

#TERROR AT HOME END DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Petition puts it back on perpetrator of violence

Conflict rated key in fight to halt DV

By ALEX NOLAN

A FATHER'S love was the catalyst that led Glass House MP Andrew Powell to call for changes to Queensland's Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act.

A petition signed by more than 200 people was tabled in State Parliament last week, calling for domestic violence orders to remain in force for either the whole of the natural life of the respondent, or until the order is ended by the court upon application.

It also suggests applications to end domestic violence orders should not be made sooner than five years

after the date on which the order first took effect.

As the law stands in Queensland, protection orders can have a duration of two years or less.

There are provisions for longer periods at the discretion of the court, but two years is the period most applied.

The move comes after Mr Powell made a speech in November highlighting one of his constituents' heartache in watching his daughter constantly apply for new protection orders against a violent ex-partner.

"I believe it only fair and reasonable that the onus

should be placed on the respondent to have a protection order lifted by application to the court rather than the aggrieved victim to bear the considerable cost, both financial and psychological, of having to apply time and time again for protection," the letter to Mr Powell read.

The Maleny man told the Daily his daughter had been controlled by her ex-partner for a number of years.

It wasn't until she was physically assaulted that help was sought, and the first protection order was placed against him.

Battling tears, the emotional father said after each

protection order ran its course, the man would return to cause more grief.

"He's not going to leave her alone, he uses the courts to get at her," the father said.

"The whole thing is ridiculous. The problem is every time the protection order runs out, she has to organise a temporary one."

The Opposition MP said he felt it was right to put the onus back on the perpetrator of domestic violence and offer greater protection for victims and hoped the suggestion would receive a fair hearing in State Parliament.

"There's been significant bi-partisan support on all is-



No one should live like this. Laws should be made to protect the innocent.

Father of victim

sues relating to domestic violence at the moment," he said.

"We're not playing politics on this.

"We're simply trying to ensure this is brought into the public eye."

AN ACADEMIC from the University of the Sunshine Coast will highlight the benefits of "constructive conflict" at a major domestic violence forum at the university on Wednesday.

USC communications lecturer Gregory Nash will be among the speakers at the 2015 Sunshine Coast Domestic and Family Violence Symposium.

Dr Nash, who will give a presentation titled "Communicating your way to a better relationship", said many people misunderstood the role of conflict within a partnership.

"Constructive conflict is a part of every good relationship, in fact, it's what allows you to grow," he said.

"A healthy relationship isn't about avoiding conflict but understanding how to deal with it. By using good communication tools you can change the dynamic of a conversation and avoid turning it into an aggressive, chaotic situation.

"In the context of domestic violence, teaching people to communicate effectively with their partner is an essential prevention strategy."

As well as guest speakers, the symposium will include working-group discussions to help create a best-practice action plan to tackle domestic violence on the Sunshine Coast.

Dr Nash, who is an ambassador for the White Ribbon campaign to end violence against women, said his personal experiences had underscored to him the need for a strong response on domestic and family violence.

"When I was 18 years old I witnessed a serious case of domestic violence that I couldn't do anything about and it's something I have always regretted," he said.

"Now, as a White Ribbon ambassador I use whatever opportunity I can to speak out about family violence and the symposium is a key chance to do that."

Rosie Batty to speak at Coast DV forum

AUSTRALIAN of the Year Rosie Batty will be the keynote speaker at a major domestic violence forum at the University of the Sunshine Coast this week.

The family violence awareness campaigner will discuss the need for increased education on safe and healthy relationships at the Sunshine Coast Domestic and Family Violence Symposium on Wednesday.

The Make It Stop conference, jointly organised by USC and child welfare group SunnyKids, will include representatives from government, community groups and the public at USC's Innovation Centre auditorium from 10am-4pm.

Ms Batty was named the 2015 Australian of the Year for her tireless advocacy for family violence prevention after her nine-year-old son Luke was killed by his father in 2014.

In a recent speech, Ms Batty said many Aus-

tralian were unaware of the prevalence of family violence and uncomfortable conversations needed to take place to bring the issue out from the shadows.

Her keynote address will open the conference, which will also feature presentations from USC Psychology, Communication, Law and Social Work academics, as well as delegates from local legal and welfare organisations.

The afternoon session will include a work-group discussion on the community's desired responses to various aspects of domestic violence to help create a best-practice response.

The day will culminate in an informal handover of actionable ideas created at the symposium to local and state government representatives.

Symposium facilitator and USC senior lecturer in social work, Dr Dyann Ross said the event would enable



IMPORTANT MESSAGE: Rosie Batty will speak at a major domestic violence forum at the University of the Sunshine Coast this week. PHOTO: WARREN LYNAM

a much-needed public discussion about domestic violence.

"While domestic violence is personally experienced,

it's not a private, personal matter," she said. "It's a public matter, because the scale is so extreme that it is affecting the substance of

communities. We want to see different groups that have different perspectives coming together and comparing notes."

Jet ski rider rescued in rough conditions

THE combination of large swell and an outgoing tide at Happy Valley resulted in a jet skier getting into difficulty yesterday morning.

Lifesavers from the Ithaca - Caloundra City Life Saving Club received reports of a woman in her mid-40s being thrown from her jet ski before it capsized at the northern end of Happy Valley.

Patrol captain Paul Barry said they found the lady near the rocks, where she was being helped by surfers.

"She was okay, but a bit shaken up," he said.

"Despite having a jet ski

full of water, she wobbled over to Bribie Island to join the rest of her party."

Ambulance officers arrived on the scene following calls from the public who saw the lady fall from the jet ski, but she refused treatment.

Mr Barry said rough conditions caused the woman's accident.

"On an outgoing tide, the Caloundra bar has very big waves and they push those breakers out the back to create two-metre high curling waves," he said.

"The morning's conditions were actually quite rough."



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