



QUEENSLAND
**CHILD
PROTECTION
WEEK**

Media Release

1 September 2016

Bundaberg North State School “BEAR Plan” applauded for child protection achievements

Bundaberg North State School’s “BEAR Plan” has been awarded a Queensland Child Protection Award for its outstanding contribution to preventing child harm and neglect.

Implemented by the Bundaberg North Primary School Guidance Officer and School Chaplain in response to the 2013 Bundaberg floods, the BEAR Plan is an innovative approach to assisting traumatised children to develop self-regulation skills.

As part of the plan, students are taught four key personal calming strategies: Breathe, Exit, Ask and Relax (BEAR). It has been expanded into many other primary and secondary schools.

Students identified as experiencing heightened levels of emotional distress, including trauma, abuse anxiety and family conflict, are invited to participate in the more intense level of the BEAR Plan, using a teddy bear to keep at school and visit at times of distress.

This week, Bundaberg North State School’s “BEAR Plan” was awarded the *Queensland Child Protection Award – Community Initiative* category, recognising its outstanding contribution to enhancing child protection in the community.

The Queensland Child Protection Awards comes ahead of Queensland Child Protection Week, which runs from 4 to 10 September, promoting the value of children and focusing attention on issues of child abuse and neglect.

Bundaberg North State School Guidance Officer Alan Bowmaker said the school realised after the 2013 floods that there was an immediate need to implement a strategy to address the stress and trauma endured by the local kids.

“The flood was the catalyst, but the program grew from there. There is an ongoing need for safety strategy for children to address issues at home and in the community,” he said.

“Young people need to know there is always someone they can speak to, to feel safe and well. It is important to provide kids with the tools and strategies to self-regulate their emotions, and cope with any issues happening at home.”

Queensland Child Protection Week Chair Elisabeth Kobierski said the Committee congratulated Bundaberg North State School on its award win and for providing inspiration to others.

“The annual Queensland Child Protection Awards provide an opportunity to publicly acknowledge the efforts, commitment and unreserved energy of many people who make a significant contribution to our community to prevent child harm and neglect,” she said.



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Queensland Child Protection Week is co-ordinated by the Queensland Child Protection Week Committee and funded by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services and Queensland Family and Child Commission. The week focuses attention on child protection being everyone's business and ensuring that all across Queensland communities take responsibility for children being protected and experiencing well-being.

More information on Queensland Child Protection Week is available at:
www.childprotectionweek.org.au

ENDS. For more information, please contact:

Kieran Rogers, BBS Communications Group

P: 07 3221 6711 M: 0421 216 124

E: krogers@bbscommunications.com.au