

SUNDAY HERALD SUN
21ST APR
1996

Visy Board

DANDENONG'S BIGGEST PARTY. RAISING \$400 000

FUND RAISING. 1700 PEOPLE @ \$550 PER HEAD

BUSINESS PEOPLE SUPPORT TO RAISE
FUNDS FOR. HOMELESS - ABUSED AND
UNEMPLOYED.

HOPE TO BUILD A NEW MILLION DOLLAR
YOUTH CENTRE.



Party mood: Richard Pratt and comedian Effie ham it up at Dandenong last night. Picture: PENNI ANSWERTH

Business gives a hand

MANY youth in depressed Dandenong have nothing to celebrate.

Homeless, unemployed or abused, and often all three, some eat at soup kitchens and sleep where they can.

But thanks to Dandenong's biggest party last night, access to advice and help in the outer suburb has been made easier.

About 700 locals, mostly business people paying \$550 a head, attended the function to raise funds for a new million-dollar youth centre.

The brainchild of former youth affairs minister Vin Heffernan and Visy Board chairman and managing director Richard Pratt, the centre is based on a New York model known as The Door.

Services such as counselling, ad-

vice and support for housing, health, finance, drug and alcohol abuse, career guidance and recreation will be offered in the one building.

Last night's party raised \$400,000. This was matched dollar for dollar by the State Government, and the City of Greater Dandenong pledged \$200,000 for a \$1 million total.

The costs for the more than \$100,000 party were met by Mr Pratt.

He said last night the best projects were those supported by government and private enterprise.

"Tonight is a recognition that Australia's problems are not just the government's problems," he said.

"They are our problems."

- STEVEN WILSON

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