

Candlelight Vigil

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2024 TOOLKIT



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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.

Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre



Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre is Victoria's state-wide response service for women, young people and children experiencing family violence and plays a lead role in this important community event and work with partners across the country to shine a light on this national crisis. This year, Safe Steps has engaged multiple partners, from local government to private businesses, across Australia who will light up their communities purple.

See the [Resources](#) page to access Safe Steps 2024 .Candlelight Vigil campaign material, or visit www.safesteps.org.au to read more about their work.

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: Jan 1 2023 - Dec 31 2023 ¹²

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

East Gippsland - #1* for Family Violence rates in Victoria.

- Victorian Police recorded **1783** Family Violence callouts.
- **Increase** by 15.32% Family Violence call outs from the previous 12 months.

Latrobe City - #3* for Family Violence rates in Victoria.

- Victorian Police recorded **2724** Family Violence call outs.
- **Increase** of 4.9% Family Violence callouts from the previous 12 months.

Wellington - #8* for Family Violence rates in Victoria.

- Victorian Police recorded **1298** Family Violence call outs.
- Decrease of 0.34% in Family Violence callouts from the previous 12 months.

Bass Coast - #23* for Family Violence rates in Victoria.

- Victorian Police recorded **812** Family Violence call outs.
- Decrease of 3.3% in Family Violence call outs from the previous 12 months.

Baw Baw - #25* for Family Violence rates in Victoria.

- Victorian Police recorded **1123** Family Violence call outs.
- **Increase** of 21.21% Family Violence call outs from the previous 12 months.

South Gippsland - #26* for Family Violence rates in Victoria.

- Victorian Police recorded **538** Family Violence call outs.
- **Increase** of 1.89% in Family Violence call outs from the previous 12 months.

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](#).

Candlelight Vigils in Gippsland

This year, Gippsland will come together again in a united regional approach to acknowledge the annual Candlelight Vigil. We will recognise the tragic loss of lives as a result of family violence, and the ongoing risk to women and children in Gippsland where we consistently face some of the highest family violence reporting rates in the state. These statistics highlight the importance of the work we do to prevent all forms of violence against women and the lethal risk faced by victim/survivors of violence if we do not work together to change our communities.

Baw Baw Shire Council

Wednesday May 1, 6pm - 6.45pm

- 📍 West Gippsland Arts Centre, 1 Civic Place Warragul VIC 3820
- ✉️ Audrey Matthews - Audrey.Matthews@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au

Bass Coast Shire Council with Change for Sam

Wednesday May 1 - 6.30pm - 8pm

- 📍 Cowes - Jetty Triangle
- ✉️ Amy Bennett - amy.bennett@basscoast.vic.gov.au

Latrobe City Council

Wednesday May 1, 6pm - 7pm

- 📍 Gippsland Performing Arts Centre
- ✉️ Kate Cumming - kate.cumming@latrobe.vic.gov.au

Wellington Shire Council

Wednesday May 1, 5.30pm, Find out more [here](#)

- 📍 Clocktower, Raymond St, Sale
- ✉️ Lily Tatterson: Lilyt@wellington.vic.gov.au

South Gippsland Shire Council

Wednesday May 1, 6.30pm

- 📍 South Gippsland Shire Council Building Garden Space - 9 Smith St, Leongatha
- ✉️ Peter Sleeman: peter.sleeman@southgippsland.vic.gov.au

East Gippsland Shire Council

Community members are encouraged to pick up battery-powered tealight candles that will be made available through Council Service Centres and Neighbourhood Houses to light on the 1st of May. Everyone is encouraged to light the battery candle and leave it in their window and share a photo on social media with a support message or keep the experience personal to them. Check out social media @[eastgippsshire](#) for further updates on what is happening in the region

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 10 for order details.](#)
- **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.
- **Ensure the event is LGBTIQ+ friendly**
- 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.**
- **Hold your event outdoors if possible and also have a wet weather option.**
- Arrange local musicians/municipal bands/bagpipe groups to perform a reflective piece.
- **Ensure the event is easily accessible** to anyone with a disability

Actions for the 2024 Campaign

In addition to Candlelight Vigil events, we are reaching out to new partners 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 event organisers** (page 6) and 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: **#GippslandFreeFromViolence #CandlelightVigil #LightACandle2024**
- 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. For inspiration check out the recording of last year's [Safe Steps Candlelight vigil](#). **Male leaders, don't miss Boyd Unwin, father of murdered Katie Haley, as he delivers a powerful message on what all men can do to make a difference. Boyd's unforgettable speech is 27:40 minutes in to the recording.**
- 6 Share local event information** with your organisation's partners to ensure broader community engagement and awareness.
- 7 As done by GWH, liaise with or support Safe Steps by connecting your events with the nation wide approach**, or engage with Gippsland businesses to participate in the event.
- 8 Create your own Candlelight Vigil assets or materials**, ensuring you are citing the correct data and agencies..

Digital Resources

Social Media Tiles

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

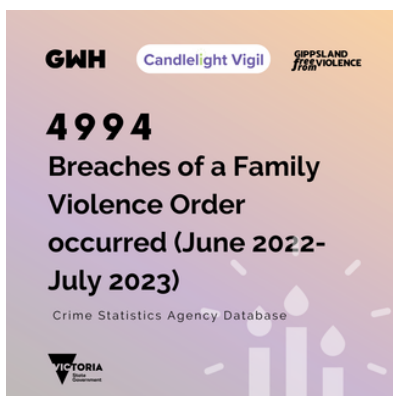
If using Canva, make a copy of the file and add your logo. Do not edit the master template. Click on the images to download 2024 Candlelight Vigil materials.



Save the Date - Canva



Seven Gippsland focused Statistics - PNG Files



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](#).

Gippsland Family Violence Alliance

A Guide to Their Resources



The Gippsland Family Violence Alliance (GFVA) advocates for integrated family violence response within our Gippsland communities and assists practitioners who work in the sector to build their knowledge, skills and practice.

Where can I Access the Gippsland Family Violence Alliance (GFVA) Website?

<https://gippslandfamilyviolencealliance.com.au/>

Who is the Gippsland Family Violence Alliance Website For?

The website features a range of information for:

- Community members
- Practitioners
- Agency leaders

How Can I Use the Website in My Work?

You can use the website to access information about family violence, working in the sector etc at any time. You can also use the website as a resource when working with others in the sector.

The way you can do this is through:

- Referencing the website in your presentations, documents etc
- Utilising QR Codes in your presentations which will direct traffic to the website

Why Should We Direct Traffic to the Website?

This website belongs to the 49 agencies across Gippsland who work to respond to those experiencing and using family violence. **This website allows us to create a shared understanding among both community, practitioners and leaders of what family violence is, allows for a shared language and a shared approach.**

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 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 GFVA and resources click [here](#).

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)

1800respect.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 – 1800 ELDERHelp is 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. 1800 353 374

GIPPSLAND *free* from VIOLENCE

Partnership to Prevent Violence Against Women

What is the Gippsland Free From Violence Partnership?

The **Gippsland Free From Violence (GFFV) Partnership** aims to prevent gender-based violence before it occurs, by creating safe, equal and respectful communities across Gippsland. GFFV is a **capacity-building partnership** supporting a collaborative and coordinated approach to gendered violence prevention both locally and region-wide.

GFFV provides a regional framework of partnership that supports all partners, funded or community, to engage in the **GFFV Strategy**.

The **GFFV Strategy** is a regional approach that unites current activities and guides future work of the Partnership member organisations and groups.

For more information:

- Visit www.gwhealth.asn.au/gippsland-free-from-violence/

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](#)

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Contact

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