




Speech By
Amanda Camm

MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY

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MOTION

Youth Crime

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (5.41 pm): It was really interesting to hear the minister speak about us on this side of the House feeding the fears. It was also interesting to observe and hear the member for Pine Rivers talk about the cheap political stunt in us moving this motion in the House and also to hear the member for Thuringowa to talk about the serious problem—at least he recognises there is a serious problem. However, I do not think we are feeding the fears of the people of Queensland or, in particular, the people of Townsville. We saw a rescue chopper being utilised to round up juvenile offenders. That rescue chopper is a resource that should not be utilised—

Mr Harper: Get to it! Get to it!

Ms CAMM: The member opposite is proud that they had to use so many rescue choppers. I take that interjection.

Mr Harper interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Thuringowa, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms CAMM: They should not use a rescue chopper to round up juveniles when police resources are already under enormous stress. I point to mentions in the media on 13 May about the relentless juvenile crime over two weeks in North Queensland. People in North Queensland are scared. People in the community are scared. They are scared to take their children to school when cars are racing at over 100 kilometres an hour in school communities. Back in February the Premier said, 'The loss of four innocent lives linked to a spate of senseless crime will not go unanswered.' Yet in the last month we have seen a significant increase across Townsville.

The member for Townsville and the member for Thuringowa talk about the need for the member for Burdekin to get on the phone. He is on the phone. He is on the phone to the constituents of Townsville and Thuringowa because when they call those electorate offices they do not receive the response they expect from their elected representatives. The member for Burdekin is pleased to stand up and advocate, and I am also pleased to stand up and continue to support him. We have seen that there is a targeted approach, and the police minister came out the day after the use of a chopper and said that all the legislative measures and the frontline strategies at their disposal would make a difference. We certainly hope it does.

I also want to highlight that across the community, particularly my local community of Whitsunday and Mackay, there are marginalised and at-risk children and young people who remain forgotten by this government. They are the victims of family violence and neglect who are sadly influenced by older offenders. Sadly, they do not have safe homes to go to and they are exposed to illicit drugs and alcohol. There are also those young people who are suffering with significant mental health challenges and a lack of support services in my community of the Whitsundays. We have now been waiting several years for increased funding for youth services.

I want to make special mention of Youth Space in Proserpine, the Whitsunday Neighbourhood Hub and also YIRS, the Youth Information Referral Service, who at different times have come together with concepts and ideas. They have put these ideas forward to state government departments and youth justice agencies in terms of early intervention, opportunities for respite on weekends and opportunities to work with young, at-risk people. However, there is no funding for these services. I ask the Minister for Youth Justice to engage with grassroots organisations who are ready to go. They are ready to go with volunteer support, but apparently we only support young people from the hours of nine to four; that is all the government funds.

Mr Mander: That is working well!

Ms CAMM: Exactly. I take that interjection from the member for Everton. It is not working well. It is failing young people in my community.

The government speaks of early intervention but we will see if there is a significant allocation of funding in the upcoming budget for early intervention programs. I certainly hope that that funding is not just allocated to South-East Queensland and the large population centres but recognises rural, regional and remote Queensland where we already see a deficiency in services that help support young people and families at their most important time.