



Groundbreaking Documentary *It Starts With Us* to Premiere on ABC TV, Showcasing Youth-Led Prevention of Family Violence

New film demonstrates innovative arts-based approach to stopping violence before it starts, featuring young people from Frankston North and advocate Rosie Batty

Premiered 17 August 2025 – A powerful new documentary that puts young people at the centre of family violence prevention is now streaming on ABC iView, offering hope and practical solutions to Australia's domestic violence crisis.

It Starts With Us, created by arts and social change company Big hART in collaboration with family violence prevention advocate Rosie Batty, follows a group of teenagers from Frankston North, Victoria, as they participate in a transformative arts-based prevention program designed to break generational cycles of violence.

The documentary reveals the extraordinary impact of engaging young people in prevention work, as participants navigate challenges including housing instability, bullying, family tensions and low self-esteem through creative expression and mentorship. Through powerful songwriting workshops, the teenagers transform their lived experiences into compelling lyrics, culminating in an original song "I'm Dreaming" that gives voice to their often invisible struggles.

A National Crisis Demanding Innovation

With two in five Australian children under 18 exposed to family violence*, the documentary arrives at a critical time when prevention programs receive less than five percent of sector funding** despite their potential for long-term impact.

"There won't be a shift in how adults treat each other unless we focus on the next generation and listen to young people," said Rosie Batty, who has long championed youth centred approaches to family violence prevention. The film builds on Big hART's decade-long Project O program, a successfully evaluated arts-based prevention initiative delivered in communities across Australia with high rates of family violence.

*Australian Child Maltreatment Study, 2023 **Australia lacks consistent data on funding allocated to family violence prevention. This statistic has been derived from a range of sources in different states.

Beyond the Screen: Education and Impact

Accompanying the documentary is a comprehensive suite of education resources featuring short films, lesson plans, and educator guides designed for high school students. These materials will be available through the ClickView education platform and the project website, extending the documentary's impact into classrooms and community spaces nationwide. Big hART is also delivering an impact strategy aimed at partnering with organisations in the FDV prevention sector and harnessing the messages in the film to drive greater resourcing towards FDV prevention initiatives nationwide.

The original song "I'm Dreaming," professionally recorded with musicians Jen Cloher, Jay Jarome, Mark Leahy, and Fallon Te Paa, will be available on major streaming platforms from 17 August.

Key Quotes

Rosie Batty added: "Whether you sit in a boardroom, a classroom or a seat on the bus, you have influence and you can contribute to the seismic shift towards a world free from violence."

"How many more preventable deaths will we permit? How many more, before we realise how deep disrespect towards women and children runs in our culture?" - Rosie Batty AO

Broadcast and Screening Details

It Starts With Us premiered on ABC TV and is now streaming on ABC iView, accompanied by a social impact strategy working with partners in the family violence prevention and education sectors to distribute the film to schools, government, and community settings across Australia. The film and education resources are available for schools on education platform ClickView.

Credits

A Big hART film, the documentary was directed by Amelia Tovey and produced by Sophia Marinos, with Creative Producer Larissa Behrendt and Executive Producers Genevieve Dugard and Deanne Weir.

Websites:

www.itstartswithus.com.au

For more information on Big hART visit: www.bighart.org

Duty of Care for Young People - Note to journalists & editors: The young people featured were not selected based on personal experiences of domestic violence and should not be portrayed as such. When reporting on this story, please refer to established guidelines for reporting on family and domestic violence available through [Our Watch](#) and the [Australian Press Council](#).

Media interviews available on request.

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All Media Enquiries to Big hART Media & Communications Manager, Christina Donoghue
E: chris@christinadonoghue.com M: 0405013357
W: bighart.org