

Sydney Jewish Museum Launches Human Rights Educational Program for Secondary Students

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In February 2018, the Sydney Jewish Museum opened a new exhibition, *The Holocaust and Human Rights*. This permanent exhibition dedicated to human rights is among the first of its kind in Australia. The underlying concept guiding the exhibition is to put our knowledge of the Holocaust into a broader human rights context. This includes a study of the timeline of human rights history, as well as focus on issues particularly relevant in Australia. The development and design of *The Holocaust and Human Rights* was conducted in consultation with the Museum's Education Department to aid the parallel creation of tailored secondary school programs within the space.

Working within this new interactive exhibition space, the Education Department has developed and piloted a series of programs that are aligned with the national secondary school syllabus for students in Stages 4 – 6, studying History, Legal Studies, Modern History and Society and Culture. This is the first time the Museum has offered seminars relevant to the Legal Studies curriculum. These engaging programs highlight the pressing and current issues pertaining to the rights of Indigenous people, the LGBTIQ+ community, refugees and asylum seekers and people with disabilities.

The Museum is proud to launch two program formats for secondary students in August: a customisable three-hour Human Rights Education Program and a day-long seminar entitled 'Inspiring Ethical Leadership'.

The Human Rights Education Program caters to students in Stages 4 through 6, and focuses on questioning and inquiry, helping students connect and reflect on the historic and thematic content of the Holocaust in relation to contemporary human rights issues, debates and concerns.

The Inspiring Ethical Leadership Day is designed for school captains, prefects, and students in senior leadership positions. This seminar focuses on the power of leaders to create thriving communities and lasting change. Held in Term 4, this day is designed to bring together incoming senior-school student leaders from around New South Wales to contemplate contemporary human rights issues, debates and concerns. In this safe and open forum, participants will have the opportunity to connect with one another and actively discuss the changes they can make as emerging young leaders.

All educational programs held in the Museum's new human rights exhibition include an interactive seminar with a Museum Education Officer, firsthand testimony from a survivor of human rights violations and a guided tour of the Museum through the lens of human rights history and policy.

"In initiating this exhibition, it was of prime importance to the Sydney Jewish Museum to build on its very successful teaching program of personal responsibility, arising from Holocaust education. Being very conscious that when human rights and politics mix, the outcome is often controversial, the Museum seeks to bring people together in mutual respect, not to adopt reflexive positions in support of 'activists'," says Professor Gus Lehrer AM FAA, President of the Sydney Jewish Museum.

“Since it was established in 1992, the Sydney Jewish Museum has dedicated itself to Holocaust education, teaching about the dangers of discrimination and persecution under the Third Reich; the courage of those who resisted; and the strength and resilience of those who survived. As we launch our Human Rights Education programs, we seek to explore the ways these themes reverberate in the world today. By using objects, images and testimony we strive to help students engage with human rights issues in nuanced and meaningful way,” says Rebecca Kummerfeld, Head of Education, Sydney Jewish Museum.

Media note: The official opening of The Educational Programs is on August 15th 5.30pm-7.30pm and is by invitation only, and not open to members of the general public. There will be a keynote address from The Hon Justice Michael Kirby AC CMG and an introduction from Mr Edward Santow, Human Rights Commissioner.

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