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IPSWICH ORGANISATIONS AWARDED FOR OUTSTANDING WORK IN PREVENTING DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

The Ipswich Jets Rugby League Football Club and the Ipswich Domestic and Family Violence Community Awareness Group were today honoured for their commitment to preventing domestic and family violence and supporting those affected by it, Member for Ipswich Rachel Nolan said.

The organisations were presented with a Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Award by Minister for Communities Warren Pitt at a special function on the Gold Coast.

“The two Ipswich organisations won the partnerships category for its *There is No Excuse for Abuse* initiative as part of Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Week 2003,” Ms Nolan said.

“Last year during Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Week, the Ipswich Jets players manned a stall at the Ipswich Regional Show targeting young people, especially young men, with the message, ‘Expect Respect: there is no excuse for abuse’.

“Organised by the club and the awareness group, young people were given an opportunity to interact with players and write messages about respectful relationships and zero tolerance for abuse.

“This partnership gave young men role models for taking a stand against abuse...an example to other football clubs of how they too can make a stand against violence,” Ms Nolan said.

Mr Pitt said the awards were one of the prominent activities held during Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month 2004, an initiative of the Department of Communities in partnership with the Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Council, and supported by Brisbane City Council and Channel 7.

“The awards encourage individuals, groups and organisations to develop new and innovative ways of working towards preventing domestic and family violence,” Mr Pitt said.

“I congratulate all of the recipients, not only because of the excellent quality of the work they have undertaken, but also because of the dedication and commitment they show to people affected by domestic and family violence,” he said.

Other award winners were:

- Individual – Heather Oakes for her work with the Sandgate and Bracken Ridge Action Group (SANDBAG) raising community awareness of domestic violence
- School-based prevention project – Maroochydore State School for *A Workplace Response*

- Community organisation – Kowanyama Justice Group Inc for *Mediating in Community*
- Government – Women’s Legal Aid - Legal Aid Queensland for *Diversity Counts - Legal Information for Women Project*

Mr Pitt said the awards showed the significant and innovative work being done to reduce the occurrence of domestic and family violence, and also highlighted the need for greater community involvement in its prevention.

“Addressing domestic and family violence is not just a State Government responsibility – it is also a community responsibility,” he said.

The awards are presented to individuals and organisations that have undertaken outstanding initiatives in the area of domestic and family violence prevention in the preceding year.

“This year we received a large number of nominations and the standard was extremely high. We encourage more organisations to become involved in domestic and family violence prevention initiatives and hope to receive even more nominations next year,” Mr Pitt said.