

Candlelight Vigil

07.05.25

Resources and
information for the
Gippsland Region



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What is the Annual Candlelight Vigil?

The annual candlelight vigil is observed on the first Wednesday in May around Australia to remember the women and children whose lives were taken due to family violence. This national day of remembrance brings communities together to light a candle while they stand in solidarity to mourn the loss of lives.

The May 7 vigil is part of domestic and family violence prevention month.

What is Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month?

The Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month is an annual event held each May to raise community awareness of the social and personal impacts of domestic and family violence and the support available to those affected. The key aims of the month are to:

- raise community awareness of domestic and family violence and its impacts;
- promote a clear message of no tolerance of domestic and family violence in communities;
- ensure those who are experiencing domestic and family violence know how to access help and support;
- encourage people who use abuse and/or violence to take responsibility for their abusive behaviour and seek support to change.

Why is the campaign important?

Our vision at **Gippsland Women's Health** is an equal and respectful Gippsland for all women. We exist to improve women's health by advancing gender equity and working to prevent gendered violence.

This campaign, the toolkit and the on-line resources provide a powerful platform for partners across Gippsland to raise awareness and send the message that violence is not tolerated in our community.

We are proud to partner with **The Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre** - Victoria's state-wide response service for women, young people and children experiencing family violence. The Centre plays a lead role in this important community event working with partners across the country to shine a light on this national crisis.

Visit www.safesteps.org.au to read more about their work and access the Safe Steps 2025 Candlelight vigil campaign materials.



Information Session

This year, Gippsland will come together again to acknowledge the annual Candlelight Vigil on Wednesday May 7. Vigils are designed to recognise the tragic loss of lives as a result of domestic and family violence and the ongoing risk to women and children in the region.

Come to our **free online session** and learn how to organise a community Candlelight vigil and/or participate in the domestic and family violence prevention month. Our session will include information about the campaign, ideas on how to sensitively run a vigil or event along with essential resources, support services and materials. We will also talk about what events are happening across Gippsland and how to get the community involved.

Hosted by Gippsland Women's Health

When: **Thursday 10th April, 2025**

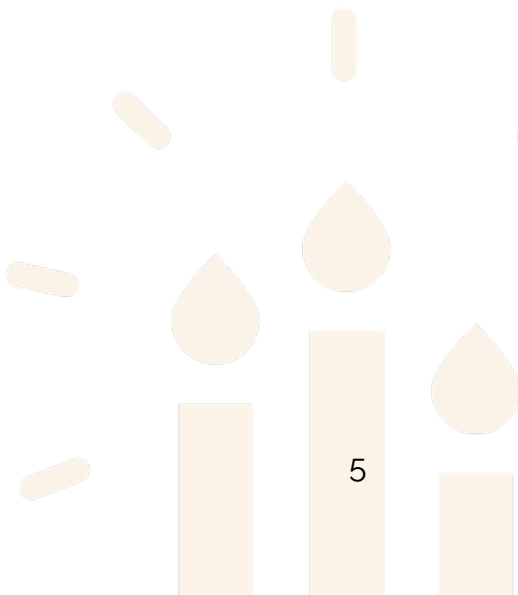
Time: **10am - 11am**

Where: **Online**

Click the image below or scan the QR code to Register



Register Here



Key Statistics:







Violence Against Women Australia

- One woman is killed nearly every week in Australia due to family violence. ¹
- **2 in 5** women (**39%**) have experienced violence since the age of 15. ²
- Women are more likely to **experience violence from someone they know** than by a stranger (35% vs 11%). ³
- Women are at **increased risk of experiencing violence** from an intimate partner during pregnancy. ⁴
- **Young women (18–34 years)** experience **significantly higher** rates of physical and sexual violence than women in older age groups. ⁵
- **12% (2.2 million)** of people witnessed partner **violence against their mothers** when they were children. ⁶
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women** experience disproportionately high rates of violence, and are **31 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence-related assaults**. ⁷ Anecdotal evidence suggests that non-Indigenous men make up a significant proportion of perpetrators. ⁸
- **Lesbian, bisexual and queer women experience higher rates of sexual violence than heterosexual women in Australia**. ⁹ Transgender and gender-diverse people also experience very high rates of family, domestic and sexual violence. ¹⁰
- **Women with disability in Australia are twice as likely to have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15 years than women without disabilities.** The type of disability can intersect with gender and different forms of violence for example, 1 in 2 women with psychological and/or cognitive impairment has experienced sexual violence. ¹¹

Key Statistics: Violence Against Women in Gippsland

Period January 2024 - December 2024

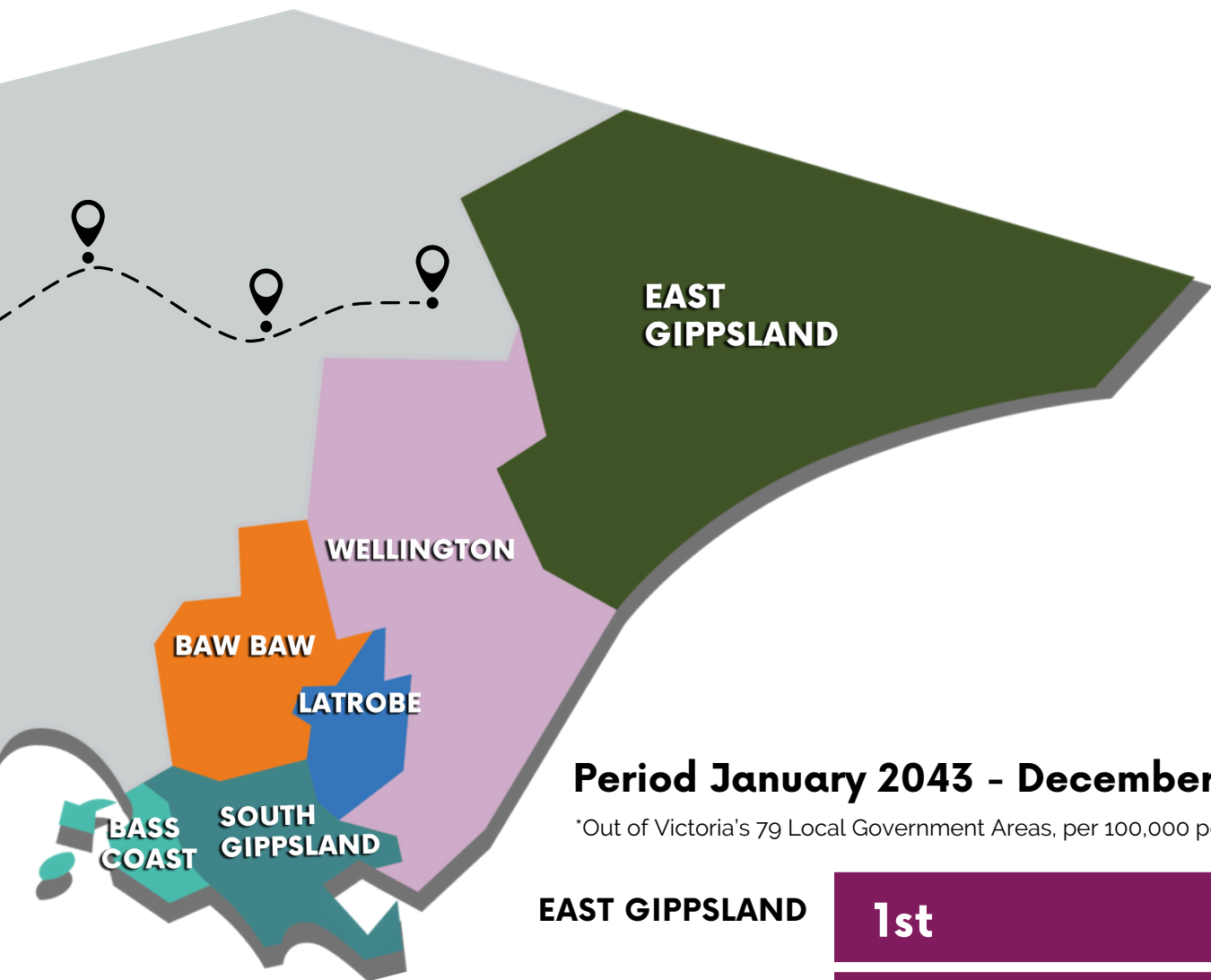
*Out of Victoria's 79 Local Government Areas, per 100,000 people. ¹²

East Gippsland	1st	In Family Violence rates out of Victoria's 79 LGAs*
2,290 <small>Recorded Family Violence callouts to Victoria Police</small>	28.4%	Increase compared to the previous year 
Latrobe City	2nd	In Family Violence rates out of Victoria's 79 LGAs*
3,115 <small>Recorded Family Violence callouts to Victoria Police</small>	14.73%	Increase compared to the previous year 
Wellington	7th	In Family Violence rates out of Victoria's 79 LGAs*
1,484 <small>Recorded Family Violence callouts to Victoria Police</small>	14.24%	Increase compared to the previous year 
Baw Baw	23rd	In Family Violence rates out of Victoria's 79 LGAs*
1,324 <small>Recorded Family Violence callouts to Victoria Police</small>	16.96%	Increase compared to the previous year 
Bass Coast	27th	In Family Violence rates out of Victoria's 79 LGAs*
912 <small>Recorded Family Violence callouts to Victoria Police</small>	12.31%	Increase compared to the previous year 
South Gippsland	28th	In Family Violence rates out of Victoria's 79 LGAs*
600 <small>Recorded Family Violence callouts to Victoria Police</small>	11.94%	Increase compared to the previous year 

Disclaimer: A decrease in police call outs does not equal less family violence. Data does not include people who directly contact Family Violence services for assistance or those who don't seek assistance.

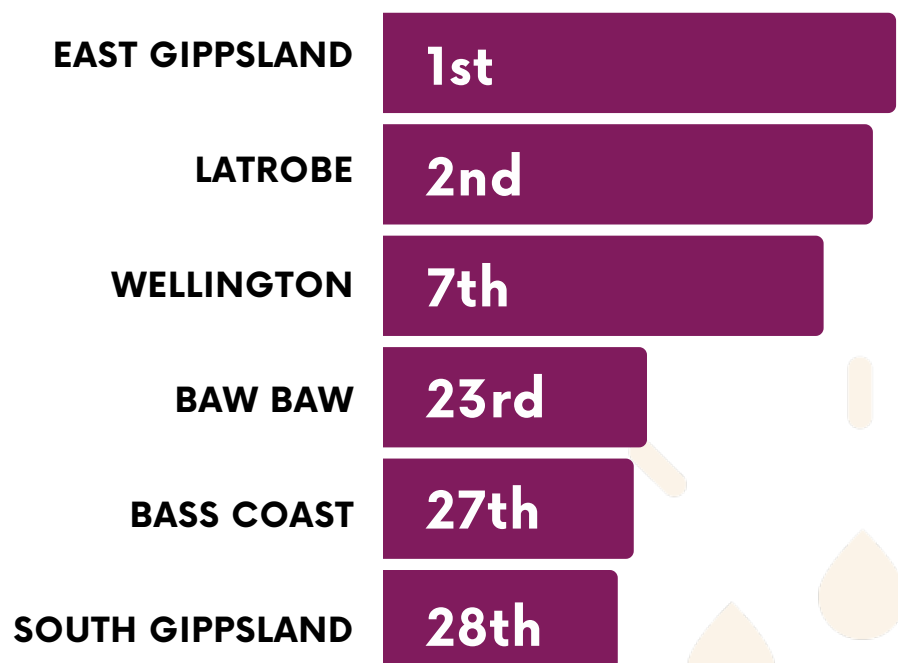
To access more detailed findings for the Gippsland area visit the GFVA website [here](#).

Key Statistics: Violence Against Women in Gippsland



Period January 2043 - December 2024

*Out of Victoria's 79 Local Government Areas, per 100,000 people. ¹²



Candlelight Vigil Ideas

- **Organise local leaders and/or** leaders in family and gendered violence prevention to speak at your event.
- **Engage First Nations leaders** to perform a smoking ceremony and/or Welcome to Country.
- **Invite support services staff** to be available for support and debriefing. Ensure they are easily identifiable and referred to during speeches.
- **Have support service materials** such as Gippsland Family Violence Alliance **STOP cards** and **1800 Respect** materials available for people to take. [See page 13 for order details.](#)
- **Introduce** the support services and materials that are available at the event and how to access them.
- Ensure that all speeches are **easy to understand**, genuine, sensitive and avoid assumed knowledge, jargon, or acronyms. eg –if you refer to the Orange Door, explain what it is and how to get help as well as any other relevant services.
- Talk about **prevention initiatives** that are being carried out in your area and that many people are working very hard to **prevent violence in the community.**

Candlelight Vigil Ideas



To find an event in Gippsland visit: gwhealth.asn.au/dfvpm/

- Hold your event **outdoors** if possible and **plan for a wet weather** option.
- **Dim the lighting** for indoor events.
- Arrange **local musicians/municipal bands/groups** to perform a reflective piece.
- Ensure the event is **LGBTQIA+ friendly** and easily **accessible** to anyone with a disability.
- **Livestream** your event for those who cannot make it in person
- **Share your event** via a **media release** and **social media** to promote the vigil and raise awareness.
- Include activities that provide **connection** and are **hopeful** in tone.
- Create a display where people can **share messages of hope** and **remember** those who have lost their lives or have been affected by family violence.
- Create a **candle display**
- Distribute **purple commemorative ribbons** to wear and show support.
- Provide **food or a BBQ**
- **Look to the future, while acknowledging that this is a very difficult issue.**



To have your event added to our website, email:
projects.hpp@gwhealth.asn.au

2025 Campaign Actions

In addition to Candlelight Vigil events, we are supporting new partners and community leaders to engage with or support combined activities, or to look at holding an event within their own organisation.

Some ideas for participation include:

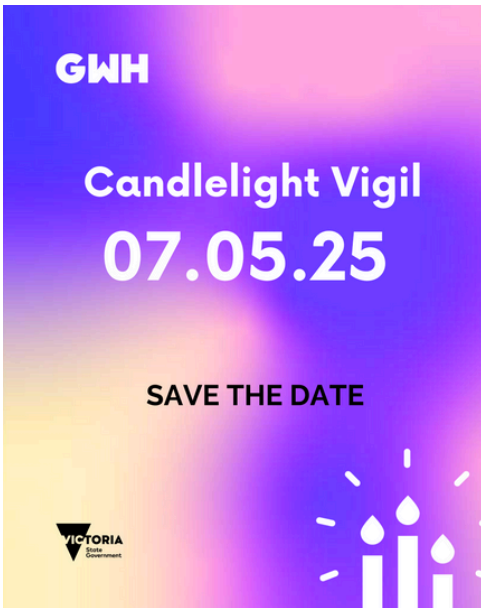
- 1 Reach out** to other organisations to discuss opportunities to collaborate in your local area. Events do not need to be large or complicated, this is about remembering victims of family violence. **GWH can help connect you with partners if assistance is needed.**
- 2 Light up your business or office space purple** - e.g. purple lights (including placing purple cellophane over lights) or placing candles in windows or in spaces where safe to do so.
- 3 Encourage your community to attend Candlelight Vigils held in your area.**
- 4 Share Candlelight Vigil social media posts** across your platforms, using the hashtags: **#CandlelightVigil #LightACandle2025**
- 5 Challenge your leaders to speak** to the ongoing high rates of family violence in Gippsland for women and children and voice their commitment to the prevention of violence.
- 6 Share local event information** with your organisation's partners to ensure broader community engagement and awareness.
- 7 Attend our Campaign and Toolkit Information session** on April 10. See more details on [Page 5](#)
- 8 Participate in the May 10 are you safe at home campaign** and learn how to help someone you know who may be experiencing abuse.
- 9 Learn** about the early signs of abuse to prevent further harm.

Digital Resources

Social Media Tiles

The provided tiles have been created as well as a save-the-date customisable tile for your event.

If using Canva, make a copy of the file and add your logo. Do not edit the master template. Click on the images to download 2025 Candlelight Vigil materials.



[Save the Date - Canva:](#)

Keep an eye out on our GWH Instagram account [@gippslandwomenshealth](#) and reshare some of the Gippsland stats we post!

Caption

On Wednesday the 7th of May, people across Australia will light a candle to remember the women and children who have died as a result of family violence. 🕯️

Across Gippsland, public spaces will light up in purple and candlelight vigils will be held. The vigils provide a safe space for people to come together to grieve, reflect and to share messages of hope as we work together to create a safe community for everyone.

A vigil will be held in (insert town and location) at (insert time), bringing the community together in remembrance and solidarity.

**[#GippslandVigil2025](#) [#CandleLightVigil2025](#)
[#Vigil2025](#) [#LightaCandle2025](#)
[#WeRememberYou](#) [#NeverForgotten](#)
[#EndViolenceAgainstWomen](#)**

Safe Steps Candlelight Vigil Resource Kit

Safe Steps has created eleven tiles to share on your social networks. You can access their vigil resource kit via their website [here.](#)

Resources



STOP Family Violence Resources

The STOP Family Violence cards and posters are a resource designed by the **Gippsland Family Violence Alliance** to educate the community on family violence and to direct them to support services. They are great resources to have at your vigil and can be ordered via the Gippsland Family Violence Alliance (GFVA) [website](#).

Resources available include:

- STOP Family Violence Cards
- STOP Family Violence Poster
- Are You concerned About Your Behaviour Poster
- Need Help Family Violence Poster aimed at Young People
- Technology Abuse Poster aimed at Young People
- Are you concerned about a child or young person in your care?



For more information on the role the GFVA and resources click [here](#).

Are you Safe at Home Day – May 10

SAFE+EQUAL

Are you Safe at Home? Is a national initiative developed by **Safe and Equal** designed to provide clear information about what to look for, what supports are available, and how to start a conversation if you're concerned that someone you know is experiencing abuse. Resources include:

- Social media tiles and messaging
- Newsletter messaging
- A video series
- Posters
- Conversation flow chart
- Website
- Free on-line short course
- Flyers
- Wallet cards



For more information visit: areyouafeathome.org.au

Safe Steps guide to early warning signs of abuse.



Abuse in relationships often begins subtly. Early warning signs, also known as 'red flags,' may seem minor at first but can escalate over time. Recognising these behaviours early can help prevent further harm. **For more information visit [Early Warning Signs | Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre](#).**

12 Signs of Coercive Control



Coercive control is a pattern of controlling and manipulative behaviours within a relationship. **Learn more about the 12 signs of coercive control: [What is coercive control? | Relationships Australia Victoria](#)**

Support Services

In an emergency, always call 000.



1800 RESPECT – National 24 hr counselling, helpline, information and support

1800 RESPECT (**1800 737 732**) (24 hours)

180orespect.org.au Web chat available (24 hours)



Safe Steps - Family Violence Response Centre

1800 015 188 (24 hours)

safesteps@safesteps.org.au Web chat available
(Mon-Fri, 9am – midnight)



The Orange Door – Local support and safety hub for adults, children, young people and families

Inner Gippsland 1800 696 784 (9am to 5pm Mon-Fri)

Outer Gippsland 1800 015 188 (9am to 5pm Mon-Fri)

orangedoor.vic.gov.au



Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault

A free and confidential service, available to anyone in Gippsland who has ever experienced, or been impacted by, sexual assault.

035134 3922 (9am to 5pm Mon-Fri) www.gcasa.org.au



No to Violence – Men's Referral Service **1300 766 491** ntv.org.au



Djirra – Aboriginal family violence prevention and legal service

Bairnsdale office services the entire Gippsland region.

Phone (**03**) **5153 2322** Freecall **1800 105 303**

Morwell office services Latrobe Valley

Phone (**03**) **5100 1700** Freecall **1800 105 303** djirra.org.au



Kids Help Line Support – for children and young people (5-25yrs)

1800 55 1800 (24 hours) kidshelpline.com.au



Rainbow Door – free specialist LGBTIQ+ helpline

phone **1800 729 367** text **0480 017 246** support@rainbowdoor.org.au

1800ELDERHelp - a free call phone number that automatically redirects callers seeking information and advice on elder abuse with the phone service in their state or territory.

Phone: **1800 353 374**

References

- 1 Australian Institute of Criminology Homicide in Australia. [\(2018-19\)](#)
- 2 Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2021-22). [Personal Safety](#).
- 3 Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2021-22). [Personal Safety](#). Australia. ABS.
- 4 Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2012). Personal Safety, Australia. ABS.; Brown, S., Gartland, D., Woolhouse, H., & Giallo, R. (2015) [Maternal Health Study: Health consequences of family violence](#) (Policy brief 2). Melbourne, VIC: Murdoch Children's Research Institute; Campo, M. (2015) [Domestic and family violence in pregnancy and early parenthood](#). Policy and Practice Paper. Australian Institute of Family Studies. Women who experience violence during pregnancy are three times more likely to experience depression. Further, almost 40% of women who experienced physical and emotional abuse in the first 12 months postpartum reported depressive symptoms in the year after childbirth, compared with 12% of women who did not experience abuse by an intimate partner. (Brown et al, 2015)
- 5 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). 2019. [Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: Continuing the national story](#). (Cat. no FDV 3). Canberra, ACT: AIHW. Young women aged 18–34 were 2.7 times as likely as those aged 35 and over to have experienced intimate partner violence in the 12 months before the 2016 Personal Safety Survey. For more see: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2017. [Personal Safety Survey](#). Australia, 2016 (ABS cat. no. 4906.0). Canberra, ACT: ABS.
- 6 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare [Family, domestic and sexual violence](#). Based on the 2021–22 Personal Safety Survey
- 7 Australian Institute for Health and Welfare (AIHW). 2023. [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework](#). Determinants of Health, 2.10 Community Safety. Where information was gathered on these assaults, 62.3% of hospitalised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women reported the perpetrator as a domestic partner, 23.5% a family member or parent. In remote areas, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women were 51 times more likely than non-Indigenous women to be hospitalised due to assault.
- 8 Braybrook, A (2015). [Family violence in Aboriginal communities](#). Domestic Violence Resource Centre.
- 9 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2021-2022. [Sexual violence](#). ABS.
- 10 Hill, A. O., Bourne, A., McNair, R., Carman, M., & Lyons, A. 2020. [Private lives 3: The health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ people in Australia](#) (ARCSHS Monograph series no. 122). Bundoora, VIC: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University. In addition, the Private Lives survey also showed that as a result of homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and intersexphobia, many participants experienced identity-based violence such as a partner or family member shaming their LGBTIQ+ identity, threatening to "out" them, or withholding gender affirming hormones or HIV medication. To learn more visit [Preventing violence against LGBTIQ+ people](#).
- 11 Centre of Research Excellence in Disability and Health (CRE-DH). 2021. [Nature and extent of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation against people with disability in Australia: Research report](#). Parkville, VIC: CRE-DH. Centre of Research Excellence in Disability and Health (CRE-DH). n.d. [Violence against young people with disability in Australia Fact Sheet 2](#). Parkville, VIC: CRE-DH. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). 2020. [People with Disability in Australia](#). Canberra, ACT: AIHW.
- 12 Data abstracted from the [Crime Statistics Agency](#) via [Gippsland Family Violence Alliance](#)

Events in Gippsland

To discover events running in Gippsland visit:
gwhealth.asn.au/dfvpm

To have your event added to this website see
contact details below.

Contact

If you have any questions in regard to this toolkit contact
Gippsland Women's Health
projects.hpp@gwhealth.asn.au