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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### FEDERAL ELECTION 2010: PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

We all accept the value of training and coaching at school, at work and on the sports field. We also love community programs and TV shows that teach us how to cook, garden and do-it-ourselves.

Yet we often neglect to give as much attention to the development of our relationship and communication skills.

This Federal Election, Family Relationship Services Australia (FRSA) is calling on all major political parties to make a clear commitment to strengthening families.

"We believe that more priority should be given to supporting family and personal relationships", said Samantha Page, FRSA Executive Director.

"Healthy family and personal relationships help each of us to thrive. They are particularly important during difficult times when we might need practical or emotional support".

Demand for courses is stronger than ever and relationship educators are working hard in response.

"There is a real opportunity for Australia to invest now in strengthening relationship education".

FRSA offers prevention strategies to strengthen families and relationships, including:

**1. A National Public Education Campaign - 'Relationships Matter'**

A coordinated public information campaign would have a primary prevention focus, encouraging behaviour that strengthens relationships, alerts people to the potential impact of external events on personal relationships and suggest ways to respond effectively if problems arise.

**2. A National Strategy - 'Think Families'**

This strategy would work at multiple levels to address issues affecting families by bringing together industry, government and community delegates to identify what can be done including developing resources for employers, decision-makers and professionals to better meet the needs of families.

**3. Increase funding for relationship education and support services to expand their capacity across community, work and school settings.**

A substantial increase in investment would see relationship education and support programs more widely available. There is also strong support to include developmentally appropriate relationship education in both primary and high schools.

**4. Increase investment in free and affordable counselling services, parenting education and support programs and self-help resources.**

An effective way to encourage people to participate in counselling and education programs is to invest public funds so that programs are free or affordable, readily available and widely publicised so that they become familiar and accepted.

- ENDS -

**Family Relationship Services Australia is the national peak body for over 150 family relationship and support service providers, operating in more than 650 locations across Australia. For more information visit**

[www.frsa.org.au](http://www.frsa.org.au)

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