CHILDREN ARE THE SILENT VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Minister for Women Pru Goward encouraged members of the community to speak out about violence against women on White Ribbon Day.

Ms Goward urged women experiencing domestic and family violence to consider the impact on themselves and their children and to seek help.

“Domestic and family violence was the number one issue reported to the NSW Child Protection Helpline for children at risk of significant harm in 2010, with an average of 82 reports made every day,” Ms Goward said.

“Today I am asking the community to consider the emotional and psychological impact that domestic and family violence has on the health and wellbeing of not only women, but their children as well.

“Domestic and family violence can affect children for the rest of their lives. This can lead to difficulties in dealing with stress later in life, trouble interacting with others and forming attachments, as well as increased aggression and distress when dealing with peers.

“The Government’s NSW 2021 plan includes actions to reduce domestic and family violence against women and their children throughout the state.

“The Staying Home Leaving Violence program is being expanded to an additional five sites with a further $2.5 million. This will enable women and their children to remain in their homes and to support them make their home environments safe.

Ms Goward said many government and non-government agencies share responsibility for responding to domestic and family violence.

“That is why we are comprehensively reviewing the current response framework which will be finalised in 2012, providing a clear direction for improving services.

Ms Goward has also encouraged men to become White Ribbon Ambassadors and take the oath ‘to never commit, excuse or remain silent about violence against women’ at www.myoath.com.au

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Further information - Domestic violence

- Domestic and family violence was the number one issue reported to the Child Protection Helpline for children at risk of significant harm in 2010, with over 30,000 reports received.

- Anyone looking for help or information on domestic violence can ring the NSW Domestic Violence Helpline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on 1800 656 463.

- The NSW Domestic Violence Line received 22,073 calls in 2010–11. The majority of these involved verbal, physical and psychological violence, and 7,666 calls involved 15,643 children.

- Anyone looking for help or information on domestic and family violence should visit www.domesticviolence.nsw.gov.au which contains the latest information, resources, referrals and contacts and is not only helpful for people directly affected by domestic violence, but for friends, neighbours and family members.