



GOVERNMENT OF  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**DON'T  
BE  
SILENT  
WHEN  
YOU SEE  
VIOLENCE**

**16 Days in WA**

**25 November to 10 December**

**#16DaysInWA | [www.communities.wa.gov.au/16DaysinWA](http://www.communities.wa.gov.au/16DaysinWA)**

Stop Violence Against Women



Stop Violence Against Women



## **Minister's message**

Don't be silent when you see violence.

When you see or hear disrespectful or violent behaviour against women, how do you respond?

While many of us would be shocked or appalled by the behaviour of others towards women, do we know what to safely say or do in response?

When people stay silent, it can be interpreted as condoning this type of behaviour. These moments occur every day, in all types of social settings. Speaking up can contribute to significant positive change towards the safety and respect of women in our community.

Our annual campaign, 16 Days in WA to Stop Violence Against Women, starts on 25 November (the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) and finishes on 10 December (Human Rights Day).

Since 2017, this WA-led campaign has focused on raising awareness and promoting change to eliminate gender-based violence.

It encourages everyone to be part of the conversation about what we can do to stop violence, individually and collectively. It is about encouraging community awareness and understanding to change attitudes that allow violence to occur.

This year, we are asking the community to take a bigger role in stopping violence against women. We are urging Western Australians to call out disrespectful behaviour to help build a community that shows respect towards women.

Throughout 16 Days in WA, we want to empower bystanders through a series of targeted 'calls to action'. These are practical, non-confrontational examples of how people can safely challenge attitudes and behaviours that condone violence against women.

Family and domestic violence does not discriminate. It impacts many people in the community – women, men and children of all ages and backgrounds.

The McGowan Government has this year made a new commitment of \$60 million over the next four years to combat family and domestic violence by supporting survivors, holding perpetrators accountable and continuing to educate the community about respectful relationships.

Family and domestic violence can be prevented, and we are committed to playing our role to stop it.

I encourage community members, businesses and sector leaders to be part of 16 Days in WA to work towards ending violence against women.

### **Hon Simone McGurk MLA**

Minister for Child Protection; Women's Interests; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services

## **Background**

The 16 Days in WA to Stop Violence Against Women initiative began in 2017, led by the McGowan Government and its first dedicated Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, the Hon Simone McGurk MLA.

From 25 November, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, to 10 December, which is Human Rights Day, individuals and communities throughout the State have an opportunity to show their support for ending violence against women, including family, domestic and sexual violence.

Our initiative draws inspiration from the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, an international campaign to end violence against women and girls across the world.<sup>1</sup> Since 1991, more than 6,000 organisations in approximately 182 countries have taken part in the 16 Days Campaign.

In Western Australia, 16 Days in WA to Stop Violence Against Women aims to raise awareness; increase positive actions; and highlight organisations, agencies, communities and individuals working to end violence against women.

## **Taking action**

This kit is designed to support your efforts to speak out in your community and circles of influence over the period of the campaign.

### **It includes:**

- Key messages, facts and statistics
- 16 ways to take action
- Social media tools to share
- Ideas for hosting an event
- Resources to develop your understanding and support your conversations
- Information on services and supports where you can seek further assistance

## 2021 Campaign theme

This year's campaign is themed around our tagline **'Don't be silent when you see violence'**, encouraging bystanders to speak up and contribute to positive change towards the safety and respect of women in our community.

### Our key messages

- Violence against anyone is unacceptable. We all have a responsibility to help stop the violence.
- Stopping violence against women means promoting equality and respectful relationships, violence-free spaces and safer communities.
- Breaking the cycle of family and domestic violence starts with respect for women.
- Everyone has a part to play by calling out disrespectful behaviour in all areas of life.

### Facts and statistics

- 65 per cent of assaults recorded in Western Australia last year were related to family and domestic violence (up 15 per cent on 2019). Of the 22,257 victims, 73 per cent – or 16,262 victims – were female.<sup>2</sup>
- 48 per cent (28 victims) of homicide and related offences (including murder, attempted murder and manslaughter) in Western Australia were related to family and domestic violence last year. Of this, 19 victims were female.<sup>3</sup>
- 1 in 2 women and 1 in 4 men have experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15.<sup>4</sup>
- There were 3,048 victims of sexual assault in Western Australia last year – a 10 per cent increase on 2019. Of these, 86 per cent (or 2,615 victims) were female.<sup>5</sup>
- Nationally, almost three quarters of family and domestic violence-related sexual assault victims/survivors were aged under 19 years at the time the incident occurred (71 per cent) and they were overwhelmingly female (86 per cent).<sup>6</sup>
- 1.8 per cent of people in Australia living with disability or a long-term health condition were more likely to experience physical and/or sexual violence by a cohabiting partner compared to people without disability.<sup>7</sup>
- 42 per cent of men aged 18 to 34 do not consider physical violence such as punching or hitting to be domestic violence, while 44 per cent said the same of non-consensual sexual activity.<sup>8</sup>
- Aboriginal women and children experience family violence at disproportionately high rates, with Aboriginal women 32 times more likely than non-Aboriginal women to be hospitalised from family violence.<sup>9</sup>
- 88 per cent of people aged 55 and over consider harassing a person electronically to be a form of domestic violence, compared to 54 per cent of people aged 18 to 34.<sup>10</sup>
- A study of migrant and refugee women in Australia found about 40 per cent of those who had experienced some form of family and domestic violence did not share their experience with anyone. For half of the participants who did not disclose their experience of FDV, the reason they gave for this was that the incident was a personal or private matter. About 27 per cent of the women surveyed said they feared disclosing their experience of FDV would make things worse.<sup>11</sup>

## Do you know?

Family violence continues to be a driver of gender inequality, including in the areas of employment, participation and financial security.<sup>12</sup> Gender roles and stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity are key drivers of violence against women.

Family and domestic violence is also the leading cause of homelessness for women and children<sup>13</sup> and a significant factor impacting health, inclusion and participation for people with disability.<sup>14</sup>

Family and domestic violence is experienced at disproportionately high rates by Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse women and children, people with disability and people who identify as LGBTIQ+.<sup>15</sup>

Technology-facilitated abuse is a form of domestic violence in which abusers control, stalk and harass their victims using technology.<sup>16</sup>

For many women, the COVID-19 pandemic coincided with an onset or escalation in frequency and severity of partner violence and abuse.<sup>17</sup>

The National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) found that:

- 1 in 5 Australians believe domestic violence is a normal reaction to stress, and that sometimes a woman can make a man so angry he hits her without meaning to.
- 1 in 3 Australians believe that if a woman does not leave her abusive partner then she is responsible for the violence continuing.
- 2 in 5 Australians would not know where to get outside help for a domestic violence issue.<sup>18</sup>

## WA Government initiatives

Since last year's campaign, the Western Australian Government has continued to work towards combatting the scourge of violence against women. This includes:

- A new \$60 million commitment made earlier this year to implement a range of family and domestic violence initiatives which include:
  - > A \$29.5 million **Safe Home Safe Family package** to fund safety planning and security upgrades for women to stay safe in their own homes and support rapid rehousing by providing rental subsidies and bond support to get women into the private rental market.
  - > A \$14.2 million **law reform package** to support victim-survivors in court processes.
  - > A \$7.3 million boost to **family and domestic violence prevention efforts**, including expanding the Respectful Relationships Teaching Support program in schools and sporting organisations, and training additional first responders to help recognise and respond to family and domestic violence.
  - > \$4 million for **new supporting survivors** initiatives that provide practical supports for vulnerable women, such as paid driving lessons and dental treatment.
- \$7.9 million in grants for community service organisations that provide frontline supports to people experiencing, or at risk of, family and domestic violence. These grants cover the breadth of family and domestic violence support services, including outreach responses, counselling services, legal advice for victims, prevention initiatives, men's behaviour change programs, crisis accommodation and connecting survivors with housing options.
- The [Stronger Together Action Plan One: Interim Report](#) released in January 2021 provides an update on Government actions under way to advance gender equality.
- Gender equality included in a new [Social Procurement Framework](#), released in April 2021.

# Don't be silent when you see violence – How to be an active bystander

## When I see or hear disrespectful / sexist / harassing actions or comments what should I say?

- If someone is acting inappropriately towards a woman **call it out**. Say something like “I think that kind of comment is offensive” or “that comment was out of line”.
- Don't ignore locker room banter, jokes and sexism – **challenge it**. Say something like “you say it's a joke but it's offensive” or “Sorry, I don't get it, can you explain the joke?”

## What next?

### What if someone challenges me? Learn how to deal with resistance or backlash.

- If you call out violence, some people may say:
  - > “Jokes are harmless.”  
No they are not harmless as sexist jokes reinforce sexist attitudes.
  - > “What happens between a family is their business.”  
Family violence needs to be addressed and you can express your concern when you see it or hear it and encourage someone to seek help.
- Preparing for resistance and examples of responses to diffuse a situation:
  - > Make a light-hearted comment to try to stop the situation, such as “What decade are you living in?” or “Sorry, what was that you said about women?”.  
This may be said in private or with an audience.
  - > Leave a pointed silence or give a disapproving look.  
This needs to be stronger than your normal ‘listening’ expression.  
This may be more useful when you know the perpetrator or when you are worried about a power imbalance.

### What if someone shares their experience of harassment or violence? Learn about disclosures.

- If you are concerned about a family member, friend or work colleague, be confident to ask if everything is okay and if they are safe at home.
- Listen without judgement.
- Provide advice on where they can get help.
- Access your organisation's sexual harassment reporting system or other incident reporting system, or report to management.
- Report details accurately.
- Provide as much identifying information as you feel comfortable with.

Visit [Our Watch](#) for more suggestions about doing something at work, online or in public situations or read about other ways bystanders can [Take Action](#).

# 16 ways to take action

1. Host or participate in an **event or activity** to raise awareness.
2. Share 16 Days in WA campaign messages on **social media**. See page 10 for more suggestions.
3. **Wear something orange** throughout the duration of the 16 Days in WA campaign to spark conversations about what you can do to help prevent violence against women.
4. **Get informed:** What is gender-based violence and why is it important to take a stand? Visit these websites to find out more:
  - [Our Watch](#)
  - [eSafety Commissioner](#)
  - [Partners in Prevention](#)
  - [White Ribbon Australia](#)
  - [ANROWS](#)Watch these videos:
  - [What is domestic and family violence?](#)
  - [Let's Change the Story: Violence against women in Australia](#)
  - [Violence against women: Sport can help change the story](#)
5. **Volunteer** your time and professional experience to community organisations, services and groups that are supporting people impacted by family and domestic violence and sexual violence. Also visit the [Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing Facebook page](#) to see how you can **support their work**.
6. **Talk** to your sporting club or organisation about what they are doing to support the campaign and/or address broader gender-based violence issues. If these issues are not being addressed, **encourage action**.
7. **Donate:** support organisations that assist women, children and young people escaping family and domestic violence by putting together **care packs**. These can include personal care items or a toy for a child as some people can arrive at a shelter or refuge with nothing, having left their home in a hurry.
8. Be an **active bystander**: Speaking up can make a significant positive difference towards the safety and respect of women in our community. See page 7 for information on how you can be an active bystander.  
Be safe. Calling out inappropriate language and behaviour can be difficult and result in necessary discomfort, but it should not come at the expense of your personal safety and dignity.
9. Talk to your children and other young people in your life about **respectful relationships** and check out the [Respect Checklist](#).



10. Think about how you would deal with a **disclosure** from a victim/survivor of family and domestic violence if it came from a family member, friend or work colleague by considering the following:

- Believe them and take their fears seriously – offer support, not suspicion.
- Listen patiently without interrupting or judging and don't ask too many questions about what has happened, as this can be re-traumatising.
- Make sure the person knows it is not their fault and that they are not to blame for the abusive behaviour.
- Don't make excuses for the person who has hurt them or blame alcohol, other drugs or mental health issues for the abuse.
- Understand that they may not be ready or it may not be safe for them to leave. Don't push them to take action.
- Have [helpline numbers](#) on hand to provide.
- Offer to help them explore [Supports Services and Resources](#).

What if someone discloses that they use violence?

- Offer [helpline numbers](#) and encourage them to speak to someone who can help with changing their behaviour.

11. Get to know more about **financial abuse** and the resources and services available to assist people in these circumstances. [Your toolkit](#) is a good starting point.

12. Take the [Is it love or control](#) quiz or develop your own questionnaire.

13. Think about what your **workplace** could do to support victims/survivors of family and domestic violence to stay safe and connected to work. A good starting point could be developing a workplace policy that provides additional leave for staff experiencing family and domestic violence.

14. Develop or get involved in a **local awareness raising campaign** to make it clear that sexism, disrespecting women and violence will not be accepted in your community. These are some great WA examples: [Geraldton's Community Respect & Equality](#); [Peel Says No to Violence](#); and [Albany Family & Domestic Violence Action Group](#).

15. [Support a local sports club](#) to develop policies and procedures that ensure women and children have equal access to resources and facilities to support their **participation in sport** and related community-based activities.

16. Remember that respect starts with you – **model respectful behaviour** in your family and among your peers.

Importantly, think about how you can continue efforts to end gender-based violence year-round.

## Social media

You are encouraged to show your support for the campaign on social media.

A selection of **infographics** and other social media tools, to be shared on your social media feeds, will be available on the [16 Days in WA webpage](#).

Set up your **profile picture frame** and use the campaign hashtags.

#16DaysInWA #StopTheViolence #DontBeSilent

To set up a social media profile picture frame:

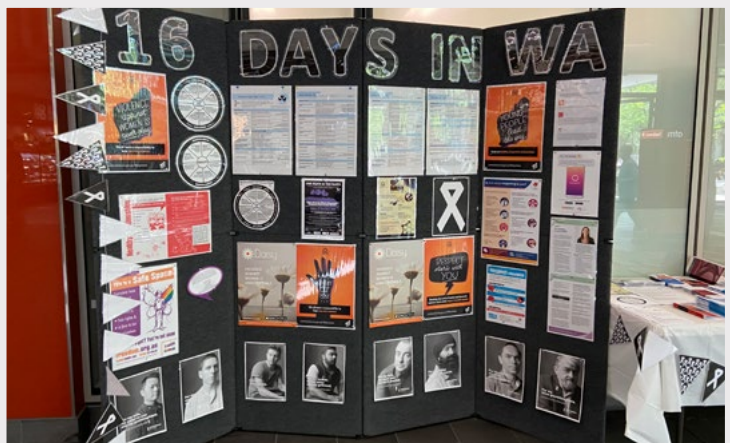
- Hover over your Facebook profile picture
- Click on 'Update' and click on 'Add Frame'
- Type '16 Days in WA' in the search bar
- Select the '16 Days in WA' option by the Department of Communities
- Click on 'Use the Profile Picture'

## Host an event

- Hold a **morning tea**, roundtable discussion or 'lunch and learn' session to raise awareness of the issues of gender-based violence. You may also want to screen one or more of the videos included in our 16 ways to take action list on page [8](#).
- Host a **fundraising activity** to raise money for a non-profit organisation that supports women and children to be safe and recover from family and domestic violence.
- Establish a **pledge wall** at your workplace, sporting club or other organisation, encouraging staff and members to show their support to stop violence against women.
- Hold a **dedicated sporting game** – ask your local sporting club to dedicate a game to raising awareness of the issues of gender-based violence.
- Hold a **book club session** focused on works dealing with issues of gender-based violence. The 16 Days in WA Book Club List will be available on the [16 Days in WA webpage](#).
- **Invite someone** who works with a domestic violence service to speak at your event – the [Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing](#) or [Stopping Family Violence](#) can assist with ideas for speakers.
- **Respect challenge** – find a contemporary film, song, image or famous icon that rejects gender-based violence and share the message with peers.



## How will YOU show your support for 16 Days in WA in 2021?



## **Resources**

A range of resources has been created for use throughout the 16 Days in WA campaign. This includes infographics, an email signature block, posters to share on display boards and video content.

Visit the [16 Days in WA webpage](#) closer to the campaign launch to find out more.

## **Information, services and supports**

If you or anyone you know is experiencing family and domestic violence, there is help available.

Call 000 if you or someone you know is in immediate danger.

For a comprehensive list of State and national helplines, please visit the State Government's [Family and Domestic Violence Help page](#).

### **1800RESPECT**

The National Sexual Assault, Family and Domestic Violence Counselling Service is a free and confidential telephone and online counselling service for any person, regardless of age or gender, who has experienced or is at risk of domestic and family violence and/or sexual assault, and their family and friends. 1800RESPECT (1800 737 732) or [www.1800RESPECT.org.au](http://www.1800RESPECT.org.au)

### **Crisis Care**

An information and counselling service for people in crisis needing urgent help. Telephone 1800 199 008.

### **Women's Domestic Violence Helpline**

The Women's Domestic Violence Helpline is a Western Australian 24-hour helpline to support women experiencing family and domestic violence. It provides support and counselling, including referrals to women's refuges. Telephone 1800 007 339.

### **Men's Domestic Violence Helpline**

The Men's Domestic Violence Helpline provides counselling and referrals for male perpetrators, as well as male victims of family and domestic violence. Telephone (08) 9223 1199 or free call 1800 000 599.

### **Sexual violence**

The Sexual Assault Resource Centre is a 24-hour emergency line that provides a range of free services to people affected by sexual violence. Telephone (08) 6458 1828 or free call 1800 199 888.

## Young people

Kids Helpline is Australia's free private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service for children and young people aged 5 to 25 years. Telephone 1800 551 800 or visit [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

## Men seeking support

MensLine Australia is a 24/7 support service for men and boys dealing with family and relationship difficulties and/or concerned that their behaviour is hurting the people they care about. Telephone 1300 78 99 78 or visit [www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au)

## Services for culturally and linguistically diverse people

Women's Health and Family Services promotes the safety of women from migrant, refugee or culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Outreach services are in Rockingham/Fremantle, Gosnells, Mirrabooka and Northbridge. Phone: (08) 9328 1200 or visit [Multicultural Women's Advocacy and Support](#).

A range of other services for culturally and linguistically diverse people are available [online](#).

## Services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

A range of culturally appropriate services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander who may be experiencing family violence are available [online](#).

## Staying safe online

Abuse does not always come in the form of physical violence or intimidation. Online abuse covers a range of behaviours an abusive person can use to control, frighten or humiliate a partner, ex-partner or family member using technology.<sup>19</sup>

When communicating online using social media, gaming platforms or other forums, there are ways to keep safe if someone is using these mediums to make you feel scared, unsafe or threatened.

Every situation is different. Use the '[what are the warning signs](#)' checklist to learn how to recognise technology-facilitated abuse, including online abuse.

Find out more from the [Student Wellbeing Hub](#) website. Also check out the [Office of the eSafety Commissioner](#) website.

A comprehensive list of additional support services and emergency contacts for those experiencing family and domestic violence is available [online](#).

## Endnotes

- 1 <https://16dayscampaign.org>
- 2 2020 ABS Recorded Crime
- 3 2020 ABS Recorded Crime
- 4 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2018, Family domestic and sexual violence in Australia, AIHW.
- 5 2020 ABS Recorded Crime
- 6 2020 ABS Recorded Crime
- 7 2021 ABS: Disability and Violence - In Focus; Crime and Justice Statistics
- 8 White Ribbon Australia, Essential Research report
- 9 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW, 2019.
- 10 White Ribbon Australia, Essential Research report
- 11 Segrave, M. Wickes, R, and Keel, C. (2021) Migrant and Refugee Women in Australia: The Safety and Security Survey. Monash University.
- 12 Our Watch 2015, Change the Story: A Shared Framework for the Primary Prevention of Violence against Women and their Children in Australia, Our Watch, Melbourne.
- 13 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2017, Specialist Homelessness Services 2016–17, AIHW.
- 14 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2018, Family domestic and sexual violence in Australia, AIHW.
- 15 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2018, Family domestic and sexual violence in Australia, AIHW.
- 16 eSafety Commissioner
- 17 Boxall H, Morgan A & Brown R 2020. The prevalence of domestic violence among women during the COVID-19 pandemic. Statistical Bulletin no. 28. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.
- 18 Webster, K., Diemer, K., Honey, N., Mannix, S., Mickle, J., Morgan, J., Parkes, A., Politoff, V., Powell, A., Stubbs, J., & Ward, A. (2018). Australians' attitudes to violence against women and gender equality. Findings from the 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) (Research report, 03/2018). Sydney, NSW: ANROWS.
- 19 [Online abuse | eSafety Commissioner](#) – [www.esafety.gov.au](http://www.esafety.gov.au)



## **Department of Communities**

5 Newman Court, Fremantle WA 6160

Postal address: Locked Bag 5000, Fremantle WA 6959

Telephone: 1800 176 888

Email: [16daysinwa@communities.wa.gov.au](mailto:16daysinwa@communities.wa.gov.au)

Website: [www.communities.wa.gov.au](http://www.communities.wa.gov.au)

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) – Telephone: 13 14 50

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