



Speech By  
**Joan Pease**


**MEMBER FOR LYTTON**

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**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Babie-Leigh**

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (2.39 pm): I would like to tell the House about a young woman who lives in my electorate. Babie-Leigh is 20 years old. Growing up she was subjected to physical and emotional abuse within her family. At 17 she was studying year 12, working in a retail store and doing a certificate III in retail, but in the midst of that she was kicked out of home. She managed to complete year 12 in 2013, but over the next few years her life fell apart. She was living in and out of youth shelters, she suffered from depression and was self-harming, and she attempted suicide. Her aunt, who was a significant support in Babie's life, passed away, bringing Babie-Leigh close to breaking point. Sadly, Babie-Leigh's plight worsened during 2015 when she moved into a house with her friend and her friend's partner and children. In Babie-Leigh's words, she hit rock bottom. During that time, she was subjected to mental and sexual abuse. She describes that time as dark and hard to live through. Here was a young woman who grew up with abuse and family violence and was then violated by people she thought were her friends. Again, she found herself homeless, vulnerable and alone.

At that dreadful time in her life, Babie-Leigh counts herself fortunate to have come into contact with BABI, the bayside's wonderful youth and family service provider. BABI accepted Babie-Leigh into their housing program and, although she was still struggling with depression and self-harming, she was supported and encouraged to take part in the Skilling Queenslanders for Work, Get Set for Work program. I can only imagine how hard it was for Babie-Leigh to join that program, yet she found the courage to do so and was supported by the wonderful staff at BABI. She discovered a group of people she could feel safe with, she could learn with and she could create good memories with. Up until that point, her life had been about basic survival and getting through each day, but with the support of BABI and the world it introduced her to, Babie-Leigh has found the emotional energy to deal with her past and look towards building a future for herself. Babie-Leigh has completed both certificates II and III in hospitality and now wants to undertake a community services certificate so that she can help other young people in the community. She wants to reach out to young people who are going through rough times and connect them with the services and caring people who can help them with their struggles.

Babie-Leigh is just one young person that BABI has saved. In 2016 alone, 54 young people took part in their Get Set for Work program, funded by the Palaszczuk government. A truly inspiring aspect of the work BABI does is the way it draws in the local community and businesses, which can see the value in providing a helping hand to vulnerable youth. This support at a crucial time in young peoples' lives has resulted in them finding employment, has developed their skills and has built their resilience so they can become independent contributing members of society. I am so impressed by the work BABI does in our area and I am so very proud of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to funding not-for-profit agencies that provide services for our most marginalised and vulnerable. I am equally proud to be part of a government that has reintroduced Skilling Queenslanders for Work, which is doing vital work in improving skills—

*(Time expired)*