



Speech By  
**Scott Stewart**


**MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE**

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Record of Proceedings, 28 February 2019

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Townsville Electorate, Australia Day; Cavanagh, Master E**

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (2.27 pm): I rise today to recognise that on Australia Day each year for the last four years we have had the official flag-raising ceremony in Queensland in Townsville, and every year the Premier comes up as does the Governor, His Excellency Paul de Jersey. Townsville City Council also has Australia Day awards, and this year they were a little bit special. We heard that the rain started and did not stop for 12 days from that particular day but, more importantly, some of the recipients of these awards were overshadowed. I would like to draw the attention of the House to one particular young man who impressed me to no end. His name is Ethan Cavanagh, and he won the Young Citizen of the Year for Townsville City Council. I would like to spend the next two minutes explaining why.

Ethan's father passed away when he was only three years old, and we all have a number of young people who live in our communities where this is the case. This student, who is now in grade 6 at Townsville Grammar School, decided that he would do something different. Lots of us have children, and if we think back to our early days when we were 11 years old, when it came to our birthday and we had a party we would honestly relish the gifts that you would be given on that particular day.

Ethan is different. At the age of 11, this young man—who thinks like a 40-year-old—said to his mum, 'If you're going to throw me a party, I'm going to tell my friends not to bring presents. They're not to bring gifts for me that day. Instead, they're going to bring things they can put into a shopping basket that we can then give to sick kids and their families at Ronald McDonald House.' This is from an 11-year-old kid. How smart and how compassionate is this young man? This is why Ethan Cavanagh won Young Citizen of the Year. He called his collection campaign SMILE, which stands for 'share a meal in a loving environment'. He said—

It's a great appreciation for sick kids who are in need of having fun instead of just lying in bed.

He also said—

The purpose is for other kids to learn from this and try to accomplish this goal and maybe even make more baskets.

He is inspiring other young people to do what he did: stop thinking about yourselves and start thinking about others.

In her ministerial statement this morning Minister Grace said that principals are shaping the global leaders of the future. We all have a role in celebrating and nurturing the bright young men and women in our community to ensure they become the leaders of the future. I reflect on what the member for Bundaberg said. He said that it is everyone's responsibility to make sure the leaders of the future are encouraged and nurtured.