Positive peers

Northern beaches children are being taught about empathy and leadership to help stamp out anti-social behaviour and cyber bullying. Full report, page B
Students Kyra Robinson, Bronte Coles, Georgie McDonald and Lucas Ward are fans of the peer support program.

Stamping out cyber-bullying

Boel Eriksson

CHILDREN should be taught empathy and leadership from kindergarten to prevent anti-social behaviour, particularly with the rise of cyber bullying.

That is according to Brookvale-based Peer Support Australia, which gives schools the tools to teach students about relationships, resilience, anti-bullying, and being good role models.

Many teachers were concerned about the amount of primary school students that were on Facebook because their parents had set up profiles for them.

"It's an ongoing issue for primary schools," Peer Support education consultant Lindsey Grenet said.

If children did not have strong confidence and skills in how to deal with others, socialising online could be difficult.

"Children can say things online that they wouldn't say to someone face-to-face," she said.

Non-profit Peer Support Australia started on the northern beaches 29 years ago, and has grown to support 1600 schools nationwide. It receives some government funding and donations, but is looking for a corporate partner to expand the program further.

CAN YOU HELP?

Contact Sharon Austin on 9905 3499 or peeroz@peersupport.edu.au to become a sponsor
A fundraising barbecue will be held outside Bunnings in Narrabeen on Saturday

Picture: MARTIN LANGE