

KOHBI BARROW

Statement

HON PETER FOSTER (Mining and Pastoral) [5.52 pm]: I rise tonight to talk about young Kohbi Barrow, who attends St Cecilia's Catholic Primary School in Port Hedland. Kohbi is on a mission to tackle bullying in our regional schools and is extremely passionate about keeping kids safe both in the playground and online.

I had the privilege to meet Kohbi, his mum Anne-Marie and the rest of his family a few weeks ago when I was in Port Hedland at the Spinifex Spree. Kohbi is raising awareness of and tackling bullying through his coffee lid project. Kohbi has designed stickers for the coffee lids with the assistance of Signswest, a local business based in Wedgefield. Kohbi's stickers say "Be kind ... Be the change ... Don't be a bully!" Kohbi's recent fundraising initiative took place on 7 August, when 14¢ was collected from every coffee sold at participating cafes over a 96-minute period. Cafes that participated in Kohbi's coffee-lid project included Hai's Coffee in Port Hedland, SOAK in Dampier and the Crave Juice Bar and The Pickled Bean in Tom Price. Kohbi, who is only 11 years of age, took his inspiration from the Dolly's Dream initiative. Kohbi chose 7 August in recognition of the seven signs of bullying that you can read about on the Dolly's Dream website, 14¢ because Dolly was only 14 years of age when she took her own life, and 96 minutes to represent the 96 children who unfortunately took their lives in 2019.

In my first speech I talked about some of my personal experiences of being bullied when growing up, and I was saddened to learn that Kohbi has also experienced bullying at school. In the *Pilbara News* on 22 July, Kohbi said —

"I am committed to raising awareness how bullying has to stop," ...

"I just want everyone to be able to get along and for kids to be together as one in schools."

The funds raised through Kohbi's coffee lid project will be donated to Dolly's Dream. For those who are not aware, Dolly's Dream raises awareness about the serious issue of bullying and its devastating effects; provides help and supports young people affected by bullying; educates about bullying issues; advocates for bullying laws and regulations; delivers information on ways to prevent bullying and cyberbullying; and works to change culture and prevent bullying through a variety of educational approaches. Dolly's Dream recently launched its own Dolly's Dream telephone support line for teenagers and their parents to get free and confidential advice.

Kohbi's generosity does not stop there. He has also researched, written and delivered speeches for the R U OK? Day at FMG and Rio Tinto mine sites—keep in mind that he is only 11—and has also fundraised locally for the Hedland cancer support group. Kohbi was a finalist in the recent Pilbara for Purpose Pilbara Community Services Excellence Awards in the young achiever category and also in the 7NEWS Young Achiever Awards in the regional services category.

Kohbi was also recently successful in being awarded an Edstart grant of \$1 500 in its social impact category for school-age children who are passionate about certain issues and are creatively looking at ways to address them. Kohbi plans to use the grant to raise further awareness of bullying and its mental health effects by further expanding his coffee lid project, initially, further around the Pilbara and north west, and then he has plans to tackle the east coast. Kohbi has currently raised \$220 of his \$250 fundraising goal. I encourage all members to consider contributing a few dollars.

I am humbled by the efforts of Kohbi. I congratulate him and his mum, Anne-Marie, for their many hours of volunteering to raise awareness of, and tackle, bullying in our regional schools, as well as to fundraise for Dolly's Dream.