




Speech by

Peter Wellington

MEMBER FOR NICKLIN

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SUPPORTING TEENAGERS WITH EDUCATION, MOTHERING AND MENTORING SKILLS

 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (9.27 pm): Tonight I would like to share with members a good-news story, instead of the doom and gloom that we have heard recently about people being sacked and job losses. The Attorney-General may know what I am going to talk about, because on the weekend he and his lovely wife attended a function in aid of a program run by the Burnside State High School. Many young teenage mums are familiar with the program. It is called the STEMMS program, which stands for Supporting Teenagers with Education, Mothering and Mentoring Skills.

On Saturday night we held a function to help raise funds for the wonderful STEMMS program for young mums. Some graduate young mums came along. We heard some real-life stories about how their lives have been turned around by the program, which is supported by Education Queensland, TAFEs and universities and the department of communities. However, the message was that the unit cannot do it alone. It needs significant support and partnership from anyone who is able to assist with finances. The event was about raising funds to try to continue the program.

I put on the record that this program achieves amazing outcomes and results. Often we talk about cost-benefit analyses or analysing results to see whether a program has been beneficial. I have to say that this program is one of a kind for Queensland; maybe it is one of a kind for Australia. It achieves amazing results. It helps teenage mums by building their confidence and teaching them some real-life skills, so that they can be great mums, continue their education and then play a constructive role in our communities. We heard from some young mums who have jobs. Others are continuing on with university studies. They want to go back into our communities and be constructive workers to help others in need.

In the lead-up to the budget I know that a lot of departments are looking at cutting costs and getting better value for money. However, this is a wonderful program and we need to put aside politics. It is good for Queensland. I hope that the federal government reviews its support for the program. If we had more programs like this in Australia, we would see better outcomes. Fewer young mums would spend the rest of their lives on the dole. More young mums would become great players in our community and great role models for their children. I commend the program. If any members would like to know more about it, they are most welcome to contact the Burnside State High School, downtown Nambour.