**WAFV2021 - WHY WE WALK – KEY MESSAGES**

These key messages provide background information about the Walk Against Family Violence event. You can adapt and incorporate your own messages that reflect your organisation’s perspective.

**Key messages**

* Rates of family violence and violence against women are still too high – 1 in 3 Australian women have experienced violence since the age of 15. It has to stop.
* Join people across Victoria to raise awareness and walk in solidarity with victim survivors of family violence and violence against women at the 13th Annual Walk Against Family Violence on Thursday 25 November, 2021.
* Although we can’t walk together around Melbourne’s CBD like in previous years, we can still help raise awareness of and take a stand against family violence and violence against women in our communities by participating in a local walk or "walk from home" event (adhering to COVID-19 restrictions).
* You can show your support for victim-survivors and help send a message across Victoria that family violence and violence against women is never okay by organising a walk, wearing orange, and sharing a video or photo from your walk using #WAFV2021, #WhyWeWalk and #WAFV hashtags on social media.
* The Walk Against Family Violence is an annual event where community members take a collective stand against family violence by participating in one of the many walk events held across Victoria on the day.
* Held on 25 November, the walk takes place on the United Nation’s Annual International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and marks the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence – an international campaign galvanising action to end violence against women and girls around the world.
* The 2021 event is supported by Respect Victoria and organised by Safe Steps Family Violence Centre in co-ordination with City of Melbourne, Djirra, VACCA, DVVic/DVRCV, InTouch Multicultural Centre, Emerge, WDV, NTV, VSAC.
* The inaugural ‘Walk Against Violence’ was held in 2008, on the first day of the 16 Days of Activism initiative. For more than a decade this major event has taken place in Melbourne’s CBD. Each year, the walk has gained momentum, drawing larger crowds and increased interest from the community.
* The landscape for 2021 has changed significantly due to coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions relating to community gatherings. With this in mind, the aim for 2021 is to widen accessibility, encouraging Victorians to stage their own ‘neighbourhood walk’ by themselves or in small groups adhering to government-approved gathering sizes.