

# Breaking silence on DV

## Laundry project to roll out nationally

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ONE OF the Dirty Laundry t-shirts created by an anonymous domestic violence victim is etched into the mind of project founder Niki Gill.

"It depicted a pregnant woman and read: The only hitting and kicking should come from within," she said.

"It's horrifying, but statistically that's when the chance of domestic violence increases."

The Dirty Laundry Day Project is managed by the Northern Rivers Social Development Council – a community based non-profit organisation that works to build community wellbeing and social inclusion across northern New South Wales.

The project runs alongside White Ribbon Day, a male-led campaign to end men's violence against women.

Ms Gill revealed the Lismore-born project framework was being rolled out nationally, saying it was successful because it put a private issue into the public arena.

"The t-shirts are really personal but one of the main parts of domestic violence is the isolation. If the offender can isolate the victim, they can keep them in that situation longer," she said.

This year's White Ribbon events have focused on school involvement.

On Sunday, a White Ribbon Walkathon and family fun day at Hepburn Park was hosted by the Rivers P-12 Secondary College.

Ms Gill said community involvement, particularly within schools, was important for early intervention.

"The government has



INTERVENTION: Students and principals from the Rivers P-12 Secondary College support White Ribbon. PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

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— Niki Gill

released a domestic violence framework which is around essentially changing community attitudes about how we see women and how we see domestic violence," she said.

"For some time I have been saying this isn't just one person's problem. This is about how we talk about women, how we interact at the pub. It's about everyone."

Women Up North volunteer Jemma Scott is volunteering with the Dirty

Laundry Day for her second year.

"It has been amazing, empowering and heart-warming to see a diverse spectrum of community members contribute to this project," Ms Scott said.

"Through my involvement I have been able to connect with victims of domestic and family violence and have witnessed them healing and in turn becoming further empowered after extremely traumatic life events."

A DV awareness and information stall set up last week at Lismore Shopping Square was manned by staff and volunteers from a range of local organisations working with domestic and family violence.

They were on hand to answer questions the general public had, particularly if there was someone they were concerned about.

This year's Dirty Laundry Day Project and Domestic

## Batty backs campaign

ROSIE Batty is a supporter of the Dirty Laundry Day Project.

"If we are to stop the family violence epidemic that is threatening Australia we need to have very difficult conversations. It is for that reason that I am pleased to support the Dirty Laundry Day Project. Family violence happens behind closed doors. Women and children often do not speak out due to shame and fear. The Dirty Laundry Day Project aims to change this and that is a good thing. There is a critical need for awareness raising within communities of the impacts of family violence. By shedding light on what some see as a 'dirty topic' we can open the



Rosie Batty

door to information, and to foster discussion within our communities. The difficult conversations we need to have are a first step to empowering women, giving children a voice and holding perpetrators accountable." - Rosie Batty, Australian of the Year

Violence Information Stand has been supported by the Northern Rivers Social Development Council via a NSW Health grant through the Lismore Domestic

Violence Liaison Committee and funding from Connecting Home, Family Referral Service, Ngunya Jarjurn Aboriginal Child and Family Network and OTCF.

### IN BRIEF

**Foodbank begins**  
CROSSROADS Church has started its Foodbank, which will begin on Thursday, December 3, and Friday, December 4, at Pigant Place, Goonellabah from 10am-1pm. The program is for anyone who holds a Centrelink Concession Card.

Groceries will be offered at reduced prices and fruit and vegetables donated by local supermarkets will be handed out at no cost. The church has asked those interested to register by phoning 0499 262 884 or 0432 078 185.

**Christmas dance**  
NUWULGI Hall will host a Christmas Dance tomorrow from 7.30pm. Featuring old time and new vogue dance, the event will cost \$8 for adults and \$2 for students, while children enter free. The dance will include supper and all proceeds will go to the hall. For enquiries, phone 6628 2255.

**Serpentine step**  
DUE to work commitments Shaun Murphy will be stepping down from overseeing the Serpentine Gallery. "I will still be carrying out multiple tasks but can no longer commit to overseeing and running the gallery. A special thanks to our media and business supporters, particularly the Nimbri Good Times, the Northern Rivers Echo and Summerland Credit Union," he said.

**What women want**  
WOMEN are invited to attend the free open day as part of the Go Red for Women Northern Rivers launch at 60 Uralba St, Lismore, from 10am-1pm on Tuesday, December 1. Participate in mini-workshops: Uplifting the Mind, Making Healthy Christmas Treats and What Women's Bodies Are Made Of as well as activities and connecting with other women.