

# Hume City Council White Ribbon Action Team Strategy 2011 – 2014



Violence against Women, Hume says NO



## Document Information

Prepared by: Hume White Ribbon Action Team Coordinating Committee

Sponsored by: Director City Infrastructure

## Acknowledgements:

The Hume White Ribbon Action Team Strategy 2011 – 2014 was developed with contribution from the following departments:

- Social Development
- Marketing and Communications
- Organisation Planning and Improvement
- Parks and Open Space
- City Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Sustainable Environment
- Corporate Services
- Learning Community
- Infrastructure Planning
- Customer Service Services
- Aged Care and Health
- Leisure and Youth Services

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## List of Abbreviations:

HWRAT	Hume White Ribbon Action Team
EMT	Executive Management Team
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Operating Budget	Reference to the Operating Budget in the action plan relates to staff time. Specific costs in the Action Plan relate to costs associated with: external service providers and materials purchased.

## Foreword from the Mayor



I am pleased to introduce Hume City Council's strategy for the newly formed White Ribbon Action Team. Violence against women is a significant issue in our community, and with the second highest incidence of Family Violence in Victoria, Council is committed to reducing this burden on our community safety and wellbeing.

Council seeks to promote the importance of respectful and equal relationships in all settings. The prevention of violence against women and the pursuit of a safe community for all women is the responsibility of all sectors of the community. This includes workplaces, homes and in the broader community. Hume City Council plays a pivotal role in role-modeling safe and equitable treatment of women, and the rejection of family violence whether physical, emotional or financial.

I implore both men and women to become involved in the White Ribbon Campaign and to help end violence against women in our City.

Cr Helen Patsikatheodorou  
Mayor Hume City Council

## Message from the Chair of the White Ribbon Action Team



As Chair of the Council's White Ribbon Action Team it is my privilege to lead this newly formed group. Violence against women is a significant issue in Hume City and this team of Council Officers is working hard to raise awareness of the issue. Our vision is a community free of all forms of violence against women.

Council is committed to tackling violence against women and working towards a safe community for all. The White Ribbon Action Team aims to provide strategic direction to Council, promote the vision and principles of the White Ribbon Campaign and to be the public face of the campaign locally.

I would like to encourage Officers to join this dedicated Team and contribute to Council's role and responsibility towards the community.

I look forward to leading this Team and working collaboratively to prevent violence against women in our community.

Steve Crawley  
Chair of the White Ribbon Action Team  
Director City Infrastructure

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# 1. What is the White Ribbon Action Team?

The White Ribbon Action Team is made up of Council Officers. The White Ribbon Campaign is driven mainly by men, for men, who are a critical part of the solution to ending male violence against women. Men are strongly encouraged to join as it is these non-violent men who have an important voice that needs to be heard and will make a real difference in ending violence against women.

## **Role of Hume White Ribbon Action Team:**

- Provide strategic direction to Hume City Council.
- Promote the vision and principles of the White Ribbon Campaign.
- Lead the White Ribbon Campaign for Hume.

## **Leadership and coordination:**

The Coordination Group is to provide executive support and leadership to the Hume White Ribbon Action Team. Representatives from the Coordination Group will convene and chair meetings bi-monthly and report to EMT and Council twice per year. The Chair of the group will be a member of Hume City Council's Executive Management Team.

## **White Ribbon Ambassadors:**

White Ribbon Ambassadors are men who have made a personal commitment through signing a pledge to not commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women.

Members of the Hume White Ribbon Action Team will strongly be encouraged to become White Ribbon Ambassadors

More information regarding White Ribbon Ambassadors and how to apply to become an Ambassador can be found at [www.whiteribbonday.org.au](http://www.whiteribbonday.org.au).

## 2. Vision and Values

### Vision

The vision of the White Ribbon Action Team is as follows:

***Our community; free of all forms of violence against women.***

### Values

The Values and Guiding Behaviours of the White Ribbon Action Team align with Council's Values and are as follows:

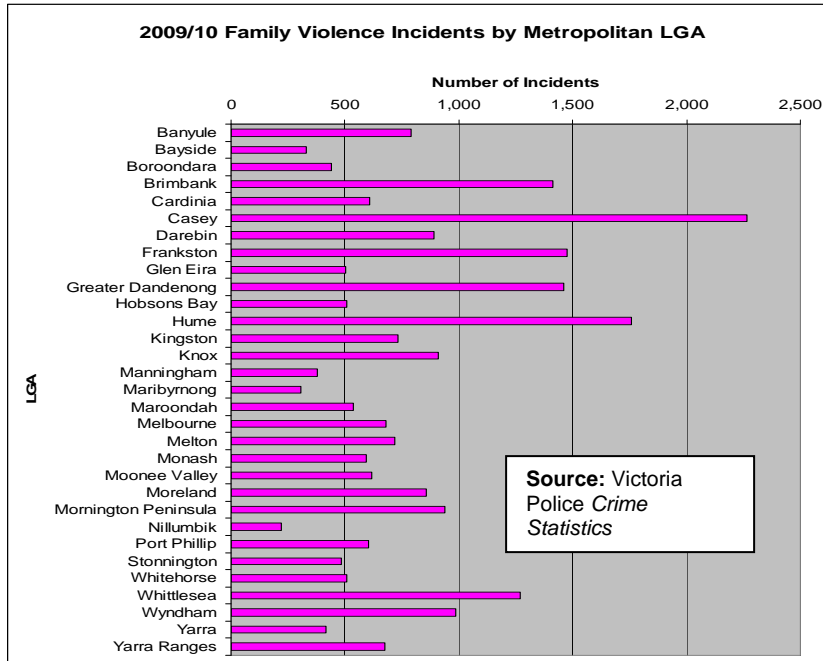
The White Ribbon Action Team commit to demonstrating:

- **RESPECT** by promoting equal and respectful relationships in all settings across the community;
- **CUSTOMER FOCUS** by being responsive to the needs of our community;
- Partnering with Council, the community and business to promote the prevention of violence against women through **COLLABORATION**;
- **INNOVATION** by exploring new ways to communicate the white ribbon message to the community.

### 3. The Issue

The United Nations defines violence against women and children as .. *any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual and or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life*<sup>1</sup>

- Hume has the second highest incidence of Family Violence in Victoria.



- In Australia, over half of all women experience some form of physical or sexual violence in their life time.
- Every week a woman is killed by a male partner or ex-partner and thousands of women are injured every year.
- For women aged between 15 and 44, the greatest burden of disease continues to be intimate partner violence.<sup>2</sup>

By far the overwhelming majority of victims of Family Violence are women and girls which necessitates men and boys to challenge behaviours and acknowledge that male socialisation is a significant determinant of violence towards women. Evidence suggests that the prevention of violence against women is best addressed through the following: promoting of equal and respectful relationships between men and women, promoting non-violent social norms and reducing exposure to children, and improving access to resources and the support system.<sup>3</sup>

A multifaceted approach to primary prevention is required to address the high incidence of violence against women in Hume City. It is also crucial to address and facilitate men’s role in violence prevention, the White Ribbon Campaign enables this to occur.

<sup>1</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (1993), *United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*, United Nations.

<sup>2</sup> Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (2004) *The health costs of violence – Measuring the burden of disease caused by intimate partner violence*, Victoria.

<sup>3</sup> Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (2007) *Preventing violence before it occurs – A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria*, Victoria.

## 4. International Context:

The White Ribbon Campaign began in Montreal Canada in 1991 by a handful of men in response to one man's massacre of 14 women. These men felt a responsibility to urge men to speak out against male violence against women.

They did this through wearing a white ribbon as a symbol of men's opposition to violence against women. In 1999, the United Nations General Assembly declared November 25 the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and the White Ribbon has become the symbol for the day.

The campaign has grown to be the largest effort in the world of men working to end violence against women and in 2008, is a growing campaign in fifty-seven countries around the world. More information is available at [www.whiteribbon.org](http://www.whiteribbon.org)



International branding for the White Ribbon campaign.

## 5. Australian Context:

On 25 November 2000, the Commonwealth Government Office for Women ran awareness activities on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. In 2003 the Australian branch of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, UNIFEM, began a partnership with men and men's organisations to make this a national campaign.

Ten thousand white ribbons were distributed in Australia in 2003. In 2008, hundreds of thousands of white ribbons were worn by men and women across Australia and the campaign continues to go from strength to strength. It now boasts more than 230 white ribbon Ambassadors Australia-wide. More information is available at [www.whiteribbonday.org.au](http://www.whiteribbonday.org.au).

In 2009 *The National Plan To Reduce Violence Against Women* was launched by the Federal Government which recommended the Australian Government take leadership on a long-term plan to reduce violence against women. In 2010 the State Government launched a *Right to Respect – Victoria's Plan to Prevent Violence against Women 2010 – 2020* to address the underlying causes, influence social norms, promote leadership and embed a culture of equal and respectful relationships.

Local Government has been identified in both the *National Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women*, the *State Plan A Right to Respect* and by VicHealth as a crucial setting to implement primary prevention initiatives.



Prime Minister Julia Gillard and Opposition Leader Tony Abbott at a 2010 national White Ribbon Day Event

## 6. Hume Context:

Hume City Council has sold white ribbons at its Customer Service Centres since 2008.

In 2009, Council adopted a new Community Safety Strategy 2009 – 2013, with a particular focus on Family Violence and Women's Safety. The prevention of Family Violence also features in Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and respectful and equitable relationships form a key part of Council's Social Justice Charter. As a determinant of mental health and wellbeing, violence against women is a violation of human rights.



Hume City Council's White Ribbon Action Team, 2010

All women and men, have the right to live in a safe community free from fear of violence and crime. Council plays a pivotal role in role-modeling safe and equitable treatment of women and the rejection of assault and Family Violence.

In 2010 the Hume White Ribbon Action Team was formed as a result of the high incidence of Family Violence in Hume City. The Team is lead by Director City Infrastructure and comprises predominantly male Council Officers who feel a responsibility to urge men to speak out against male violence against women.

This Strategy promotes the importance of respectful and equal relationships in all settings with actions themed into three broad areas:

- To strengthen Hume City Council's leadership in the prevention of violence against women;
- To raise awareness, develop partnerships and strengthen the community's capacity to prevent violence against women;
- To encourage corporate social responsibility of Hume businesses to prevent violence against women.

The Strategy will guide the actions of the Hume White Ribbon Action Team which have been developed to support programs and activities of Council departments.

## 7. The White Ribbon Journey at Hume:

### 2008

- Sale of White Ribbons at Customer Service Centres for White Ribbon Day;

### 2009

- Sale of White Ribbons at Customer Service Centres for 16 Days of Action;
- 'Swear Jars' were placed in Council's Customer Service Centres and in Council staff areas to encourage all men to take the White Ribbon Oath;
- White Ribbon Day featured in local media;
- Mayor, CEO, Directors and Council Officers attended the Northern Region White Ribbon Breakfast.

### 2010

- White Ribbon Action Team formed in September lead by Cr Geoff Porter and Director City Communities Steve Crawley;
- Officers attended the first Local Government Preventing Violence Against Women Conference;
- Host Northern Region Local Government White Ribbon Luncheon in November with over 160 Council Officers, including Mayors, CEO, Directors, Victoria Police and Community Leaders in attendance;
- Over 200 Council Officers attended a White Ribbon Day event at the Civic Plaza including:

- The Loudest Shout; measuring the sound of 200 officers yelling 'No' to Family Violence using a decibel reading;
- The Biggest 'No'; Officers arranged themselves into a large 'NO' to signify the rejection of violence against women;
- Wore specially designed t-shirts stating 'Violence against women: Hume says NO!'
- Listened to a Council Officer relay her personal and moving experience of Family Violence.



Council staff at the 2010 White Ribbon Day event

### 2011

- White Ribbon Action Team commences work on a four year White Ribbon Strategy and planning White Ribbon events for 2011.

## 8. Aim 1: Council to be a leader in the prevention of violence against women.



Councillors Ogilvie, Patsikatheodorou, Porter and Atmaca at Hume City Council's White Ribbon Day event in 2010

### **8.1 Hume White Ribbon Action Team (HWRAT) members to lead initiatives to prevent violence against women.**

- a) Promote and create opportunities for HRWAT members to spread the message of preventing violence against women to the community through the local media and by becoming White Ribbon Ambassadors.
- b) Develop a presence on the Council website.
- c) Promote the principles of the Hume White Ribbon Day campaign within Council and to the community.

### **8.2 To seek and apply for funding opportunities to undertake prevention of violence against women activities across the whole of Council, including resources for projects.**

- a) Build relationships with Government departments and businesses to actively seek funding opportunities from Government and other funding bodies.

### **8.3 To integrate Council's commitment to the prevention of violence against women into our planning and service delivery processes.**

- a) Encourage the inclusion of activities that help prevent violence against women in divisional and departmental plans and strategies.
- b) Develop an internal Council Family Violence Policy to support staff that may experience violence.

### **8.4 To maintain active participation in HWRAT from Councillors, Executive Management Team (EMT) and Managers.**

- a) Seek continued executive support for HWRAT and the Strategy.
- b) Invite male representatives from EMT, Managers and Councilors to join HWRAT.
- c) Provide updates to EMT and Council twice per year.

## 9. Aim 2: To strengthen Council's organisational leadership in the prevention of violence against women.



CEO Domenic Isola at Council's White Ribbon Day event in 2010

### **9.1 To lead Council participation and embrace the White Ribbon Campaign.**

- a) Develop a White Ribbon program for Hume annually.
- b) To encourage all areas of Council to participate in White Ribbon activities.
- c) Develop partnerships with other northern metropolitan local governments to establish a regional White Ribbon Action Team

### **9.2 Promote White Ribbon Activities throughout Council.**

- a) Develop a communications strategy which outlines mechanisms to raise awareness of the issue of violence against women.
- b) Explore opportunities to profile HWRAT team members through the local media.
- c) To promote the White Ribbon pledge "never to commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women."

### **9.3 Promote resources available to staff about the prevention of violence against women through such programs as the EAP and services delivered by other community organisations.**

- a) Assist in the identification and development of resources and programs to assist staff;
- b) Work with local service providers (including Victoria Police, Berry Street, Broadmeadows Community Legal Service, Broadmeadows Magistrates Court) to promote services delivered to Council staff.

### **9.4 To assist the HWRAT team to advocate and challenge violence against women.**

- a) HWRAT members to participate in training and attend workshops / functions that raise awareness of violence against women and bring back key information to the Hume White Ribbon Action Team.
- b) Invite guest speakers to address the Hume White Ribbon Action Team.

## 10. Aim 3: To raise awareness, develop partnerships and strengthen the community's capacity to prevent violence against women.



North Melbourne Football Club CEO Eugene Arocca speaks at Hume City Council's Northern Region Local Government White Ribbon Luncheon in 2010.

### **10.1 Encourage the community to embrace the white ribbon campaign.**

- a) To promote the White Ribbon pledge "never to commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women" to the community.
- b) To highlight Council's White Ribbon activities through Council publications and through the local media.
- c) To encourage community and faith leaders to become White Ribbon Ambassadors and promote the prevention of violence against women to their respective communities.
- d) Work with the local media to encourage maximum coverage of the White Ribbon Campaign.

### **10.2 To provide information and support for the local community.**

- a) Promote role of Ambassadors as advocates for the White Ribbon Campaign.
- b) Provide advice and access to available resources to external groups/individuals.
- c) Hold a White Ribbon stall at Council events and festivals.

### **10.3 To identify stakeholders interested in preventing violence against women**

- a) Develop network of interested partner organisations and participants.
- c) Explore the establishment of local learning networks by bringing people together to learn and build capacity around the role of men in preventing violence against women.

### **10.4 Encourage participation from individuals, community organisations and networks in the prevention of violence against women activities.**

- a) Encourage community organisations, sports clubs and businesses to promote White Ribbon Campaign and sell White Ribbon merchandise.
- b) Encourage community organisations to coordinate White Ribbon activities throughout the year, especially on 25 November annually.
- c) Encourage community leaders to become White Ribbon ambassadors.

## 11. Aim 4: To encourage corporate social responsibility of Hume businesses to prevent violence against women.



Attendees at Hume City Council's Northern Region Local Government White Ribbon Luncheon in 2010.

### **11.1 Encourage businesses to embrace the white ribbon campaign.**

- a) Encourage local businesses to embed the White Ribbon message across their organisations.
- b) Assist business to promote their corporate social responsibility in marketing and promotional material.

### **11.2 Promote the prevention of violence against women to employees, suppliers and sub-contractors.**

- a) Facilitate meetings between Council, CEO, White Ribbon Action Team Chair and Hume's business leaders to promote the issue of violence against women in their respective workplaces.
- b) Prepare and distribute an information pack that assists businesses in their promotion of the prevention of violence against women within their workplace, including ideas and examples of successful activities to engage employees, suppliers and sub-contractors.

### **11.3 Encourage businesses to incorporate the prevention of violence against women into staff code of conduct and relevant policies and procedures**

- a) Prepare and distribute an information pack on how to implement new code of conduct policies and procedures into their workplace, including case studies for example.
- b) Encourage the recognition of employees who play an active role in the prevention of violence against women.

### **11.4 Recognise and reward businesses for their corporate social responsibility.**

- a) Invite businesses to attend Council-lead White Ribbon activities.
- b) Profile White Ribbon activities undertaken by local businesses through Council publications and reward their efforts through Council Business awards.

### **11.5 To encourage workplaces to coordinate White Ribbon activities.**

- a) To encourage businesses to plan and coordinate an event on White Ribbon Day including selling White Ribbons and other promotional material.
- b) Encourage senior management within businesses to become White Ribbon Ambassadors.
- c) Encourage the development of White Ribbon Action Teams within their workplace