

Spoke out strong

About 150 concerned Blacktown residents attended a special drug issues forum at Bowman Hall in Blacktown last Wednesday night.

The forum with guest speakers was held by Blacktown Alcohol and Other Drug Family Service (BAFDS) and the Damien Trimmingham Foundation.

Among the speakers were ACT Health Minister Mr Michael Moore, Western Sydney director of Drug and Alcohol Services Dr Jon Currie, University of Technology Head of School of Management Ms Jenny Onyx, therapist Mr Peter Slattery and father of heroin overdose victim Damien Trimmingham, Mr Tony Trimmingham.

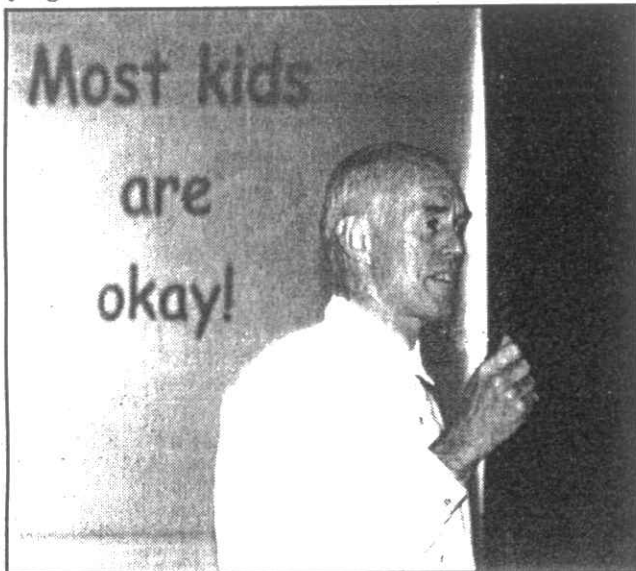
The speakers raised various issues of concern involving drug use and addiction, and the best approach to take.

Mr Slattery raised a comparison between cigarette smokers and drug users.

He said that both knew that what they did damaged them, but still continued doing it.

Mr Moore also said that the "Say No To Drugs" campaign didn't always work.

He quoted the joke about why the 14-year-old boy crossed the road (because he was told not to).



Mr Slattery makes a point

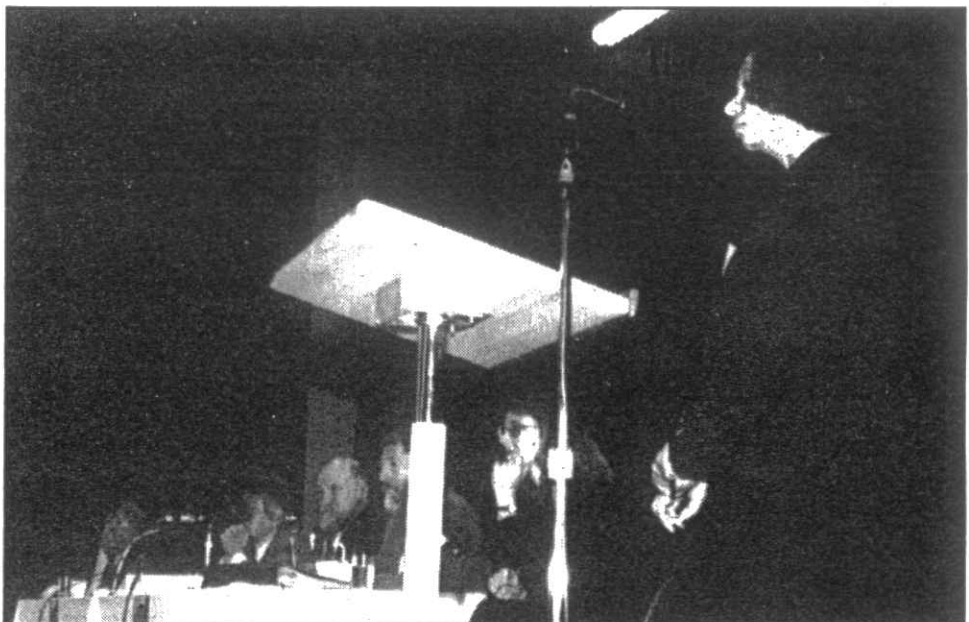
The speakers also raised the point that drug addicts, like alcoholics and cigarette smokers, didn't always kick the habit the first time and would occasionally stumble.

Mr Trimmingham said the best advice he gave parents whose children used drugs was to

"listen, listen, listen, say a little, listen and listen".

After the forum Ms Tirrania Suhood of BAFDS said it was a very successful forum.

"It focused on the positive, not the negative," she said. "Sometimes there forums can be hijacked and go nowhere."



Ms Suhood (right) and the guest speakers last Wednesday night