



Speech by

## Ms Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Wednesday, 12 March 2008

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### BRISBANE YOUTH SERVICE

**Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (10.18 pm): I rise to inform the House that the Brisbane Youth Service is celebrating its 30th birthday with celebrations being held this Saturday, 15 March 2008. Although BYS formally turned 30 last year, having been in operation since 1977, I wish them a very happy 30th birthday and wish them all the very best for their birthday bash on Saturday.

BYS is located in Church Street, Fortitude Valley in my electorate. It is a non-government organisation providing a wide range of community services to homeless and disadvantaged young people aged 12 to 25 years and their children in the inner city of Brisbane.

The current BYS vision is 'New Futures for Young People' and the BYS purpose is 'to support homeless and at-risk young people and their children in realising their potential by upholding their dignity and forming genuine partnerships'. BYS values include recognising the fact that young people and their children trust them to act with integrity and that respectful and trusting relationships are fundamental to growth and change.

BYS provides a range of services across multiple levels of immediacy and intensity, from immediate needs such as food and showers through to intensive, therapeutic and planned support. The current wide range of services provided include: drop-in services including access to showers, laundry, food, mail, storage of belongings, computers and phones; a specialist youth medical clinic including a doctor and nurse; access to drug intervention workers which includes intervention, education and support and a needle and syringe exchange program; access to emergency assistance for housing and fares; an on-site mental health outreach clinic; community cultural development projects; transitional housing support and education programs; a range of parent support services for young families; and intensive personal support and counselling, to mention a few.

So unique and professional are the services of the BYS that recently it was approached to assist in engaging with young people outside its inner-city area. Following the tragic and sad loss of a teenager's life in Capalaba due to an unfortunate accident in a stormwater drain, the BYS was approached to assist the grieving young people in the area. Young people going through grief at the loss of their friend in tragic circumstances were gathering at the site and the community felt this issue needed to be addressed. BYS workers visited and immediately connected with the young people affected, quickly determined what support services were required and assisted in ensuring that these support and counselling services were organised. They also obtained agreement from the young people to meet with the local councillor where it was agreed that a permanent monument and memorial would be undertaken.

BYS obtains 86 per cent of its revenue from government sources, with the vast majority of this funding coming from the state government. I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the hardworking and dedicated executive management team of Angela Barnes, Phil Hancock and Jack Tong, whose commitment to helping young people is exemplary. I also acknowledge the tireless work and commitment of the current management committee, particularly President Mary Philip.