




Speech By
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ADJOURNMENT

Dyslexia Awareness Month; Mental Health Week

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (6.24 pm): I rise to talk about two issues today. We need to mark Mental Health Week and also that October is Dyslexia Awareness Month. It is unusual for me to wear a red tie. I am pleased to see many red ties today. I am sure they are all doing it specifically for Dyslexia Awareness Month. Dyslexia, as many people in this House know, affects at least one in 10 people and leads to a very difficult start to one's education. A really great author in my area, Sharon Boyce, has written a book called *Discovering Dyslexia* and I provided one to every school in my electorate, and also to some other people, because it gives some understanding about dyslexia and tools to help recognise how to put things in place that can overcome some of the difficulties. I am lucky to only have dyslexia in a mild form, but it caused a lot of difficulty in my earlier years. Please respect the month, mark the month, talk about it and provide support. I urge members to look at Sharon's book and see if it is something they might want to provide to their own schools.

Mental Health Week in Toowoomba is being marked by Lattes and Letters. Cafes are giving out little orange envelopes which have inside a story of someone struggling with mental health and the difficulties that they have gone through. When one buys a latte they can get that envelope and read their story to bring some empathy into our community. The Darling Downs has 21.4 people per 100,000 take their life on an annual basis. That is the highest in Queensland and one of the highest in Australia. We really need to deal with this. I would like to thank Lee Faulkner on Triple M Breakfast. He has been reading one of these orange envelopes out each morning so that people in the community can understand and empathise with people and reach out to make sure that we are all working together to make sure people in our community are okay.

Momentum Mental Health is a community mental health and wellbeing organisation in Toowoomba that provides one-to-one and group coaching to people who want to work on their mental health. They are doing something very different. The organisation is working with the 'missing middle'—those people who fall through the cracks and who are not sick enough for acute treatment at our completely stretched and overworked hospital system in Toowoomba. This mental health wellbeing organisation is using community donations to support this unfunded group. Next time the health minister is in Toowoomba I encourage her to have a look at the organisation and consider some funding for the good work they do.