



Speech by

**LINDA LAVARCH**

**STATE MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH**

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Hansard 16 September 1998

#### **DADS CARING FOR KIDS**

**Mrs LAVARCH** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (10.12 a.m.): From 31 August to 4 September, Australia celebrated Adult Learners' Week. This is a national celebration and promotion of adult learning, aimed at capturing the imagination of and encouraging more Australians to participate in adult learning.

In Queensland the promotion of adult learning is sponsored jointly by the Australian National Training Authority and the Department of Employment, Training and Industrial Relations. Part of Adult Learners' Week is the presentation of State awards in four categories: outstanding learner, outstanding tutor, outstanding provider and outstanding program. Today I will make particular mention of the outstanding program winner, Dads Caring for Kids. I congratulate the program coordinator, David Horstman, for his success in winning this prestigious award.

This program operates out of the Pine Rivers neighbourhood centre, which is located in my electorate, but it serves all of the Brisbane area. It is a unique program, being the only program in Australia that conducts regular training courses for fathers. The program is aimed at increasing fathers' knowledge and teaching them more parenting skills, especially when they experience difficulties with their children. The course runs for 10 weeks, one night per week. Its success can be measured by those who complete the entire course. Sixteen men were enrolled in the first course and all 16 finished. The program's success can also be measured by the number of agencies who refer clients to it, including Relationships Australia and the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care, as well as the private legal profession.

The need for such a program was identified by well-known and respected local community worker Betty Blake. She realised that there was a lack of training courses for fathers. Taking her idea to the Pine Rivers Welfare Association and the Pine Rivers Community Health Service, she received enthusiastic support. The program is now jointly funded and supported by those two services. I congratulate Betty Blake for her vision and both of those services for their support. I know that they are all delighted that the program has received the recognition it well deserves. I also congratulate the other award winners.

Time expired.

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