



Esther Foundation participants Bethany Dohnt (17), Ashlee Currell (16), Chloe Payne (16), Anna Baxter (17) and Sarah Hannibal (17). Pic: Bill Hatto

## Chloe strides into a new future

Striding forward with supportive friends on each arm, Chloe Payne yesterday showed the dignified determination which transformed her from teenage tearaway to award-winning charity worker in the space of a year.

The 16-year-old oozed confidence as she addressed a marquee-full of Perth's movers and shakers including Australia's richest man Andrew Forrest at the official handover of a disused convent to the not-for-profit welfare organisation which turned her life around.

The western suburbs teenager said her life became ruled by anger and rebellion which came to a head when she took off in her mother's car after an argument.

It was her last-ditch involvement with the Esther Foundation for troubled girls, young women and their children which improved her fortunes to the point she was named the 2010 Young People Who Care award-winner at Parliament House.

"I came to Esther kicking and screaming but from there took it as a challenge to better myself," Chloe said.

Success stories like Chloe's was one of the reasons the State Government bought the former St Emilie's convent in Kalamunda from the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition for \$3.9 million so the Esther Foundation could assume a peppercorn lease of the sprawling heritage site and gardens.

Esther Foundation administrator Rod Lavater said the relocation from seven different houses in South Perth to the former convent would boost accommodation capacity by 40 per cent.

Housing Minister Bill Marmion said the building would be retained by the Department of Housing, which was delighted to be helping the foundation.