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MEDIA RELEASE

TWENTIETH YOUTH WEEK A HUGE SUCCESS

Youth Week 2008, celebrating its 20 anniversary this year, was a huge success in NSW with thousands of young people across the state planning, developing and staging events that benefited their local community and showed off their talents.

Minister for Youth Linda Burney said thousands of young people aged 12 to 25 participated in Youth Week activities in NSW to raise issues that are important to them, offer solutions and express their talents.

"Hits to the Youth NSW website increased by an astonishing 258 per cent – to 166,500 hits – in March, compared to the previous year, soon after I announced Government funding for Youth Week and publicised the site, showing just how important the internet is for communicating with young people," Ms Burney said.

"Youth Week is a great opportunity for the wider community to listen to young people and acknowledge and celebrate the valuable contributions they make."

The Lemna Government organised and supported the Youth Stage at the Royal Easter Show and YouthRock to provide opportunities for young people to participate. Entries to the statewide Youth Week in NSW Design Competitions also broke all records in 2008," she said.

"Congratulations to PokerFace from Kempsey, winners of the 'Rock The Royal Easter Show' challenge. Judges were very impressed by their talent and the effort they made in uniting their school and posting their performance on MySpace.

"Bleached Academy from Lucas Heights Community School also deserves recognition for winning YouthRock 2008, a statewide competition that identifies and promotes emerging rock bands."

Youth Week 2008 was celebrated from 5-13 April. More than \$235,000 funding was allocated to councils in NSW to help young people plan and stage creative events like band competitions, online forums, workshops and dance parties.

"I encourage all councils in NSW that staged Youth Week events to make sure they nominate their activities for Local Government Youth Week Awards. The closing date is 23 May and the application form is on www.youthweek.nsw.gov.au/download."

National Youth Week is supported by all levels of government across Australia. In NSW, the event is managed and funded by the NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS) and sponsored by the Motor Accidents Authority through its 'Arrive Alive' campaign. Other sponsors in 2008 included *beyondblue* and the NSW Commission for Children and Young People.

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