

YOUTH — AWARDS

**53. Mr P. ABETZ to the Minister for Youth:**

Given the focus in recent months on initiatives to safeguard youngsters at risk through out-of-control parties and youth offending, can the minister please inform the house of any programs that encourage the overwhelming majority of young persons who are doing the right thing?

**Mrs M.H. Roberts** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Midland!

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON replied:**

This is my first time on my feet in this chamber in the new Parliament, Mr Speaker, and I congratulate you on your position and —

**Mrs M.H. Roberts** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Midland, I formally call you to order for the first time today.

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** I thank the member for the question. I was glad that my first job as the Minister for Youth was to help launch National Youth Week two weeks ago in Northbridge. It was great to see young people in our community doing such wonderful things. On the Saturday of the launch, a number of stalls were set up, all run by young people less than 25 years of age. It was fantastic to see such a great launch. Last Saturday was the night of nights when the WA Youth Awards were held. Throughout the week, more than 70 events took place throughout the state, and 450 people were in attendance on Saturday night. There were 12 categories and 28 finalists in the WA Youth Awards. It was a great night. I must admit that I was blown away by the citation of the 28 finalists. They are fantastic youth and it makes me very, very proud to be the Minister for Youth and see that the state of our youth is in great hands in Western Australia.

The 2013 WA Young Person of the Year award went to a young gentleman named Lewis Abdullah from Spearwood, who is an outstanding young man. He works at Banksia Hill Detention Centre as a youth advisory helper. He encourages young people from all walks of life with their life skills; he helps them get on with it. Lewis is a fantastic representative of Western Australia. He came through the Halo program and in part of his speech he said that he aims to one day be the CEO of Halo. He is a fantastic asset to our community.

Finally, often we read about the wrong things young people do in our community, be it antisocial behaviour, excessive drinking and out-of-control street parties, but on Saturday night I was proud to be representing the youth of Western Australia who do such a fantastic job. It gives me great pleasure to know that our future is in great hands.