



Speech by

**DESLEY BOYLE**

**MEMBER FOR CAIRNS**

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Hansard 5 October 2000

**YELLOW RIBBON PROGRAM**

**Ms BOYLE** (Cairns—ALP) (10.17 a.m.): This morning honourable members of the House would have noticed on their benches a sheet with information about the Yellow Ribbon Program. I would like to draw members' attention to that important program as it is about raising the importance of the prevention of youth suicide in our community.

This program did not originate in Cairns, although I must say it has been given some profile in Cairns over recent months because it was taken up, in fact, by a Cairns lady, Naomi Wilson. The sad reality is that in the early 1990s health professionals recognised that the prevalence of youth suicide, particularly male youth suicide, in the far north was one of the worst in Australia.

This is an opportunity for me to give recognition to Mr John Boatman, who was the director of Lifeline. When I was the chair of the regional health authority and chair of the Family Resource Service, Mr Boatman approached me to put together some kind of program whereby we could work together to minimise youth suicide. They were the circumstances in which I initiated the far-north Queensland task force for the prevention of youth suicide.

That task force has gone from strength to strength. This is also an opportunity for me to give recognition to Councillor Fran Lindsay, who has stayed with that program over these past 10 years. Ms Wilson's more recent efforts to raise community awareness through the Yellow Ribbon Program are indeed to be commended and supported. I hope that all honourable members will proudly wear that yellow ribbon to give recognition to this tragic and futile problem in our society.

I dare say that some members themselves or their constituents have been touched by the tragedy of youth suicide. It is incumbent upon all of us in this House—in fact, all community members—to do what we can.

Time expired.

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