

*November 25 – White Ribbon Day  
International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (IDEVAW)*

*White Ribbon Women's activists have marked 25 November as a day against violence since 1981. This date came from the brutal assassination in 1960, of the three Mirabal sisters, political activists in the Dominican Republic, on orders of Dominican ruler Rafael Trujillo (1930-1961).*

*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, December 6, 1989. They began the White Ribbon Day Campaign to urge men to speak out against violence against women. In 1999, the United Nations General Assembly declared November 25 the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (IDEVAW) and the White Ribbon has become the symbol for the day. People wear white ribbons to show they are committed to supporting community action to stop violence by men against women.*

White Ribbon events in cities and towns around the state of South Australia in 2008 included:

- A range of local services displayed and supplied white ribbons eg Zonta and a local Domestic Violence Action Group provided information about support services in the local newspaper, and met with local media to promote the day.
- White Ribbon Day was acknowledged with speeches and a sausage sizzle on the foreshore of a city lake. Messages against domestic violence and the history and significance of the day were delivered by Chief Inspector Police, local Newspaper Editor and a City Councillor. All speakers noted the significance that White Ribbon Day was created by males and its purpose is to urge other males to speak out against violence against women.
- Several local public libraries presented week-long White Ribbon displays.
- An event with strong visual impact was a smashed-up car with a long, wide white ribbon draped around it sitting in a public park with the message:

*"This impact you can see, what about the impact of DV?"*

Around the lawn were eye-catching posters made by the local EVAW groups. Local polytetch students also participated in distributing white ribbon boxes across the region to places like pubs, clubs, shopping centres and golf clubs.

Fathers, grandfathers, brothers and sons gathered to participate in "Australia's Loudest Shout" to support White Ribbon Day. The theme for the event was "Not Violent, Not Silent". Men raised their voices in unison and shouted "NO" to violence against women. The shout culminated in a decibel reading of 115.8 (louder than the sound of a jackhammer)! A White Ribbon ambassador led the shout and addressed the assembled men urging the community to make a stand against violence and report any incidents of suspected violence. The Mayor, the father of three young daughters, told the men he wanted his daughters to grow up free of the threat of violence. The event will continue this year (2009) when an even bigger and louder shout is planned.

An information stall in a large city mall was complemented by many of the shop owners and their staff in the Mall wearing white ribbons and displaying information on the White Ribbon Campaign. This was a very successful morning with many handmade white ribbons given away as well as a wide range of services displaying their relevant agency information for the prevention of domestic violence and supports offered to women and children in domestic and family violence situations. [ compiled from *Victims' Voice*, March 2009, [www.victimsa.org](http://www.victimsa.org) ]

The campaign, 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence, originated in 1991 at the Center for Women's Global Leadership, based at Rutgers University in the American state of New Jersey. The campaign runs from 25 November to 10 December. During this period, activities highlighting the problem of violence against women are organised daily. The 16 Days campaign has been a tool to raise awareness that violence against women is both a violation of human rights and a major health concern

***Quotes as reported by an agency who support victims of domestic violence and men who abuse:***

*"People just don't speak about it. We strongly believe that silence feeds violence."*

"Generally the abuser is the male partner and there is a repeated pattern of abusive behaviour - not just isolated, one-off instances. However any physical or sexual assault is a criminal offence, and is wrong.

"Abusers want power and control and their behaviour usually escalates over a number of years. Abuse happens across all age groups, cultures, socio-economic situations and professions - it's just the forms that may be different.

"Domestic violence is more than just physical. It's also spiritual, sexual, financial, and social. Many women tell us they can deal with the physical; it's the other forms they find harder to cope with."

"Often the first incidence of domestic violence happens when a woman is pregnant and their focus is not on their male partner, the relationship is changing. Usually the violence doesn't abate unless there is some intervention."