



Speech By  
**Aaron Harper**


**MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA**

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## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Clontarf Foundation**

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.03 am): I would like to tell the House about a special group of people who are making a huge difference to nearly 500 students in four secondary schools in Townsville. They are the awesome people I have met from the Clontarf Foundation who, as you would know, Mr Deputy Speaker Stewart, are located at Townsville State High School in your electorate and at three secondary schools in Thuringowa, those being Heatley, Kirwan and Thuringowa state high schools, of whom nearly 400 students are part of this terrific program.

The Clontarf Foundation, which has its origins in Western Australia, exists to improve the education, discipline, life skills, self-esteem and employment aspects of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. By doing so, the Clontarf Foundation equips them to participate more meaningfully in society. Students from years 7 to 12 voluntarily sign up to the Clontarf program, which sets key areas of growth and development in young people's lives with its key vehicle being football. I say well done to the Thuringowa team for winning the Clontarf Cup just last week.

I have spent several hours visiting all three schools in Thuringowa where Clontarf is now established. I spent some time with these young people and the outstanding staff who have only been in Townsville for about eight months. My last visit was to Thuringowa High just last week. I spoke with the students, staff and a pretty special mum of two of the students—she is, from my observation, an inspirational and amazing mum of nine kids—Ms Tullia Grego.

Tullia spoke so well about the importance of having this program embedded within the Thuringowa school community. Tullia has two of her children enrolled in the program. She spoke passionately about the positive effect the Clontarf program is having on their lives. I thank Tullia and principals Grant Dale, Steven Miskin and Meredith Wenta from Thuringowa High, Heatley High and Kirwan High respectively for supporting programs like the Clontarf Foundation and for making people so accessible to me on my visits. The leader of Clontarf Foundation in Townsville, Nathan Perrin, and all Clontarf support workers, such as former Cowboys players Anthony Mitchell, who is with the Kirwan High team; and Ricky Thorby, who is at Heatley; and the Blackhawks player at Thuringowa, are great mentors and are having a positive impact on these boys.

Clontarf has established 10 academies in Queensland and our state government has contributed \$2.3 million in funding for this outstanding foundation. To all involved in Clontarf, I say thank you. Thank you for doing what you are doing so humbly and quietly by mentoring, supporting and inspiring these young people. Fellow members, look up the Clontarf Foundation. They truly are the quiet achievers doing amazing things in our communities.