Safe Schools Coalition supporting Australian schools

It’s been a tough week in the media, but amidst it all, Safe Schools right across Australia are continuing to have a great impact in creating safe and inclusive schools for same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students, staff and families. Here’s an update on all the wonderful things we have achieved together.

Check out our new testimonial page to hear directly from all the students, teachers, principals and families who have experienced the program!

Safe Schools Coalition Australia and Safe Schools Coalition teams right across the country would like to thank our member schools and all of our supporters, for working with us to create more inclusive schools for same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students, staff and families. Together we are making a difference in the lives of thousands of young people across Australia by saying no to homophobic and transphobic behaviour and implementing practical steps to foster safe, positive and supportive schools for everyone.

Our growing community

In 2015 we saw our program go even more national, expanding for the first time into the Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania, Queensland and Western Australia. We had over 260 schools sign up, growing our total to 490 school members with around 330,000 students. We are almost at 500 schools!

I had been feeling kind of lonely, hopeless and isolated for what feels like a lifetime... to have the school take this step and to be a part of [the coalition] means the world to me. Student

We now have 86 organisations now on board as official ‘Safe Schools supporters’, such as the Australian Secondary Principals’ Association, headspace national, beyondblue, Wesley Mission Brisbane and Curtin University in WA. We have also received a number of new messages of support including from Ministers for Education in South Australia and Victoria. Throughout 2015 our supporters have contributed enormously to raising awareness about why the program is needed and its very positive work in schools.
Our activities with schools

We delivered professional development for about **10,000 teachers and other school staff** in 2015 ensuring they have the language, confidence and practical tools to implement more inclusive school policies and practices. That brings the total number of school staff members trained by Safe Schools to over **13,000** overall.

I’m writing to say a huge ‘thank you’... Staff shared how valuable they found your presentation. It has started professional conversations about how we can make our school safer for everyone. - Teacher

We have engaged with over **12,000 students and young people** through events, workshops, presentations and meetings to equip them with information and back them as change makers in their own school communities. This included our [National Safe Schools Symposium](#).

We also provided tailored assistance for more than **80 schools** just in 2015 that were supporting individual students affirming their gender identity. Requests for support in this area by both secondary schools and primary schools are growing and highly valued by school leaders, students and their families.

You have made this transition so much easier, I don't know how we would have done it without the Safe Schools Coalition. You are doing a fantastic job, and we are very grateful. - Parent

Our resources

Last year we launched **three new resources** for school communities and more are on their way!

- [Guide to supporting a student to affirm or transition gender identity at school](#)
- [Guide to hosting inclusive school formals](#)
- [All Of Us](#) classroom resource

The release of **All Of Us** generated much buzz nationally as our first ever teaching and learning resource for the classroom. Developed with youth organisation Minus18, the resource is aligned to the Health and Physical Education learning area of the Australian Curriculum for years 7 and 8. We had 350 expressions of interest from teachers and schools before the resource was even released!

**All Of Us is a powerful addition to the range of resources on offer through Safe Schools Coalition Australia.** - Rob Nairn, Executive Director, Australian Secondary Principals’ Association

Safe Schools stays safe in Dubbo and Orange in NSW. Read the story [here](#).

We launched All Of Us in late November, with special guest Ro Allen, Victoria’s first Gender and Sexuality Commissioner. Read all about it [here](#)!
That’s a wrap

As you can see from this snapshot there is a lot of fantastic things going on for Safe Schools. We have loved hearing about all the amazing activities of our member schools – many of which have been profiled in media. From IDAHOT and Wear It Purple celebrations – including an 18 panel rainbow installation at the ACT legislative assembly forecourt – to school based policy reviews and initiatives, our member schools are leading positive change for their communities. We have also been pleased to work with education departments and others as they continue to develop and shape more inclusive educational policies and frameworks.

What’s coming up

We’re excited about plans for Safe Schools this year.

Stay tuned for an announcement of a partner organisation to kick off work with schools in the Northern Territory which will see Safe Schools Coalition Australia become truly national.

Together with our national coalition of partner organisations, we’ll be developing new guidance material and resources – including more on running a Stand Out Group (or student diversity alliance) and advice on creating more inclusive school environments for transgender and gender diverse students and, separately, for intersex students.

We will also once again be planning to host a National Safe School Symposium and, as always, we encourage schools and other stakeholders to keep an eye out for the many events and activities happening locally in each state or territory.

Thanks again from all the Safe Schools staff around the country.
Our program in pictures...

National Safe Schools Symposium hits Sydney!

Schools around the country mark Wear it Purple day!

IDAHOT is celebrated around country, & includes a creative display outside ACT’s Legislative Assembly.

Victorian member school launches an exciting project - Inside Out.

Stand Out Day Camp in regional Victoria.

Safe Schools Action Day held in South Australia.

Safe Schools Coalition presents to the Parliamentary Friendship Group for LGBTI Australians in Canberra.

Queensland Teachers’ Union promotes the program roll out in Qld.

Safe Schools Coalition joins a UN meeting about addressing homophobia and transphobia in schools.