

Messages of hope

Students fly kites on R U OK? Day

Cathy Adams
Cathy.Adams@northernstar.com.au

Are you okay?

It's a question we've been urged to ask, not only each other, but also ourselves.

Yesterday was R U OK? Day across the country, and Trinity Catholic College united with Headspace and Stand By Response Service, to write positive messages on kites to carry skyward.

Year 12 student Lucie Lawrence, 18, said it was important for the school to stage the event during what had been a challenging year.

"Your mental health is important," she said. "It's in these formative years you need to look after yourself and your peers."

With the HSC exams approaching, she said students could carry the weight of a lot of expectation.

"Exams can also put a lot of pressure and stress on you, so it's getting the balance between school work and social life ... and setting your own expectations."

Another important message she hoped to share was "it's ok to ask for help". Rose Hogan, from Stand



R U OK?: Year 12 students James McInnes and Lucie Lawrence of Trinity Catholic College flying kites on R U OK Day. PHOTO: CATHY ADAMS

By Response Service, talked to students and staff about the many services available in our community and how they could be accessed.

She said the more familiar people were with services, the more courage they

would have to reach out for assistance and support.

"We acknowledge suicide and mental health issues are concerns for many," she said.

"It impacts on everybody. It can touch any community,

any age."

Ms Hogan said there are also services to help parents reach out to children. She said don't be fearful of having a conversation, be prepared, ask for help where needed, including online.

"Most services are free and confidential. If you can't find the help you need, pick up the phone and call."

■ If you or someone you know needs help, contact Lifeline on 13 11 14.

IN BRIEF

Fundraising event AS PART of the Northern Rivers Role Model Competition 2016, a runway fundraiser event will be held tonight at the East Lismore Bowling Club.

Doors will open at 6.30pm and the models will be out and about introducing themselves until just after 7pm, when they will get ready to showcase some local designer clothes in the main runway event. Voting begins online on Monday to decide the final two contestants for the competition.

All money raised during the event will go to the Children's Cancer Foundation.

Collection tins will be passed around and placed by the doors for donations.

For information visit the Northern Rivers Role Model Facebook page at www.facebook.com/northernriversmodel.

Spotlight on Federal

FEDERAL Film's September movie is the Academy Award winning **Spotlight**.

This month's dinner is by Federal Community Children's Centre who will be offering: lentil, sweet potato and coconut curry or chicken and chickpea tagine served with rice. Doors open 6.30pm for dinner; film starts at 7.30pm.