



Speech by

**BONNY BARRY**

**MEMBER FOR ASPLEY**

---

Hansard 29 October 2002

### **ORANA YOUTH SHELTER**

**Ms BARRY** (Aspley—ALP) (5.52 p.m.): In my other life—or, should I say, my real life—I am the mother of four children aged 11 to 17 years who live in Strathpine. Like many members here today, I am grateful every single day that my kids arrive home safe, appear happy in their lives and enjoy what my husband and I hope is a fulfilling and supportive way of family life. I do not kid myself, however; I know that raising young people is one of life's greatest challenges. Public position, sufficient income, worldly possessions or good intentions are not necessarily the answer to happy children and young people. Homes can be tough places to live—battlegrounds for many families, unfortunately. The demons of domestic violence, poverty, unemployment and drugs affect our families most of all.

For many of our young people, living at home is no longer an option and they can be faced with the prospect of homelessness at the tender ages of 14 or 15 years. That is where the Orana Youth Shelter at Bald Hills makes its mark in the electorate of Aspley. It is a little piece of space, rest and understanding for homeless and at-risk youth aged 14 to 18 years, a home that gives young people a chance to seek the shelter and assistance that can save them from a life of despair and hopelessness that homelessness can bring. I am pleased to tell the House that Orana has been providing a service for young people in our community for over 20 years. Under the auspices of Queensland Baptist Care and with significant state government funding, the shelter provides emergency accommodation to young people who are either already homeless or at risk of being so. Residents can stay one day, several weeks or up to three months. There are places for up to six young people, but unfortunately the shelter turns away many more than it can help. But thankfully each year 200 young people have a chance to recover and survive just by the fact that Orana and its fantastic staff and volunteers are there for them.

I first became involved with Orana Youth Shelter after I met Sergeant Kev Phillips of Boondall Police Station. Kev came to tell me about his involvement with Orana and the Sponsor a Bed program. His discussions about how important it is for our police to be involved with not just the punishment of young people but also the solutions was one that made me jump on board and sponsor a bed at Orana for \$500 a year, money that goes towards the extras that make a difference to the kids who are there. Recently I was the MC at a function for businesspeople in the electorate which was attended by my good friend the member for Stafford, and over 60 businesses attended. Orana has 80 Sponsor a Bed places and I understand that it is halfway there. I thank the businesses which helped Orana. I particularly want to say thank you to Orana Youth Shelter, its staff, volunteers, and the Bald Hills community, who for the past 20 years have shown great commitment towards our youth. To the young people who have survived and thrived following their time at Orana, I say my biggest thanks.