




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Cairns Safer Streets

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (2.40 pm): Crime and the causes of crime are complex and multifaceted. Tackling the issues requires not only immediate action but also dedication, innovation and cooperation, because the solution to crime problems does not lie with any one agency, level of government or strategy. To achieve this, the Cairns Safer Streets initiative was born. In early 2017 Cairns Safer Streets initiated the youth activity enhancement program. Since April 2017 there have been over 94 youth activities in nine different locations with a total of 1,748 instances of participation in sports as varied as soccer, table tennis and traditional games—even frisbee and robotics. A preliminary review of the project saw improvement in the community and school based behaviour of some young people, improved peer interactions and positive participant and community feedback.

This crime-breaking initiative was to provide diversionary activities for young people in West Cairns. This was in response to issues raised by the residents of West Cairns in relation to juvenile delinquency and the lack of available activities and events for young people. Research shows that a lack of structured leisure and recreation activities is a significant criminological risk factor and is regarded as an important prevention and early intervention strategy to divert young people away from offending. Research also supports the notion that the positive and frequent use of public parks and spaces discourages antisocial behaviour, improves a community's view of itself and creates a sense of ownership and belonging.

The vision of Cairns Safer Streets is to improve community safety and wellbeing in not only West Cairns but also throughout Cairns through community and a whole-of-government approach. Its objective is to develop, implement and finalise projects relating to safety and wellbeing for the community and, more importantly, to ensure people feel safer.

The Cairns Safer Streets Taskforce has been established and has been operating since May 2013. It comprises representatives from six key agencies: the Queensland Police Service; the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships; the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women; the Department of Housing and Public Works; Education Queensland; and Queensland Health. These organisations and the people working in them also work with a number of NGOs to ensure that the people of Cairns will get what they need—that is, a far safer community. We are working towards it. As the representative of the people of Cairns I know that more needs to be done. I assure my electorate that more is being done to reduce the scourge of crime.