



Study delves into link between bullying and mental health(图)

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12 July 2007, Brisbane school students will help unlock the secret of how bullying affects mental health when they are given the chance to take part in a study through The University of Queensland.

Erin Wolfe, a PhD student at UQ's School of Psychology, later this year will launch a study into bullying that she hopes will improve the way schools deal with the problem.

Ms Wolfe said she would conduct research in a combination of state and private schools to come up with a solution to bullying that targets bullying's effect on children's mental health and takes into account the way children stand up to bullying and seek help.

"Bullying is increasingly being recognised as a big problem in our schools and has been linked to mental health problems like depression, anxiety, poor social adjustment, low self-esteem, as well as poor academic achievement," she said.

"It can have a huge impact on the kids involved, academically, socially and mentally and I believe it's an issue that really needs to be addressed."

The study will initially involve developing an intervention program, and then over time will use feedback from the schools involved to further improve the program.

The project is expected to run for three-and-a-half to four years.

As the research is still in the early stages, no schools have yet been approached to participate but Ms Wolfe hopes to include upper-primary and lower-secondary grades from schools in the greater Brisbane area.

Ms Wolfe's research into bullying is partially funded by a \$48,000 grant from the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund.

A large part of this grant was raised by the Rotary clubs of Stones Corner, Hamilton and Brisbane High-Rise through their annual Art Spectacular held in the Riverside Centre in Brisbane's CBD.

John Monsen, who is chairman of the organizing committee for the Art Spectacular, said the Rotary club members chose to put their money toward Ms Wolfe's research because they wanted to help young people through a study with a long-term focus.

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