



Speech by

Hon. WENDY EDMOND

MEMBER FOR MOUNT COOT-THA

Hansard 10 March 1999

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Positive Parenting Program

Hon. W. M. EDMOND (Mount Coot-tha— ALP) (Minister for Health) (9.51 a.m.), by leave: I wish to bring members of the House up to date on one of the most important initiatives that the Beattie Government has implemented during its time in office. I am referring to our Early Intervention and Parenting Support Initiative, which has already been introduced in 15 communities around Queensland. It will be extended to a further 15 communities early in the next financial year.

The initiative aims to provide parents with the confidence and skills needed to interact with their children through the various stages of their development. The first program that we have introduced is known as the Positive Parenting Program, or PPP. That program was developed by Dr Matt Sanders and his team at the Parenting and Family Support Centre at the University of Queensland. Dr Sanders and his team have achieved both national and international acclaim. I am delighted that those skills, which were developed in Queensland, are now being made available free of charge to Queensland families.

I had the opportunity of joining my parliamentary colleague John Mickel, the member for Logan, and Dr Sanders at the Browns Plains Child Health Centre on 7 January to officially launch the program. Browns Plains is one of the first 15 centres selected for this initiative. The others are Bundaberg, Edmonton, Hervey Bay, Ipswich, Logan Central, Maroochydore, Maryborough, Mount Isa, Nambour, Palm Beach, Rockhampton, Southport, Smithfield and Townsville.

Child health nurses in each of these locations are now receiving training in the parenting program. We are also offering training to staff of Education Queensland and the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care in these areas. This training is occurring on a progressive basis and the first parenting programs are now beginning to be offered by the recently qualified trainers. Positive parenting booklets, tip sheets, videos and other resources that were ordered by Queensland Health arrived last Friday and are in the process of being delivered to the 15 centres to support their training programs.

As well as offering parenting courses, our child health nurses will be even better equipped to provide one-on-one advice to parents seeking support in raising their children. PPP shows parents how to deal with a wide range of common parenting issues, ranging from dealing with sleeping problems in infants to temper tantrums in toddlers and helping older children with homework, and it works. PPP is based on 20 years of careful research. It is particularly effective with children in the two to seven year age group who are difficult to manage and aggressive. In one large scale evaluation of the PPP program in Western Australia, when it was made available to all parents of three and four year old children, there was a 50% reduction in the number of young children with serious behavioural problems a year later. The results speak for themselves.

Parents who undertake this training program will have the tools to build better relationships with their children, easing family tensions and strengthening family units. By introducing this positive parenting initiative, we are building better citizens and stronger families for the future.
