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White Ribbon program a finalist in national community sector awards

A school-based program addressing violence towards women has been named one of five finalists in the Organisation category of the 2013 HESTA Community Sector Awards.

White Ribbon Australia's Breaking the Silence in Schools Program was recognised as a finalist for promoting respectful relationships and the prevention of violence against women amongst primary and secondary school students.

The Organisation Award category recognises organisations that have made outstanding contributions to social justice in Australia, through the development of an innovative program, project or specific service.

White Ribbon Australia's CEO, Libby Davies, said it was important to work closely with schools, universities, workplaces and the wider community to prevent violence against women.

"In Australia, one in three women report having experienced physical or sexual violence since the age of 15, while domestic violence contributes more to the poor health, disability and death of Australian women under age 45 than any other risk factor, including obesity and smoking," she said.

"The Breaking the Silence in Schools Program works with school leadership to develop and drive attitudinal and behavioural change. The Program is responsive to the school and is tailored to the culture of the school and the needs of students, staff and the broader school community."

"The program seeks to address the serious, prevalent yet preventable problem of violence against women and engages the school and the community as agents of change to break the silence around violence against women and girls."

The judges commended White Ribbon Australia for building awareness of violence against women among young people in a sensitive and proactive way.

Ms Davies and the other finalists will be flown to Adelaide to attend an awards dinner, where the winners will be announced during the Australian Council of Social Service National Conference on Monday, 25 March 2013.

A \$30,000 prize pool will be shared among the winners, courtesy of long-term HESTA awards sponsor, ME Bank. The Organisation and Social Impact Award winners will each receive a \$10,000 development grant. The Unsung Hero Award winner will receive a \$5,000 ME Bank *EveryDay* Transaction Account and a \$5,000 education grant.

HESTA is the leading super fund for health and community services, with more than 750,000 members and \$21 billion in assets. More people in health and community services choose HESTA for their super.

Visit hestaawards.com.au for tickets for the awards dinner or to learn more about the awards.

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