

## Case Study

### This is NOT a healthy relationship poster series

Mitchell Shire Council and the SEED Project — a women's economic security and financial wellbeing initiative in Seymour — partnered with women with lived experience of family violence to develop the *'This is NOT a Healthy Relationship'* poster series, raising awareness of the non-physical forms of family violence.

In August 2024, The SEED Project hosted a Family Violence Round Table, bringing together women with lived experience, local service providers and local MP Annabelle Cleeland to have open, honest conversations about what's working, what's not, and to provide clarity around real-life scenarios and system gaps. During the discussion, one SEED Member shared that she had not recognised the early warning signs of family violence and expressed how valuable it would have been to see something in the community that named and illustrated these red flags. The Gender Equality Officer at Mitchell Shire Council offered to support the development of awareness materials through the Free from Violence Local Government Grant 2022-2025 funding.

As part of a broader local government initiative to reduce the stigma around family violence, the posters centered lived experience as the driving voice, ensuring messages were authentic, empowering and inclusive. The two SEED Members, who originally connected through The SEED Project's women's wellbeing group, brought their unique stories and strengths to the design table. Despite their different backgrounds, they shared a common goal: to create something meaningful that would help others feel seen, heard and supported. Over several months, the team worked together to create the "This is NOT a Healthy Relationship" poster series. Drawing from their lived experiences, the women ensured the focus was not solely on fear, but also on strength, safety and choice. Inclusive imagery was a priority, representing people of all ages, backgrounds and relationship types.

Three unique posters were distributed to high-traffic community locations — including libraries, maternal and child health centres, medical services, sporting changerooms and neighbourhood houses. As one SEED Member reflected, "If even one woman sees this and realises she deserves better—than it was all worth it." This project highlights the transformative power of lived experience in shaping effective, community-based messaging. By empowering women to lead the conversation, this campaign not only raised awareness, but also created space for connection, understanding and healing within the wider community.

