

Women's support lauded

By Ashleigh Tullis

TANYA Whitehouse has worked tirelessly for 22 years in an industry that helps women escape violent partners.

She has supported women and children in crisis through her domestic violence work and she has now been awarded the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW 2016 Justice Medal.

"The community as a whole needs to say domestic violence is not acceptable," Ms Whitehouse said.

"Women shouldn't be ashamed. Women need to know they have support if there are problems and men need to say to other men it is not okay."

She is the chair of the peak body, the NSW Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services and the coordinator of the Macarthur branch.

Ms Whitehouse manages all branch services which provide support, help and information to women about how they and their children can get protection from the court from domestic violence.

In Australia, on average, one woman is killed every week as a result of intimate partner violence.

"The justice system can be frustrating and women have the right to feel safe and they have the right to report behaviour," she said.

"Going to court is very intim-



Work recognised: Tanya Whitehouse has been awarded the NSW Justice Medal for her work with victims of domestic violence.

Picture: Jeff de Pasquale

idating so women can use our support at court."

Ms Whitehouse said she was proud and humbled to be nominated and win the award.

"My job is made easier because of the support services that work collaboratively to help women in crisis."

Ms Whitehouse wanted women to know that if they are experiencing a form of domestic violence there are services and support available, that they should not feel alone, the behaviour is never their fault and the perpetrator is always responsible.

She said: "Women should be reassured that there is support if they want to access it."

GET HELP HERE

- Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services Macarthur: 4640 7333
- Benevolent Society: Campbelltown 4633 3777, Camden 4651 4000
- WILMA Women's Health Centre: Campbelltown 4627 2955
- NSW Domestic Violence Hotline: 1800 656 463
- 1800 RESPECT: 1800 737 732
- Community Links Wollondilly: 4683 2776