



YWCA
CANBERRA

MEDIA RELEASE

ACT MINISTER FOR WOMEN JOINS YWCA CANBERRA TO CALL FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE

3 December 2015: YWCA Canberra's Executive Director Frances Crimmins and ACT Minister for Women Yvette Berry have called on Canberra business owners to support women fleeing domestic violence.

YWCA Canberra is committed to a world free from violence against women. It is marking the global campaign, 16 Days of Activism to End Gender-Based Violence, by hosting a series of actions and events.

In Australia today, 1 in 3 women will experience violence in some form. This year to date, 78 women have been killed as a result of violence in our community.

Ms Crimmins said domestic violence leave was a practical and meaningful way for businesses to support employees experiencing violence.

"A key support for women escaping domestic violence is being able to access leave from work, to provide time and financial support when seeking legal advice or support services, arranging alternate accommodation, appearing in court, and supporting their children," Ms Crimmins said.

"Being secure in their income and working arrangements is a critical aspect of women feeling safe and able to continue rebuilding their lives after domestic violence."

The Australian Labor Party has recently released a policy on domestic violence leave, which would see five days of leave incorporated into the National Employment Standards, should they be successful in the upcoming Federal election.

Minister Berry said businesses could actively demonstrate their commitment by introducing domestic leave now.

"The ACT Government is committed to supporting people experiencing violence and this year introduced domestic violence leave for ACT Government employees."

"This is an opportunity for Canberra business owners to lead change in ending domestic violence.

"Choosing to introduce this leave before it becomes compulsory demonstrates a commitment to gender equality, and to the health and well-being of workers that I know many Canberra businesses share," Minister Berry said.

YWCA Canberra is calling on business owners to introduce a provision of five days of domestic violence leave.

“This will not only ensure that your employees are able to access support when they most need it, but will also increase productivity and decrease the amount of unplanned leave taken,” Ms Crimmins added.

“Together, we can end violence against women, and ensure women are able to access the support they need.”

- ENDS -

Frances Crimmins is available for interview.

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About YWCA Canberra: YWCA Canberra is a feminist, not-for-profit community organisation that has been providing community services and representing women’s issues in the Canberra community since its establishment in 1929. YWCA Canberra employs more than 300 staff across the ACT, and delivers 30 quality programs in children’s services, community development, housing, youth services, women’s leadership, advocacy, and training. Represented in 122 countries, the YWCA has a global reach of 25 million women and girls. As part of this international movement, YWCA Canberra works for a world where reconciliation, justice, peace, health, human dignity, freedom and care for the environment are promoted and sustained through women’s leadership. For more information visit: www.ywca-canberra.org.au

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