




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

FOSTER AND KINSHIP CARER WEEK

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (10.21 pm): This week marks the beginning of Queensland's Foster and Kinship Carer Week, where the outstanding work of our state's great carers is praised and acknowledged. Currently, there are more than 4,400 foster and kinship carers in Queensland who are providing safe and loving homes to over 8,000 children in care.

On Thursday, 21 February I had the pleasure of being invited to attend the celebration for three foster carer families from the local area at Elevation Church, Scottsdale Drive, Burleigh. They came from around the Gold Coast. This celebration was a special event for my colleague Tarnya Smith, the member for Mount Ommaney, as this was her first official function since being named the Assistant Minister for Child Safety. I would like to congratulate the assistant minister on attaining that position. She will do a wonderful job in this very important area. I also congratulate Rob Molhoek who was in that position. He did a wonderful job in the 12 months he held that position.

These extraordinary families were being acknowledged for their service as foster carers ranging from 26 to 30 years. They take babies or children and keep them until they are 18. That is basically a lifetime for these children. The community showered Jenny, Mark, Lynda, Allan and Moira with many gifts for their dedication and commitment. It was inspiring to see not only the regional department but also hair salons, mechanics and many other local organisations acknowledge their important work in the service of children in need.

The Foster and Kinship Carer Excellence Awards are another fantastic way the Newman government aims to recognise their invaluable work. The awards for the south-east region were announced today with Beaudesert foster carers Jacqui and Wayne Grant being named the winners in a special ceremony. I also take the time to say to all those nominated that their commitment is just as invaluable. On behalf of the people of the Burleigh electorate, I would like to express our thanks.