

news-mail

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Trying to help kids

THERE are many parents who do not know what their children are doing after dark.

Every day mums and dads across Australia do not know where their children are or if they are dead or alive.

During the past five years our group has spoken with many parents whose children are roaming the streets and doing what they please.

These are parents who would dearly love to have their children home and would do anything to be able to be responsible for their children.

Due to legislation that does not support this, parents are powerless to do anything but sit

by and watch and wait for that phone call from the police.

Our kids are dying on the streets and no one is doing anything about it.

If these parents tried to bring their children home they could and would be charged with kidnap, assault and deprivation of liberty. This happened to a Caboolture mother recently.

The sad fact of the matter is even if these parents did know where their kids were, there is no way they would be able to bring them home if the children don't want to come.

Parents are trying to be responsible for their children and unfortunately government agencies are not allowing this to happen.

It makes it difficult when these kids are given Centrelink payments that only encourage them to stay away from the family home.

If your 14-year-old child ran away from home, the first place you would go to is the police. Unfortunately the police are unable to help you. The Department of Families won't help you either.

So tell me, who will help parents?

Premier Peter Beattie is really good at telling parents to be responsible for their kids, but when asked to help a family with a runaway the reply is "there is nothing we can do".

He doesn't want to know

about it.

Our group does have some answers and has worked hard during the past five years to get some help for parents and families.

We have spent many hours working on a submission which states what we feel are the problems, causes and solutions.

We have met with Families Minister Judy Spence, the Department of Families Director General Frank Peach, Police Minister Tony McGrady and Police Commissioner Bob Atkinson.

We will continue to dedicate long hours to these families.

Many heart-breaking telephone calls are received from parents desperate to get their children away from the dangerous situations they continue to put themselves in.

We do care and call for the community to support our cause. It is worthwhile as the kids we are trying to save are our future and they are worth saving.

KAREN GOULD
PLEASE secretary

Numbers please

EACH letter should include the author's name, address and a daytime telephone number for verification.