



MEDIA RELEASE

25 November 2005

MR 006 / 05

**RELATIONSHIPS AUSTRALIA
SUPPORTS**

WHITE RIBBON DAY AND ITS ANTI-VIOLENCE MESSAGE

November 25 is International Day for the Elimination of Violence or White Ribbon Day. Relationships Australia is proud to support White Ribbon Day and its message that the community, including men in particular, can take action to reduce the incidence of domestic and family violence.

Domestic and family violence continues to leave deep scars in Australian families. According to Access Economics, there were an estimated 408,100 victims of domestic violence in Australia in 2002-03 of whom 87% were women.

Violence is a personal choice. More and more men are promoting the message that they are willing to take responsibility for their actions and will no longer tolerate the perpetration of violence on women and children by themselves or by others.

According to Relationships Australia National Director Mary Mertin-Ryan: "White Ribbon Day is an important way for Australians to get involved and deliver a personal message that they want to promote healthy relationships and healthy families in which violence has no part."

"Relationships Australia's vision is one of positive and respectful relationships and the message promoted by White Ribbon Day ties in perfectly with that vision" said Ms Mertin-Ryan. "Where violence or the threat of it exists in a relationship, there is a vicious cycle of power and control that eats away at self-esteem and quality of life with incalculable negative effects on family wellbeing."

Ms Mertin-Ryan added: "The fact that, through this campaign, community leaders in various fields are willing take a stand and encourage others to do the same sends a tremendously powerful message that violence is not acceptable."

Relationships Australia wholeheartedly encourages men and women to participate by wearing a white ribbon this Friday.

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For further information contact Mary Mertin-Ryan, National Director, Relationships Australia on (02) 6285 4466 (telephone) or 0410 623 030 (mobile) or visit www.relationships.com.au