

Teens go for jeans, inspired by sense of community

It's normally a fashion faux pas, but students of Melba Copland Secondary School will be decked out in denim head to toe today, their very own Jeans for Genes Day.

The fundraiser for the Children's Medical Research Institute is usually on in August, but there's just no stopping the super-keen students who are holding it early.

Student Marrwah Ahmadzai, 16, of Giralang, is leading the effort to get all her fellow students donning denim to do good. She's drummed up support for the cause with a chat to her school at an assembly, a big projector in the library

constantly advertising the day, and plenty of announcements over the loud speakers.

Ahmadzai is evidently altruistic to the core – she's an aspiring doctor and her passion for the cause stems from her research into incurable diseases.

"Reading about all these diseases that are incurable and how they affect families and children really affected me," she said. "There are so many medical and technological advancements but there are still these diseases that exist that have such serious impact on lives."

Doing something to help gave her a

good feeling.

"It's a small school but there's a great sense of community. It's good to know that by wearing something we wear almost every day, we can help so many people and change so many lives."

The school has 320 students signed up to participate and hopes to raise \$700 to \$1000.

There will be a reward – a \$10 canteen voucher – to recognise the zaniest outfit.

■ Information about Jeans for Genes Day is at www.jeansforgenes.org.au



GOOD CAUSE: Denim-wearing Melba Copland Secondary School students Marrwah Ahmadzai, left, Elizabeth Thodosopoulos 16, Josh Mahony, 17, Elysia Muirhead, 16, and Georgii Bolton, 16, are fundraising for gene research. Photo: GRAHAM TIDY