

ADVISORY NOTE

THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN AND MEN

This Advisory Note is designed to help reporters and program producers to understand and be responsive to the concerns of many people about how television portrays women and men. It will also be of assistance to programmers, program promotion producers and program classifiers.

In describing and portraying women and men of any age, you should avoid encouraging or endorsing inaccurate, demeaning or discriminatory references or descriptions, stereotyping or unwarranted generalisation. In particular:

1. Do not place inappropriate or irrelevant emphasis on gender, or on physical characteristics or family status.
2. Avoid language that unnecessarily excludes one sex or gives unequal treatment to women and men.
3. Avoid stereotyped gender portrayals which associate particular roles, ways of behaviour, personal or social attributes or use of products or services with people on the basis of gender.
4. Avoid implying that a person is inferior because of his or her gender, or that either sex is naturally superior at certain tasks or in certain fields.
5. Recognise in reporting and in commentary that women and men nowadays are involved in an equally diverse range of roles.
6. Try to achieve a better balance in the use of women and men as experts and authorities, and give more prominence to the achievements of women in areas such as sport.
7. Take particular care when reporting instances of violence (particularly sexual assault) to:
 - (a) avoid offering explanations which may reasonably be seen to diminish individual responsibility for the violence, or even shift blame to the victim;
 - (b) avoid gratuitous detail, such as the state of dress or undress of a sexual assault victim, and unnecessarily detailed description of the crime;
 - (c) report instances of family or domestic violence in a responsible manner and direct those in need of assistance to the appropriate services.