

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**  
**THURSDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2015**  
**WHITE RIBBON DAY**

**Mr PEDERICK ( Hammond ) ( 12:16 ):** I rise to support the motion regarding White Ribbon Day. I note that this day will be held on 25 November 2015. In this motion we are also recognising the great work of White Ribbon Australia in raising the profile of the issue of domestic violence, noting that men play an important role in helping combat domestic violence and encouraging businesses, sporting groups and other community organisations to get involved with White Ribbon.

Domestic violence is a serious and sometimes fatal issue, which should never be taken lightly. At least one Australian woman is taken by this each week and the simple response is that this number is just too high—any life taken is one too many. The history of the White Ribbon campaign is a clear indication of how this issue can result in fatalities. On 6 December 1989, a man killed 14 of his female classmates. Further to this massacre, a minority of Toronto men came together and accepted the responsibility of speaking out against violence against women. This formed what we now know as the White Ribbon campaign, which is the world's largest and Australia's only male led campaign against violence against women.

Originating in Canada, White Ribbon has excelled in raising awareness and advocating against violence against women. This is evident as White Ribbon is now active in over 60 countries around the world. The campaign's commencement is signalled by White Ribbon Day, also known as the International Day of Elimination of Violence Against Women, which normally takes place on 25 November of every year and is followed by a 16-day activism program, ending on 10 December, which is known as Human Rights Day.

White Ribbon's campaign 'works through primary prevention initiatives involving awareness raising and education programs with youth, schools, workplaces, and across the broader community.' White Ribbon is of the belief that the safety of women needs to be made a man's issue too. Current funding arrangements for White Ribbon are made up of six categories, all with their own percentages, and they are as follows: 11 per cent being donations, 23 per cent partnerships and philanthropic organisations, 10 per cent from government, 2 per cent other, 30 per cent merchandise and 24 per cent events.

I would now like to speak about what people can do in order to assist the White Ribbon campaign, as the more who participate the more awareness violence against women will receive. Assisting the campaign in its simplest form could mean wearing a white ribbon or wristband. Another simple message could involve taking the oath, which can be done on the White Ribbon website; to date, over 173,104 people have sworn to stand up, speak out and act against violence against women.

Attracting others to the campaign is also another form of activism and awareness of White Ribbon, as is possibly even encouraging them to participate

by wearing a ribbon, wristband or even taking the oath themselves or, lastly, planning to host a White Ribbon Day event or a guest promotion. All these contributions will raise awareness for this campaign and educate participants. I think education—and I will speak more on this later—is absolutely vital in combating violence against women.

Education, learning and advocacy are just some of the key initiatives towards tackling this issue. White Ribbon is about men standing up against domestic violence. The following points, listed on the White Ribbon website, could assist anyone wishing to pursue advocacy or support against violence against women:

1. Listen to women, learn from women.
2. Learn about the problem.
3. Learn why some men are violent.
4. Wear a white ribbon or wristband.
5. Challenge sexist language and jokes that downgrade women.
6. Learn to identify and oppose sexual harassment and violence in your workplace, school and family.
7. Support local women's programs.
8. Examine how your own behaviour might contribute to the problem.
9. Work towards long-term solutions.
10. Get involved with the White Ribbon campaign's education efforts.

When researching this issue, there is some very useful information on the White Ribbon website, but one piece of information in particular stood out for me, as I think it provides people with an insight as to what to do when presented with a difficult situation, such as a victim/survivor confiding in you about an ongoing or recent domestic violence case.

I often find myself thinking, 'What would I do in such a situation?' and, more so, 'What are the right things to say and do when presented with this kind of information?' I found some ideas that can be followed when presented with a domestic violence case. They are as follows:

1. Believe and validate the person's experience.
2. Affirm that the victim/survivor is blameless.
3. Enable the victim/survivor to regain control.
4. Accept the difference of opinion, be nonjudgmental.
5. Be supportive, encouraging, open and honest.
6. Give accurate information.

I will be attending a White Ribbon event in Murray Bridge at the Mobilong Prison tomorrow as one way to show my support for White Ribbon Day and its ongoing campaign. I was also a part of the Home Safe Home campaign, when the outside of my office was decorated with white balloons and I was pictured wearing a white ribbon, advocating my promise to domestic violence awareness, and on that day and every day to come I promised to support domestic violence prevention.

I would like to acknowledge the fact that other members of this place and the other place and I are involved with the Social Development Committee inquiry into domestic violence. We are told some heart-wrenching stories and far too many statistics of domestic violence are coming through during that inquiry.

I certainly applaud some of the programs that are attempting to educate our children and our young boys, our men and our girls in relation to domestic violence. I firmly believe that we need to have these education programs in place right throughout society. I know there are some perpetrator programs run through the Offenders and Rehabilitation Service, through the prisons, and that there are some other perpetrator programs run throughout the state. But that is after the event, and I think we need to make sure that these violent events just do not happen.

I certainly commend the work of groups like Our Watch and Say No to Violence and their programs educating the community so that we can have far better outcomes than always fixing up the crisis end of happens so often with cases of domestic violence. What I have learnt throughout the committee process is that it seems like most of the money is at the crisis end, whether it is for women's shelters or assistance to women in other ways. We have to keep that money there, but we also have to focus on the prevention because, in the end, that will save having to spend so much on crisis situations.

We also need to have strong men in all communities, and during the Social Development Committee hearings that means all communities, whether they be Indigenous or others. We have had submissions from the APY lands and Alice Springs in regard to domestic violence. We have had submissions from right across the state.

It needs strong men, no matter what their background, whether they are immigrants who have come into this country recently or the founding peoples, the Aboriginal people of this state who have been here for many thousands of years. We need communities where strong men stand up and protect our women, who are so valued by us, and we must make sure that this work goes on.

In closing, the member for Ashford and I will be in Darwin next week at a commonwealth parliamentary seminar and we will be presenting on this very subject of domestic violence to commonwealth nations and states, to keep spreading the word about what needs to be done to combat this evil against women and children. I commend the motion.