



Speech By
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ADJOURNMENT

4074 Family Fun Day; R U OK?

Ms PUGH (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (7.16 pm): Last Saturday I participated in the 4074 Family Fun Day burger-eating competition to raise funds for drought relief in Charleville. How could I say no when Milton Dick, the federal member for Oxley, double dared me to eat the double patty so I had to give it a go. Spoiler alert, I lost. While I was preparing for the challenge of a lifetime, I had a chat with a local resident and a good friend who was participating in the blokes round. His name is Dave Ross.

Mr Purdie: Hear, hear!

Ms PUGH: Hear, hear indeed! He joked, as he often does, that if he won the competition I would have to mention him in parliament tonight. He lost too, but that is not why I am talking about Dave tonight. I met Dave when my parents moved to the electorate last year. I posted on our local Facebook page 4074 Community & Beyond that my parents are moving to the area and could everybody please be nice and make them welcome. Dave went one better and posted up some rules for the area to help my parents assimilate. He poked fun at the quirky things about 4074 like the fact that we have heaps of snakes—or nope ropes as we call them—swimming deer, sharks, rabbits, foxes, roos and heaps of bats. We think they are from Moggill.

It was funny, it was good natured and they were larger than life like Dave himself. I started following Dave's adventures online. He had decided to climb Mount Everest and he made it to base camp before his team turned back due to adverse weather. He came back and hosted a community event to tell us all about his trek. I went along last year expecting a light-hearted tale of adventure and folly, but Dave surprised us all. Dave shared that the whole journey had been an effort to deal with his serious and ongoing depression. In fact, Dave disclosed that he had suicidal thoughts and had set himself the challenge of climbing Everest to challenge himself and keep the black dog at bay.

We are coming into R U OK? Week and I want to commend Dave for starting the conversation in our community around men's mental health. In men aged 18 to 45 in Australia, suicide is the number one cause of death. Organisations like Mates in Construction know this and they are working to prevent it with support for men working in construction.

This is a personal issue for me. This week is the anniversary of the day that my uncle took his life leaving behind two beautiful boys, now men, and a family who miss him very much. Last Friday I found myself at his grave while attending the funeral of a friend's father and I read the epitaph on his gravestone. It said, 'Steven. He tried his best and lost his way.' Too many of our young men are losing their way. We as a community need to make them see, as Dave did, that there is another way and we need to make sure we listen when they say, 'Hey, I'm not okay.'