Helping youths sail out of stormy waters

TRACEY FINDLAY

WAHROONGA: It was all hands on deck as sailors and students joined forces for a charity fundraiser at St Leo’s College on Monday.

The sailors, from HMAS Success, have launched a partnership with St Leo’s to raise funds for Father Chris Riley’s Youth Off The Streets charity.

Their first event was a fundraising barbecue where sailors and students worked side by side to cater for the lunchtime rush.

St Leo’s year 8 organiser Erin Overton said they met the sailors during an open day at Father Riley’s chapel school.

As they chatted, they discovered they had a common goal to raise awareness and funds for Youth Off The Streets.

"I think it’s good to have these connections," she said. "I think it shows them (the students) that charity is ongoing, something they do beyond school in their daily lives."

Ms Overton said their aim was to provide a $5000 scholarship for a youth in need. "The scholarship will allow a disadvantaged child to put that money towards TAFE or university, their educational needs," she said.

As part of the new alliance, a group of 20 students will spend a day on board HMAS Success later this year.

Ship warrant officer Mark Cooper said the partnership was a good way of building community links.

He said they had adopted Youth Off The Streets as their charity in 2006.