



EMBARGOED UNTIL 5PM THURSDAY 23 NOVEMBER - *Photo opportunity cheque handover, 3:30pm, Thursday 23 November, NSW Parliament House*

100,000s of volunteer hours & \$400,000 in donations: proof that Australians want action on domestic violence

Australian communities understand that domestic violence impacts every single one of us and that we need to focus on prevention. That's why individuals from all walks of life are saying 'enough is enough' and joining not-for-profit organisations like Run Against Violence to raise funds to get much-needed programs to their local young people.

Today the Hon Jodie Harrison, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and Dr Hannah Tonkin, Women's Safety Commissioner for NSW, joined Kirrily Dear and Brad Smithers, Co-Founders of Run Against Violence and Leesa Waters, CEO of the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN), in support of recent fundraising efforts to bring critical education to young Australians.

Minister Harrison congratulated Run Against Violence for their successful fundraising efforts for the Love Bites Program.

"Ahead of the start of the **16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence**, it's great to see Run Against Violence investing in respectful relationship education through Love Bites.

"As a government and community, we must focus more on prevention to address domestic and family violence. This starts with equipping young people with the knowledge needed to have respectful and healthy relationships.

"Well done to Run Against Violence for raising over \$111,000 by engaging the community in running and walking, to not only raise funds but awareness about family violence prevention."

Run Against Violence Co-Founder, Kirrily Dear, said, "It is with great pride that today we hand over an unprecedented cheque of \$111,308 to the Love Bites program. That brings our four-year investment to over \$400,000, the largest ever made by an Australian non-government entity."

"These funds are entirely generated by volunteers as part of Run Against Violence's annual Virtual Team Challenge. More than 11,000 Australians have contributed by participating in the RAV Challenge, buying event merchandise, and fundraising. This enormous effort demonstrates how determined everyday Australians are to gain access to respectful relationship education within their communities. Let this signal what all Australians can achieve when we come together to create safe and respectful communities."



NAPCAN's CEO, Leesa Waters, says young people and conversations are essential ingredients for a safer Australia.

"Our Love Bites respectful relationships program gives young people the opportunity to have frank and open conversations about what healthy relationships look like, what red and green flags look like, what consent looks like, and much much more."

"Through our 4-year partnership with Run Against Violence, we've been able to dramatically expand Love Bites. Vital funds have meant that we've been able to train more facilitators, particularly in rural and remote areas, and develop culturally-informed program adaptations, trauma-informed support modules and infrastructure.

"Importantly, this is about equity and fairness; it is often the areas in most need that struggle to raise the funds to train facilitators and run these types of programs."

Women's Safety Commissioner NSW, Dr Hannah Tonkin says, "People in Australia are demanding concrete action to end intimate partner violence and they are putting their money where their mouths are and donating to prevention programs for local communities."

"During the 16 Days of Activism for Gender-Based Violence, let's raise awareness that we can prevent violence when we all work together."

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For more information, contact Helen Fogarty NAPCAN on 0410 541997 or helen.fogarty@napcan.org.au

Additional information: <https://www.runagainstvviolence.com/napcan-information>

Photo: The Hon Jodie Harrison, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault; Kirrily Dear, Co-Founder of Run Against Violence; Leesa Waters, CEO of the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN); and Dr Hannah Tonkin, Women's Safety Commissioner for NSW, celebrated community fundraising efforts to bring critical education to young Australians.