

Councillor Column

By Cr Kevin Hall

As a Councillor I get to attend many community events. I was fortunate enough to attend the Tough Love Seminar held at the Esperance Bay yacht Club on Saturday 1 July. I cannot thank the organisers of this event enough for bringing Peter Lyndon-James from Shalom House to Esperance and I'm sure that there are many families that have walked away with some valuable strategies for dealing with drug use.

I know first-hand the destructive effects drugs can have on families, the feeling of isolation and desperation is something that manifests over time. Coming together as a community to offer support and assistance to each other and knowing that you are not alone gives you hope and strength for the future.

Peter Lyndon-James gave a no frills presentation on his story, of a life of knocks and disappointments and how he came to be the CEO of a non for profit drug rehabilitation centre for men. His story was an inspiration, not only for the work is he doing with over 100 men, but for the way he managed to turn his own life around in the face of adversity. I may add that his approach may and will offend some people, but his results speak for themselves.

As parents, grandparents, friends and relatives of drug users we have to be strong, keep the lines of communication open, offer unconditional love and most importantly learn not to enable our loved ones by cutting off all financial assistance. This can be a heart wrenching time for parents and families and it really is a "Tough Love" strategy. The most important message that Peter Lyndon-James spoke of is that we all make choices and those choices have consequences.

This seminar may have come too late for my late son David and I, but I feel that if it has helped one family or one drug user in the quest for rehabilitation then it has been well worth the effort.

I am so proud of young Josh Fowler for the way he delivered his testimonial at the Tough Love seminar. What a fine young man he is and I wish him all the very best for a future full of hopes and dreams. After discussions within the Shire Council, it is the intention of the current Council to bring Peter Lyndon-James back to Esperance again in the near future.