

Taking action against violence

- **Amnesty International Australia** have researched the effects of Domestic Violence in our society and the cost of subsequent health care. The Government research from 1993 exceeded *\$400 million*. In 02/03 this estimate had risen to *\$8.1 million*.
- If we focus on family violence and the impact that it has on children in terms of poor school performance, anxiety disorders and bullying this is where we see that the violence needs to be addressed.
- Australian states and territories don't have an across the board way of dealing with the impact on families. Legislation varies and criminal sentences vary and that can be where the problem lies.

United Nations Secretary-General, *Kofi Annan* stated in 2005 that " Governments should accelerate their efforts towards the implementation of comprehensive strategies against violence, adequately funded and with a clear time frame. " It is an important Human Rights issue and we need to make the necessary changes now.

Ways we can take action to prevent violence:

- Learn about the problem.
- Challenge sexist jokes and behaviour.
- Support local women's programs.
- Help work towards long term solutions.
- Examine how your own behaviour may contribute to the problem.
- Learn how to identify and oppose sexual harassment in your workplace, school and family.
- Listen to women.
- Join the Women's Cottage.
- Get involved in Reclaim the Night, a political march against sexual assault.
- Wear a white ribbon on White Ribbon Day.
- Support local men's programs.

Violence is an important global issue which impacts on the lives of human beings all around the world, yet we can start to address violence on a local level in our community. By taking action in our own lives, we are taking a stand and helping prevent violence against women and children.



