

A theory of change for men's behaviour change programs

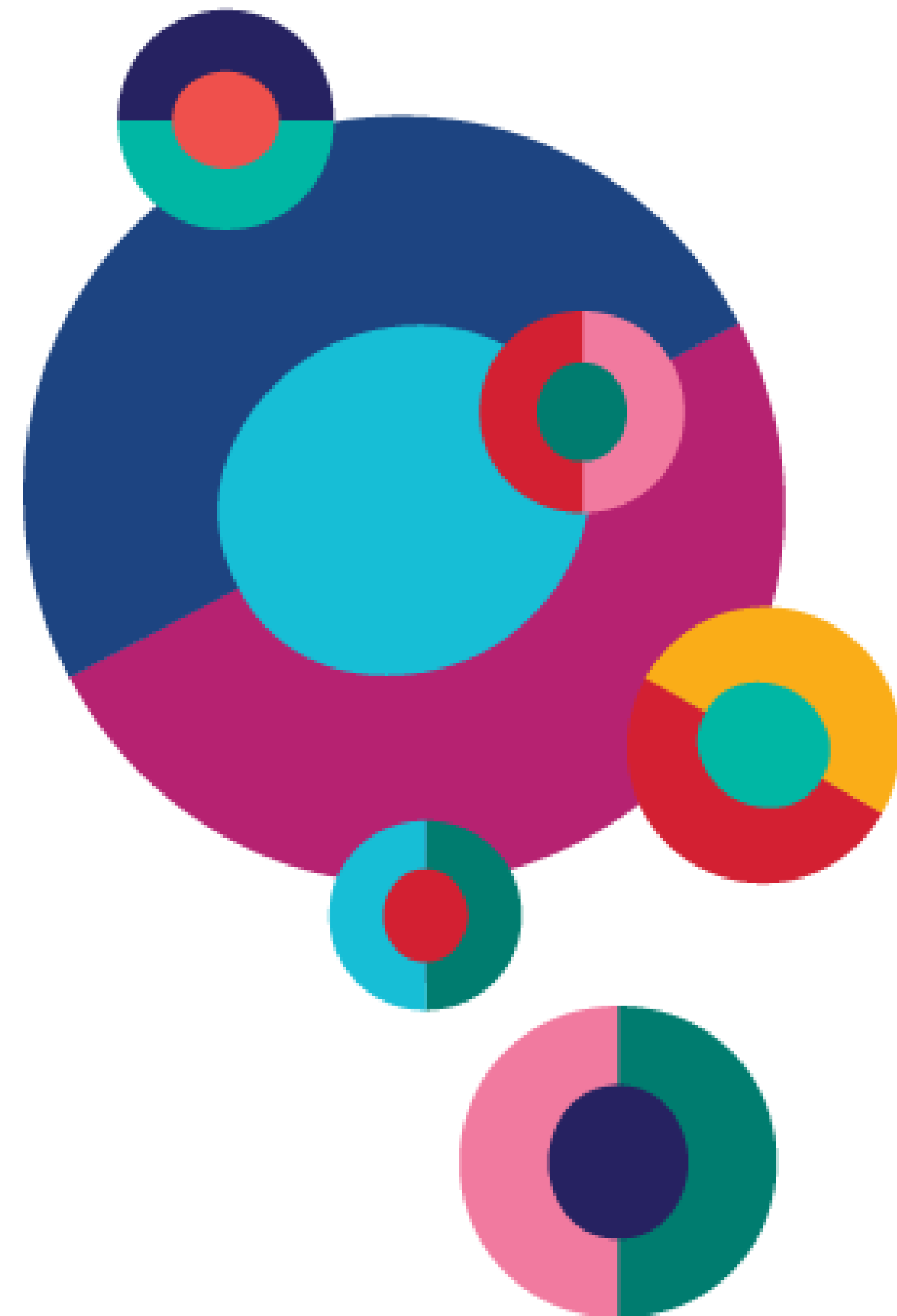
Diverse programs, common aims,
and how we create change



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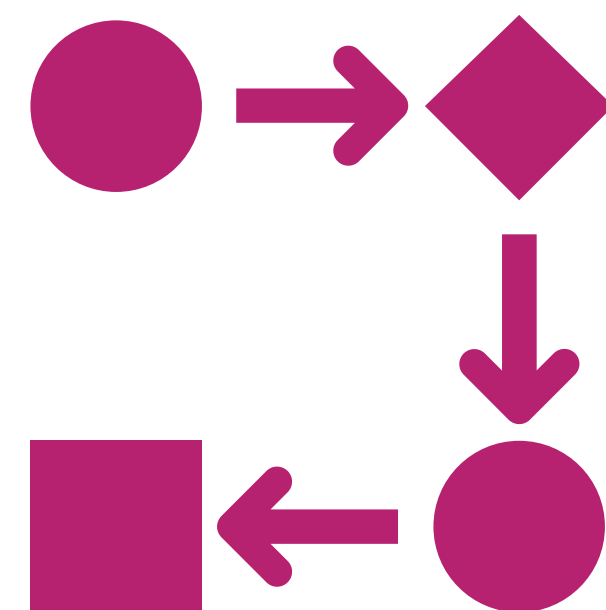
Relationships Australia and the Australian Institute of Family Studies acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to lands and waters. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders past and present.

The men's behaviour change program (MBCP) landscape

- A key component of Australia's response to family violence.
- Group-based interventions aimed at men who use violence against current or former partners, and their children.
- An uncertain evidence base: how do we know if they work, and how are we measuring change?

The challenge for Relationships Australia (RA)

A diverse range of MBCPs, with variations in:



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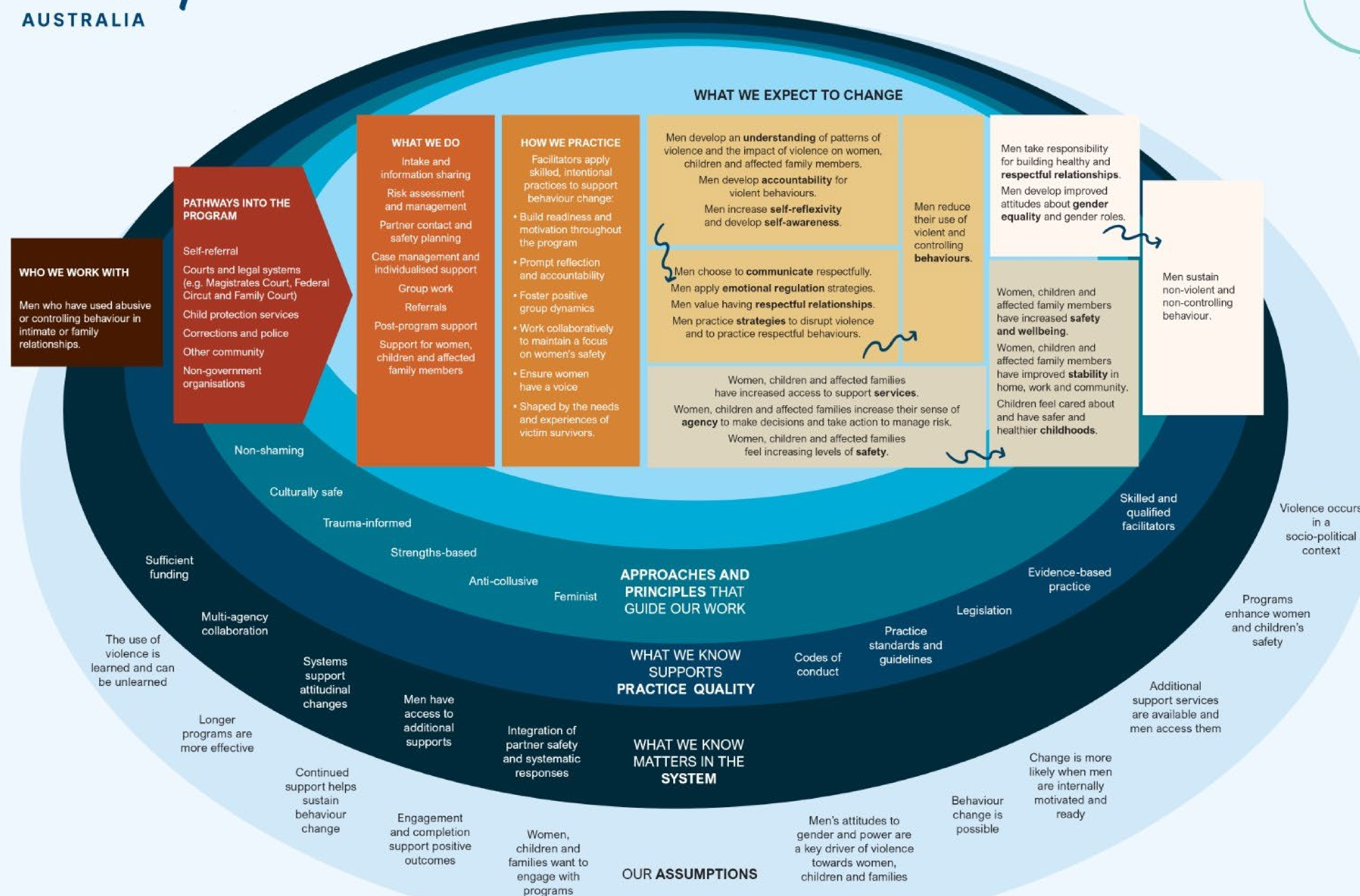
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Project development

- Relationships Australia state and territory organisations from across the country collaborated to design and fund the project.
- Engaged the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) to:
 - develop a generalisable theory of change; and
 - design an evaluation framework to measure programs against this.



OUR PURPOSE

We support men to stop using abusive, violent or controlling behaviours. We work to improve the safety and wellbeing of women, children and families affected by domestic and family violence (DFV). We do this by:

- challenging men's harmful beliefs, entitlement, and gendered attitudes
- supporting men to reflect on their choice to use violent or controlling behaviours and to take responsibility for their actions.

To further support the safety and wellbeing of women and children, we facilitate access to victim-survivor support programs and counselling, and conduct regular check-ins. We also perform safety monitoring and risk assessments to ensure a responsive and coordinated approach.

Development process



- Audit of current MBCP offerings across the Relationships Australia Federation.
- Review of published research on MBCPs
- Theory of change co-designed with extensive input from Relationships Australia practitioners.

Audit

AUDIT**REVIEW****CO-DESIGN**

- Analyses of program information shared by RA about:
 - what happens in programs
 - aims and intended outcomes
 - how change happens
 - participation requirements
 - the underlying evidence base.

8**Jurisdictions
examined**

Common elements informed the theory of change. Unique elements were retained as questions for evaluation

Desktop review

AUDIT

REVIEW

CO-DESIGN

- Review of recent Australian MBCP literature (n=29 articles).
- Allowed us to draft a theory of change with key program elements and measurable outcomes, to test and refine with RA.
- Identified which elements of RA programs are underpinned by evidence.

29

Australian
articles
reviewed

The literature identified possible outcomes and the program elements believed to support change

Workshops

AUDIT

REVIEW

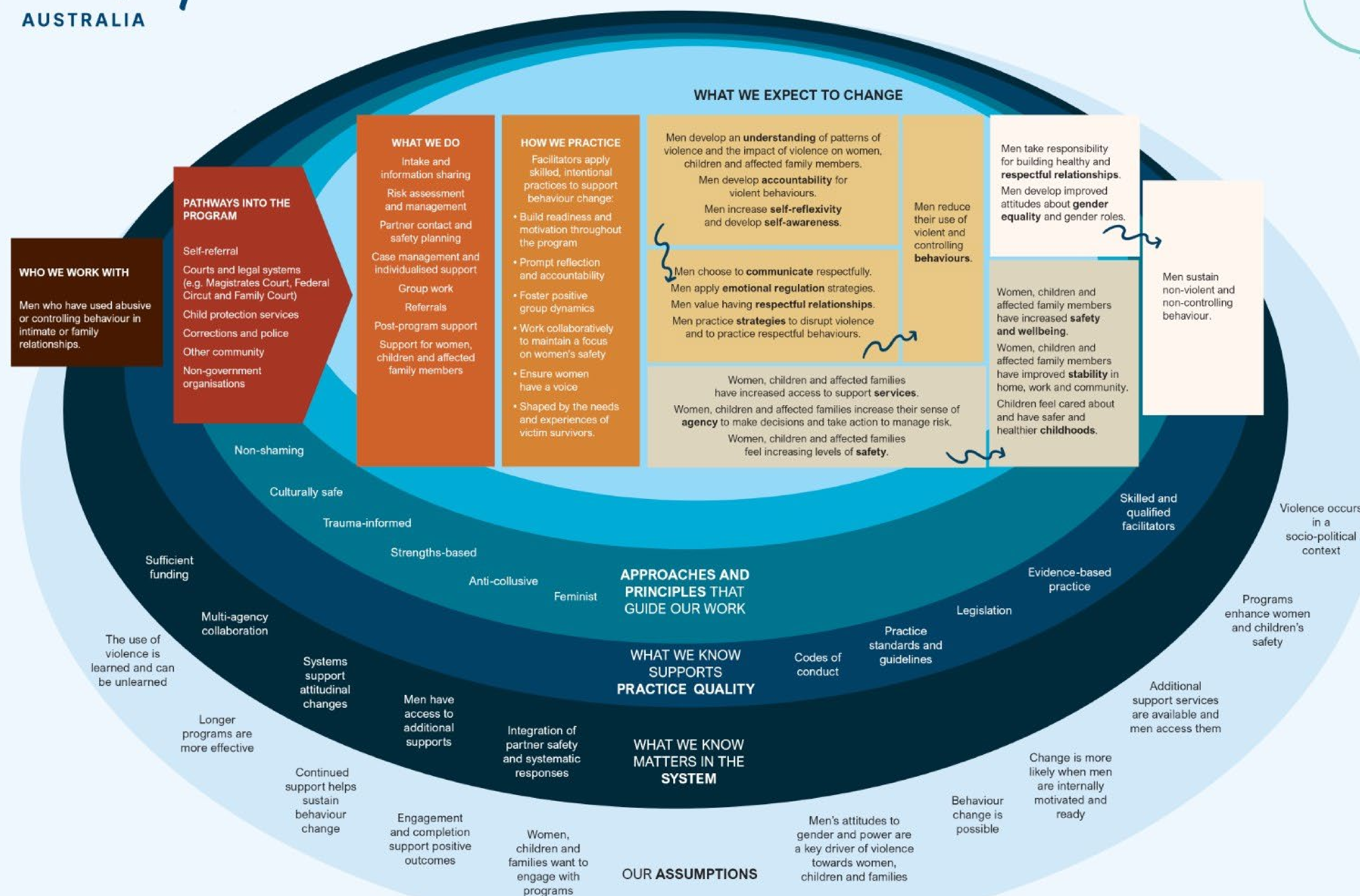
CO-DESIGN

- We held two online workshops with Relationships Australia practitioners.
- The first workshop tested our understanding of how MBCPs work and our initial ideas for a theory of change model
- The second workshop reviewed a revised version and gathered feedback to resolve outstanding issues.

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Workshops with
practitioners

Practitioner expertise tested and refined the theory of change through an iterative process



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WHAT WE EXPECT TO CHANGE

Men develop an **understanding** of patterns of violence and the impact of violence on women, children and affected family members.

Men develop **accountability** for violent behaviours.

Men increase **self-reflexivity** and develop **self-awareness**.

Men reduce their use of violent and controlling **behaviours**.

Men take responsibility for building healthy and **respectful relationships**.

Men develop improved attitudes about **gender equality** and gender roles.

Men choose to **communicate** respectfully.

Men apply **emotional regulation** strategies.

Men value having **respectful relationships**.

Men practice **strategies** to disrupt violence and to practice respectful behaviours.

Women, children and affected family members have increased **safety and wellbeing**.

Women, children and affected family members have improved **stability** in home, work and community.

Children feel cared about and have safer and healthier **childhoods**.

Women, children and affected families have increased access to support **services**.

Women, children and affected families increase their sense of **agency** to make decisions and take action to manage risk.

Women, children and affected families feel increasing levels of **safety**.

Men sustain non-violent and non-controlling behaviour.

Using the theory of change

- For anyone evaluating or needing to articulate MBCP inputs, outputs, and social impact, the Theory of Change:
 - provides a generalisable description of the intervention
 - provides the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of MBCP interventions.
- Relationships Australia using as basis for national MBCP evaluation project.
- Evaluation will assess effectiveness and inform ongoing service design and delivery improvement.

From theory to practice

01**Describe**

A generalisable description of MBCP activities, mechanisms and intended impact.

02**Evaluate**

A basis for testing the effectiveness of MBCP interventions.

03**Improve**

Evidence to inform service design and improvement.

**Relationships Australia
will use the theory of
change as the basis for
a national MBCP
evaluation project.**

Thank you

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