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Leagues unite against family violence

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THE Horsham District and Wimmera football netball leagues are joining forces with the Wimmera Mallee Umpires Association to raise awareness of family violence, hosting the Are You Safe at Home? Round this Saturday May 9.

The initiative forms part of the Are You Safe at Home? campaign, a Victorian program aimed at increasing awareness of family violence and connecting people with support services for those experiencing harm or concerned about others.

Wimmera league chair Bart Turgoose said the round highlighted the role community sport could play in addressing family violence. "As a league, we recognise that our influence

extends well beyond the scoreboard," Turgoose said.

"Community sport has the power to shape culture: to model respect, call out harmful behaviours and create environments where everyone feels safe and valued.

"By encouraging people to ask a simple question like 'Are you safe at home?', we're helping to open the door to conversations that can make a real difference in someone's life."

Players, coaches and umpires across the leagues will show their support on match day by wearing armbands signalling a united commitment to creating safer communities.

Women's Health Grampians chief executive Jennie Courtney

credited the leagues for their support, noting the campaign's importance in the local context.

"It's great to see such strong leadership from the leagues in this space," Courtney said.

"We know it takes a community to prevent violence against women and girls and we also know that the sporting community in the Wimmera is up for the challenge.

"Asking someone whether they feel safe at home is a small but powerful action anyone can take, and one that could save a life."

More information about the campaign and available support services is at www.areyousafeathome.org.au



Horsham Saints' Jorja Clode, Wimmera Mallee umpire Chloe Houghton and Taylors Lake's Ryan Gebert wear armbands ahead of this Saturday's Are You Safe at Home? Round to raise awareness of family violence.

Photo: MACKENZIE BOOK