

Gender Equality

GGA Position Statement

Our Vision

Girl Guides around Australia want a world where girls and young women can discover and fulfil their potential, without being held back because of their gender.

Statement

Despite ongoing progress towards gender equality, deeply rooted discriminatory social norms, stereotypes, laws and commercial practices continue to prevent girls, women, and people of minority genders from enjoying the full spectrum of their human rights.

Gender inequality prevents girls and young women from achieving their full potential through various ways, including:

- **Gender Based Violence**

1 in 2 women have experienced sexual harassment in their lifetime, while 1 in 3 have experienced physical violence, and 1 in 5 have experienced sexual violence. ¹

See GGA Position Statement on Gender-Based Violence for further information.

- **Limiting Women & Girls' Leadership**

Women are underrepresented in most decision-making roles in workplaces, government and more, including holding less than 30% of the positions in parliaments across the world², and in Australia less than a quarter of CEO positions and less than 20% of board chairs are women³

See GGA Position Statement on Girls and Young Women's Leadership for further information.

- **Impacting Women's Economic Security**

Australia's gender pay gap is 21.7%, and on average women earn, \$26,393 less than men each year. ⁴

Progress towards gender equality is not on track to achieve the targets under Goal 5 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. At the current rate it's

¹ Our Watch, *Quick Facts*, <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/quick-facts/>

² Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2024, *Global and Regional Averages of Women in National Parliaments*, <https://data.ipu.org/women-averages>

³ Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Australia's Gender Equality Scorecard*, <https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2022-23%20WGEA%20Gender%20Equality%20Scorecard.pdf>

⁴ Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Australia's Gender Equality Scorecard*, <https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2022-23%20WGEA%20Gender%20Equality%20Scorecard.pdf>

estimated to take 300 years to end child marriage, 286 years to close gaps in legal protection and remove discriminatory laws, 140 years for women to be equally represented in positions of power and leadership.

Girls Say

Girls consistently identify gender equality and women's rights as one of their top priorities. In particular, they want to see more women in leadership and decision making, equal pay and improved work, and an end to gender based violence and harassment.

"Girls need to have rights and freedom" - Olivia, 13

There needs to be more education in issues of gender equality in schools, better representation of women in all levels of government, and more done about the gender pay gap. - Audrey, 18

In Australia we're luckier than many other women and many women don't realize there is still inequality. For example, policies surrounding reforming/removing the Tampon Tax was only abolished in 2018 and the gender pay gap is 22% in WA. Many women are unaware of issues like these, and we need to educate each other in order to empower women to advocate for equality. - Lexi, 16

"I would like to change the rules on the job offers and pay between working men and women. I would love to change this because I want to have the best potential and let my kids have the best opportunities that they can. - Ainsleigh, 12"

Why is GGA commenting?

Addressing gender inequality is fundamental to Girl Guiding's mission to empower girls and young women to discover their potential as leaders of their world. By creating a more gender-equal society, we create a future where girls and young women aren't held back due to their gender.

What Guides are currently doing

Through the Australian Guide Program, we create safe spaces and non-formal education opportunities for girls and young women to develop their values and practice leadership with social purpose. When girls and women have space to lead, they can transform their communities and the world.

In Australia and around the world, Girl Guides are speaking out and taking action on gender equality.

Free Being Me

Free Being Me is an educational programme that promotes body confidence and a world free from appearance-related anxiety. Through relevant, exciting, accessible and learner-led activities, young people learn that body confidence and self-esteem come from valuing their bodies, challenging beauty stereotypes and advocating for a healthy body image in their friends, and communities.

Stop the Violence

“Stop the Violence” is the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts global flagship campaign to end violence against girls and women. Since launching in 2011, Girl Guides and Girl Scouts around the world have been tackling violence against women and girls in their communities through advocacy, education, awareness raising, community action and research. Thousands of Girl Guides around the world have been a part of the Stop the Violence Campaign.

Speaking Out for Gender Equality at the United Nations

Every year, Girl Guides participate in the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. This is a unique opportunity for Girl Guides and Girl Scouts to advocate for the rights of girls and young women at a global level, and champion gender equality through the principal global intergovernmental body shaping global policy standards on women's rights.

Call to Action

Decision Makers should:

- Include gender-informed impact statements in government policies at local, state and federal level
- Implement measures to address attitudes, behaviour change and fair portrayal of girls and women
- Create better holistic policy settings that redress gender-based discrimination

Girl Guides should:

- Learn more about ways they can help combat gender inequality
- Call out actions of that reinforce harmful gender norms and stereotypes

Everyone should:

- Seek to end gender inequality for everyone – recognising the unique ways that different people experience gender inequality, which is affected by factors such as race, disability, sexuality, gender expression, and more.

- Question the gender pay gap
- Recognise and address prejudices with regard to women's work and "traditional" roles of women as carers, housewives, etc.

Supporting Research

<https://www.wagggg.org/en/resources/statement-on-girls-leadership/>

<https://www.ourwatch.org.au/quick-facts/>

<https://www.wgea.gov.au/publications/australias-gender-equality-scorecard>

<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/about-sex-discrimination>

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>

For internal use

<Resources for units to learn more and advocate>

- Learn more about discriminatory social norms, and how they impact on gender based violence: <https://www.respect.gov.au/resources/>
- Learn more about policy work on Economic Security & Leadership: <https://www.equalityrightsalliance.org.au/projects/>
- [Our Watch Resouce on how schools can address gender based violence by tackling social norms](https://assets.ourwatch-campaigns.net/assets/OW-hubs/OURW0031_SCHOOLS_FINAL_CAPTIONS_100mbs.mp4?mtime=20210713134614&focal=none) https://assets.ourwatch-campaigns.net/assets/OW-hubs/OURW0031_SCHOOLS_FINAL_CAPTIONS_100mbs.mp4?mtime=20210713134614&focal=none
- <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/resource/know-your-a-z-preventing-violence-against-women-poster/>