




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

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ADJOURNMENT

Lions Children of Courage Awards

 **Mrs D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (9.06 pm): I rise to speak about the Lions Children of Courage Awards. These awards were first initiated in 1983 in Western Australia by the then District Governor, Joe Mason, to recognise a very special group of young Western Australians and their families. There were many awards that recognised the achievements of young people. However, children with special needs were not catered for. These awards are especially designed to recognise the courage and bravery shown by these children every day.

The Lions Children of Courage Awards is not a competition: every child who is nominated receives an award. It is hoped that by receiving the award it will act as an encouragement for their future, help them believe in themselves and help increase their self-worth. Nearly 100 children were recognised as children of courage in ceremonies hosted by 12 Lions and Lioness clubs within the last 12 months. Not only does the receiving of the award help the child; the family also benefits from the award, sharing in their pride and the recognition of how these children have overcome the many hardships that they face day to day.

The criteria of the awards have been altered to include siblings and also carers who need to look after their parents. This program allows members of the Lions family to show that they care about all children and they are proud to recognise their bravery and their determination to reach their full potential. This year in Redcliffe there were 18 recognised for this award, and I would like to try to briefly cover some of these wonderful children.

Rachelle and Breanna are twin sisters and are eight years old. They were born three months premature and spent much of their early life in hospital. Rachelle has combatted skin conditions and breathing problems through her short life but is a very happy, loving child. She loves art, fishing, football, karate and gaming. She has many friends but her very special friend is her twin sister, Breanna. Breanna is a brave and positive young girl who is currently being treated for a broken neck and is awaiting further treatment at the Royal Children's Hospital. Breanna had her accident falling off a trampoline. She is a little fighter with a great attitude. She loves art and craft, fishing, walking and gaming. We congratulate both Rachelle and Breanna for receiving these awards.

Elliot was recognised for a bravery award. He is 10 years old and was diagnosed with cancer and has undergone extensive chemotherapy treatment. He had a relapse in 2013 and in early 2014 he had radiation treatment followed by massive doses of chemotherapy and a bone marrow transplant. His brother, Jaidyn, who is 12 years old, was recognised because he donated his bone marrow and was a very brave boy in supporting his brother.

There are so many great stories. I cannot go through all of the stories of these wonderful kids who have faced challenges that we can only imagine, but these kids are incredible and they are brave. Their proud parents and siblings are extremely supportive and we congratulate them.

(Time expired)