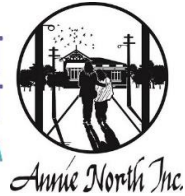




CENTRE AGAINST
SEXUAL ASSAULT
CENTRAL VICTORIA



16 Days of Activism - Time for Change

The voices of women and children with lived experience of domestic and family violence and sexual assault are at the centre of an exhibition on display in Bendigo during the 16 Days of Activism to end gender-based violence.

'Time for Change' is a series of artworks created by women and children who have been clients of specialist family violence response agency, Centre for Non-Violence, crisis refuge and domestic violence service, Annie North, and specialist counselling and support service, Centre Against Sexual Assault Central Victoria.

The works are an illustration of women's journeys of recovery, focusing on healing and offering messages of hope to other victim-survivors.

The 'Time for Change' exhibition also includes photographs documenting a time in history when women rallied across Australia, saying 'enough'.

Enough of enough of their voices not being heard. Their stories not believed.

Their calls for action ignored. Their history, silenced.

A time when women took to the streets, because the time for change was long ago.

The exhibition opens on November 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and first of 16 Days of Activism, and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day.

The 16 Days campaign calls for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls, across the globe – and promotes essential actions that can be taken by anyone to address the serious issue of violence against women in all communities.

The Victorian theme for 2021 is Respect Women, Call It Out – which engages people to recognise disrespect and the conditions that contribute to violence against women, and take action.

The global theme is Orange the World: End Violence Against Women Now – which mobilises all communities across the world to do more to raise awareness of, and prevent, gender-based violence.

CNV, CASACV and Annie North are challenging all members of the community to visit the exhibition, and educate themselves on what they can do to be an active bystander and Respect women: Call it out.

Centre for Non-Violence chief executive officer Margaret Augerinos says while 16 Days of Activism shines a light on the serious issue of gender-based violence, there needs to be ongoing focus on what is one of the leading social issues across Australia.

“We are still seeing on average, one woman a week being murdered by a current or former partner,” she said.

“If we had these deaths occurring in other contexts, there would be greater community outrage.

“The 16 days of activism shine a light on this – but it really is a national emergency and is beyond time that we need to do significantly more.

“We’ve seen too many horror stories and tragedies where women have tried to leave, where women do absolutely everything right, they seek support, they get intervention orders, they seek safety, and still they are stalked, harassed and murdered.”

Annie North Women’s Refuge chief executive officer Julie Oberin has been supporting victim/survivors of domestic and family violence for almost 30 years.

“I’ve been educating community influencers and government decision makers about what victim/survivors need and what is needed to prevent gender-based violence against women for the same time,” she said.

“We are still to see the required concerted effort from the federal government to genuinely and purposely commit to doing what needs to be done. Enough is enough.”

Centre Against Sexual Assault Central Victoria chief executive officer Kate Wright says ‘we know that we if don’t call out and name behaviours of abuse, violence and harassment the impact of the behaviour negatively affects the victim’s wellbeing and may lead to adverse long-term physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health outcomes’.

“It is time to stop the violence, harassment, abuse and disrespect. And it begins with each one of us standing up, taking account of our actions, having conversations with our partners, friends, family members, in schools, in workplaces, holding others to account, reflecting on our own behaviour, and changing our society together.

“The spotlight on sexual assault and violence across Australia this year has created a groundswell of community outrage, we want to maintain the community momentum because no child or adult should ever experience sexual violence.”

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