

Stopping the spray



Students from Glenmore Park High School took part in Penrith City Council's graffiti education program this week.

Story Stacey Hicks • Photo Melinda Jenkins

IT is hoped that incidents of graffiti in the local area will dramatically decrease with the help of Penrith City Council's groundbreaking education program to tackle the issue head on.

Penrith is the first council to run the program in NSW, and 75 local schools have already benefited from it. Consisting of a 45-minute presentation, the program is specifically tailored to Year Five and Year Eight students to help them discover the consequences of spraying graffiti and its impact on the local community.

Council's Community Safety Coordinator, Allison Kyriakakis, said the program has had a positive impact so far and would continue to be run at least until 2010.

"Penrith City Council contracted the Warner Group to run the program in local schools and it is a very interactive program for the students," Ms Kyriakakis said.

"There is an actor who will go in and adopt the character of a person who gets involved with the wrong crowd and then demonstrates the consequences of that and the result of getting involved in doing graffiti.

"As well as getting the students thinking about legal and health issues, it also gets them thinking about the fact that if Council spends all this money on removing graffiti, that is money that is not going into skate parks and recreational programs in the area."

The program also touches on the factors that lead young people to graffiti such as peer pressure and boredom, as well as looks at how to engage young people in more positive ways in the community.

Glenmore Park High School was the latest school to experience the program and Year Eight Advisor, Cindy Cunynghame, said it was a huge success.

"It was terrific, the kids were really engaged and they related very well to the presenter," she said.

Vehicles confiscated

TWO men have been charged and had their cars confiscated following an alleged street race in Penrith late last week.

About 9.30pm last Thursday (May 14), police were patrolling Coreen Avenue when they observed two high powered vehicles pull-up side by side, with one vehicle allegedly on the wrong side of the road.

Police allege that the two vehicles, a Holden Commodore and a Ford Falcon, accelerated harshly side-by-side for a distance of approximately 600 metres, reaching speeds of 135km/h in a 60km/h zone.

"At a point it is alleged that the Falcon crossed back onto the correct side of the roadway to avoid colliding with two parked semi trailers," a police statement said.

"Police stopped both vehicles and spoke with a 23-year-old male P2 provision driver of the Commodore and the 34-year-old male driver of the Falcon."

The 23-year-old Glenmore Park man was charged with a range of offences and was granted conditional bail to appear at Penrith Local Court on June 24. He had his licence confiscated on the spot. The 34-year-old Emu Plains man was also charged and had his licence confiscated. He appeared in Penrith Local Court last Friday and was due to appear again on Wednesday.

Both cars were towed from the scene.

The latest incident follows another alleged street race at Colyton earlier this month.

Two years ago, Alan and Judith Howle were killed when they became the innocent victims of an alleged street race on the Great Western Highway at St Marys. Their deaths sparked public shock at the practice of illegal street racing on suburban streets.

Burnout backfires

A Londonderry man has been charged with a mid range drink driving offence and negligent driving after he crashed his car in Londonderry last Thursday, May 14.

At about 8pm, the 31-year-old male was doing burnouts at The Driftway before losing control of the vehicle which collided with a telegraph pole and burst into flames. When police arrived, the vehicle was well alight. After refusing a breath test, the man was taken to Penrith Police Station where he recorded a BAC of 0.1 and was charged.