



MEDIA RELEASE

21 February 2011

Newspoll finds almost 50 per cent of parents are concerned their child will be bullied

Parents are increasingly anxious about bullying at school, with a Newspoll survey finding almost 50 per cent of parents are concerned their child is at risk of being bullied.

Seventy-eight per cent of parents with children aged 5-17 believe bullying has become more serious in the last decade, with the majority saying this is due to either the internet or increased peer pressure.

The report also revealed 50 per cent of parents of a bullied child believe their child was first bullied when aged between five and seven.

The Newspoll survey was conducted for National Buddy Week, an initiative developed by NAB and The Alannah and Madeline Foundation to highlight the need to prevent bullying in Australian schools and cyberspace by providing an opportunity to celebrate friendships.

The findings validate the experience of MTV host, DJ and Fashion Designer, Ruby Rose who endured years of bullying that eventually hospitalised her during her high school years.

"It's outrageous that so many children feel unsafe at school or online and it's really important we take a stand against bullying. Parents, schools, children and the community can all help make sure kids know where they can get help and advice," said Ruby.

"Raising awareness around the issue of bullying, and the positive things we can do to address it, is something I'm very passionate about. It's important to me to share my experiences and let kids and their parents know that things do get better and there are lots of people out there who can help you through it," she said.

Throughout National Buddy Week, friendship bands and badges will be available for purchase at NAB branches with all proceeds going to The Alannah and Madeline Foundation.

The wearing and sharing of friendship bands is a significant symbol for the week, providing people with the opportunity to express the importance of friendships through a caring and positive gesture.



Dr Judith Slocombe, CEO of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, said the Foundation's partnership with NAB focuses on taking very real steps towards addressing the issue of bullying.

"We were delighted when NAB approached us with the idea of National Buddy Week. The initiative provides the opportunity for all Australians to discuss the subject, while also celebrating the positive relationships in their lives," said Dr. Judith Slocombe.

Throughout National Buddy Week, free 'Bullying Solutions' seminars will be held across Australia for teachers, educators and the community. The seminars will explore the issue of bullying and provide insights into ways to identify, manage and prevent bullying in Australian schools

The community, and particularly primary schools, are also encouraged to register for 'Buddy Picnics' to celebrate the positive friendships in their lives.

"Since 2007, we have worked with NAB to address the issue of bullying through the Better Buddies Framework. Now in more than 800 Australian schools, Better Buddies creates positive, caring and friendly environments for children when they start school," said Dr Slocombe.

In 2011, the partnership has grown to cover 'eSmart' - a world-leading system for cybersafety and wellbeing in schools. eSmart guides and supports Australian schools to create a culture of smart, safe and responsible use of technologies.

For further information or to get involved, visit www.buddyweek.org.au

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These findings are based on a study conducted nationally among 310 parents or guardians of children aged 5 to 17 years of age. The study was conducted by telephone by Newspoll Market Research over 28 to 30 January 2011.

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