



Open diary for all

A NEW online project aims to alleviate teenage stress by sharing the diary entries of some of Australia's most well-known public identities to show today's teenagers they are not alone in their experiences.

The Open Book Project, an initiative of the Reach Foundation, has already published diary entries from personalities, including radio larrikins Hamish Blake and Andy Lee.

Others, such as Victorian Premier Ted Baillieu and sporting identities Cathy Freeman and Shane Crawford, each share a page or two from their childhood showing the difficulties they faced growing up.

The Reach Foundation was established in 1994 by Jim Stynes and Paul Currie, in an effort to inspire young people to get the most out of life with community programs.

Reach facilitator and Mt Waverley resident Meaghan Payne said she believed the project would help support teenagers get through some darker times of the school years.

"I think it is a really good idea because one of the things that really helps kids is knowing they're not alone," Ms Payne said.

"When people are going through similar things, you feel more confident to talk about the issue."

The 19-year-old, who runs a weekly Reach program for young people at Mt Waverley Secondary College, said her main struggle during her early teens was confidence.

"I was going through my diaries the other night and . . . I struggled with confidence and with the cliques of high schools," she said.

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