Belmont's St Francis Xavier's Primary School receive peer support

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STUDENTS at Belmont's St Francis Xavier's Primary School have taken the initiative to break down barriers within the school community.

The school's 135 students divided into 10 groups last Tuesday for the first session of its annual Peer Support Program.

Led by the school's 26 year 6 students, the program develops students' social skills.

It achieves this through getting-to-know-you activities such as puzzles and charades, which are designed to encourage students to break out of their cliques and talk to new people.

The program builds on the school's buddy system, where year 5 and 6 students are paired with their kindergarten and year 1 peers.

St Francis Xavier's Primary School is one of eight primary schools in Lake Macquarie that run the program, which is resourced by not-for-profit organisation Peer Support Australia.
Year 6 teacher Stephen Brown has been at the school since the program was introduced there 17 years ago.

He said it produced confident, self-assured students.

"We want every student to know their worth."

The school runs the program once a week for half an hour during term three.

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