



MEDIA RELEASE

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (IDEVAW)

“The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women is a reminder that male violence against women is a global, national and local issue and that ending this violence is everyone’s responsibility. It is an opportunity to celebrate how far we have come, to acknowledge and reflect how far there is still to go, and to renew our efforts.

Australia has an exciting opportunity with the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children to be a global leader and to really drive the long-term social change needed to address violence against women and girls. The National Plan has a crucial focus on the importance of primary prevention and recognises gender and other social inequalities that are both a cause and consequence of violence against women and girls.

We need governments, the preventing violence against women sector, schools, business, industry, media and communities to join forces and work in partnership, to learn from each other and to share good practices, knowledge and resources, alongside the lessons learnt along the way. We need a long-term, sustainable, comprehensive whole-of-government, whole-of-school, whole-of-community, cross-sector approach to achieve a real reduction in the disturbing levels of violence against women and girls.

IDEVAW, which is supported by the White Ribbon Campaign, provides the ideal opportunity for people to start conversations about how we can really make a difference and to begin to address violence against women and girls in all our communities.

*If everyone works together we **can** end violence against women and girls”*

- Julie Oberin, Chair of the Australian Women Against Violence Alliance (AWAVA)

Background

25 November has been marked by women’s and anti-violence activists as a day focussed on the elimination of violence since 1981. It was initiated following the brutal assassination in 1960 of the three Mirabel sisters, political activists in the Dominican Republic, on orders from Dominican ruler Rafael Trujillo.

In 1999 the United Nations declared 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (IDEVAW) with the aim of inviting the

organisation of, and participation in, activities designated to raise public awareness and advocate for the elimination of all forms of violence against women.

25 November also marks the start of 16 Days of Activism – where thousands of activists from around the world will take part in campaigns to demand an end to violence against women and for governments and state parties to play their part in preventing, and responding to, violence against women in their communities. Globally, the focus for 16 Days of Activism in 2012 is on the intersections of gender-based violence and militarism.

White Ribbon Day is also 25 November. AWAVA supports White Ribbon Day which urges men to speak out to end violence against women. White Ribbon Day was established by men on the second anniversary of one man's massacre of fourteen women in Montreal. AWAVA calls on all men to step forward, speak up and join women in the campaign to stop the endemic violence against women and their children in Australia and across the world.

Australian Women Against Violence Alliance (AWAVA)

AWAVA is the Commonwealth-funded National Women's Alliance focused on addressing all forms of violence against women and girls.

The ***Stopping Violence Against Women Before it Happens: A Practical Toolkit for Communities*** - developed by two of the National Women's Alliances the National Rural Women's Coalition (NRWC – project lead) and AWAVA, in partnership with the Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research (QCDFVR), CQUniversity - supports communities to implement the *National Plan*, explaining the concept of primary prevention and how communities can lead change in societal attitudes. The Toolkit was funded by the Office for Women, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) and can be downloaded from: www.nrwn.org.au/stopping-violence-against-women-before-it-happens-a-practical-toolkit-for-communities/

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