



Speech by

# Hon. Rod Welford

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

Hansard Tuesday, 30 October 2007

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Year of Physical Activity

**Hon. RJ WELFORD** (Everton—ALP) (Minister for Education and Training and Minister for the Arts) (10.10 am): Our government takes the health and wellbeing of our children and young people very seriously. We are leading the way as the first state education department to set ambitious yet achievable goals for students' physical activity levels through our new Smart Moves movement education program. This program follows on from the success of other government initiatives such as the Smart Choices Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy, last year's Obesity Summit and the Eat Well, Be Active—Healthy Kids for Life Action Plan 2005-08.

Smart Moves will increase the time in which primary school students are engaged in physical activity and improve the quality of that activity. All Queensland state schools will begin the implementation of Smart Moves from the beginning of 2008.

In effect, this has been the year of literacy and numeracy. That has been my primary focus throughout the year. Therefore, to support the first stage of the Smart Moves implementation in 2008, today I am pleased to announce that next year will be declared the Year of Physical Activity in Queensland schools.

The overall aim of the year will be two-fold. Firstly, it will aim to increase awareness of the link between physical activity and academic achievement. There is substantial international research that shows that, along with the physiological benefits, engaging in physical activity at school enhances students' educational outcomes, supports their personal development and promotes lifelong active lifestyles. The second aim is to further engage educators in the process of including physical activity across the curriculum, and not just in physical education classes. We will create a dedicated web site with advice and tips on how students, parents and teachers can incorporate physical activity into their everyday lives at school, home and work.

My department is also developing a range of activities and events to be held next year throughout the state for students, parents, schools and the community. Some of the events being planned include conferences that will provide professional development opportunities for teachers in both south-east and regional Queensland. We will also introduce an integrated 'move-a-thon' to encourage students to get moving with general physical activity in addition to their sporting activities.

2008 is going to be an active year! I look forward to an active year ahead and I hope that we will all take part in a smarter, more active and healthier 2008 in Queensland schools.