

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

“Without the human community, one single human being cannot survive” (Dalai Lama)

Welcome to the Victorian Courage to Care website; here you can learn about this important program whose aim is to increase awareness of the consequences of prejudice and intolerance. Here in Australia we are extremely fortunate to live in a country where racism and religious intolerance are uncommon and so it is easy to believe that we are a sophisticated society where those more primitive human emotions no longer exist to any extent. Unfortunately, objective evidence tells us otherwise and we do not have to spend too much time reading our newspapers or watching TV to find examples of prejudice behind incidents of violence within our communities.

Students and other visitors who visit the Courage to Care Exhibition will learn of the ease with which sophisticated and liberal thinking Germany slipped gradually into an intolerant and discriminatory society. The ultimate consequence of these attitudes to the “other” – Jew, gypsy, Jehovah’s Witness, the disabled – became the “Final Solution”!

Those participating in the educational program will learn of the meaning of prejudice and how this human emotion may show itself in their school ground and in their community. We challenge the visitor to question their own attitudes to witnessing or participating in acts based on prejudice and suggest that individuals must be willing to take a stand when they witness actions they believe to be wrong.

The models we use to demonstrate this “courage to care” are the so-called Righteous Amongst the Nations, those extraordinary ordinary people who during the time of the Holocaust in Europe sheltered and assisted Jews in the face of the risk of death for themselves and their families. They were extreme times and hopefully we will never see their like again, but the actions taken by the Righteous, often involving people who they did not even know, are an example to all of us about man’s ability to accept their fellow human beings as part of the rich community in which we live. Their message is as important today as ever.

Dr. Tony Weldon MBBS, FRACP

Chairman