



MEDIA RELEASE

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Castle Hill RSL Leads the Way with Anti-Bullying Programs

Essere (To Be) Living Skills Inc is a registered charity and not for profit organisation, formed in 2004, offering transformative resilience building workshops in schools, community groups, Indigenous communities, corporations and organisations.

Through its fun and innovative approach, Essere delivers highly effective skills and strategies that help children and young people deal with anger, conflict, bullying, worry and stress which help them make well informed and better choices for their lives!

Since its creation, Essere has reached over 18,000 individuals Australia wide with over 2000 from the Hills area alone. This has been solely due to the generous support of the Castle Hill RSL Club who has supported the "Growing Years – Anti Bullying Program". Since 2006, the club with Mr. David O'Neil, as Group General Manager, has provided funds for Essere to facilitate workshops for Year 5 and Year 6 students in 15 Schools in the Castle Hill vicinity.

"Castle Hill RSL Club is concerned about the challenges that many of our children face on a daily basis and feel compelled to provide assistance to help equip students with the ability to face these challenges".

As a result, the club has offered financial support to the tune of \$100,000 to schools in the Castle Hill area, to completely fund this very valuable program. Essere would like to thank David O'Neil and the Board of the Castle Hill RSL Club for getting behind this wonderful initiative that is making a huge impact to so many young people. Your generous support has been very much appreciated.

"The support of Castle Hill RSL has made a difference to more than 2000 kids in helping them develop skills to deal with life's challenges including bullying and to build confidence within themselves. The building of relationships, community and the strengthening of families has also been a positive side benefit to the programs we run." CEO Fran Dobbie



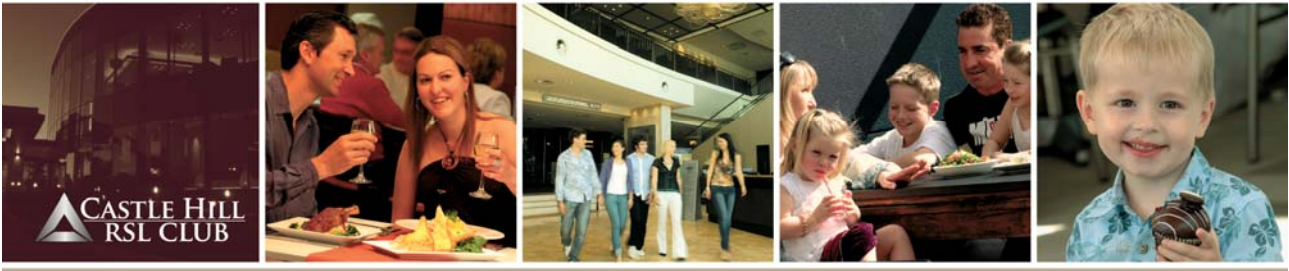
Kellyville Public School has been involved in the Castle Hill Initiative, as it has become known, from its inception. *Mr. Craig Brown*, former Principal, has been a supporter of the programs and has since brought Essere into his current school. **“The feedback I have had from students, staff and parents has been extremely positive...Essere helps students to understand their world and make a positive contribution to our community...I would like to acknowledge the support of Castle Hill RSL who have supported our school this year...”**. Since these early beginnings, many schools have been a part of this Initiative as an increasing number of teachers and academics are recognising that we need to equip our youth with life skills to build their self esteem.

“Excelsior Public School has been extremely fortunate over the past 2 years to have been involved in the Essere Living Skills and Self Esteem Program. All of our Year 5 students have been given the opportunity to attend a one day workshop which has been conducted by two highly qualified Essere facilitators. The response from our students to their involvement in these workshops has been extremely positive”.

J.Evans, program co-ordinator, Excelsior Public School, June 2nd, 2008

Statistics show that 98% of children loved and continue to use the ‘calming techniques’ they learnt during the workshops. Chelsea from Castle Hill RSL commented **“it was probably the most gentle and calming thing I have done for a long time...”**. Since each workshop covers many different areas of living skills, each experience is unique with students taking from the workshop things that they need for their own personal journey. **“I learnt that I don’t have to be someone else, I just have to be myself”** *Julia from St Bernadettes, Castle Hill*. **“(My daughter) spent our story time that evening going through her experience with me and also shared with me what she had been given....Thank you-this has made a difference to our child!”** *A mother from Kellyville Public School, June 26th, 2008*

- **I learnt how to deal with anger and bullying. Essere is a fun and productive workshop!** *Jack, Winston Heights P.S.*
- **“You should keep this program going. It will change people’s lives.”** *Michael, Sherwood Ridge*
- **“I learnt how to take anger out of myself and without hurting others and how to relax myself...I’d like to do it again.”** *Samara, Castle Hill P.S.*
- **“The students really got to expand and come out of their shell. Some children really seemed to express themselves and do a lot of thinking... Thank you so much for organising such a successful and well thought out program. Thank you to Castle Hill RSL for making this happen.”** *Karen Rubista, Teacher, St Michael’s, Baulkham Hills*



The programs offered by *Essere (To Be) Living Skills Inc* through the club's involvement has made invaluable contributions to the youth in the Hills Area, helping to create a healthier community. Deputy Principal, Martin MacDonald, of Kellyville Public School praised the support of Castle Hill RSL saying the school wouldn't be able to run the program if it wasn't for the club's financial support. Through its sponsorship, the Castle Hill RSL has helped its youth deal with the pressures of life.

For information on Castle Hill RSL please call their friendly reception team on 9858 4800.

Media Contact:

Melanie Morson
Group Marketing Manager Castle Hill RSL Group
Phone: 88584818 or 0419 461 454
Email: morsonm@castlehillrsl.com.au