

Students aware of drug risk

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Redcliffe Peninsula high schools are working hard to ensure all students are aware of the dangers posed by drugs and alcohol. Picture: Chris Higgins.

MAKING good and positive decisions is the focus of Peninsula high schools' alcohol and drug awareness programs.

But that does not mean the region's teenagers are oblivious to the dangers posed by using drugs and alcohol, and chroming.

Southern Cross Catholic College personal development teacher Niecia Freeman said drug and alcohol awareness programs were an important part of a teenager's education.

The school has a different theme/concept for each year level.

"We also look at dealing with peer pressure and good decision making," Ms Freeman said.

Ms Freeman said Year 8 students focused on drugs and the inappropriate use of solvents, including chroming during Health and Physical Education classes.

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Year 9 lessons focus on making healthy choices and risk taking.

Year 12 students take part in the PARTY Program at the Royal Brisbane Hospital during which students spend a whole day in the emergency and trauma wards talking to nurses, doctors and patients.

Ms Freeman said getting to live it and see the consequences of silly decision-making leads had a big impact on students.

Mueller College Year 11 students take part in the same program.

Mueller Head of college Paul Valese said the school also ran a weekly program with specific drug and alcohol lessons.

“We work to educate students in what wellness is so that they do not introduce anything into their life that will affect their wellness,” Mr Valese said.

“We aim to cover all substances. We talk through the misuse of substances, even legal and substances in which in small quantities are safe such as energy drinks.”

Mr Valese said it was “crucial” part of a child’s education.

Redcliffe State High School principal Shona McKinlay said the school followed the National Curriculum for drug and alcohol education.

“The focus is on the decision making process, irrespective of the drugs involved,” Ms McKinlay said.

“Teachers use their discretion and professionalism when issues arise, there is some scope to cover (chroming) in a discussion setting.”

She said the school held a Healthy Minds Expo once a year.

“We focus generally in senior years on drug education in the health subject and briefly in senior years about party drugs,” Ms Butler said.

“There is a significant amount of content that is covered in the school curriculum and it is challenging to educate on everything a student may encounter in their social lives.”

Grace Lutheran College principal Ruth Butler said their program did not specifically educate students about the dangers of chroming but focused on good decision making.

Clontarf Beach State High School referred the Herald to the department of education’s media department.

A spokesman for the department said it and the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority had developed the alcohol and drugs education program to assist all schools.

“Principals in consultation with their school community, make decisions about how the program will be implemented and what specific curriculum content will be delivered to best support their students and community,” the spokesman said.

He said the program covered topics of marijuana, alcohol, smoking, tablets/pills, amphetamines, inhalants, injectables, cocaine and prescription drugs.