

Graffiti gets bad rap from crew

BY MELISSA CUNNINGHAM

GRAFFITI and anti-social behaviour were the themes of a performance at Mooroolbark College on Wednesday.

Year 8 students entertained by performers from the Warner Awareness Education Group who used humour and hip-hop to teach the students.

It highlighted choices the students may be faced with as they grow older including smoking, drug use and drinking.

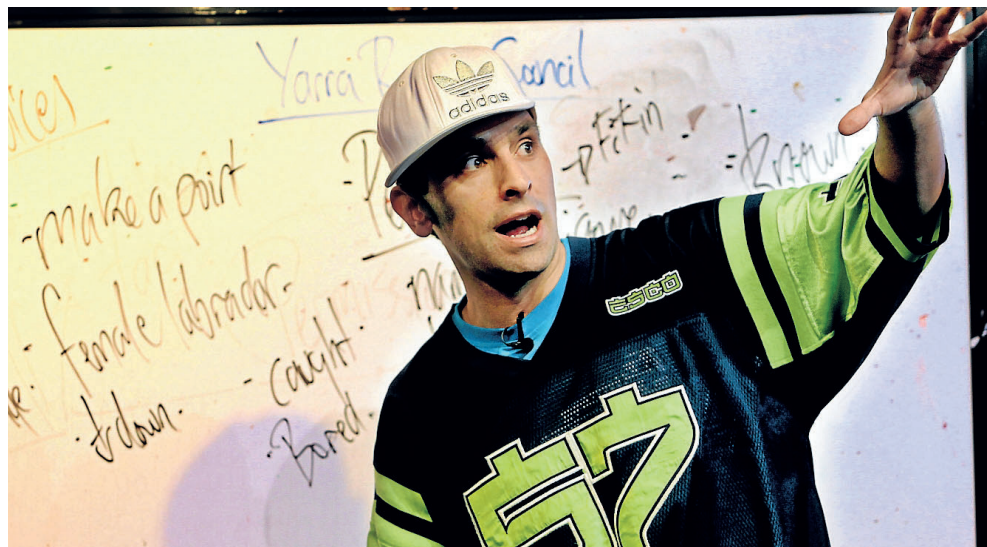
Principal Simon Reid said the program was another way to empower adolescents to make the right decisions.

"It was a really positive and proactive approach to teaching students to make the right decision at the right time," he said.

"It was a humorous and entertaining performance but it was also educated in the message it communicated."

He said the students were enthusiastic and engaged throughout the performance.

Yarra Ranges councillor Richard Higgins said the program was designed to complement other initiatives designed to minimise graffiti tagging and anti-social behaviour. "It was fantastic to see the students laughing and joking as they learn. While we may never see the results directly, I am



Important message: Xavier Diaz of the Warner Awareness Education Group entertains Mooroolbark College students.

Picture: Rob Carew

sure the results will be there," he said.

There were also performances at Manchester Primary and Rolling Hills Primary as part of the Yarra Ranges Shire anti-graffiti campaign.

Mayor Terry Avery said the presentation aimed

to engage students to raise awareness about the impact of graffiti. "Graffiti and anti-social behaviour continues to be a problem in our community. It's great to see a new program aimed at young people to help in the education process."

School buses to stay: MP

THE STATE Government has denied claims that the Lilydale, Healesville and Upwey school bus services could be axed.

Opposition education spokesman Rob Hull said he was concerned that a government review into school bus services in the region could mean that children were left without a taxpayer-funded ride to school.

"It's time Mr Baillieu tells parents why his government is reviewing, and potentially cutting, bus services," Mr Hulls said.

"If these bus services are cut, how will children who rely on them get to school?"

Mount Evelyn MP Christine Fyffe said Mr Hull's statements had "no substance" and he was only "scaremongering".

She confirmed the government was looking at school bus services to ensure only eligible students were catching buses funded by the state.

"If parents choose to send children to a school further away despite there being a school with vacancies closer to their home they do not have the right to free transport to that school," Ms Fyffe said.

— Melissa Cunningham



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