

John Castrilli MLA



Representing the people of Bunbury

My aim to make Bunbury the first Choose Respect city in WA moved one step closer to reality on March 5 when more than 150 gathered at the RSL for an information evening.

Immense support was shown from the crowd which included representatives from the City of Bunbury, police, business sector, schools, sporting and community groups.

The most exciting outcome of the forum was that an action group will soon be formed to develop strategies to progress this initiative.

I know this will not have miraculous results overnight but we need to start somewhere if we want to change our culture to foster respect.

And that includes respect for all, regardless of age, respect for yourself, respect for the environment and respect for property.

Choose Respect is a simple concept which, through schooling, encourages young people to focus on respect in all aspects of their life.

However it goes further when it spreads through the community and that respect is then encouraged in the home, the workplace and on the sporting field.

This consistency reinforces the importance of respect not only to the young but reminds us all of the need to maintain it in our latter years.

After all, the younger generations – our children and grandchildren – will learn most of their behaviours from us.

So while the action group progresses this initiative I ask you all to start integrating respect into your daily language now to set the example. Choose Respect has proven successful in improving behaviour, reducing anti-social behaviour and crime in four towns and 26 schools.

I look forward to witnessing the same positive change in our city in coming years.

Last week in Parliament I raised an issue which is extremely worrying for all West Australians but particularly those who live here.

I raise this issue to put pressure on the State Government to address this issue without further delay.

The scary fact is that 30 per cent of sex offenders released from Bunbury Regional Prison over the past two years did not undertake the sex offender rehabilitation program. Further to that reports now show this figure has grown to 60 per cent State-wide over the past year.

From soft sentencing in our courts to a prison system that cannot cope, it seems our so-called justice system is letting us down at every turn.

Yes, there is a labour shortage as the Minister stated in response to my questions in Parliament, but that is not a good enough excuse for allowing sexual offenders back onto our streets without treatment.

So to the Minister, I reiterate, do whatever it takes to fix this system now.

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