

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

What are we doing?

Between Sunday November 25 and Monday December 10, the union will be supporting 16 days of activism against gendered violence. This campaign is about awareness, education and encouraging all of us to speak about the scourge of domestic and family violence. Domestic and family violence spans all sections of our community and it is up to all of us to speak about the issue and take action if we think that something isn't right.

What is domestic and family violence? It is not just overt violence...

Domestic and family violence is violent, threatening or controlling behaviour between family members and/or intimate partners that over time causes a person to feel fear, physical harm and/or psychological harm. It can include:

- physical, verbal, emotional, sexual or psychological abuse;
- neglect;
- financial abuse;
- stalking;
- harm to an animal or property;
- restricting your spiritual or cultural participation; and
- exposing children to the effects of these behaviours.

Why are we doing this?

Domestic and family violence has a far reaching impact and the CFMEU is committed to continuing to show leadership on this issue. While most men are not perpetrators, this violence is overwhelmingly perpetrated by men and according to Australian research, is partly based on rigid expectations and attitudes (stereotypes) about what it means to be a 'man'

or a 'woman'. The CFMEU has a large percentage of male members nationwide and we believe the union has an important role to play in working with and educating our members about gender equality and the scourge of domestic and family violence.

There are other issues like men's depression and suicide prevention, which I think are more important...

Our national day of action on family and domestic violence is not about taking away from work that we do on men's depression and suicide prevention, nor is it about demonising men. We will continue our work tackling the issues that affect men's health, but we all stand to benefit from eliminating domestic and family violence. Domestic and family violence spans all sections of the community and we want to encourage more men to speak out against it. Over the past few years as a union we have strongly supported Walk a Mile in Her Shoes and collected hundreds of toys and non-perishable items for women and families in domestic violence refuges, but we want to do more. This is just one part of our work to break down the stigma and barrier to talking about

domestic and family violence and encouraging action. There are lots of different ways that we can do this, but we want to be a part of community driven change and to change attitudes. We want to be a part of the solution. We want to put the fence at the top of the cliff, not park the ambulance at the bottom.

What are the facts?

In Australia, 1 in 3 women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by someone known to them.

Family violence is a bigger health risk for women than smoking, drinking and obesity. It contributes to a range of negative health outcomes, including poor mental health, problems during pregnancy and birth, alcohol and illicit drug use, suicide, injuries and homicide.

I know someone who was in that situation and I don't understand why they didn't leave...

Domestic and family violence is an extremely complex issue. Leaving a violent situation can be the hardest step and the most dangerous time for someone. It needs to be carefully planned with appropriate support. Think about the last time you moved home. Now consider: - you have been assaulted, you are ashamed, you may not have money, your kids are terrified and you may not know where to go...

What can you do?

If you know or suspect that someone is in this situation you can call 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) and they will provide you with advice and where to seek help.

If you are in need of urgent police assistance call '000'.

What if I know someone who I think is using violence at home or is having family or relationship problems?

If you know or suspect that someone is in this situation you can call 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) and they will provide you with advice and where to seek help.

If you are in need of urgent police assistance call '000'.

How can we do better?

We know that as a community we can drive change. We all need to learn, understand and make a difference individually. It is up to all of us to oppose violence against women and promote a culture of non-violence and respect in our community.

What can men do?

1. We can declare that violence against women is never acceptable.
2. Men need to work alongside women in ending violence against women.
3. We need to be having the private conversations, with our mates, our sons, our families. Women and girls need respect and need to be treated as equals. We also need to be having the public conversations, using our influence where we can.
4. Men need to help other men understand that violence against women is fuelled by attitudes and beliefs that women are worth less than men, or are the property of men.

If someone needs assistance...

We are not experts on the issue, please seek help from your Organiser, Incolink, Mates in Construction, Mates in Mining or Hunterlink.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

National:
Mates in Construction
1300 642 111

Mates in Mining
1300 642 111

Hunterlink:
(02) 4929 6625

In Victoria:
Incolink:
03 9668 3061 or 0419 568 605