

# Parkdale Secondary College students in shock after being labelled 'oppressors'

The push to sack a council worker is mounting after she shamed Melbourne schoolboys during a diversity and inclusion talk.

Parents and councillors are calling for a youth worker to be sacked after she ordered year 11 boys to stand up in class and labelled them "oppressors" for being white, male and Christian.

Year 11 boys at a state school were ordered to stand up in class and then slammed by a council youth worker for being white, male and Christian "oppressors".

The extraordinary attack by a female Kingston City Council worker at Parkdale Secondary College last week has outraged parents disgusted their children were unfairly targeted for being white boys.

The Sunday Herald Sun has been told the council youth worker held a talk about privilege, pronouns and "intersectionality" at Parkdale Secondary College last Wednesday and asked Year 11 boys to stand up if they were "white", "male" and "Christian" and then told them they were responsible for being "privileged" and "oppressors".

Several parents have said they were angry and "disgusted" by the incident.

In a statement on Facebook on Monday afternoon, the Kingston council said it was "deeply sorry" the recent diversity and inclusion session at the school caused "hurt" and "anguish" to students and parents.

"It is clear the program had the opposite impact to what was intended and we understand the serious concern of the school and wider community," the statement said.

“Please be assured we are investigating this as a matter of urgency and will take measures to ensure this can never happen again.”

Kingston councillor Cameron Howe said the worker displayed “reverse racism” and called for her to be sacked.

“This is unacceptable behaviour that has angered the school community and public; she needs to be sacked,” Cr Howe said.

A father with a male student at the school also called for the worker to be sacked.

“The council needs to take this extremely seriously, there are a lot of furious parents of young boys and we need guarantees that something like this will never happen again,” he said.

A year 11 student said pupils were left “shocked” by the presentation.

“It was so messed up, we thought for a moment it was a joke, but then we realised it wasn't and we were so upset and angry by it all,” the 16-year-old said.

“She basically said straight, white, Christian males were oppressors and they held all the power and privilege in society.”

She said the male students had felt “ashamed” and “targeted” during the presentation.

“We were shocked but it was quite difficult to say anything because she was also talking about LGBTIQ+ and if you spoke out against that you feared you'd be called homophobic,” she said.

A father with a male student at the school also said he was angered by the incident.

“To be called out in this way at school of all places is wrong and has no place,” he said.

“To me school is not the place to indoctrinate kids with divisive ideas where the colour of your skin is worth more than the content of your character.”

Principal David Russell has issued a statement to parents and students on Sunday saying the school did not “support” or “condone” the presentation.

“As part of this presentation led by the guest speaker, many year 11 boys were asked to stand and told they were historically the oppressors,” Mr Russell said.

“The part of the presentation was inappropriate and we’re extremely disappointed it was included. We certainly do not support or condone this approach and messaging.”

“The school has written to Kingston Youth Services and Kingston City Council to express our disappointment regarding the content and delivery.

“The year 11 students were addressed on Thursday morning offering support through the school to any student who was impacted by this presentation.”

Kingston mayor Steve Staikos apologised for the incident.

“I have spoken to a number of parents about this and have listened fully to their concerns,” he said.

“The council’s CEO is undertaking an investigation into this as a matter of urgency. I extend my apologies to all students and parents who have been affected by this.”

Kingston City Council chief executive, Tim Tamlin, said: “Council is still investigating what happened at the recent diversity and inclusion session delivered by Kingston Youth Services, but is deeply sorry if any of the content has caused hurt and anguish to students and parents at Parkdale Secondary College.

“We acknowledge and understand the serious concern of the school and wider-community.

“It is never council’s intention to enter into identity politics ... we are carefully reviewing the youth services program and will take measures to ensure this can never happen again.”

[suzan.delibasic@news.com.au](mailto:suzan.delibasic@news.com.au)