

Hindu Council to take up Nose Piercing restriction with Catholic establishment

By: Surinder Jain.

Hindu Council of Australia has taken up the issue of [a Hindu student being kicked out of a Catholic school for a religious nose piercing](#) with Catholic Educational establishment. According to Hindu Council's multi-faith director, the recent misunderstanding among Catholic schools about Hindu culture and traditions has a potential of affecting the harmony between our communities in Australia and the reputation of Catholic schools among Indians.

Hindu Council believes that it is simply an issue of Catholics being unaware of Hindu traditions and that it can be easily resolved by making Catholic school teachers aware of Hindu sensitivities.

Hindu Council of Australia is keen on taking up the general issue of Catholic schools permitting religious symbols of non-christian students in their schools. It is understood that all Catholic schools permit Sikh students to wear turbans and similar exemptions exist for some other religions also. Hindu Council would like to explain that nose piercing is not a fashion or rebellion statement of a teenager but is a deep rooted cultural and religious ritual for girls going through puberty.

In Hindu culture, a girl who achieved menarche, or her first period, is feted, and pampered at a ceremony where family and close friends gather and lavish gifts on her. The girl would be bathed in fragrant water after applying oil, turmeric etc. she would be bedecked in fine clothes, flowers and ornaments - and her feet would be washed. This is because Hinduism celebrates, and does not abhor menstruation. The Shakti philosophy upholds it as a gift which is responsible for creation of life. Nose piercing of the girl and placing a metal stud is a ritual that is invariably accompanied. As is true of any cultural or religious tradition, most Hindu parents want to and do observe these rituals very sincerely.

Hindu Council of Australia, has asked Catholic establishment to meet a Hindu Council delegation. Hindu Council would like to discuss the issue of Nose Piercing by young girls with the Catholic hierarchy so that the information can be disseminated by them to all catholic schools in Australia.

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