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ALL NOT FORGIVEN
Why this man should never again be invited to the Grammys.
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Gay abandon

Nadia Salemmé

Anti-bullying programs for gay teens have been criticised by a Jewish leader who says they are "unethical" and may "encourage homosexuality".

Rabbi Dr Shimon Cowen's comments have been slammed by gay and lesbian lobby groups, which have labelled them "damaging" and "irresponsible".

Cowen, a Monash University academic and the son of former governor-general the late Sir Zelman Cowen, has hit out at Safe Schools Coalition Victoria's program supporting gender

Jewish leader slams anti-bullying campaign

and sexual diversity in schools. He said it was "using bullying as a pretext to teach all schoolchildren that homosexual conduct is equally normative with heterosexual conduct".

"This program could in fact cultivate and encourage homosexuality amongst many children who would ordinarily grow into heterosexual lifestyles.

"The bullying of homosexually-inclined children should be stopped

and it should be stopped by a process which eliminates all kinds of bullying.

"What the program wants to do is tackle bullying by celebrating homosexuality as one form of legitimate human expression. To eliminate bullying does not require that.

"Let's say a child was being bullied because the child was fat, you don't have to celebrate obesity."

Cowen said he had "nothing against

people with homosexual inclinations" and wanted "a full parliamentary debate" into programs in schools.

But Safe Schools Coalition Victoria co-ordinator Roz Ward said the comments were "offensive".

"The program has been widely well received and is having an impact in schools to reduce bullying and I just think these kinds of comments are unfounded," Ward said.

"It sounds like something you might have heard in the 1950s."

Micah Scott, general manager of youth gay and lesbian support centre Minus 18, said the view was "damaging".

"Same-sex attracted young people are... already a vulnerable group due to homophobia," Scott, 23, said.

It comes as *Kath & Kim* actor Magda Szubanski, who publicly came out yesterday, admitted she was suicidal as a teenager.

"I know how those kids feel, believe me, I know how those kids feel," Szubanski told 3AW today.

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