



Mercedes College student Monika, 12, of Urrbrae, being taught self-defence by schoolmate Sophia Zachos, 15, of Colonel Light Gardens.

PICTURE: STEPHEN LAFFER

# Student attacks a serious problem

## COLONEL LIGHT GARDENS

### Celeste Villani

AFTER learning the dire statistics about violence against women, student Sophia Zachos wanted to find a way to help combat the problem.

The Mercedes College Year 10 student and jiu jitsu fighter ran a self-defence class last weekend to arm females with skills to better protect them-

selves. The session was organised as part of a school project but, due to its popularity with women of all ages, she now plans to hold more classes.

The class raised money for White Ribbon, a group that aims to prevent violence against women.

White Ribbon statistics show one in three women experience physical or sexual violence by someone known to

them during their lifetime. "I hope to ... make women aware of how they can protect themselves in violent situations," Sophia, 15, of Colonel Light Gardens, says.

"I don't think people really know the statistics and it is something that needs to be known."

Sophia started training with SABJJ Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Academy in Klemzig about three years ago.