

NEWSFRONT

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Help us stop the bullies

EMILY BAKER
State Political Reporter

PREMIER Will Hodgman says his government is open to hearing any and all ideas on how to stop bullying in Tasmania.

Mr Hodgman spoke after the Council of Australian Governments committed to progress the Right to be Forgotten laws championed by anti-bullying organisation Dolly's Dream — a campaign group founded in memory of Dolly Everett, who suicided this year.

"This proposal ... would make it possible to remove content on websites or social media platforms that constitutes cyber-bullying or online harassment," he said.

"Bullying can have devas-

What we advocate is for schools to take a whole-of-school approach to racism in the student community — SALLY THOMPSON

tating impacts on people and their families, and our community, and we are determined to do all we can to stop it."

Education Minister Jeremy Rockliff this week also called for the community's ideas on battling bullying.

Children's Commissioner Leanne McLean yesterday backed action: "All children and young people have a fundamental right to be safe and to feel safe, and we all have a part to play in making sure this happens."

It's got to be a community-focused effort — not just the schools, but the schools are a major part — REUBEN CUNNINGHAM

Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania multicultural youth program team leader Sally Thompson yesterday said the young people she worked with regularly dealt with bullying.

Ms Thompson said the Migrant Resource Centre would love the opportunity to work with Tasmania's school leaders on how to collectively combat discrimination.

"A lot of the bullying is racially motivated," Ms Thompson said.

"What we advocate is for

Kids Helpline supports a public health approach to bullying, which seeks to intervene early — JOHN DALGLEISH

schools to take a whole-of-school approach to racism in the student community, and that would be empowering young people to make positive change in their school community."

Angels Hope co-founder Reuben Cunningham said the Launceston-based anti-bullying organisation also backed a community-wide approach to battling bullying.

"It's got to be a community-focused effort — not just the schools, but the schools are a

major part of the whole process," Mr Cunningham said.

"We believe that we have that and we want to forward that to the minister when we have the opportunity."

John Dalgleish, strategy and research head of yourtown, said Kids Helpline received 3523 contacts from children and young people about bullying last year alone.

"Kids Helpline supports a public health approach to bullying, which seeks to intervene early and prevent bullying rather

than criminalise the issue and children," Mr Dalgleish said.

"It's critical that any new interventions developed to prevent bullying behaviour is done as a community with active participation from children and young people who experience bullying first hand, be they the bully or those bullied."

"Every young person also needs to be supported to help-seeking and to be an 'upstander' when they are confronted by bullying — whether in the school playground or online — and encouraged to tell adults about their experiences."

The State Government has released draft legislation that would criminalise bullying behaviours — including cyber-bullying — that was conducted with the intention to harm.



BARE BONES: Jade Hay from St Mary's College and Umesh Rai from New Town High School learning about skeletons.

Picture: LUKE BOWDEN

Uni's art of thinking about science

JAMES KITTO

THERE are no bones about a new University of Tasmania program giving high school students exposure to the exciting world of science.

The Science Experience program offers Years 9 and 10 students the chance to attend a three-day event, which started yesterday, to showcase different career options in the field of science.

Hands-on lab sessions with scientists give students a look into a number of disciplines including, chemistry, zoology, plant science, geography and engineering.

"The Science Experience provides an opportunity for students to broaden their understanding of what science really is and to discover the diversity of career options available," program co-ordinator Tanaz Knott said.

Year 9 St Mary's College student Jade Hay said the program provided an invaluable look into what a future career in science might look like.

"I've considered a career in forensic science and this program has helped me further look into something down that path," she said.

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