

# AWAVA

Australian Women Against Violence Alliance

MEDIA RELEASE

## Timeline rolls out for International Women's Day

To celebrate the centenary of International Women's Day on Tuesday 8 March, the Australian Women Against Violence Alliance will launch an online timeline of significant events affecting Australian women.

Women are often simply missing from historical texts and documents, says Julie Oberin of AWAVA.

"The timeline aims to redress that imbalance by providing an interactive tool for teachers and students, where they can find out information about key milestones for women and the women that shaped Australia," Ms Oberin said.

AWAVA, a national alliance representing women across Australia, works to ensure that all women and their children are able to live free from all forms of violence and abuse.

Ms Oberin says while significant advancements have been made for women over the past century, women still experience violence at unacceptable levels.

"The biggest risk for violence is just being female," she said.

"Australia has a female Governor General, Prime Minister and three female Premiers, but violence against women remains the leading contributor to death, disability and illness in women aged from 15 to 44. It's time for the violence to stop."

While carrying out research for the timeline, the team at AWAVA was reminded of what Louisa Lawson wrote in 1889 in an article on violence against women: 'Will it be believed, a hundred years hence, that such a state of things existed?'

"Sadly, we think Louisa would be horrified to find one in three Australian women experience violence at some point in their lives and is the major cause of homelessness in Australia for women and their children," Ms Oberin said.

"Worse, some groups of women in our society experience violence at even higher levels than this. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, immigrant and refugee women, women from non-English speaking backgrounds, women with disabilities, lesbian and same-sex attracted women are subjected to interpersonal and public violence at greater than average rates, and this is compounded by these women's experiences of marginalisation.

"We're trying to get the message out that it's now firmly established that gender violence is both a consequence and cause of gender inequity in all sectors of society. And one of the most effective ways to address violence against women is by promoting women's equal rights.

"It's about getting rid of gender stereotypes and discrimination, making women more visible and having equal access to society's resources, including education and employment" Ms Oberin said.

The timeline was made possible by a grant from the Australian Government Office for Women and hundreds of hours of work from a small team of dedicated women, many of whom kindly donated their time and resources to make the timeline possible, she says.

“We haven’t been able to capture everything that women have done yet, but the Timeline will be a ongoing project for AWAVA and we hope the community will embrace it and its underlying message.”

The timeline can be viewed at [www.timeline.awava.org.au](http://www.timeline.awava.org.au)

AWAVA is one of six National Women’s Alliances funded by the Australian Government through the Office for Women, Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

For more information, please contact Julie Oberin on 0419 539 346.