



Speech by

DESLEY BOYLE

MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

Hansard 7 September 2000

SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS; CHILD PROTECTION WEEK

Ms BOYLE (Cairns—ALP) (10.25 a.m.): Today I am privileged to be here to give recognition—and I am sure that there are many thousands of people in Cairns who join with me—to the important contribution that the South Sea Islanders have made and continue to make to this fine State of Queensland.

However, I would like to draw to the attention of honourable members that this is Child Protection Week 2000. Certainly, in the Cairns area, there is a very active committee sending the message out to people that if they know a child, or if within their family there is a child at risk of abuse or neglect, then for heaven's sake, they should face the problem. The sooner the problem is faced, the sooner contact is made with one of the worthy organisations that are available to assist, then the sooner the problem can be remedied and there is less likelihood of ongoing trauma or discomfort for either the child or other members of the family.

I would like to draw the attention of honourable members to one of the important groups of children who are at risk of neglect through no fault of their own, and those are children who have a parent with a mental illness. In times past we have not offered as much assistance to those people who have a mental illness as probably we should. It is indeed gratifying that health services have re-oriented their focus. Nonetheless, we need to care for the children who grow up in households with parents who through mental illness do not have the competence to provide the leadership, guidance and security that is necessary for their children's normal development.

I give my sincere compliments to the active committee in Cairns who have a week-long list of activities, culminating on Saturday next week with White Balloon Day and a sausage sizzle at Peace Park at The Esplanade. Their activities are aimed at the protection of children not only in Cairns but also throughout Queensland, and they are indeed to be commended.
