

Wed 15 March 2017

Safety drive at school

Police in bid to bridge cultures

Steven Deare

POLICE spoke to 250 international students from high schools across the district about their safety at a meeting at Marsden High School on Tuesday.

For the first time, Ryde Local Area Command officers invited the students to an orientation day to discuss their safety in Australia.

Officers gave talks on personal safety and cyber safety, while a surf lifesaving representative and a youth worker discussed water safety and mental health.

Ryde police have worked with international students at Macquarie University for years, and have continued visits through the Cops on Campus program.

They have identified growing numbers of students from overseas at high schools, through meetings with principals and school liaison officers.

Police want to ensure these students are not vulnerable.



Sen-Contable Debbie Christel and Marsden High School student Victoria Xu, 17.
Picture: Adam Ward

Multicultural community liaison officer Chantha Manu said: "The majority of these

kids are probably homestay - staying with carers - so we want them to have this in-

formation. So if they need police help in any way, they know what to do.

"We want to provide as much information as we can to make them safe."

They also hope to overcome cultural stereotypes about police.

Crime Prevention Officer Julie Lewis said: "Police in other countries, particu-

larly Asian ones, can be seen as a bit hostile, and a bit more like the army."

The orientation day took place in the high school's hall.