

WOMADelaide may axe band of internet troll Tristan Barker's father

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WOMADelaide festival organisers are facing pressure to dump a lead act after one of the band's two members made derogatory comments about a suicide victim.

Top drummer [Michael Barker](#), a former member of groups Split Enz and The John Butler Trio, is to play with his two-man blues and roots group The Swamp Thing at this weekend's four-day [WOMADelaide](#) music festival.

Mr Barker was revealed by News Ltd on Sunday as the proud father of [Tristan Barker](#),

[Australia's most prolific internet troll](#).

The father and son have both played together in previous performances as The Swamp Thing.

The 18-year-old son has posted numerous questionable comments about celebrities, Muslims, murder victims such as Melbourne's [Jill Meagher](#) and emotionally unstable young people.

However, the teenager's father has now been criticised after commenting on his son's views, particularly about United States teenager [Amanda Todd](#), who hanged herself in October 2012.

Following the death Mr Barker jnr posted online comments about Miss Todd, calling her "slutty", "attention seeking" and a "histrionic attention whore".

When News Ltd spoke to Mr Barker snr about his son's views, he said: "Was she? Was she slutty and attention seeking?"

Ruben Cunningham of anti-bullying charity Angel's Goal has called on WOMADelaide organisers to remove Mr Barker snr from the line-up.

"I am disgusted, this is disgraceful that he would question why a young girl killed herself when he doesn't even know her," Mr Cunningham said.

"He shouldn't be allowed to play at an event sponsored by government organisations."



The parents of internet troll Tristan Barker - musician Michael Barker and his wife Cathy.

WOMADelaide is supported by Adelaide City Council and the Government of South Australia.

WOMADelaide's Mr McGrane told News Ltd today "this is about Tristan, we don't know all the facts, we are declining the opportunity to comment, we are not taking a position".

Sponsors of WOMADelaide include Hills Cider, Coca Cola, Coles and ABC. A number of sponsors said they had just learned of the comments made by the musician and were meeting to discuss them.

WOMADelaide's website says The Swamp Thing plays "gritty songs of love, loss, hope and salvation"; remarkably different to the diatribes posted on Mr Barker jnr's Facebook pages.

The father and son have played onstage most recently in January at Rotorua's Okere Falls Festival as The Swamp Thing.

Meanwhile Mr Barker snr said he did not try and give his son guidance about internet use. "I think for an 18-year-old those rules go out the window, it's basic rules of co-habitation; we leave each other alone and don't hurt one another and we give each other our space. Tristan is his own man now...I would say he is a ratbag."

He then went on to comment on his boy's hateful posts: "The people that apparently read his crap on (the internet) is more than most regional newspapers," he said.