

Hon Dan Caddy; Hon Ayor Makur Chuot; Hon Donna Faragher; Hon Brian Walker; Hon Peter Foster; Hon Kyle McGinn; Hon Alannah MacTiernan

AT-RISK YOUTH

Motion

HON DAN CADDY (North Metropolitan) [10.09 am] — without notice: I move —

That the Legislative Council commends the McGowan government on its commitment to programs for at-risk youth, including the ongoing funding and support for the police and community youth centres programs, and acknowledges the fantastic work done by PCYC staff and volunteers around the state.

Modern society, the world we all live in today, is more than ever built on the work of those in the community sector, both paid and volunteers. Indeed, today whole industries exist that could not exist without the countless hours put in by these workers and volunteers. This can be said of many sectors, but it is especially true for the myriad organisations that are set up to provide services to those in our society who are identified as at-risk youth. There are few areas of our society for which funding from government can have a more valuable and more valued impact on our youth, and the subset of that group most desperately needing funding is those who are identified as at-risk youth. There are also few areas of our society for which funding can have such a level of immediate and at the same time long-term impact, both on the individuals and on society as a whole. I bring this motion to the house today to recognise the funding that is provided by this government to service providers in this area and to explain just what this achieves.

As outlined in the motion, I will speak about the history of police and community youth centres as an organisation, and about where it has come from and the benefits that it provides to Western Australian society. Time permitting, I will also talk a little about another fantastic organisation based in Leederville in the North Metropolitan Region called PICYS, the Perth Inner City Youth Service, and the fantastic work being done by Andrew Hall and his team. Those members who, like me, are keen observers of what happens in the other place, will notice that not long ago the Minister for Police acknowledged the eightieth anniversary of the PCYC organisation, now known as police and community youth centres. The first PCYC in Western Australia was established in 1941. For 80 years now, PCYCs have been offering programs for youth in this state. The PCYC was originally borne out of a partnership between Rotary and the Western Australia Police Force and was called the Police Boys' Club. Even when it was known as the Police Boys' Club 80 years ago, its goals and what it aimed to achieve were very similar to what the modern PCYC sees as its goals. The original club was set up during the Second World War, a time when many fathers were at war. Many women were working during the war effort, some for the first time, and also looking after their families. The purpose of this club was to give boys some structure and guidance in their lives. They potentially had male role models when those role models may not have been at home. Despite the name, I am reliably informed that even though it was known as the Police Boys' Club, girls were also welcomed.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: It sounds like the Labor Party, or what it used to be.

Hon DAN CADDY: Much of it was centred around sport, Hon Alannah MacTiernan. There was a gymnastics program for the girls. Most of the boys' activities were focused around boxing, a little bit like a Liberal Party love-in at Rottneest—a bit of a punch-up!

Later, this developed into more complex programs specifically designed to ensure that young people not only remained active, but also received the support they needed. Programs were designed to keep these young people on a positive trajectory into adulthood. At some stage along the journey, the Police Boys' Club changed its name to the Police and Citizens Youth Club, which was its nomenclature when I was a young man, and now we have the police and community youth centres.

I would like to provide some facts and figures and outline where the PCYC operates in WA, what it provides and, most importantly, what is achieved. These centres operate right across Western Australia. They provide a variety of recreational activities, support services, training and even educational opportunities for local youth. I will talk a little more about the educational opportunities later. They have really taken off in the last 25 years.

Although the set-up is similar across the PCYCs, the local input is really important. The programs offered are often very much tailored to the needs and wants of youth in the area. That is a critical component of the importance of PCYCs and also, I would suggest, why they are so successful. They are set up at a grassroots level; they are on the ground in the local suburbs. The people organising them and the police officers involved volunteer their time. They are so successful because of this local involvement.

Regional members will be pleased to know that of the 16 permanent PCYCs, 10 can be found in regional areas, from as far south as Albany right up to Kununurra. Members may think that given the size of Western Australia—indeed, it is one of the largest jurisdictions in the world—16 centres across the state is not a lot, and that is true. How fantastic would it be if we could have a PCYC in every regional centre, but that is simply not possible. This is why the Blue Light youth activity units are critically important. Under this program, PCYCs in regional areas work with the Western Australia Police Force to create Blue Light youth activity units. Older members in the chamber may

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remember the old Blue Light disco days. I know that Hon Martin Pritchard was a big fan, as was Hon Dr Brad Pettitt, as he was just telling me.

Hon Darren West: Very groovy.

Hon DAN CADDY: Yes, they were very groovy.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: I didn't know Martin was so wild. I can't imagine it!

Hon DAN CADDY: You should see his moves, minister.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon DAN CADDY: There are 35 Blue Light youth activity units around the state, from as far away as Balgo, Esperance, South Hedland and Wyndham—they are located all over the state. That is a brief tour, geographically and structurally, of the police and community youth centres and the Blue Light youth activity centres.

As I mentioned, the PCYCs run many programs. Today I would like to reference two individual programs. One is a program called safeSPACE. It is run in about half of the PCYCs. It is fantastic. It gives youth and children somewhere to go, as the name suggests—a safe space—before and after school. It is critically important, especially in some regional areas, for youth who are identified as at risk in those areas. It does not just offer youth a safe space; it offers diversionary programs and provides the structure and support that these young people need. Some of them go a bit further. The PCYC in Albany also offers a police rangers program. I understand that is also run during safeSPACE time. The other critically important thing it offers is formal education and training. I touched on this briefly earlier. It started in the mid-1990s, about 25 years ago. The PCYCs started to offer a number of certificates that young people in the community could work towards and attain through the PCYC program: certificate I and II in automotive vocational preparation, certificate I in leadership, certificate I in general education for adults and certificate II in engineering pathways. I do not have the numbers to hand of how many people have graduated from these programs but given that they are in their twenty-sixth or twenty-seventh year, I can only assume it is a very successful program, certainly from everything I have heard.

Participation is a difficult one. We measure it with statistics. Two things jump out at me when looking at the 2019–20 annual report. This year's budget for PCYCs around the state was about \$13 million, of which more than half came from the state government. Throughout the year, nearly a quarter of a million attendances to PCYCs around the state were recorded. We do not need to crunch the numbers too much to realise that with that budget, the number of young people who are being positively influenced, whether they are given a safe space through the safeSPACE program, given an educational opportunity or simply given structure and mentoring in their life, it is a fantastic return for the money that is spent. This goes to the heart of my motion, which is recognising the government's commitment to the PCYC moving forward. I will read a little of the PCYC's press release, which states —

... “Without this support, it is unlikely that PCYC could have continued to provide the necessary diversionary programs, alternative education, training opportunities and activities to support the most at risk and disadvantaged young people across WA.” This new commitment represents an increase in funding from previous years and will enable PCYC to deliver vital programs and activities across the state. It also demonstrates the Government's confidence in the work undertaken by one of WA's iconic not-for-profit organisations.

The funding is critical for the ongoing viability of PCYC. On top of that \$18 million, another \$175 000 was put aside, specifically for items in the south west, in Bunbury and Collie.

Another important stream of income for PCYC is from fundraising across the community. I mention this because it is something that is close to my heart. Given I am speaking on this motion today, it will not surprise members to hear that I have been a supporter of PCYC for many years. More recently, in March 2018, I became a Big Change Club raffle member. This membership is fantastic. It allows me, being the forgetful person I am, to automatically donate through my credit card to this most worthy of institutions. The 2019–20 annual report shows that just under 15 per cent of PCYC funding comes from the community. This is testament to the fact that the community understands this is a critical area.

I note that time is getting tight, so I want to do a shout-out to local governments that support PCYCs. Members will have heard me criticise local government previously, but on this issue I have nothing but praise for them, because every single local government in the state that owns a building out of which a PCYC operates gives them that building on a peppercorn lease. This is critically important, and I congratulate local governments on this. Some local government authorities donate directly, but every single dollar that these centres save from not paying commercial rates goes directly to our youth and directly to improving the lives of young people in our local government areas.

I want to finish quickly with a quote from my local PCYC —

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In summary, PCYC exists so the children and young people have a safe place to go ... the activities, diversionary programs and alternate education and training opportunities keep children and young people active and engaged so they can reach their potential and stay on a positive life path.

The PRESIDENT: Honourable member, it is customary to wait until the President has finished speaking.

HON AYOR MAKUR CHUOT (North Metropolitan) [10.22 am]: Thank you, President. I thank Hon Dan Caddy for bringing to this place this great motion on such an important topic. In our community, 20 per cent of the population is children and young people, from the age of 12 to 25 years of age. As I have said, our youth are our future. It is important for the government and the community to look at issues affecting youth in the community and to support our youth who are going through such issues. I have previously highlighted issues that are important in our community, such as youth crime, mental health, employment and homelessness. These issues have gotten worse during COVID times, because a lot of young people do not have permanent jobs and they face a lot of issues. The issues affecting young people do not fall under only one ministerial portfolio, so it is important that, as government members, we support all of our ministers involved in this vision to make life better for young people in our community.

I also acknowledge the McGowan government and Hon Dave Kelly on the great initiatives in the important youth portfolio. I was really lucky to be given the chance to attend a briefing with Minister Kelly on 9 August. It was amazing to see the great initiative *Beyond 2020: WA youth action plan 2020–22* put up by the minister. That action plan has touched my heart and I am glad that it was launched in January this year. The idea of the action plan is for the McGowan government to assist our young people from the age of 10 years to 25 years. The action plan is based on consultation and basically the need for the government to concentrate on the diversity amongst young people, who comprise 20 per cent of our community, and to support them through the challenges they face during COVID times. The consultation focused on what was important for young people and the action plan prioritised seven areas. The first is to ensure that the voices of young people in the community are heard. The second is to make sure we assist our young people to reach their full potential in the community. The third is to make sure our young people secure jobs in the community, as we know they are struggling. Climate change is another issue, as is mental health and wellbeing. But the most important priority at the moment is to secure housing and to prevent homelessness in our community. Young people also need access to the services they need.

I was happy to see another important issue in the action plan. In the briefing with Minister Kelly, mention was made of \$360 000 from the government to support the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia to provide programs to help our youth. I am really proud to be part of a government that acknowledges the issues within our community, and provides a plan to make it better for our youth.

HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan) [10.27 am]: I rise to make a few comments in this debate on the motion moved by Hon Dan Caddy. Part of the wording contained in the motion is unnecessary, although it is unsurprising, coming from a member of the Labor Party. Perhaps it would have been better to have moved a motion that entirely revolved around commending PCYCs, which I strongly support, and other programs and services provided across the state in support of young people, particularly those at risk, rather than the self-congratulatory tone of this motion. I think Hon Dan Caddy would agree with me that many youth organisations, like PCYCs and many others—I will reflect on a couple of them today if I have the opportunity—have received bipartisan support for many years from governments of both persuasions. I say that perhaps with a little authority, given I am a former Minister for Youth, which is a portfolio for which I am proud to have been the minister. Hopefully, in my comments today, and perhaps with the indulgence of the mover of the motion, I will reflect on not only police and community youth centres, but also a range of organisations that provide outstanding support to young people across the state.

I absolutely agree with all the comments made by Hon Dan Caddy on the importance and value of PCYCs. I recognise that they have been part of our community for 80 years, I think, which is an outstanding achievement. Over that period, they have supported thousands and thousands of young Western Australians irrespective of their circumstance, some of whom may fall under the category of being at risk. As Hon Dan Caddy indicated, PCYCs provide a range of programs and initiatives. Each are different, and it is fantastic that we have PCYCs in not only metropolitan Perth but also regional parts of Western Australia. Certainly, I think that the PCYCs in regional WA that I have visited during my time in this place have become a hub within the community and draw young people in. PCYCs may have various different and individual programs depending on their location, but at their core is a clear focus on supporting young people to achieve their very best.

I also acknowledge the important role of youth workers and volunteers, and WA Police for its ongoing support of PCYCs and the valuable work that they undertake every day in support of young people.

As I say, with the indulgence of the house, I might broaden this out a little, because it is always good to acknowledge youth organisations in this place. In addition to PCYCs, of course, there are many youth organisations that might focus more particularly in a local government area, and then there are others like PCYCs that are broader in scope.

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I refer to some of the more specific ones. Obviously, we have fantastic youth centres within all our electorates. Just last week I was at the wonderful Swan City Youth Service with Ray and his team out there. That service has been providing really valuable services to young people in Midland and the surrounding eastern suburbs for a number of years. It provides a variety of programs in a safe space for young people to come to. It runs music, cooking, driving and fitness programs, a parents and bubs program and a young Aboriginal men's group. I heard Hon Dan Caddy refer to some PCYCs that deliver training programs; certainly, the Swan City Youth Service partners with North Metropolitan TAFE to engage young people who are otherwise disengaged from mainstream schooling to complete their certificate of general education for adults, which is a fantastic thing.

I also want to recognise that a number of other youth organisations have been part of our community for a number of years, such as the YMCA. Every year, this Parliament plays host to the YMCA Youth Parliament. The YMCA has many other programs as well. There is also Girl Guides Western Australia and Scouts Australia. I think that if we were to do a straw poll in this house, there would be a few members who would put their hand up to say that they had been a girl guide or a scout in their younger years. I am very pleased that my daughter has continued in my tradition and is a girl guide, although I will say that her uniform is a bit more user-friendly than the one I used to have to wear! Each of those programs provides wonderful opportunities for young people to learn valuable life skills, make new friends and increase their self-esteem and confidence, again, with the support in those cases of mainly volunteers.

I also want to acknowledge a particular program that I am very, very fond of and have spoken of on many occasions in this house, and that is the Cadets WA program. That program has now been in place in this state for many years. It was established by a former Minister for Youth, Mike Board. When I came in as the Minister for Youth it came to my attention that the program had not received a funding increase for 14 years, and the reality is that programs like the Cadets WA, PCYCs—I want to acknowledge the support that the government has given to the PCYCs; that is a good thing—girl guides and a range of others require funding and support, and where that can be provided and increased, I think everyone in this house would support that. I think the Cadets WA program is very valuable. Often, when we think of cadets, maybe we think of the more traditional cadets such as the Air Force, Navy and Army Cadets, but I think the really good thing about the cadets program is that it is able to engage young people across a range of areas. Not everyone wants to join the Army Cadets, but they might want to join the Bush Rangers WA or surf life saving cadets. When I was minister, I was very keen to increase the breadth of the Cadets WA program, and I think this would be a good thing for government to consider. When I was minister—perhaps it was fortuitous, because I was also the Minister for Environment at the time—I was very keen to see the cadets program actually extended into the primary school years. That was in the context of delivering a River Rangers cadet program. I felt it was important that we should be engaging young people in really positive activities before they even get into high school.

In saying that, I want to acknowledge all organisations that are involved in the youth space. I want to particularly acknowledge—it is reflected in the motion; I am pleased to see it is there—the support for youth workers and volunteers and everyone involved in delivering programs and initiatives, whether within the PCYCs or other areas. I would say that youth workers in particular are often very much unsung heroes. They can be a sounding board. They are a safe person for young people, particularly those in need or who may well be at risk, to be able to talk to in a non-judgemental way. For some, it will probably be the first time that they have had an opportunity to speak and feel relaxed enough to talk to someone about their worries or concerns, or what they might be going through in their life. Those youth workers play a crucial role in providing opportunities and giving young people confidence that they can have a good and positive life, and that, with the supports and structures around them that are provided through PCYC and other organisations, they can live a very fruitful life. I, too, want to commend the youth workers, volunteers, and everyone involved in this very important area.

HON DR BRIAN WALKER (East Metropolitan) [10.37 am]: I rise as a member of the crossbench to thank Hon Dan Caddy for this motion and certainly to support it, but also to add a few words of my own. Members might recall the discussion yesterday and my contribution when I looked at health and observed that dealing with problems before they arise and dealing with the cause before it causes problems is much more effective and much more cost worthy. I have some particular experience in this, as I used to be the medical officer for the boxing club of a police club in Hong Kong. I will give this example to members, because youth across the world are pretty much the same. It is a troubled time, changing from a child into an adult, and that adolescent period is always a time of concern for parents and children alike. I speak also as someone who, in the Australian context, has been an Army Cadet and a surf life saver; in fact, some of my best memories were at the City of Perth Surf Life Saving Club at City Beach, where I took my first swim on returning to this wonderful country.

I return to the boxing club. Members might be surprised to know that in the Chinese Hong Kong context, there is a fairly strong drive of disaffected youth towards the criminality of the triads, leading them into gang warfare and all kinds of horrible things. It must be said that Hong Kong is a particularly safe place to work and walk. Ladies can walk alone at night unsupported in the streets without fear of being attacked. It is a far safer country than most other places in the world. However, there are some serious concerns about criminality. Members might be surprised

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to know that when the police picked up the youth who were getting involved in crime, they were given the choice of going before the magistrate or joining one of the clubs offered. For example, the girls had a club teaching quite energetic dance routines, but the young men were invited to join the boxing club. I ask members: a young criminal being taught how to fight in the ring—does that make any sense? Here we see what can happen in the Australian context when police officers who care about the community look at things that might help. Thinking outside the box is highly recommended. I commend the PCYC for all the good it does and all the creation it can bring to this topic. However, in that particular context the boxing club was taught by police officers. Potential thugs were being taught how to stand up in boxing gloves and fight according to the Queensberry rules. Members might think we are now teaching them how to beat people up on the streets. But what they did—members might find this interesting—was to then get together all the police officers in the police officers club and set up a proper boxing ring with internationally accredited referees. Those youngsters got up to fight proper three-round fights in front of an applauding public of police officers. They gained a great amount of respect. It takes courage to stand up there and fight, especially if they are losing, and to stand the courage and accept the result of the fight, without winning or losing. To be applauded by the people who arrested them gave them so much face, so much confidence in themselves.

Members may be interested to know that of all the young men who went through that system, not a single one reverted to crime; in fact, they had wonderful results. I remember one young man in particular, an officer in the fire brigade, putting his life at risk for the community he had been threatening before. This is an example of how we can treat our youth, encouraging them at a time when they are very easily discouraged. It is not just the responsibility of the McGowan government—thank you for that—but of every government. We need to care for our youth; they are our future. To bring them from a state whereby they cannot respect themselves to a state whereby they can and respect others, I particularly like the concept of introducing them to environmental issues and climate change issues. How might we then be able to encourage them to reverse the damage that has been caused by previous generations? How might we encourage them to pick up rubbish when they are passing by, cleaning the beaches, engaging in helping with the regeneration of land? This is their country—a country they can respect and admire, and the people in this country, of whichever shade or belief.

Protecting our youth, giving them every opportunity to thrive and flourish at a difficult time in their lives, is a vitally important aspect of government. I thank Hon Dan Caddy for bringing this motion to the house, and I commend it.

HON PETER FOSTER (Mining and Pastoral) [10.43 am]: President, thank you for the opportunity to speak on the motion moved by Hon Dan Caddy on at-risk youth programs and police and community youth centre programs, and, furthermore, the work done by PCYC staff and volunteers. I note that today is International Youth Day—a day on which we celebrate the importance of young people across our community. The McGowan government is committed to providing opportunities for Western Australian youth to participate and be heard, including the Ministerial Youth Advisory Council, which was established by our government in 2017.

As I mentioned in my inaugural address, prior to entering state Parliament, I worked for the Department for Child Protection and Family Support for a few years. In that role I worked daily with at-risk youth. I have a long history of involvement with the Tom Price Youth Support Association as a volunteer for over 12 years. The association delivers services to at-risk youth in the inland towns of Tom Price and Paraburdoo. The TPYSA is a community not-for-profit organisation that delivers services from two locations—the Tom Price Youth Centre and the Paraburdoo Youth Centre. The TPYSA operates at the coalface of community services locally, is client-focused and holistic in its service delivery and actively seeks to increase opportunities for young people in the broader community. It operates a range of programs, including case management, drug and alcohol counselling, juvenile justice and the very popular youth drop-in service, as well as promoting healthy lifestyles and harm minimisation skills. I acknowledge and thank the many volunteers who assist Marian Hearne and her team at the Tom Price Youth Support Association, from running the many events to cooking snags on the barbeque on a Friday night.

This year the McGowan government provided \$366 453 to the Tom Price Youth Support Association for those case management and recreation activities. Through my personal experiences I have seen firsthand the challenges faced by young people in our community and I have also seen the positive impact that the investments made by this government have had on our young people. I know the McGowan government is committed to supporting at-risk youth across WA. This government knows that early intervention with at-risk people helps to turn lives around and reduce the rate of offending in our community.

As Hon Ayor Makur Chuot mentioned in her speech, our youth are at risk in a range of areas, including the challenges of COVID-19. I will talk briefly about the COVID-19 youth recovery grants. Young people in WA have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19. Social isolation, few opportunities to engage in the community and job losses associated with the public health response were tough on everyone, including young people. The *Beyond 2020 WA Youth Action Plan 2020–22*, which was drawn up following years of consultation, outlines how the state government is supporting Western Australians and the communities they live in as the state recovers. As has been

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identified, young people make up 20 per cent of the state's population: 21 per cent live in regional WA, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders make up six per cent, an estimated 11 per cent identify as LGBTIQA, and two per cent have a disability.

Following the release of the action plan, the Minister for Youth announced the 2020–21 Youth Recovery Grants program. The aim of these grants is to support young people following the COVID-19 pandemic; in particular, projects that support, inform and build the capacity of young people in gaining and retaining employment opportunities, and in mental health. Thirty-one grants were awarded for projects supporting young people during the recovery phase. The grants total more than \$202 000. Some of the grants were awarded in the Mining and Pastoral Region, which I represent. A grant of \$7 930 was made to the Royal Life Saving Society Western Australia to engage local Aboriginal youth to obtain their bronze medallion, which will assist them in gaining employment as lifeguards at local pools across the Kimberley. An amount of \$5 000 was provided to the Constable Care Foundation to work with upper primary and high school students in the Derby area on intensive filmmaking programs. An amount of \$10 000 was provided to the West Kimberley youth development program to assist in the development of human and social capital of Aboriginal young people in the Derby area who are currently struggling to enter the workforce, and \$5 000 was provided to the Teach Learn Grow rural tutoring program for free one-on-one tutoring to students in rural and remote schools in the south west, midwest, great southern and wheatbelt areas. Noting the time, I will wrap up because I believe there are a few more speakers. I commend Hon Dan Caddy for moving this motion today and I congratulate the McGowan government on its commitment to programs such as those I have outlined for at-risk youth in our community.

HON KYLE MCGINN (Mining and Pastoral — Parliamentary Secretary) [10.48 am]: I thank Hon Dan Caddy for bringing the motion to the house today. It is a very timely and good motion for us to discuss in the chamber. I will touch quickly on a point made by Hon Dr Brian Walker about boxing. The police and community youth centres are doing a fabulous job to bring discipline and respect into that space. I think everyone who has lived in a regional area would understand going to boxing training at a PCYC and seeing the older people training and the respect that the younger people have for them, for being able to discipline themselves into that sport. I will say, though, that I think the world is changing, and that basketball seems to be the new boxing. Not for me, though—I could not hit a three-pointer to save my life!

Hon Samantha Rowe: Because of your height?

Hon KYLE MCGINN: Definitely the height issue!

I am a huge supporter of PCYCs. I think they are absolutely amazing organisations that have been well supported by this government. Some of the things I have seen in PCYCs since coming to this place in 2017 need to be touched upon.

Firstly, the Carnarvon PCYC. When I first went out to visit the Carnarvon PCYC we were looking at delivering on an election commitment to upgrade that PCYC. When I got there, it looked like the building had been there for more than 50 years. All the ceiling fans were bent and there was an old-school skating rink. However, the biggest disadvantage was that it was situated out of town, right at the entrance to Carnarvon, which was a good half an hour to 40-minute walk for kids from the town. That was causing havoc. The police would be driving around town after 6.00 pm to pick up kids and take them out to the PCYC. When you got there, there would be more than 100 kids, absolutely running amok but having a ball in a very safe space.

That is the key here: PCYCs create a safe space for at-risk youth. The volunteers and youth police officers who work there do an amazing job. They go above and beyond. The Carnarvon youth police officers and volunteers at the PCYC should be commended for what they have achieved. Without the PCYC, we would have seen displaced youth far further across the Carnarvon area. The McGowan government has spent more than \$1 million on a new PCYC at the old school facility in Carnarvon, which is right in the centre of the town. This facility has a proper basketball court; at the old PCYC, the roof was too low so when you threw the basketball too high, it would hit the roof and ruin the game. But the new PCYC has a fabulous basketball court, and there is also a football field just outside. It has a kitchen and a new gym has been installed. Some amazing resources will be available for the kids of Carnarvon.

This has been heavily supported by the local council, the police, the PCYC and, especially, the McGowan government. I cannot wait to see it officially opened in September. The kids of Carnarvon will have a more convenient space to go to, and I know that will go a long way towards creating something that they will be able to sink their teeth into, night after night, to keep them entertained.

I want to also give a shout-out to the Kalgoorlie PCYC. It has done an amazing job since 2017 when I started working with that organisation. Again, the youth police officers involved go above and beyond. They are constantly out on the streets with the kids and know the kids by first name. One of the great ideas from one of the young coppers was to get hold of a DJ set, similar to the old Blue Light Disco situation, but out in the parks and skate parks. Kids would end up DJing and blasting music out, which would attract more kids. Probably one of the best investments

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I have made from an electorate perspective was to donate that equipment to the Kalgoorlie PCYC. When that youth copper moved out to Warburton, I got a letter saying, “How about Warburton getting one as well?” It was not cheap, but it was amazing for the kids.

No member of Parliament should feel shy about supporting their PCYC and getting in there and seeing the kids. They feed kids who are hungry and provide very, very healthy meals. I cannot say enough about this organisation. I thank Hon Dan Caddy for bringing this motion.

HON ALANNAH MacTIERNAN (South West — Minister for Regional Development) [10.53 am]: I thank Hon Dan Caddy for raising this issue, and I thank all members across the chamber who have spoken to this motion. It is very clear that all members in this house are deeply concerned about engaging with at-risk youth and about having a raft of creative and innovative programs to try to deal with the ever-changing problems young people face. We all want to work hard to prepare them in a variety of ways to ensure that they are able to become independent, contributing and happy members of society.

We have all seen many examples of young people struggling to transition to adulthood and take their place in society. I take Hon Donna Faragher’s point that perhaps this issue is not recognised across government. I am very sure that it was not Hon Dan Caddy’s intention, but of course the government wants to promote the focus it has given to this issue. One of the important lessons we need to learn is that we have to be constantly out there in our communities to understand what is going on, and be prepared to back the people who have innovative ideas.

Hon Dr Brian Walker talked about creative responses, and this goes right back to offering very good quality antenatal and postnatal care. Many young mothers are coming into parenthood without having learnt good parenting skills from their parents or even the basics of child development. At the very earliest phase of a child’s life, we must support the families around them to address what is often an intergenerational breakdown in the understanding of parenting and of guiding a child into adulthood.

I thank all members who have contributed to this debate: Hon Donna Faragher, Hon Dan Caddy, Hon Dr Brian Walker and Hon Ayor Makur Chuot—I hope I have pronounced her name correctly! I thank her for her contribution about the communities she works for in the North Metropolitan Region. It is important that we have members who are able to bring these fresh perspectives and to be a bridge into those communities. I also thank Hon Peter Foster and Hon Kyle McGinn for their insights into how this functions in the Mining and Pastoral Region, and I acknowledge the work Hon Peter Foster did in his past career in this area.

It is really great for us to be able to focus on this issue. The government has a strong \$58.6 million package to focus on support for at-risk youth. Of course, part of that is the \$18 million for supporting PCYCs. As Hon Donna Faragher pointed out, there are also many other organisations that are doing incredibly good work.

I will make quick reference to a project that is very dear to my heart and to Hon Sue Ellery: the Kimberley Schools Project, which is dedicated to ensuring that when Aboriginal kids, in particular, go to school, there is a pedagogy that will deliver to them the ability to read and write. In schools we often see children failing to learn and believing that somehow they are at fault and that they cannot learn, and the whole cycle of hating school begins. The work that has been done in the Kimberley schools program has been very successful in trying to give the students some more success so they have more belief in themselves and more motivation to attend school. Again, we are very focused on this. Whether it is the Minister for Education and Training, Minister for Youth, Minister for Police or Minister for Community Services, we all have an absolute and, I think, profound desire to give these kids at risk better opportunities to become full and happy contributing members of our community.

HON DAN CADDY (North Metropolitan) [11.00 am] — in reply: I am incredibly heartened by what I have heard in the chamber today in the contributions of the members who have got to their feet. It seems that we are all in furious agreement about the great, fantastic work done by the police and community youth centres around the state. I want to thank each member individually and pick up on a couple of things.

In her contribution, Hon Ayor Makur Chuot talked passionately about youth crime and homelessness. She also discussed the *Beyond 2020: WA youth action plan 2020–22* and what it means for young people in Western Australia.

Hon Donna Faragher gave a fantastic contribution. She brought up the bipartisan nature of this funding, and Hon Alannah MacTiernan also mentioned it briefly, and I absolutely acknowledge that. It has been ongoing for some time; Hon Donna Faragher is entirely correct. Members may have noticed that I ran a little short on time as I was getting to contributions from other tiers of government. I have briefly touched on the support of local governments, both directly, in some cases, and through peppercorn leases provided to their local PCYC, and that is extremely important. I also acknowledge Hon Donna Faragher’s work with the Cadets WA program. I was a cadet myself in the mid-1980s, and it was very important. As she mentioned, that is now an expanded program and it is fantastic.

I acknowledge Hon Dr Brian Walker and his account of experiences overseas. Each time Hon Dr Brian Walker speaks, we are privileged in this chamber to hear about something that is happening or has happened in some other

Hon Dan Caddy; Hon Ayor Makur Chuot; Hon Donna Faragher; Hon Brian Walker; Hon Peter Foster; Hon Kyle McGinn; Hon Alannah MacTiernan

far-flung place in the world. I absolutely welcome his contribution both on working with at-risk youth in Asia and his time as a surf lifesaver.

Hon Peter Foster spoke about his experiences as an employee at the Department for Child Protection and Family Support. This is not really specific to the motion, but the workers at DCP deserve the thanks of everyone. It is an incredibly important role, so I acknowledge all of Hon Peter Foster's former colleagues and all of those people currently in that role. It is extremely important.

I noted Hon Kyle McGinn's support of PCYCs, and especially those in the area he represents such as the PCYC in Kalgoorlie. I also acknowledge his telling of the events of the creation of the new PCYC in Carnarvon, which now has a brand-new facility in the centre of town, and this is indeed a good thing.

I thank Hon Alannah MacTiernan for her response and summation of everything that has been said.

Once again, it is great to see that all members who spoke, and no doubt all members, including those who did not have the opportunity to speak, are in furious agreement about the fantastic role that the PCYCs and Blue Light youth activity units across the state play in the lives of young people in Western Australia, and more specifically those identified as at-risk youth.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.