**We can all spark a powerful change – let’s stop disrespect at the start.**

We know that violence against women is a serious issue, but what we often don’t realise is where the cycle can start – in childhood, with the acceptance of seemingly harmless words and actions that are founded in disrespect.

There are some concerning statistics out there about what young people think about respectful relationships. For example, one in four young people don’t think it’s serious if a guy, who’s normally gentle, sometimes slaps his girlfriend when he’s drunk and they’re arguing (National Community Attitudes Towards Violence Against Women survey, 2013).

Children pick up on simple things like our gestures, reactions and the words we choose. When we say things like ‘don’t worry about it, it’s not that bad’, ‘boys will be boys’ or ‘what was she wearing?’ – we need to ask what our children are really learning. We need to ask, could we be teaching our children disrespect?

The *Stop it at the Start* campaign highlights how we can all play a role in raising a generation of respectful young people. As parents, family members, teachers, coaches, employers and role models, we can have a positive influence on young people and set the standard for what is and what’s not acceptable, right from the start.

But the good news is making a positive change can be as simple as reflecting on the impact of what we say or do in front of our kids, or starting a conversation about respectful relationships.

Small moments and small steps will move us closer to a culture free from disrespect and violence against women. Let’s come together as a community, and make respect a regular conversation; let’s stop it at the start.

To find out more about the *Stop it at the Start* campaign, and find out how we can all drive a positive change, visit respect.gov.au/community.