

Question on Notice

No. 2028

Asked on 7 October 2010

MS STONE asked the Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women (MS STRUTHERS)—

Will the Minister detail what the State Government is doing to support Schoolies Week 2010?

ANSWER

The State Government is working with councils and local organisations to make sure young people stay safe. There are four key locations in Queensland where young people congregate to celebrate Schoolies Week—the Gold Coast, Airlie Beach, Magnetic Island and Yeppoon.

This year, the Queensland Government has provided funding of \$40,000 to the Whitsunday Regional Council for Airlie Beach, \$20,000 to Red Frogs Australia for services on Magnetic Island and \$20,000 to the Rockhampton Police Citizens Youth Club near Yeppoon to help keep young people safe at these locations during Schoolies Week. A further \$610,000 in funding has been provided for the Gold Coast Schoolies Community Safety Response.

The Department of Communities will deliver over 250 school education presentations in high schools, working in partnership with other Queensland Government agencies and a number of non-government organisations. These presentations outline students' rights and responsibilities while attending Schoolies and provide important information on key safety strategies which aim to minimise risk and harm.

The department has also developed key communication materials focusing on proactively educating and informing Schoolies and their parents before Schoolies activities commence. The Schoolies Information Booklet and the Parents Guide to a Safer Schoolies Booklet are available to school leavers across the State online at www.schoolies.qld.gov.au. These materials focus on safety, personal responsibility and respecting the local community.

The Queensland Government also provides the general public with information on Schoolies activities and will extend the hours of operation of the Schoolies Hotline (phone 13QGOV or 13 74 68) during Schoolies.

This hotline will provide a 24/7 contact point for information and referral for Schoolies, their parents and the general public.

Through the Safer Schoolies initiative, the Queensland Government is working to create positive and safe environments for young people and communities in Queensland during the Schoolies period.

While the Queensland Government does not promote or encourage attendance at Schoolies, we remain committed to supporting the safety of schoolies and local communities during Schoolies celebrations.

I would particularly like to express my appreciation for the hard work of the non-government organisations and hundreds of volunteers that contribute each year to the Safer Schoolies Initiative and help to provide supportive and safe environments for Queensland's school leavers.

I thank the honourable Member for her support the Government's efforts to help keep our young people supported and safe during Schoolies Week celebrations.