



NEW FILM '*Best Enemies*' Tackles Cyber Bullying in Schools

A new short film tackling the growing problem of cyber bullying in schools head on will premiere at a major Charity Event on September 30 at Hoyts Entertainment Quarter to raise money for Point Zero Youth Services.

Best Enemies is inspired by true events and shows how a teenage girl's life can so easily be thrown into despair and depression, through the actions of her friends and class mates using online community network sites, MSN and SMS to cyber bully and mass communicate cruel and offensive material.

The film has already been well received through pre-release screenings to a number of schools and youth interagency groups in NSW and has received support from MySpace, Girlfriend Magazine, Hoyts, Point Zero, Lane Cove and Woollahra Council Youth Inter-agencies.

The director, Ross Bark, and his producer brother Darren have had requests from authorities to screen the film in schools.

"We hope it will inspire structured discussion about the causes and effects of bullying," Ross Bark said. "Young people and parents and teachers can use this film with anti-bullying programs to talk directly about the issue rather than theoretically. We've found the film captivates young people and connects on their level to explore the causes and consequences of these issues"

With the recent public hearing on bullying of children and young children at NSW Parliament identifying that cyber bullying is occurring at increasingly younger ages, the importance of material that can connect with students is a vital resource.

Darren Bark, who has been working with the government on these issues, said bullying could lead to depression and suicide. "If left unchecked, bullying is an issue which is going to explode. It's something that will be carried on well into adult life by the victims and the bullies. It has widespread consequences for those who are targeted and their families."

Pru Goward Member of the NSW Legislative Assembly and Shadow Minister for Community Services said "Best Enemies is a film which conveys the reality that teenage girls face and is a true depiction of the devastating impact of bullying. I commend the Bark brothers for their efforts in creating this film and I encourage schools around the country to utilise this great resource. I certainly will be taking it to my schools in my electorate".

The film makers are currently working with youth psychologists in creating an educational kit around the film to explore the causes and consequences of cyber bullying and will also be presenting this at the charity event.

For more information visit www.bestenemies.com.au

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The Film Makers

Producer – Darren Bark

Darren has produced a number of youth orientated film productions and has completed a Bachelor of Laws (First Class Honours) and been awarded the Dean's Scholarship at UTS. Darren is a Solicitor and Barrister of the Supreme Court of NSW and the High Court of Australia. He is also Vice-President (Policy) of the Killara Young Liberal branch, a member on the Faculty Board in Law and Academic Board at UTS. He is currently co-ordinating a Youth Forum to discuss cyber-bullying issues.

Writer and Director– Ross Bark

Ross has produced, written and directed internationally acclaimed theatre, film and documentaries for over 15 years, establishing a multimedia and film production company Bark Productions Australia in 1990. His work has included a number of youth related films (*No Regrets*) and documentaries (*Footsteps*).

Point Zero Youth Services

Point Zero provides access to programs that empower, support and educate young people and their communities in Sydney, including programs to schools on youth issues, such as bullying, drugs & alcohol, and depression.

www.pointzero.org.au