



Vera Dunn

Volunteer Guide

I was born in Hungary and my family fled across the border on foot to escape the Communists. We spent time in refugee camps before being accepted into Australia as refugees when I was 5 years old. My parents were both survivors of the Holocaust and lost all their families. They were so grateful to come to Australia and being simply allowed to live normal lives, free from discrimination.

I grew up with parents who had heavy accents, different food and culture and who had to struggle to establish their family in a new country. I certainly was always aware of being different and feeling it hard to fit in. My parents' stories of their lives so badly affected by discrimination and bullying of the worst possible kinds makes me treasure the basically open and tolerant society that we have in Sydney.

I feel that it is my duty and privilege to do what I can to help students and people of all ages to understand where bullying and the refusal to accept each other can lead. My parents told me stories of people who had the courage in such difficult circumstances to help someone, even in small ways and how that made such a difference. I want to inspire our young people to realise that by not being a bystander they can help someone who is suffering.