

## Take a stand against domestic violence during 16 Days of Activism

Wagga Wagga City Council is supporting the Wagga Domestic Violence Liaison Committee (DVLC) in calling on the community to say 'no more silence' during the upcoming 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.

The global campaign calls for action against one of the world's most persistent violations of human rights – violence against women – and starts on Monday 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

It concludes on Tuesday 10 December, International Human Rights Day.

The campaign is led by the DVLC and is chaired by the Wagga Women's Health Centre (WWHC), who play a pivotal role in connecting women over 16 years of age to services and supports whilst advocating for equality and increased service provision in the region.

WWHC Operations Coordinator and Wagga DVLC Chairperson Jessica Roberts said domestic and family violence is not limited to physical violence.

"It includes other forms of equally harmful abuse such as psychological and financial abuse or coercive control," Ms Roberts said. "None of these forms of violence is acceptable, yet unfortunately they persist in our community.

"To commence 16 Days of Activism, the community is invited to join us for a poignant vigil at Council's Museum of the Riverina – Botanic Gardens site, where we will commemorate the lives lost this year to intimate partner violence."

The Commemorative Vigil & Installation will be held on Monday 25 November, from 6.30pm – 8pm.

Whilst domestic and family violence goes largely unreported, the New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research states that one in four Australia women is impacted by domestic violence in her lifetime, with Wagga Wagga reporting 498 incidents from July 2023 to June 2024 (BOCSAR, 2024).

Council is an active member of the Wagga DVLC and will be hosting several community education programs promoting safe and respectful relationships, which is a key priority in its *Community Safety Action Plan 2022-2026*.

Council is working with Paula Smith from Upstream Educators to present three key topics for services workers and their volunteers informed by the Wagga DVLC, including coercive control, online and technology facilitated abuse, and financial and economic abuse.

Council's Director Community Janice Summerhayes said during the 16 Days of Activism, eradicating domestic and family violence should be a conversation everyone is having, because everyone deserves to be safe.

"To mark the campaign, we will temporarily illuminate Fitzmaurice Street with purple lights, and are partnering with Police and local emergency services to host a free Family and Community Safety Day on Saturday 7 December, from 10am to midday, providing a safe space for people to raise concerns and ask questions", Ms Summerhayes said.

"Council is committed to advocating for resources and funding levels that support front-line services and other organisations addressing coercive control, abuse, and violence as outlined in Council's adopted Advocacy Plan."

There is an opportunity for everyone across the community to play an active role and break the silence on gender-based violence.

Find the full program here: [wagga-womens-health-centre.squarespace.com/16-days-of-activism](https://wagga-womens-health-centre.squarespace.com/16-days-of-activism)

If you or someone you know is in danger, call **000** immediately.

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### **About the Wagga Domestic Violence Liaison Committee (DVLC):**

Wagga DVLC is a monthly interagency of key local domestic and family violence stakeholders that aim to promote safety in the community and provide domestic and family violence information and support.

Led by the Wagga Wagga Women's Health Centre (Chair) and Sisters Housing Inc. (Auspice), the committee also includes Wagga Wagga City Council, Mission Australia, Relationships Australia, Wagga Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service, Murrumbidgee Local Health District, Multicultural Council of Wagga Wagga, CentraCare, Charles Sturt university, TAFE NSW, NSW Police, Ambulance NSW, and Rotary.

### **Sources:**

Commonwealth of Australia 2022, *The National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032*, visit: <https://www.dss.gov.au/ending-violence>

NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, *Crime statistics by LGA*, visit: [bocsar.nsw.gov.au/statistics-dashboards/crime-and-policing/lga-excel-crime-tables.html](https://bocsar.nsw.gov.au/statistics-dashboards/crime-and-policing/lga-excel-crime-tables.html)

Wagga Wagga City Council 2021, *theDVproject:2650 Closeout Report*, visit: [wagga.nsw.gov.au/community/programs-and-initiatives/thedvproject](https://wagga.nsw.gov.au/community/programs-and-initiatives/thedvproject)

Wagga Wagga City Council et al. 2023, *No More Silence about Domestic and Family Violence*, visit: [wagga.nsw.gov.au/community/programs-and-initiatives/no-more-silence](https://wagga.nsw.gov.au/community/programs-and-initiatives/no-more-silence)

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## About Wagga Wagga City Council

Wagga Wagga City Council serves more than 68,000 residents across an area of 4825 square kilometres with an overall budget of \$240 million.

The organisation manages more than \$2.48 billion in assets, including a 2300km road network, Wagga Wagga Airport, Livestock Marketing Centre, and the Oasis Aquatic Centre.

Council also provides important community facilities such as Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, Wagga Wagga City Library, Museum of the Riverina, and Civic Theatre, as well as maintaining countless parks, playgrounds, and sporting facilities to ensure Wagga maintains its reputation as 'the City of Good Sports'.

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