



# MEDIA RELEASE

Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC  
Attorney General  
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## KEMPSEY MIDNIGHT BASKETBALL SLAM DUNKS CRIME

The NSW Government is investing almost \$60,000 in innovative programs to steer young people away from crime and reduce domestic violence in Kempsey, NSW Attorney General John Hatzistergos announced today.

Mr Hatzistergos said one of the NSW Government's grants would be used to start up a Midnight Basketball competition for young people who are at risk of being perpetrators or victim of crime.

"Midnight Basketball will operate on Friday nights, which is a period when young people are more likely to be exposed to crime," Mr Hatzistergos said.

"During the eight-week program, participants who join in the games will be required to attend life skills workshops."

The workshops cover topics such as drugs and alcohol, job seeking skills, staying healthy and anger management. Games will begin at 7.30pm at Kempsey PCYC and players will be taken home by bus afterwards.

"Midnight Basketball, which will be run by Kempsey Shire Council, aims to help young people improve their self esteem and learn about team work," said Mr Hatzistergos.

Similar programs have been conducted in Redfern in inner Sydney, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Duty MLC Kayee Griffin said Kempsey Shire Council would also use government funding to conduct a domestic violence awareness campaign.

"The *Knowledge=Power* project will inform at-risk women about recent changes to the law that are helping to protect victims of domestic violence and bring offenders to justice," Ms Griffin said.

"New guidelines have been rolled out across the state to fast track domestic violence cases through local courts, allowing victims to get on with their lives as soon as possible.

"In addition, the NSW Government has introduced laws that create a specific offence of domestic violence."

Ms Griffin said The *Knowledge=Power* program will also engage local agencies to improve referral procedures for victims of domestic violence.

Kempsey will also receive a full-time domestic violence advocacy worker and an outreach office under the Government's \$2.7m expansion of the Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Program.

The program provides support workers to assist women who go to court to obtain apprehended domestic violence orders, to give them advice and support through the process.

Funding for the North Coast area will rise by 74% from \$155,573 to \$271,193 and will expand from Kempsey and Coffs Harbour to include Bellingen and Macksville Local Courts for the first time.