



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

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MIAMI STATE HIGH SCHOOL ENRICHMENT CENTRE

Mrs SMITH (Burleigh—ALP) (10.23 a.m.): One of the good news stories on the Gold Coast is the Enrichment Centre operating at the Miami State High School. The centre opened in 1997 and provides assistance to students with academic and behavioural issues. The centre's coordinator, Sally Ladgrove, is one of only three paid employees at the centre and they rely heavily on community volunteers.

The Enrichment Centre provides students with assistance in basic skills such as reading, numeracy, comprehension and also research skills, using the Internet as one of its tools. Perhaps even more importantly the centre provides a homelike environment and help with social skills. The centre has become a refuge for children to come and discuss their problems with a willing listener—problems that may otherwise impact on their academic performance.

The volunteers range in age from 18 to 80 and willingly give up their time to help students catch up with their peers. All volunteers receive training and continuing support from the coordinator so that they are confident in their roles as mentors. All of the students receive one-to-one attention from these dedicated helpers.

One of the hardest-working volunteers is Bernard Barnes, who recently won an award for his tireless work at the Enrichment Centre. Seventy-eight year old Bernard works full time. As well as giving assistance with literacy and numeracy he also tutors students in Japanese—a language he learned last year especially to help with his work at Miami State High.

Each week 145 students seek help from the Enrichment Centre. They can attend as often as they like for as long as they like and may be referred by parents or teachers or they can self-refer. Other schools are beginning to emulate this wonderful service. Merrimac and Benowa High Schools are putting in place similar programs. I congratulate Sally, her staff and all the volunteers and wish them well in their wonderful work.
