



MEDIA RELEASE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SUICIDES IN THE NT

TABLING OF REPORT ON YOUTH SUICIDES

The Select Committee on Youth Suicides in the NT tabled its report *Gone Too Soon: A Report into Youth Suicide in the Northern Territory* in the Legislative Assembly today.

“Our youth suicide rate is 3.5 times the national average; clearly things need to change if we are to stop losing our young people at their own hands at such a high rate.” Marion Scrymgour MLA, the Chair of the Committee, said.

“This report highlights the need for the Northern Territory and Federal Governments to work together to provide youth-specific counselling, mental health services and recreational facilities. The Committee has recommended **headspace** centres for Katherine, Tennant Creek and Nhulunbuy, along with construction of the Litchfield Activity Hub.”

Ms Scrymgour added that “Suicide is a multi-dimensional problem that requires many different responses. One of the biggest priorities is to work better with what we’ve got. Everywhere the Committee went we heard that there was a need for better coordination and collaboration between services. Too many of our young people are falling through the gaps and not getting the help they need. The Committee has recommended that a high level Suicide Prevention Coordination Committee be established and that a comprehensive mapping of youth and community services be undertaken as a matter of priority.”

The Committee has also recommended that the Department of Education review its anti-bullying policy to include cyber bullying, and allocate school counsellors to primary, middle and high schools based on a standard student to counsellor ratio. Other recommendations include resourcing the Coroner’s Office to provide grief counselling services and maintain a Suicide Register.

“The Committee is very grateful to all those who provided submissions or attended the inquiry’s hearings and forums. It was both humbling and inspiring to hear of the dedication of the many people across the Territory who are providing help to those in need. The Committee thanks all those who shared personal and often painful stories to help the Committee better understand the issues around youth suicide. In particular the Committee thanks the young people who so generously shared their personal experiences with us and the challenges they have faced,” Ms Scrymgour said.

END

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