



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Swan Electorate: Youth

SPEECH

Wednesday, 14 October 2015

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Questioner
Speaker Irons, Steve, MP

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Mr IRONS (Swan) (10:22): Youth in Australia is a vital resource and a very important part of our economy and our society. In a week where there has been a focus in parliament on troubled youth with the act of terrorism in Western Sydney, I want to reflect on some positive youth engagements in my electorate of Swan. I have spoken a bit in the past about the Esther Foundation and my involvement with this group, but today I want to focus on some effective youth programs being run in the City of Belmont in my electorate of Swan. The City of Belmont is a low-SES area, but its demographics are changing and it is raising its SES rating. It runs an effective youth engagement program through the YMCA Perth.

As members might know, the YMCA has been a provider of values based services to Australia's youth for over 150 years. Each year across Australia over 300,000 young people come into contact with YMCA youth services staff. The YMCA has dedicated youth services operating in more than 25 communities across the country, and one of them is in the City of Belmont. On Monday, 6 May 2013 they commenced a long-term contract to provide youth services to City of Belmont residents aged between 11 and 25, and they have been getting results. On Saturday night the annual mayoral dinner was held by the City of Belmont, which I attended. The city has an annual award which is called the City of Belmont Opportunity Award. That was awarded to the YMCA for the work they have been doing with youth in the City of Belmont.

One element of the YMCA Perth's program in Belmont has been The Base. The Base is a youth centre for 11- to 17-year-olds, who live or go to school in the City of Belmont, and is located in Abernethy Road, Cloverdale. It gives local young people somewhere to meet, eat and chat while having access to qualified youth workers and case workers and hosts a range of activities, including outings and outreach on Saturdays. As the City of Belmont says, 'It's a great place to hang out with friends, meet new people, play video games, show off your pool and table tennis skills and watch movies on the big screen'. The food and soft drinks provided are all free to young people. This is obviously funded by the ratepayers of the City of Belmont. So there is no state or federal funding. It is a local program, and I congratulate the City of Belmont for their input into looking after the youth of Belmont. Parents are also welcome to come along and visit.

We cannot start engaging with youth just at the age of 11. I want to particularly pay tribute to the PCYC and Glenys Godfrey, the MLA for Belmont, who have been successfully putting on a Blue Light Disco for seven- to 11-year-olds. They had one on 25 September, with 125 kids coming along. The police popped in. They will be running more. So, congratulations to the YMCA and to Glenys Godfrey.