

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Government applauded for prompt response to *Time for Action* report on family violence**

The Australian Psychological Society (APS) applauds the prompt response taken by the Federal Government to action many of the recommendations from the *Time for Action* report produced by the National Council to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children.

Nearly one in three Australian women experience physical violence and almost one in five women experience sexual violence over their lifetime. "Psychologists see the distressing effects of such abuse in the high prevalence of health problems in women and children exposed to violence at the hands of someone they trusted," says Professor Bob Montgomery, President of the Australian Psychological Society.

"We agree that the levels of family violence in Australia are cause for collective shame. The commitment of funds to support women and children demonstrates that the Government is prepared to take these issues seriously."

"A systems-wide approach addressing the ways our culture supports violence against women and their children is needed to ensure that legal, medical and social responses serve to expand the options available to women experiencing violence, and to deter the use of controlling behaviours in intimate relationships. Research clearly indicates that relationships based on power and control are central to abuse of women and children. Raising the status of women is essential," says Professor Montgomery.

The APS welcomes the proposed changes to nationalise intervention orders, and also supports the prevention strategies taken up by the government to educate young people about respecting the rights of others.

"This is all consonant with the announcement this week by Jenny Macklin, Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, of government support for a wide-ranging review and restructure of child protection in Australia, in which the APS will participate," adds the APS President.

Professor Montgomery is also a UNIFEM Ambassador for the White Ribbon Day stand by men against violence against women and children.

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*The APS is the largest professional association for psychologists in Australia, representing more than 17,500 members. The APS is committed to advancing psychology as a discipline and profession. It spreads the message that psychologists make a difference to peoples' lives, through improving psychological knowledge and community wellbeing.*

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