

Year 9 students grow as homelessness advocates

Year 9 Global Citizens students have grown in their understanding of youth homelessness, thanks to a visit from author and advocate Pip Harry.

Homelessness is on the rise in Australia, particularly affecting young people: nearly a quarter of all people experiencing homelessness are aged between twelve and twenty-four. This term, Meriden students in Year 9 will be taking a closer look at the ongoing crisis during the Global Citizens Program. The aim is for students to better understand people who are facing the crisis, and how we, as individuals and a society, can take steps to address the issue.

As part of the program, on Thursday 9 May, Pip Harry spoke to our Year 9 students to help them grow in their awareness and advocacy for youth homelessness. Pip shared her personal experiences of working with the Property Industry Foundation, an organisation that builds housing for homeless youth. She also described some of the numerous societal and environmental factors that have resulted in the current crisis.

Her powerful stories brought home the stark reality many young people face and helped to break down societal stereotypes about people experiencing homelessness. Students learned that professionals – including architects and lawyers – can face homelessness.

Students walked away from the talk with a greater understanding of the structural and cyclical nature of the homelessness crisis, including some of the hidden challenges society faces in trying to reduce homelessness.

Pip also spoke about the work she has done in the past that aims to assist youth through securing shelter, writing workshops, and providing skills training to help youth secure greater opportunities to break the cycle of homelessness. Year 9 students will read Pip's novel *Because of You*, which explores issues surrounding youth homelessness, as part of the Pastoral Reading program in Term 3.

Mr Kuhan Rajalingam

COLL – Global Outlook



Amelia O'Farrell, Sasha Troianskii, Mila Vujcic and Yolanda Dolenac
with Pip Harry