



Speech by

JOHN ENGLISH

MEMBER FOR REDLANDS

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REDLANDS YOUTH CHALLENGE

Mr ENGLISH (Redlands—ALP) (1.33 a.m.): This morning I rise to inform the House about an organisation in the Redlands area that is doing great work to help youth involved in drug and alcohol problems, the Redlands Youth Challenge. This organisation evolved out of the Teen Challenge organisation. Teen Challenge supported a lot of drug and alcohol counselling work that was done in the Redland shire. Finally, it was deemed suitable that we establish our own organisation, so we now have local ownership of the group. The Redlands Youth Challenge meets the needs of young people and their families in relation to the issues of drug and alcohol use. The coordinator, Chris Battistuzzi, does a fantastic job on the ground with the youth. He works through drug and alcohol problems with them.

As we know only too well, drug and alcohol abuse is a huge problem in our areas. I went to the launch of the Redlands Youth Challenge, where I listened to an address by ambulance officer Ron Henderson. Ron provided some alarming statistics about drug and alcohol abuse in our society. During his presentation he gave a range of statistics. One of the most alarming was that, in his experience working as a paramedic with the Queensland Ambulance Service, up until recently the youngest drug overdose victim of whom he had been aware was an 11-year-old-girl. Unfortunately, that record was broken by an 11-month-old baby who had ingested some of her mother's stash of heroin and overdosed. Thank heavens, due to the quick response of the Queensland Ambulance Service, and a hit of Narcan, the baby survived that terrible tragedy.

To highlight their partnership, the Queensland Ambulance Service and Teen Challenge have prepared this brochure that I have in my hand. When they attend drug overdoses, they fill out the details of the patient and hand it to them. When that person has recovered from their drug overdose, they have some information about how they were found, in what condition and a number of options that they have to try to solve the problems that they may be facing. I commend the work of Teen Challenge and Redlands Youth Challenge. I highlight the partnership between the Queensland Ambulance Service and Teen Challenge in trying to save the lives of all of our children. I commend their work to the House.
