

Jake- The Unexpected Champion for Gender Equality

“I see gender inequality as a big problem.

Its not just a women’s problem, it’s a family and community problem”

Jake’s story

I’m a tradie and proud that I completed my apprenticeship and now have a good job with a local company.

We are just a small team, I work with five other blokes and we all get on pretty well together. My girlfriend and I live together and are planning a future that we hope involves kids. I admire her and respect her and she has taught me a lot about how women should be treated. Almost every day she points out things to me that I’ve never noticed before, and since I’ve been seeing things through her eyes I can see that women and men aren’t being treated equally.

Attitudes and Behaviours

I’m noticing more and more about gender inequality these days. I consider my girlfriend and I to be equal, and I don’t like to see her getting treated differently to me. She plays footy the same as I do, and it’s not right that she has to get changed in the car because there aren’t always changing rooms for her. I get uncomfortable too when we go into the club and it is so “blokey” with all those photos of men up on the wall, and nothing that might interest the women. When I say something about it to my mates, they howl me down- they really aren’t interested in hearing about it.

Since I have started noticing this stuff I’ve become a bit uncomfortable about a few things at work too. The team I work with are great tradies, and are a lot of fun but some of them are very disrespectful to women with their jokes and put downs. The older blokes are worse than the younger ones, and being one of the younger ones I find it hard to know how to speak up and let them know their comments are not on. I hear this sort of talk when I am out as well and at the footy club and even from people I normally look up to. I’m not one to go out on a limb, and hate feeling unsupported by the other blokes who tell me to get off my high horse when I do speak up and say something.

Needs & Expectations

I would really like to see women getting the respect they deserve. I want everyone to be given a fair go, and for men to stop sexist jokes and put downs of women. I’d like to feel supported to speak up about these things and for other people to “get it” as well. People need their eyes opened like mine have been.

I’d like to see some big changes at the footy club. There needs to be more facilities for women and a revamp of the club rooms to make them more welcoming to women. I’d like my girlfriend to feel just as welcome there as I do.

