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ABOVE: Bialik College student Amber Shostak helps out at The Posh Opp Shoppe in Elsternwick.  
INSET: Mentone Grammar's Ella Hassan and Isabella Houlahan with Yarrabah School student Arthishna Chand.



Mentone Grammar students to see the world from a different perspective and it breaks down all the prejudices – giving young people the chance to see what life is like for a person with a disability.”

The environment is another focus for Mentone, which has supported the “i sea, i care” Ambassador Program developed by the Dolphin Research Institute for 12 years.

Fintona Girls' School looks far afield in its volunteering initiatives, taking students to locations such as Ecuador, Madagascar and Peru in World Challenge trips, held every two years.

“Our girls not only gain a deeper understanding of the world around them, but learn much about important life skills such as independence, self-reliance, how to work as a team with different ages, and the value of solid friendships.” Fintona marketing manager Vicky Kapourelakos said.

“Above all, our girls understand the joy of giving.”

During the 2014 trip to Madagascar, Fintona students dug foundations for a new water system for the Akany Avoko organisation for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Bialik College in Hawthorn also has a strong focus on social justice and giving, with programs including “Bridging the Gap” – which involves weekly visits to aged-care residencies such as Emmy Monash and Dina Munzer House.

The visits span eight or nine weeks, allowing individual students to build strong relationships with residents, according to Bialik teacher Andy Miller.

“They help over lunch time – they talk to residents and they help in preparation of the evening meal as well,” Mrs Miller said. “And next term there will be a new initiative where they help the residents with an iPad program. We're really excited about that.”

Students also help out at the Posh Opp Shoppe in Elsternwick. The work they do includes sorting second-hand Bialik College uniforms – with proceeds used to assist Jewish school students with special needs.



ABOVE: Sterling Ellis is among the Bialik College students who visit Emmy Monash Aged Care residents.



RIGHT: Fintona Girls' School students dig the foundations for a new water system at Akany Avoko, Madagascar.

