



YWCA CANBERRA

MEDIA RELEASE

RELATIONSHIP THINGS IS A PARTNER IN PREVENTION

11 December 2014: Last night YWCA Canberra's *Relationship Things* program received a prestigious Partners In Prevention Community Award by the ACT Office for Women.

The annual Partners in Prevention Awards recognise best practice strategies and activities that create awareness of gendered violence in order to prevent violence and sexual assault against women and children in the ACT.

Relationship Things is an evidence-based community program that empowers young people to develop and maintain safe and respectful relationships.

The program is part of YWCA Canberra's work in the primary prevention of violence against women and children, including the *Respect, Communicate, Choose* program.

Relationship Things challenges stereotypes that support gender inequality, which leads to violence against women.

YWCA Canberra Executive Director Frances Crimmins said the *Relationship Things* program was unique, as it goes beyond the sex education young people receive at high school to explore healthy relationships.

"As a strengths-based resource, *Relationship Things* focuses on what makes a good relationship, with content covering topics such as communication, negotiating sexual relationships, respecting other's wishes and choices, resolving conflict, and recognising when a relationship is not healthy," Ms Crimmins said.

"It encourages young people to strive for the best kind of relationship, not just minimise the risk of a bad relationship."

In January, YWCA Canberra commissioned a review of the resource, leading to significant updates and additions.

The redeveloped resource, including a section on online communication, was launched in October this year and is now available to secondary schools Australia-wide.

Recent additions to *Relationship Things* include content covering:

- Culture - to support young people to identify and explore their culture and how this affects their attitudes, behaviours and relationships
- Diversity - which explores respect for diversity and difference. It aims to encourage young people to consider issues around discrimination based on sex, race, sexuality and ability
- Helping to stop violence - that encourages bystanders to say something when they witness sexism, homophobia and racism
- Social media and online communication - focusing on equipping young people with the skills to be respectful and safe online. It also shows the legal and social ramifications of online behaviour.

This week YWCA Canberra was also successful in securing an ACT Office of Women grant of \$10,000 to fund the creation of a *Relationship Things* website, which is now in development.

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Frances Crimmins is available for interview.

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About YWCA Canberra: YWCA Canberra is a feminist, not-for-profit community organisation that has been providing community services and representing women's issues in the Canberra community since its establishment in 1929. YWCA Canberra employs more than 350 staff across the ACT, and delivers 30 quality programs in children's services, community development, housing, youth services, women's leadership, advocacy, and training. Represented in 122 countries, the YWCA has a global reach of 25 million women and girls. As part of this international movement, YWCA Canberra works for a world where reconciliation, justice, peace, health, human dignity, freedom and care for the environment are promoted and sustained through women's leadership. For more information visit:

www.ywca-canberra.org.au

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