

Evelin Ilves and Danish Crown Princess Mary emphasised today, in their opening addresses given at the Education Free of Bullying conference, which is being organised by the Estonian Union for Child Welfare and the Office of the Chancellor of Justice, that by preventing or reducing bullying at school we protect society in general, as bullying influences the children concerned for the rest of their lives, affecting their relations and life management skills as adults.

"It is painful for me as a mother with a 4th class child to read a survey stating that one in five children attending Estonian schools has suffered from bullying and 24 per cent of students have suffered from bullying for years. These figures serve to demonstrate the gravity of the problem," stated Evelin Ilves.

"We know that there is no such thing as an average person, average teacher, average student. Everyone is different – and special. School should transform the differences and special features of children into their strengths instead of attempting to fit everyone into the same mould. The acknowledgement and cherishing of differences will make our people better and more tolerant from the very beginning, and will also help to make them stronger," emphasised the spouse of the President.

The Danish Crown Princess, who is on a two-day visit to Estonia with the representatives of Crown Princess Mary Foundation, Free of Bullying, said in her address that the prevention of bullying at school is a long-term investment into the future and welfare of our children. In her opening address, she focused on bullying that stems from social relations, such as someone being ignored or ostracised from a group.

"We all have the right to belong somewhere, to feel accepted," told Crown Princess Mary.

Today, Crown Princess Mary and Evelin Ilves will visit the German Gymnasium at Kadriorg and the Estonian Children's Literature Centre, which is patronised by the spouse of the President. They will together take part in a seminar entitled Sustainable Fashion as a Business Model.

Yesterday, Crown Princess Mary visited the Danish King's Garden, where renovation works

were carried out in 2013 by the City of Tallinn, supported by the Queen Margrethe and Prince Henrik Foundation and the AP Møller and Chastine Mc-Kinney Møller Foundation. She opened the Modern Royal Home photo exhibition in Kiek in de Kök and took part in a reception organised by the Mayor of Tallinn in Tallinn Town Hall. The Crown Princess also paid a visit to Suitsupääsupesa Kindergarten, which applies the Free of Bullying method that has been introduced within the framework of a programme implemented by the Estonian Union for Child Welfare.

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