




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

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ADJOURNMENT

Cairns Electorate, Youth Justice

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (7.27 pm): Like many people in Cairns, and in Queensland, I am very aware of the challenges that we face in relation to youth justice. I believe, as does this government, that one of the best ways to tackle the problem is steering at-risk young people away from crime through diversionary tactics, such as the Cairns Safer Streets Task Force, of which I have spoken about in this chamber previously.

In addition, last week I was delighted to accompany the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, the Hon. Di Farmer, to the Wuchopperen Health Service in my electorate where the minister announced \$1 million in funding to extend Wuchopperen's family and wellbeing service by employing four new Indigenous youth and family workers in Cairns. With this extra funding, Wuchopperen would be better able to respond to families with children who are at risk, or are already in contact with the youth justice system. These Indigenous youth and family workers will create connections with youth justice and youth support services to make sure that families coming to the attention of these systems can more easily access the support they need. The new program will strengthen family units, which ultimately strengthens the community as a whole.

The Cairns community has a right to feel safe and expects young people to be accountable for their action, hence the fact that we have increased the number of magistrates working in this area in addition to building and expanding existing and new facilities to assist with containment. We also know that one of the best ways to keep the community safe is by preventing young people from offending in the first place, which is what this new investment is to help deliver.

In conjunction with this investment in Wuchopperen is Project Booyah, which, because of its success, has now been adopted in Tasmania, the ACT, New South Wales, and the Transition 2 Success program, which is a service delivered by Youth Justice, whose mission is to, 'Change the story for young people, the community and our organisation'. Additional funding will be provided over two to four years to establish a new Transition 2 Success program, in addition to establishing a community youth response, which may include services such as an after-hours diversion service, monitoring program and an alternative education bridging program. This program is in addition to current initiatives in Cairns, such as the integrated case management program, which is to work intensively with high-risk young offenders and their families in addition to bail support, legal advocacy services and our Strong Together program.

The issues that we face in the youth justice area are complex, many and varied. That is why I am pleased to inform the House that the Palaszczuk government's response is across all government departments and includes working with a number of local NGOs that are very aware of the challenges that are faced in my community. I am happy to report that these programs and initiatives are underway and well supported.