



## Media Release

10<sup>th</sup> March 2010

### Parents bullying 'scorecards' on My School important

Parents' "scorecards" on school bullying and safety on the national *My School* website could be a very positive contribution to making schools safer for vulnerable students, Adjunct Professor, Ken Rigby, said today.

Prof. Rigby, who is one of Australia's foremost experts in peer victimisation and a member of the National Centre Against Bullying (NCAB), said parents should be allowed to put forward their own views on bullying on the website, as well as schools highlighting their actions on the issue.

"There is a long way to go on this issue for vulnerable students," he said. "Parents need to be reliably informed about the situation at their children's schools and about what actions schools are taking to counter bullying.

"The better informed the community is about bullying - and about the measures that are being taken to reduce what is an insidious problem - the safer our children will be at school."

Prof Rigby welcomed the announcement by the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, that the Federal Government would facilitate direct input concerning bullying from both parents and schools to the recently-launched *My School* website.

"Allowing parents to put forward their own views on bullying, and including provision for schools to show what they are doing to address any bullying problems, would greatly assist the national campaign against bullying," he said.

"There are well-developed instruments in Australia designed to obtain reliable information about bullying in schools from parents, students and teachers."

Among the information avenues available for parents is the Peer Relations Assessment Questionnaire, which has been used to gather data about bullying in thousands of Australian and overseas schools. This will soon be available nationally through the Australian Council for Educational Research.



# NATIONAL CENTRE AGAINST BULLYING CONFERENCE 2010

April 9–10, Melbourne



The Alannah  
and Madeline  
Foundation

Keeping children safe from violence

Prof. Rigby said dramatically increased awareness around the world of the prevalence and often serious consequences of bullying was resulting in the adoption by more and more schools of positive anti-bullying policies and more effective means of intervention.

Recent research into bullying in many European schools had revealed that, despite the appearance of cyber bullying as a direct result of ever-evolving “e-technology”, peer victimisation was gradually reducing. It is unknown whether there is a similar trend in Australia.

Cyber bullying in schools - and the associated issue of cyber safety for students - will be the primary focus of the 4<sup>th</sup> Biennial NCAB Conference in Melbourne from April 8-10 this year.

A key objective of the conference will be the development of clearly-defined strategies to help principals and teachers combat cyber bullying.

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