

JCCV says no to homophobia

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THE Jewish Community Council of Victoria (JCCV) will join the “No to Homophobia” campaign and is asking its affiliate organisations to sign up too.

The “No to Homophobia” initiative aims to challenge all forms of harassment and discrimination faced by gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (GLBTIQ) people.

The campaign aims to reduce the incidence of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic harassment in Victoria – and beyond – by empowering people who identify as GLBTIQ as well as the broader community to respond and speak out against this harassment.

According to JCCV president Nina Bassat, the campaign promotes respect between people and healthy relationships, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identification.

Bassat acknowledged the emotional turmoil members of the GLBTIQ community can face, whether it be at school, in the workplace or in the wider community.

“No-one should be discriminated against because of their sexual orientation or gender identity,” she said. “The mental wellbeing issues in relation to bullying, depression and lack of self-esteem can be catastrophic.”

By Jewish organisations joining the campaign, the JCCV not only anticipates a greater level of understanding and awareness within the Jewish community, but also an education with respect to what constitutes homophobic, biphobic and transphobic harassment. For instance, phrases such as “That’s so gay”.

Sally Goldner, a spokesperson for Transgender Victoria and a member of the JCCV’s GLBTIQ reference group, said as a transgender person she has been received fairly well by the Jewish community, and feels this move can only make people more tolerant.

“This is an amazing step forward that pushes diversity higher. It’s sensational,” she told *The AJN*.

The JCCV will officially request that its affiliates become part of this campaign at their next plenum meeting in May.