

We must all do more to improve respectful relationships education

Jim Miles, Executive Director of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV), says it is clear schools, parents, policy-makers and the wider community must all do more to educate young people about respectful relationships.

‘Respectful relationships are not only at the core of Catholic values and teachings, but are a necessary element of a proper functioning society.

‘Teaching about respect and consent aligns with the beliefs of our Catholic schools as enshrined in the gospel values and should not be seen as a one-off or stand-alone exercise.

‘Developing young men and women who respect each other’s fundamental dignity and rights is central to our ongoing education and development approach as a Catholic schooling system’, he said.

Mr Miles said Catholic schools utilise a range of materials and programs in a continuous manner across all year levels to help meet curriculum requirements addressing interpersonal behaviours and respectful attitudes.

‘It is integral to both the ongoing holistic development of students across the spectrum of primary and secondary education, along with the respectful relationships expectations set within the curriculum for all schools.

‘We are at an important juncture where schools need to invite and empower young people to participate in what should be ongoing conversations on the efficacy of existing programs, and the priority they are given.

‘Catholic education and its schools are clear in the belief that parents and families always remain the first educators for their children. On this basis, teachers, schools and system leaders need to continually work together with families and wider society to do all we can to address this issue and prevent future harm to young people.

‘It is also vital that these conversations recognise and give voice to our young people who behave respectfully towards others, and to their families and schools for the good work they do to guide them in their development each and every day’, Mr Miles said.

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