

## **YOUNG PEOPLE WHO CARE AWARDS**

*Statement by Minister for Youth*

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah - Minister for Youth)** [12.14 pm]: I highlight the outstanding finalists who attended the 2006 Young People Who Care Awards, which was hosted by the Premier last week at Parliament House.

The awards, jointly hosted by Silver Chain, Carers WA and Woodside Energy Limited, commenced in 1989 and aim to recognise exceptional young Western Australians who provide voluntary care to their families and in their communities. "Young carers" are defined as children and young people up to 25 years of age who help care in families in which someone has an illness, a disability, a mental illness, or an alcohol or other drug problem.

In Western Australia, more than 37 000 children and young people help care for their relatives, friends and community members. As these inspirational young people often devote their time and effort without want of recognition, I believe these awards are an important vehicle to show our appreciation for the good work that these young people are doing.

Nominations into the awards focus on young people aged 12 to 18 years and are divided into the following three categories -

Caring in the Community Award, which recognises a young person who provides voluntary care to a person or people in his or her community.

Young Carer Award, which recognises a young person who cares for a family member with a disability or illness.

Caring Together Award, which recognises an exceptional group of young people providing voluntary care to others in the community.

This year, the awards uncovered some inspirational individuals and I was privileged to meet many of these young people and their family members and to share in their remarkable stories. For example, 12-year-old Daniel Rawlings has been assisting his ill mother for the past two years and has successfully combined this responsibility with his schooling. Skye King, despite her busy volunteer commitments with the local fire brigade and the Bush Rangers cadets, finds time to spend with the aged residents of Berringa Lodge. Another, the Young Mercies group, comprises dedicated volunteers who established the group themselves and are involved in helping refugee families and victims of AIDS, and fundraising, all in their own time.

I congratulate the young people involved and I urge all members to support and recognise the enormous community contribution made by Western Australia's young carers.