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Jenna an inspiration

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Susanne Reilly | May 19, 2015, 7:00 PM | SOUTHERN GAZETTE



Young leader Jenna Woods, of Gosnells. Picture: Martin Kennealey [Click here to buy this photo \(http://www.communitypix.com.au/SearchForm.aspx?pn=d437330\)](http://www.communitypix.com.au/SearchForm.aspx?pn=d437330)

Jenna Woods dropped out of high school, fell pregnant to an abusive partner and looked after her sick mother all before her 17th birthday.

It is fair to say the 23-year-old did not have an easy start to adulthood but what she now does for young people is amazing.

She recently led the Youth Leadership Roundtable at the Youth Partnership Project (YPP) summit, attended by more than 100 young people.

The YPP is an initiative focused on supporting the most vulnerable young people. It uses the voices of young people to help others.

Ms Woods grew up in Gosnells and said she saw many gaps in the system in terms of support for young people.

"I didn't get very much from the education system, it just didn't work for me," she said.

"I went to a few schools then dropped out in the second week of Year 11."

"During this time, I realised that there needs to be more support for young people and when told about the Youth Partnership Project, I saw this as the opportunity to implement that."

By working with YPP she hoped young people would be given stronger input into youth services.

She hoped decision makers in government, not-for-profit and community organisations would have a better understanding of the real life experiences of young people in the area and shape their programs accordingly.

"I see this project as an opportunity to change the way that youth services are delivered and get the youth voice out there," she said.

"I believe this will produce more effective outcomes for young people in that they will be given the opportunity to shape the services that they use so that these services can best suit their needs."

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