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Schools mark National Anti-Bullying Week

BULLYING, in all its forms, was a serious issue that could not be ignored, according to students at Siena Catholic College, Sippy Downs.

Whether it be verbal or physical abuse, discrimination or violence, whether it was found on school grounds or in social media, bullying cannot be accepted.

Siena was one of the hundreds of schools and workplaces around the country that participated in National Anti-Bullying Week, hoping to raise awareness about the serious issue.

Year 12 student Griffyn Goodall said in order to demonstrate the college's commitment to taking a stand against bullying the school held a "crazy sock day" with all staff and students encouraged to wear the craziest and most colourful socks they could find.

"Our uniform socks were traded for striped and spotted, furred and feathered, patterned and tie-dyed, footy and soccer socks, all to demonstrate our support for the anti-bullying campaign.

"Key to our message for the day was a recognition of the uniqueness and individuality of each person and a reminder that it's okay to be different and that bullying, in whatever way, shape or form, is never acceptable.

He said in addition to crazy socks, anti-bullying posters were created and displayed and each Home Room created a hand print banner.

"These 35 banners included a sketch of the outline of each student's hands and a heart-felt anti-bullying message.

"All of our actions this week are also a pledge to ensure that no one in our community becomes a victim of bullying," he said.

Meanwhile at Southern Cross Catholic College, Scarborough, they focused on bystander behaviour and the role every member of the school community played to challenge bullying behaviour to ensure the college was safe for all.

Principal Brett Horton said each year the event grew in strength.

"This year we had a seven metre travelling orange banner visit all four campuses for every student, whether in Prep or Year 12, commit with their handprint that bullying isn't OK," he said.

"For a full week the 'No Bullying' message has been reinforced in classrooms and our senior students taught valuable lessons to our primary students by presenting a dramatisation of what bullying might look like in their context," Mr Horton said.

He said the majority of students did not want bullying to happen, but they often did not know how to stop it.

"Our job as teachers and parents is to give students the tools and the courage to know what to do when they see bullying occur," he said.

College Captain Dalton Dries said he was passionate about the anti-bullying cause.

"By placing my own mark on the banner I hoped for a flow-on effect and wanted to show other students that anyone can take a stand against bullying."

"This exercise united not just our campus but the four campuses within our college and emphasised that Southern Cross just isn't a place for bullying," he said.



Southern Cross students put their hand prints to a seven metre long "SCCC says NO bullying" banner to support National Anti-Bullying Week



Siena College students wore crazy socks to highlight National Anti-Bullying Week

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