1800 244 504

Child Safety Services

To report that a child in Queensland is experiencing harm, or is at risk of experiencing harm, 24 hours.

1800 177 135

South Australia**Yarrow Place Rape & Sexual Assault Service**

For people who have been raped or sexually assaulted, 24 hours.

(08) 8226 8777 or 1800 817 421

Victim Support Service

Free and confidential services for people affected by crime and abuse.

1800 842 846

Domestic Violence Crisis Service

For people experiencing domestic and family violence, 24 hours.
1800 800 098

Domestic Violence and Aboriginal Family Violence Gateway Service

To help anyone affected by domestic or family violence, 24 hours.
1800 800 098 or free call 1300 782 200

Child Abuse Report Line

To report all child protection concerns, 24 hours.
131 478

Legal Services Commission of South Australia

Free legal advice, 24 hours
1300 366 424

Women's Legal Service South Australia

Free domestic violence legal assistance.
(08) 8221 5553

Tasmania**The Sexual Assault Support Service**

For victims of recent rape or sexual assault and their families, 24 hours.
1800 697 877

Laurel House

For victims/survivors or sexual violence and their families, in the North and North-West of Tasmania
North: (03) 6334 2740
North West: (03) 6431 9711
After-hours state-wide support: 1800 697 877

Family Violence Counselling and Support Service (FVCSS)

Offers professional and specialised services to assist children, young people and adults affected by family violence. Monday – Friday: 9.00 am – midnight; Weekends/public holidays: 4.00pm – midnight.
1800 608 122

Family Violence Response Referral line

For people experiencing domestic and family violence, 24 hours.
1800 633 937

Child Safety Service

For urgent notifications about child abuse or neglect, 24 hours.
1800 000 123.

Women's Legal Service Tasmania

Free domestic violence legal advice.

(03) 6419 7050 – Burnie Office; (03) 6349 1943 – Launceston Office

Victoria**Sexual Assault Crisis Line**

After-hours, telephone crisis counselling service for victim/survivors of both past and recent sexual assault.

Operates 5pm – 9 am on weeknights, weekends and public holidays.

1800 806 292

Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre

For confidential support and information please call the safe steps 24/7 family violence response line.

(03) 9322 3555 or 1800 015 188

Child Protection Crisis Line

For concerns about the immediate safety of a child within their family unit, 24 hours.

131 278

Eastern Community Legal Centre

Free family violence legal advice.

Box Hill: (03) 9285 4822; Boronia: (03) 9762 6235; Healesville, Metro: (03) 5962 1665 ; Healesville,

Regional:1300 79 70 88.

Women's Legal Service Victoria

Free domestic and family violence legal assistance, with helpful online information.

Metro: (03) 8622 0600; Regional: 1800 133 302

Inner Melbourne Community Legal Drop in service

Domestic and family violence legal assistance for the Melbourne City District, Docklands West Melbourne, North Melbourne, Carlton, Parkville areas.

03 9328 1885

Better Place Australia

Counselling, dispute resolution and mediation services, Moorabbin

1800 639 523 or family@betterplaceaustralia.com.au

The Orange Door

Free service for people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence and families who need extra support with the care of children. Open from 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.

North Eastern Melbourne: 1800 319 355; Bayside Peninsula: 1800 319 353; Mallee: 1800 290 943; Inner Gippsland: 1800 319 354; Barwon: 1800 312 820.

Western Australia

The Sexual Assault Resource Centre

24 hour emergency line.

(08) 9340 1828 or 1800 199 888

Women's Domestic Violence Helpline

For crisis support, 24 hours.

(08) 9223 1188 or 1800 007 339

Western Australia Police: Child Abuse

To report child abuse, 24 hours.

131 444

Marninwarntikura Family Violence Prevention Legal Service

Free domestic violence legal assistance and crisis accommodation.

(08) 9191 5284

Southern Communities Advocacy Legal Education Service

Free domestic violence legal advice.

Kwinana and Rockingham: 08 95500 40

Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre

Legal advice for family and domestic violence and restraining orders.

Mirrabooka Office: (08) 9440 1663; Joondalup Office: (08) 9301 4413