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City airs DV free zone

Sophie Moeller

AIRING your dirty laundry used to be frowned upon but these days it is a sure sign that you are part of a united front against domestic violence.

Since 2009, businesses in and around Lismore have proudly strung up anti-domestic violence t-shirts, and this year more shopfronts than ever have joined forces to fight what is all too often a silent

epidemic.

Niki Gill, Manager of First Response and Youth Team, Connecting Home at Social Futures in Lismore, first had the idea to invite people who had experienced domestic or family violence to design t-shirts with messages of hope and resilience seven years ago.

Last week, volunteers at Women Up North Housing Inc (WUNH), an Aboriginal Women's Refuge Bugalma Bihyn & Women's Domestic

violence service for women seeking safety from abuse, were busy painting t-shirts to contribute to the project.

WUNH Manager, Jillian Knight-Smith said "when you experience domestic violence you lose control over your life. Dirty Laundry sends the opposite message to the community about taking the power back."

This project heralds 16 days of activism from the November 25 to December 10 declaring: "we want the

Northern Rivers to be a DV free zone".

Ms Gill said she never imagined that the Dirty Laundry Day Project would become an annual event that not only empowers survivors, but gives hope and courage to others in similar situations.

Comedian Mandy Nolan will be at the Lismore Produce Market in Magellan Street today to launch the Dirty Laundry Day Project exhibition.