

**MEDIA RELEASE** For immediate distribution

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## **Call to action: Gippsland businesses asked to help STOP Family Violence**

With COVID-19 impacting where the STOP Family Violence cards and posters can be accessed, there were concerns that important contact information wouldn't be readily available to victims of family violence. The Gippsland Family Violence Alliance (of which Gippsland Women's Health is a member) is made up of 38 specialist service organisations working together to respond to family violence in Gippsland by supporting victims/survivors and their children, as well as services assisting perpetrators to change their behaviour.

A community focused campaign by the Gippsland Family Violence Alliance is asking Gippsland organisations and businesses to display the cards and posters in public spaces. Their aim is to raise awareness that family violence services are open and to promote and improve access to Gippsland services and resources. Campaign information can be found at [www.gwhealth.asn.au/campaigns/stop-fv-gippsland/](http://www.gwhealth.asn.au/campaigns/stop-fv-gippsland/)

Along with some social media messaging, two infographics have been developed, one for businesses and one for community, as helpful guides on how to use of the STOP Family Violence resources and how to support friends and family experiencing violence.

Family violence, also known as domestic violence or intimate partner violence includes physical, emotional, financial, psychological and sexual abuse, and any threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour. Family violence is not always between intimate partners, but can occur between extended family and close family friends. Family violence is not caused by alcohol, drugs or poor mental health. It is a choice for perpetrators to exert coercive control over their victims.

**Join the campaign** by displaying the Gippsland STOP Family Violence cards and posters in your workplace or business. They can be downloaded at the Gippsland Women's Health website [www.gwhealth.asn.au/resources/](http://www.gwhealth.asn.au/resources/) or order cards/posters to be posted on 03 51431600.

### **Melanie Brown, Acting CEO Gippsland Women's Health and Chair, Gippsland Family Violence Alliance:**

"Gippsland's rates of family violence are alarming. Latrobe and East Gippsland have the highest rates for police call outs for family violence in the state. We applaud the Gippsland enterprises (both public and private) who are supporting the campaign, to assist both victims and survivors. Community action is helping to keep women and children safe and holding perpetrators accountable."

### **Jane Barr, CEO of Gippsland Centre against Sexual Assault (GCASA) and member of the Gippsland Family Violence Alliance:**

"The Stop card has allowed our practitioners to provide immediate and discrete referrals, even in busy stalls or public places. It provides direct access to local services to support women and children to find assistance"

If you or someone you know is impacted by sexual assault or family violence, call 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732 or visit [www.1800RESPECT.org.au](http://www.1800RESPECT.org.au) **In an emergency call 000.**

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