



## The White Ribbon Challenge

Welcome to The White Ribbon Challenge, where you will find resources and advice on how to take action and create a community that says “no” to violence against women.

Prime Minister and White Ribbon Ambassador, Kevin Rudd, called men’s violence against women “The great silent crime of our time”<sup>1</sup>.

**We all need to take action to alter attitudes that allow violence against women to occur. When it is unacceptable in every community across Australia for men to be violent towards women, if someone always speaks out when violence takes place, if all of us including our children understand and accept that we must be respectful in our relationships with one another, then we will have achieved social change.**

*“It is critical that community leaders, both individual and organisational, adopt and expand upon government leadership initiatives. Social and community organisations such as sporting, political, spiritual and specific-interest groups are **as important** as government in shaping the attitudes and behaviours of Australians.”<sup>2</sup>*

### Why should I get involved?

#### The Facts

- One in three Australian women will experience physical or sexual violence in her lifetime.<sup>3</sup>
- The biggest contributor to illness, injury or premature death for women between 15 and 45 is not smoking or obesity... it’s violence, perpetrated by a husband, boyfriend or ex-partner.<sup>4</sup>
- More than one Australian woman every week is killed by her partner or ex-partner<sup>5</sup>
- Violence against women and their children costs the Australian economy over \$15.1 billion each year including costs in terms of health, work absenteeism, police and court costs.<sup>6</sup>

**For more facts about violence against women, please visit the ‘Resources’ page on our website**

### Why Should Men Be Part of the Solution?

- This is NOT just a women’s issue. Violence against women is the most widespread human rights violation worldwide and by eradicating it we are creating a society that is safe and inclusive for everyone – men, women and children.
- Men can play a significant role in helping stop violence against women because, as business leaders, community leaders, politicians and key decision-makers we are in a position to make real change.
- It’s a men’s issue because men can speak out and step in when male friends and relatives insult or attack women.
- It’s a men’s issue because violence committed by a minority of men gives all men a bad name and it is up to the majority of men to help create a culture in which this is unacceptable.
- It’s a men’s issue because it affects women across all sections of society. The women who suffer violence are our mothers, wives, sisters, colleagues and friends.

# WHITE RIBBON

Making violence against women  
a thing of the past



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### What is the White Ribbon Challenge?

It is a chance for you to change your community and take action to end violence against women. All over Australia, a wide range of people are undertaking all sorts of projects to create social change, raise awareness and change attitudes. They are acknowledging the problem, talking about the issue and breaking the silence that allows violence against women to occur.

### Are you ready to take the challenge?

#### Make a difference

You may already be part of a community that is taking steps to end men's violence against women, or you may be interested in taking the first step to raise awareness in your community.

Whatever the level of support and engagement that exists in your community, you'll find activities and ideas here to become more involved in this vital campaign.

#### How can I make a difference?

**White Ribbon Champions** in our communities are often the drivers of fantastic projects or annual events to promote White Ribbon. Find out more about how easy it is to make a difference - read the stories of some White Ribbon Champions and discover how they started out.

#### How can we make a difference?

**White Ribbon Teams** have ongoing campaigns with involvement from different sections of the community, such as the local council, small business and police. Learn more about how your community can expand its networks - take a look at how Mt Gambier has created a popular, ongoing campaign to end violence against women.

#### How can my community make a difference?

If your campaign involves many sections of the community and takes a long-term strategic approach, you may be a **White Ribbon Community**. This means you have a network of community partners – including local council, business, police, education and community-based organisations – that are involved in policies and strategies to prevent men's violence against women. Gender equity and respectful relationships are a factor in every community decision.

White Ribbon encourages every region to become an accredited **White Ribbon Community**. One group that has made exceptional efforts to implement violence preventing strategies is Darebin City Council in Victoria.

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### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> [www.pm.gov.au/media/2008/speech](http://www.pm.gov.au/media/2008/speech)

<sup>2</sup> Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) (2009) *A Time for Action: The National Council's Plan for Australia to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, 2009-2021* Canberra 2009

<sup>4</sup> VicHealth (2004) *The Health Costs of Violence: Measuring the burden of disease caused by intimate partner violence*. Melbourne: VicHealth

<sup>5</sup> Australian Institute of Criminology (2004) *International Violence Against Women Survey*, Mouzos & Mak-kai 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Access Economics (2004) *The Cost of Domestic Violence to the Australian Economy*. Canberra: Office of the Status of Women, Australian Government.