

Media Release



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For immediate release

SAMARITANS LAUNCHES OI APP

This week, Samaritans will launch the 'Oi' mobile App, a practical digital resource developed for young people to be a voice against abuse, identify abuse when it happens and know where to go to seek help.

"Samaritans were proud to receive one of the Optus Future Makers Grants in 2016, which has now seen the development of a great resource for young people experiencing or witnessing relationship abuse or family violence," Penny Harnett, Samaritans Communications Officer said.

The App is the product of a successful collaboration between Samaritans, Optus and Newcastle-based creative agency, Headjam, which has seen the development of a product that provides self-help information for young people about domestic violence.

"We worked closely with our youth services teams to gain insights into the kinds of questions young people ask, the support services available and their interactions with digital media, such as Apps," Miss Harnett said.

"We are very excited to finally launch Oi, which sees the project become a reality and empowers young people to recognise, stand up and speak out against domestic and family violence," Miss Harnett said.

The Oi App has been developed for iOS and Android platforms and includes an interactive quiz, an option to pledge to never commit or remain silent about abuse and share across social media, frequently asked questions about abuse and domestic violence, as well as a library of support services available for those who may be at risk, or who need someone to talk to.

Samaritans work in the community extends from disability services and support for the homeless to services for children, youth and people experiencing domestic violence, offering a number of confidential services that support women and children escaping domestic violence.

"Approximately 70 per cent of the young people that Samaritans works with have experienced some sort of domestic or family violence. This number is just too high and we have found that some young people can't identify what abuse is, let alone knowing how to report it. We hope that this App provides some confidence to young people to seek help when they need to by driving conversation and awareness around the issue.

"We identified a 'self-help' gap in the market for young people, both male and female to identify if they or someone they know is in an abusive relationship. Technology is key to engaging young people and our hope is that the Oi App project makes a difference by encouraging young people to be a voice against abuse," Miss Harnett said.

The Oi App is available for download now from the App store and on GooglePlay. Please go to www.oiapp.org.au for more information.

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Media Contact: Media are encouraged to contact Laura Dawson and Samaritans Communications team on 4960 7157 or 0438 475 772 to arrange an interview or photograph opportunity with Samaritans staff. Media are invited to the media launch at 10am on Friday 7th July at Samaritans Head Office, 36 Warabrook Boulevard, Warabrook.