



1 April 2009

MEDIA RELEASE

Young people hold the key to ending violence

To coincide with Youth Week, the White Ribbon Foundation is calling on young men to play a positive role in changing attitudes to violence against women by becoming White Ribbon Ambassadors.

The recent coverage of celebrity couple Rihanna and Chris Brown has brought domestic violence to the forefront of young people's minds and is a shocking reminder of the widespread nature of the problem. The public response to this story has also demonstrated how young people still tolerate violence in their relationships, and even place blame on the victim.

A US poll showed nearly half of the respondents aged between 12-19 thought that Rihanna was 'responsible' for the incident¹. Research closer to home has shown that 29% of young people believe that 'most physical violence occurs in dating because a partner provoked it'².

White Ribbon says it is important for young people, particularly young men to be conscious of their own attitudes and of those around them, and to be aware of positive steps they can take in challenging violence supportive attitudes and behaviours.

Asher Preston, White Ribbon Youth Ambassador says, "I am pleased to be involved with the White Ribbon mission to eliminate violence against women. I was excited by the chance to become a White Ribbon Ambassador, and since being involved, I have really enjoyed engaging with the community and my friends to discuss the impact that violence towards women has on our society and how we can prevent it."

White Ribbon Ambassadors play a key role in reaching out to young people about violence. They are highly respected men from a wide range of sectors who speak out about violence against women and the attitudes that allow it to continue. In 2008 the campaign introduced Youth Ambassadors to the programme with overwhelming success.

"We are delighted to be supporting such a positive campaign, as it is through engaging young people that we can begin to create an inter-generational change. Hopefully we can create a future where violence is never tolerated and respect is always given and expected in relationships," said Jethro Lyons from General Pants, who are supporting White Ribbon through the sale of white scarves, in a joint promotion with Marie Claire this month.

White Ribbon is looking for Youth Ambassadors in each state to participate in the development of youth engagement activities for the White Ribbon Campaign. White Ribbon will also be training selected Ambassadors to take the anti-violence message into more schools, universities and youth networks. You can nominate yourself or someone you know to become a White Ribbon Youth Ambassador by visiting www.whiteribbonday.org.au.

You can support the campaign by visiting your local General Pants store. From today (1 April) General Pants stores will be selling a limited-edition white scarf for \$29.95 and all proceeds from the sale of the scarves will go to the White Ribbon Foundation.

ENDS

¹ 2009 Boston Public Health Commission Survey (see notes)

² 2001 National Crime Prevention Survey (see notes)

REFERENCE NOTES:

- 2009 Boston Public Health Commission Survey of 200 people aged 12-19 between Feb 13 and 20:
http://www.bphc.org/news/press_release_content.asp?id=473
- 2001 National Crime Prevention Survey (Australia):
<http://www.crimeprevention.gov.au/agd/www/Ncphome.nsf/Page/6CEF75E88CoC5564CA256B43000E51A7?OpenDocument>
- It is estimated that one in four young people between 12-20 witness violence against their mother and this can affect their education, employment and their attitudes to violence in their adult lives. (*An Assault on Our Future*, White Ribbon Foundation report, pg. 2:
<http://www.whiteribbonday.org.au/media/documents/AssaultonourFutureFinal.pdf>

For more information about White Ribbon visit: www.whiteribbonday.org.au or to arrange an interview contact:

<p>Katrina Brooks Marketing Manager White Ribbon Campaign Ph: 02 9453 1811 / 0414 988 384 Email: katrina@whiteribbonday.org.au</p>	<p>Lukas Picton / Karen Wells Text 100 Public Relations Ph: 02 9956 5733 Email: karen.wells@text100.com.au Email: lukas.picton@text100.com.au</p>
---	--