



## House of Assembly

Tuesday 21 June 2011

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

#### YOUTHCONNECT GRANTS

Mr PICCOLO (Light) (15:06): Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister for Youth. Can the minister inform the house of the recipients of the 2011 *youthconnect* grants?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI (Hartley – Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers, Minister Assisting the Premier in Social Inclusion) (15:07): I would like to thank the member for this very important question, and I acknowledge the outstanding work he does in his community.

I was thrilled to announce recently the recipients of the state government's new *youthconnect* grants. This is the first grant round designed to support the state government's new youth policy, *youthconnect*, which is a plan for young South Australians for the next four years. The grants have been awarded with a particular focus on promoting young people's health and wellbeing, education, employment and skill development, and, of course, engagement and participation.

Normally, we would allocate about \$500,000 to this grant program, but we have been able to increase that to just short of \$600,000. I am thrilled that we will be able to assist about 18 organisations from across our state to assist them in assisting young South Australians. For instance, the Service to Youth Council will be getting a grant of \$48,000 so that it can run a project called the Next Step, which is a therapeutic and educational project being run in conjunction with Zoos South Australia to assist young people with mental health issues or physical health problems.

The Peterborough Youth Network will receive a grant of about \$30,000, to engage young people in the design and redevelopment of the outdoor space at the Peterborough Youth Centre. The centre will be redeveloped to create a versatile open space with landscaped grounds, a beach volleyball court and a leisure space incorporating an urban art initiative. I am sure that will be welcomed by the member for Stuart's community. I know the member for Fisher is a very strong advocate for improved youth centre facilities, and I hope he will join me in welcoming this initiative as well.

Also, with these grants, we are supporting young people from diverse ethnic communities. UnitingCare Wesley in Port Adelaide will receive a grant of nearly \$30,000 to deliver its Afghan Youth Project. This project will support around 200 young Afghans to improve their physical and mental health, engagement with their community and conflict resolution. These grants will no doubt go a long way to improving the opportunities and prospects for young South Australians. I am very happy to offer to all members in this place a briefing on these grants.