

16 Days of Activism – WHE Website Campaign

Key Facts

“Violence against women is the greatest silent crime of our time – we need to change the attitudes of Australian men” Kevin Rudd 2008.

- In 2004, 57% of Australian women had experienced physical violence in their lifetime and 34% sexual violence.
- Nationwide, it is estimated that only 36% of physical assaults against women and 19% of all sexual assaults were reported in 2005.
- Australian indigenous women are 40 times more likely to be victims of violence.
- Over 70% of sexual assault incidents are not reported to police.
- Sexual assault in Australia is most likely to occur in the home.
- The ABS reports that in 2006, 78% of sexual assault victims in Australia had some form of relationship with the offender.
- Women who experience violence (including physical, sexual or verbal) are at a higher risk of experiencing poverty, stigma, isolation and overall poorer health outcome.

For more information about violence against women visit:

http://www.whe.org.au/newsite/resources_Fact_Sheets.html or

<http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/en/Publications/Freedom-from-violence/Violence-against-women-in-Australia-research-summary.aspx>

DATE

DETAILS

November 25th, Friday

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women / White Ribbon Day

In 1999, the UN General Assembly designated 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. Violence against women and girls is a problem of pandemic proportions. At least one out of every three women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime - with the abuser usually someone known to her.

Women's activists have marked 25 November as a day against violence since 1981. The date commemorates the brutal assassination of the three Mirabal sisters, political activists in the Dominican Republic, in 1960 on orders of Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo (1930-1961).

For more information visit: http://www.who.int/mediacentre/events/annual/elimination_vaw/en/index.html

The 25th Nov also marks White Ribbon Day. White Ribbon Day was created by a handful of Canadian men in 1991 on the second anniversary of one man's massacre of fourteen women in Montreal. They began the White Ribbon Campaign to urge men to speak out against men's violence against women.

In 1999, the United Nations General Assembly declared November 25 the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the White Ribbon has become the symbol for the day.

For more information visit: www.whiteribbon.org.au or <http://16dayscwgj.rutgers.edu/>

November 26th, Saturday

- **Myth: Domestic violence only occurs within poor or working class families**

Reality: Numerous studies show that domestic violence occurs across all socio-economic and cultural groups. Families from middle socio-economic backgrounds with access to more resources may be better able to hide the abuse.

November 27th, Sunday

- **Myth: Domestic violence is caused by the abuse of alcohol**

Reality: Even though alcohol is involved in about 50% of cases, these same offenders also beat their spouses when sober.

November 28th, Monday

- **Myth: Women provoke men to be violent by nagging and other annoying behaviours**

Reality: Most abused women try to do everything they can to please their partner and avoid further violent episodes. Victims of domestic violence are vulnerable to further episodes of abuse regardless of their behaviour.

**November 29th, Tuesday
Women Human Rights
Defenders (WHRD) Day.**

- WHRDs are women who are fighting to defend and promote human rights, with many advocating for issues such as the right to abortion, sex workers rights and equal rights in a family context. Many of these workers are subjected to severe repression on the grounds of social, cultural or religious norms.

For more information visit: www.unwomen.org

**November 30th,
Wednesday**

- **Myth: If women don't like it they can leave. Leaving a violent partner means the abuse will stop**

Reality: Women often believe it is impossible to escape the violence and abuse. They are often threatened with death if they leave. In some cases, violence, harassment and intimidation can escalate during separation and can result in serious injury and sometimes death.

They often believe they and their children will be destined to a life of poverty if they leave. Obtaining suitable accommodation for themselves and their children is often difficult, particularly in regional and remote areas.

<p>December 1st, Thursday World AIDS Day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV/AIDS still exists in Australia. The annual number of new HIV diagnoses in Australia has been stable at around 1000 cases in the past 4 years. • HIV/AIDS does not discriminate, people do. Stigma and discrimination will continue to exist so long as societies as a whole continue to judge people who have HIV/AIDS. You can help change this by encouraging others not to judge. • Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) is a four-week course of one or more anti-HIV (or anti-retroviral) drugs which may stop HIV infection becoming established. The drugs must be taken within three days of exposure to the virus. • Around 20,171 people were living with HIV in Australia at the end of 2009. • Did you know: HIV is spread by anal or vaginal sex without a condom, from an infected mother to her baby (during childbirth or breastfeeding) and by sharing needles. In rare cases HIV is spread through oral sex and sharps injuries. • World AIDS Day is recognised and observed by millions in more than 190 countries around the world. • HIV is not spread through sharing a kitchen, bathroom, toilet, clothes, bed sheets, towels swimming pool with an HIV infected person. <p>For more information visit: http://www.worldaidsday.org.au/internet/wad/publishing.nsf/Content/home</p>
<p>December 2nd, Friday</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myth: Men only sexually assault young sexually 'attractive' women. <p>Reality: Sexual assault is not about sex. It is a crime about power and domination.</p>
<p>December 3rd, Saturday International Day of Persons with Disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 20 percent of women in Australia have a disability, with a large proportion of these women being under the age of 65. • A quarter of the global population is directly affected by disability, as care-givers or family members. • This year the United Nations theme for International Day of Persons with Disabilities is "Together for a better world for all: including persons with disabilities in development." • Women with disabilities face extra challenges within their community and are often subjected to social isolation and stigma • A 2006 a study found that women with disabilities experience intimate partner violence 40 percent more often than other women. <p>For more information visit: www.wdv.org.au or www.idpwd.com.au</p>
<p>December 4th, Sunday</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myth: Women 'cry' rape. <p>Reality: Police statistics reveal that 'false' reporting of sexual assault is minimal, representing 2% to 7% of all</p>

reported assaults. These statistics also include statements withdrawn by victims/survivors due to fear of revenge and the impact of the legal system.

December 5th, Monday

- **Myth: Women can avoid being raped by dressing sensibly and not going out alone at night**
Reality: Over 50% of rapes occur either in the offender's home or in the victim's home. There is no casual link between a woman's clothing and social behaviour and crimes of violence.

**December 6th, Tuesday
Anniversary of the
Montreal Massacre.**

Today is the 22nd anniversary of the Montreal Massacre. On December 6, 1989, a 25 year-old man named Marc Lepine walked into the University of Montreal's School of Engineering Building with semi-automatic rifle. He began a shooting spree during which he murdered fourteen women and injured thirteen others: nine women and four men. Lepine believed it was because of women students that he was not accepted to the engineering school. Before killing himself, he left an explanatory letter behind which contained a tirade against feminists as well as a list of nineteen prominent women whom he particularly despised.

This prompted a handful of men in Toronto to take responsibility to speak out about and work to stop, men's violence against women. As a result, the White Ribbon Campaign in Canada became an annual awareness-raising event held between 25 November and 6 December.

For more information visit: <http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu/> (Link to 2011 Campaign -Take Action Kit: 'Key Dates') or <http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/CommunitySupport/Men4Change/>

December 7th, Wednesday

- **Myth: Child sexual assault is perpetrated by 'dirty old men'**
Reality: 71% of sex offenders are younger than 35 years old.

December 8th, Thursday

- **Myth: Violence against women is an issue that only concerns women**
Reality: Violence against women is an issue for everyone. It is a human rights violation.
"Violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation. And it is perhaps the most pervasive. It knows no boundaries of geography, culture or wealth. As long as it continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development and peace" Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

December 9th, Friday

- **Myth: Violent Men Cannot Control Their Anger**

Reality: Violent men often believe this is true. The large majority of men who use violence against their partners are able to control their anger and use of abuse around others, i.e. work colleagues, friends and neighbours. They are also able to control the ways in which they abuse their partners, including limiting the physical assault to certain parts of the body where the bruising and injuries don't show. Domestic violence is not an argument that gets 'out of hand' and is frequently the premeditated use of violence.

**December 10th, Saturday
Human Rights Day**

- Today acknowledges the work of human rights defenders all around the world for the endless work they do in helping to end discrimination.
- Human rights defenders are everyday people who campaign for equitable and effective laws, report and investigate human rights violations and support victims to lead better lives.
- *“Human rights defender is a title each and every one of us can earn. It is not a role that requires a professional qualification. What it depends on is regard for our fellow human beings, an understanding that we are all entitled to the full range of human rights and a commitment to seeing that ideal become a reality.” Navi Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights*

For more information visit: <http://www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday/2010/about.shtml>
or <http://www.unwomen.org/>

For more information about myths and misconceptions around violence against women visit:

<http://www.dvrc.org.au/index.php?action=view&view=33163>

<http://www.thewomens.org.au/SexualAssaultsMyths>