



QUEENSLAND  
**CHILD  
PROTECTION  
WEEK**

**7 - 13 September 2014**

**ISSUED UNDER EMBARGO | EMBARGO EXPIRES 1PM THURSDAY 4 SEPTEMBER**

# **FNQ WINS TOP CHILD PROTECTION AWARD CATEGORY - YOUTH IN CARE FIND VOICE THROUGH PUBLIC ART**

A foster carer and artist from Far North Queensland will tomorrow accept the 'Youth Participation' Award at the annual Queensland Child Protection Week Awards ceremony, in Brisbane.

Lee-Ann Davis-Collier will receive the award for her work in creating a dramatic public art mural, painted by young people in care. A record nine winners will be presented in the 2014 awards. Past award-winners include Bruce & Denise Morcombe, and Hetty Johnston.

Tomorrow's event will also include the formal launch of Queensland Child Protection Week, which runs from 7-13 September.

"The mural that Lee-Ann worked with children in care to create is much more than a big, bold, beautiful piece of public art," said Queensland Child Protection Week Chair, Lorraine Dupree, a long time child protection researcher and NGO leader.

"It is also a permanent, visual and unignorable reminder to the wider community of the the trauma faced by local children because of abuse or neglect," Ms Dupree said. "It also reminds all children that they have a voice and that the community cares about child protection."

Ms Dupree said that some 40,000 Australian children and young people are currently living in foster care, and that demand for foster care has tripled over the past two decades.

The manager of Innisfail's Child Safety Service Centre, Ralph Laksa, said Lee-Ann represented a fine example of child protection being everybody's business.

"Lee-Ann brought everyone together," Mr Laksa said. "She involved children, the department, community elders, foster carers and the general community through the mural project."

Queensland Child Protection Week is run by committee including 21 representatives from the State's leading child protection, education, health and welfare agencies, as well as law enforcement and government. The State Government provides nearly \$107,000 to support and promote Queensland Child Protection Week. Visit <http://childprotectionweek.org.au/>

## **Further information**

Teresa Adamson | 0413 682 845

Caitlin King QCPW Project Officer | 0418 408 062

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