



JON SULLIVAN MP FEDERAL MEMBER FOR LONGMAN

LONGMAN YOUTH FORUM

The Longman Youth Forum was held Monday 9 November 2009 at the Caboolture Memorial Hall, Caboolture.

The event, hosted by Jon Sullivan MP brought together students from schools across the Longman electorate:

- Caboolture SHS
- Bribie Island SHS
- St Columbans College
- North Pine Christian College
- Tullawong SHS
- Morayfield SHS
- North Lakes SHS
- Deception Bay SHS

In all there were 36 delegates from these schools.

Longman Youth Forum

The running order for the day was:

10.00am – arrival

- Registration and informal getting to know you

10.15am

- Welcome by Jon Sullivan MP
- Didgeridoo performance
- Short introduction (how the day will work) by facilitator Jillian McKeague
- Short discussion with Cassey Russell, a young person who has created her own opportunities and programs that support young people in the local area.

11.40am

- Adults out of the room leaving young people and facilitator to get to work talking about local issues and the issues identified above.

12.15pm

- Teachers welcomed to return and informal discussions over lunch

12.45pm

- Brief talk about opportunities available through 'Transit Lounge' and other Moreton Bay Regional Council programs
- Working with the facilitator the young people work towards a communiqué to be sent to the National Conversation as well as ideas for practical action locally.

1.30pm

- Present communiqué etc to teachers and local media
- Jon Sullivan MP – discussion with delegates

2.00pm – Forum completed

Summary

Much of the discussion focused on identifying obstacles which prevented young people (locally and nationally) being active in their communities. The delegates identified practical ways young people can engage with the community and ways the broader community can engage with young people.

Some of the obstacles preventing young people from being active in their communities:

- Negative stereotyping and media demonisation of young people
- Lack of support; moral, facilities and financial for young people to create their own opportunities
- A lack of knowledge about the opportunities and support organisations for young people in the local area
- Lack of recognition of the positive contribution young people can/do make and a general underestimation of young people
- A lack of inspiration or motivation for young people to achieve
- A gap in educational opportunities
- Issues of social isolation, segregation and exclusion in the local area.
- A lack of positive social experiences for young people outside of school.

Respect was a recurring theme at the Forum; the delegates felt respect was vital if young people were to engage with the community.

“Respect for yourself, and respect from other young people and the wider community... (is needed) ... so we can get involved and people can see all the good stuff we do.”

Delegates were keen to seize opportunities to manage their own projects and destiny. They called for support so they could be empowered to develop and manage their own projects that encourage young people to participate in their community and that encourage older members of the community to see young people in a positive light.

Communiqué

- Local young people need support from the community
 - o We need financial support to mount projects and activities locally
 - o We need to be encouraged and mentored by adults and the community generally
 - o We want to be acknowledge for our value
 - o We are seeking advice and support on life skills and direction
 - o We are seeking guidance – guidance officers and teachers need to relate more to the needs of young people
- As young people we need to participate in and generate more community events that celebrate young people, youth culture and help foster acknowledgement of the positive contribution young people make to the community
- We are seeking more support to help young people achieve their goals through their own actions/events
- Young people should have a say on subjects that affect young people

Outcomes

We propose a local youth forum or youth council supported by existing institutions like local government. The council would be made up of young people and provide:

- Youth planning space for young people to meet, network and create change
- Allow young people to have a say on subjects affecting young people
- A youth focussed magazine that provided a voice for young people as well as; a creative space, work experience and opportunities for young people, providing positive views on young people.