



THE FUTURE of our children

IS IN OUR HANDS

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) recently launched the Project Safehands pilot program in Ipswich.

Safehands joins the QPS, Department of Child Safety, Department of Communities and Queensland Health with community partners the Brisbane Broncos and Ipswich City Council with one aim – to raise awareness of the abuse of children aged 0-4 years.

Detective Senior Sergeant Charysse Pond, Ipswich SCAN Coordinator became alarmed at the escalating incidents of serious assaults on young children and knew that something had to be done.

A six-month education campaign was designed to increase public awareness regarding the issue of abuse and its ramifications.

“We hope to see less of battered and bruised children – and save their lives,” Detective Senior Sergeant Pond said.

The future of our children is in our hands is the main message to encourage everyone to take responsibility for the safety of children.

A range of products were created to promote the key messages, including a poster campaign, information brochure and a kit provided to new mothers with the assistance of Ipswich General Hospital.

Community members are directed to the Safehands support line 1800 children (1800 2445 3736) and website to find helpful information and resources.

The resources available are not only targeted at parents and carers but also those people who believe they have witnessed or suspect abuse and don't know what to do to help.

An important element of the pilot is to change the perception of rough handling of children to one of being completely unacceptable.

The focus of the campaign is on three forms of abuse, shaken baby, domestic and family violence and neglect. Understanding how these acts of abuse can adversely affect our children is paramount to changing the public's view of what is harmful.

Assistant Commissioner Col McCallum, Southern Police Region, officially launched the pilot and said the program will provide valuable insight for the people of Ipswich.

“I believe the project will make great inroads into promoting the safe handling of children and reinforcing the responsibility for parents to act protectively,” he said.

The Brisbane Broncos chose Safehands as one of the seven projects and charities they would support in 2007 under their community partnership initiative.

Former players Petero Civoniceva and Brad Thorn are the faces of the campaign. Both have three young children and are extremely supportive of the project.

For more information on Safehands visit www.safehands.qld.gov.au

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