

# Become an active Bystander!

By Val France

FOLLOWING a successful workshop last December, the Speak Up Now – Stop Domestic Violence group is offering community members and organisations another opportunity to gain active bystander awareness training at the Maleny Neighbourhood Centre on Tuesday, March 5 (8.45am–1 pm).

Speak Up Now, a Hinterland-based group coordinated by Rotary, Zonta, Maleny Neighbourhood Centre, and community members, was formed to address the escalating challenge of domestic and family violence by bringing information, resources, and training to our community.

Latest research indicates the importance of people (bystanders) speaking up where there is evidence of domestic and family violence and often being able to help diffuse a situation from escalating, potentially saving lives and helping to eradicate this type of violence from their communities.

Exposure to all kinds of domestic abuse, from physical violence to more subtle forms such as coercive control, increases the chances of our children being unable to form safe and violence-free relationships as adults.

According to a Speak Up Now spokesperson, this workshop will enable participants to find out how

to respond to domestic and family violence on an individual and community level and within the limits of their safety.

“You will discuss what



**Stop Domestic and Family Violence**

gender violence in all its forms looks like in your community and among your friends, what is the role of an active bystander, why we should act, and how to go about it.”

“It is especially aimed at those companies, firms, retail establishments,

schools, or any organizations that have direct contact with staff or the public,” she said.

On average, at least one woman a week is killed by a current or former partner in Australia, and family violence contributes to more death, disability, and illness in women aged 15 to 44 than any other preventable risk factor.

Lifeline training has set up these workshops because “it is a shared community issue, a shared responsibility, and requires a whole of community action”.

Speak Up Now can offer this free Lifeline accredited course as an outcome of a successful grant application from the

Sunshine Coast Regional Council. Participants will receive a Certificate of Attendance and learning materials. Morning tea will be included.

There are only 25 places available, and the deadline for applications from anyone wishing to attend is Monday, February 19th.

“The workshop we held in December last year was oversubscribed, so we recommend an early reply, together with your first and last name, phone number, and email address,” said Speak Up Now. Further information or expressions of interest for registration are available by contacting Val at [speakupnowstopdomesticviolence@gmail.com](mailto:speakupnowstopdomesticviolence@gmail.com).