Media release

The Hon Mary Wooldridge MP
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Community Services
Minister for Disability Services and Reform

Tuesday 9 September 2014

Victorians recognised for excellence in working with children and families

- **Robin Clark Awards – the state's highest honour for individuals and organisations working with vulnerable children, young people and families**
- **Official launch of Child Protection Week**
- **Napthine Government building a safer Victoria**

Minister for Community Services Mary Wooldridge has officially launched Child Protection Week and praised the work of individuals and organisations in Victoria's children, youth and families sector at the 13th annual Robin Clark Memorial Awards.

The awards recognise the significant contribution, service and leadership by volunteers, individuals and groups in the children, youth and family services sector that improve the lives of vulnerable children and young people.

"The Robin Clark Memorial Awards provide an opportunity to honour and thank individuals and organisations that work tirelessly to improve outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and families in Victoria," Ms Wooldridge said.

"I would like to congratulate the 10 award recipients and also the nominees, all of whom have gone above and beyond to make a positive difference to the lives of children in child protection.

"Children and young people are some of the most vulnerable members of our community, and those individuals who care for and support them need to be strong, dedicated and compassionate – yet their work is often unseen. These awards recognise and honour their good work," Ms Wooldridge said.

The Victorian Coalition Government continues its strong commitment to protecting children, with an additional investment of more than $900 million to strengthen supports and protection for vulnerable children, young people and their families since coming into office.

Child Protection Week, which runs from 7 – 13 September this year, is a national campaign run by the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) that aims to increase awareness and understanding about the importance of preventing child abuse and neglect.

For further information on National Child Protection Week, visit www.dhs.vic.gov.au/childprotectionweek

A list of Robin Clark award winners and highly commended recipients is attached.

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Robin Clark Memorial Awards 2014 – Award recipient list

AWARD	RECIPIENT	ORGANISATION
MAKING A DIFFERENCE WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES AWARD		
WINNER	Supporting Kids and Youth	VACRO
HIGHLY COMMENDED	Peter Toohey	Department of Human Services
HIGHLY COMMENDED	Barbara McIvor	Lighthouse Foundation
INSPIRATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE FIELD AWARD		
WINNER	Micaela Cronin	MacKillop Family Services
HIGHLY COMMENDED	Susan Barton	Lighthouse Foundation
HIGHLY COMMENDED	Angela Forbes	Connections UnitingCare
CARER OF THE YEAR AWARD		
WINNER	Stephen Thomas & Rachel Kent	
HIGHLY COMMENDED	Robert & Brigitte Baker	
HIGHLY COMMENDED	Vince Barker	
ABORIGINAL CARER OF THE YEAR AWARD		
WINNER	Wendy Henry	
CREATE AWARD		
WINNER	Christine Dennison	