

## Emergency Management Supports Family Violence Prevention

The Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) has acknowledged the 16 days of Activism campaign by Victoria Against Violence at its recent quarterly meeting.

The campaign promotes different ways for community members, groups and organisations to get involved and raise awareness of family violence.

The MEMPC is required to prepare the Municipal Emergency Management Plan, which documents response and recovery operational arrangements whose membership comprises of emergency response recovery agencies, government, business and community representatives.

The committee recognised the 16 days of Activism campaign due to the influence family violence has not only on community members but emergency services.

The campaign encourages people to raise awareness by painting your hand orange and posting a photograph, decorating your workplace orange or even participating in a registered event such as a morning tea to raise awareness and begin a conversation about the issue.

South Gippsland Shire Councils Coordinator of Grants/Emergency Management Penni Ellicott said it was vital for the committee to acknowledge the impact of family violence.

*“The Addressing family violence in communities recovering from emergencies: A strategy to integrate family violence services with emergency recovery has been developed by the Department of Health and Human Services, Emergency Management Branch to help reduce the risk and impact of family violence after emergencies. Implementation of this strategy is a priority for recovery programs following emergencies, but has broader application to ongoing recovery planning.*

“Research has demonstrated an increased risk of escalating family violence after emergencies. It is well recognised that specific vulnerabilities exist for women, men and people with diverse gender identities, and that additional vulnerabilities such as age, culture, and disability, can further impact the experience of family violence and access to support services.

“It is vital that the MEMPC have an increased awareness of the risk and impact of family violence, particularly for vulnerable people, and awareness of available resources. We also must consider family violence issues in emergency recovery planning” said Ms. Ellicott.

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