

# RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

## Preventing Sexual Assault

**Associate Professor Moira Carmody from the Centre for Social Justice and Social Change has been investigating the effectiveness of sexual assault prevention education programs, in order to develop a best practice prevention education framework. This project has been funded by the National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence.**

'Education to prevent sexual assault has focussed on women being primarily responsible for managing their risk of assault', says Associate Professor Carmody. 'Men have usually been seen as part of the problem and not the solution but recent developments in sexual assault prevention (SAP) education indicate a shift to engage men and boys in positive ways and to encourage them to participate in prevention education. As part of that change in direction, we need to develop best practice models of prevention education which in the field of sexual assault prevention are in its infancy in Australia. A more consistent national framework is needed that encourages creative approaches to preventing sexual violence by engaging diverse groups of women, men, young people, parents and the whole community.'

SAP specialists facilitating successful programs, as well as women's health services, will identify education programs in their local area and information about related programs will be collected in schools, youth centres, sporting organisations, TAFEs and universities. The details of these programs and broader programs on relationship violence will be examined by using focus groups and interviews with SAP educators. These will be used to determine how well the programs deal with sexual assault issues. The study is particularly interested in programs that move beyond risk management as a strategy for the prevention of sexual assault.



The research will contribute to the development of a consistent, effective national framework for sexual assault prevention education programs, and form a national network of SAP education mentors to assist with implementing more effective prevention programs. Strong sexual assault prevention programs are an essential part of affecting change in community attitudes and behaviours towards sexual assault and increasing the security and safety of Australian women and girls.

**Project Title:** Development and Trial of a National Sexual Assault Prevention Education Framework  
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