

## **INQUIRY INTO BULLYING OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**Organisation:** Interrelate Family Centre - School Services Division  
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**Position:** Co-ordinator  
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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
GENERAL PURPOSE  
STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 2

INQUIRY INTO BULLYING OF  
CHILDREN AND YOUNG  
PEOPLE

ATTENTION:

The Hon Robyn Parker MLC  
(Chair) & Committee

From: Interrelate School Services  
Bullying Awareness Program in  
NSW Primary Schools  
Co-ordinator: Dianne Todaro



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9<sup>th</sup> March, 2009

Dear Hon Robyn Parker MLC and Committee Members,

Interrelate Family Centres – School Services Division would like to alert the committee members to facts and information relevant to the inquiry into bullying of children and young people.

Interrelate would like to show the Committee Members how our organisation is supporting Bullying Awareness programs in NSW primary schools and to show how our audiences feel about this issue of bullying. If you would like a member from our organisation to come forward to give evidence at the hearing we would be encouraged to take this position.

Interrelate School Services has been working with schools since 1926, we are the leading providers of Sexuality and Relationship Education in NSW schools. In particular, Bullying Awareness is a program we have been conducting since 2000. We believe that providing reinforcement of Bullying Awareness to children in schools is vitally important.

The support appendices with this letter highlights the current work we are doing in NSW schools and we believe will help your investigation into the following aspects of your inquiry.

- 3. Prevention and early intervention approaches to address bullying, including 'cyber-bullying'**
- 4. Co-ordination and co-operation between relevant government agencies to address bullying**
- 5. The evidence-base for effective anti-bullying approaches**

**Appendix A Statistics 2007/2008 & Evaluations Term 1 2009:**

Interrelate School Services Bullying Awareness Programs.

Awareness programs NSW schools.

**Appendix B Anecdotal:** Educator and parent comment.

**Appendix C.** Interrelate School Services Bullying Awareness program overview

**Recommendation: External providers need to be involved in training and support with schools on bullying awareness and intervention.**

Yours sincerely,

Dianne Todaro  
Coordinator  
Interrelate School Services

Jonathan Toussaint  
Executive Manager  
Interrelate Family Centres

# Appendix A

Statistics 2007/2008 &  
Evaluations Term 1 2009:

## APPENDIX A

### SUMMARY OF CLIENT EVALUATIONS -2009

#### Introduction

Interrelate School Services conducts a range of relationship and sexuality educational programs for children and families in government, independent and private schools. All our programs are presented by highly skilled and specially trained educators who maintain a high standard of integrity and professionalism. The full range of programs we offer to Primary School Children and their parents of New South Wales are attached in **appendix A**.

Our organisation delivered Bullying Programs to **1,455** children of NSW in **2008**.

In **2009**, current Term 1 bookings for Bullying Programs have us delivering to **3,584** children of NSW. This shows a significant growth of **40.5%** in attendance figures to date. This growth has been supported by a proactive marketing approach, but also indicates to us as an organisation on the front line of delivery service that there is a genuine need in schools for outside organisations like ours to support the need for Bullying Awareness and strategies that can reinforce the ethos of anti-bullying policies of NSW Education.

In particular our School program on the issue of Bullying is as follows:-

- a) **Bullying Awareness Program (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6) –**  
Separate sessions are presented for each grade – 1 hour for years 3 and 4 and 90 minutes for years 5 and 6. Each session identifies the nature of bullying and covers some strategies for dealing with bullies from the perspective of the victim and the bystander. The program especially in the Years 5 and 6 develops empathy for the sufferer of bullying and suggests strategies that build confidence for all students to interact to prevent bullying. Information on cyber bullying is also included, particularly for Years 5 and 6.

## **EVALUATION SUMMARY**

At the conclusion of each of these programs evaluations are sought from our clients. These clients include both teachers and students in school programs. This report summarises the evaluations collected during 2009, Term 1. Copies of the evaluations are attached.

## **TEACHER'S EVALUATIONS**

### **BULLYING AWARENESS** – N=29 [18 submitted for inquiry]

All teachers surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed with the rating items about the program; that is the students enjoyed the program; it fulfilled expectations; consideration was given to varying abilities; the program was useful and the activities and visual aids were suitable.

Comments included were:

- ◆ Excellent discussion re: cyber bullying
- ◆ Willingness to listen to the children
- ◆ Connected well with children
- ◆ Encouraged a positive climate
- ◆ Gave them good strategies.

## **STUDENT'S EVALUATIONS**

### **BULLYING AWARENESS**– N= 212 [40 submitted for inquiry]

Educators ask the children to fill in students' evaluations at the end of each session.

In summary the students find value in:-

- ◆ Opportunity to openly discuss the issues as a group
- ◆ Recognising and appreciating their differences.
- ◆ Learning about strategies to try as a group and individually how to support a person being bullied
- ◆ A show of hands ALWAYS indicates they know more about supporting bullied persons.

We have included some children's evaluations as sample evidence for the inquiry and have noted a summary of the children's comments.

Most enjoyed:-

- ◆ how to keep myself safe
- ◆ Learning how to help people
- ◆ Being made to feel special
- ◆ Increased my self esteem

- ◆ Everyone felt comfortable sharing their stories
- ◆ I enjoyed the program because it was fun and interesting

## **CONCLUSION**

Interrelate School Services has earned and maintained a reputation for excellence and professionalism, presenting material that is relevant, accurate and age-appropriate in a welcoming, encouraging and supportive manner. The evaluations indicate that our clients believe we continue to provide an excellent service. Almost every evaluation praised the attitude and abilities of School Services Educators, who are considered to be a valuable resource in schools to reinforce the message of Bullying Awareness. The updated format of the presentations, that is use of PowerPoint rather than overheads, also received wide acclaim. The material itself is generally believed to be appropriate, and school services regularly update their programs to be relevant to meet the needs of their audiences.