




Speech By
Nigel Dalton

MEMBER FOR MACKAY

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ADJOURNMENT

Mackay Electorate, RISE

 **Mr DALTON** (Mackay—LNP) (9.21 pm): I rise today to speak about a program making real and lasting difference to the future of Rugby League in Queensland, particularly in my electorate of Mackay. That program is RISE. RISE is more than just training; it is structured, evidence-based development pathways that support young players and coaches beyond the community level. It targets boys aged 13 to 15 and girls aged 13 to 16 through five face-to-face sessions that are focused on physical preparation, technical and tactical skills, strength and conditioning.

RISE challenges traditional biases in early talent selection, focusing instead on long-term development and inclusivity. Participants earn nationally recognised accreditation—bronze for under 13s, silver for under 14s, and gold for under 15s—enabling them to contribute to back to the game as referees, League Safe trainers and community coaches. Coaches also benefit from a consistent, state aligned model of player development, ensuring that high-quality training is accessible across Australia.

You might ask what RISE stands for. R stands for routine, building consistency and goals; I stands for identity, fostering pride, loyalty and gratitude; S stands for socialise, promoting teamwork and mateship; and E stands for evolve, encouraging resilience and growth. These are not just sporting skills; these are life skills that young people will have for the rest of their lives after leaving the field.

I am proud that Mackay hosts one of the largest programs of RISE in Queensland. There are 250 young players across five age groups, 60 per cent of whom come from state schools, demonstrating strong grassroots engagement. This success would not be possible without the tireless dedication of the volunteers and coaches who give their time and expertise to support the next generation. Programs like RISE have already helped produce Queensland and NRL stars like Tom Dearden, Reuben Cotter, Daly Cherry-Evans, Dane Gagai, Brittney Breasley-Nati and Renae Kunst.

RISE builds athletes, leaders and communities. It gives young people the skills and spirit to rise. The RISE program starts in Mackay on Monday, which is very timely following the NRL and NRLW matches this weekend. I commend all involved and look forward to seeing our young Queenslanders achieve great things both on and off the field.