



Speech by


Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Hansard Thursday, 17 February 2011

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Disability Services

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs) (10.06 am): The state government is getting on with the job of rebuilding Queensland after the devastating floods and cyclones of our recent summer. I can also assure Queenslanders that we are also getting on with the job of strengthening disability services throughout the state. We want to ensure young people with a disability are making the most of their lives, that they are making an active contribution in their communities.

Last week I saw firsthand the incredible difference our Post School Services program is making to young Queenslanders with a disability. I travelled to Townsville to open the Endeavour Foundation's newly renovated Post School Services centre with the member for Townsville, Mandy Johnstone, and the member for Mundingburra, Lindy Nelson-Carr. The Bligh government committed \$500,000 to this refurbishment, which will now benefit school leavers with a disability in North Queensland—enhancing their education, employment and social opportunities.

Also during this visit I met with dedicated staff from the Department of Communities who were working tirelessly in the city's recovery call centre. This centre was contacting disaster affected residents and organising outreach for those unable to travel to access assistance. I want to pay tribute in this House to all Department of Communities staff and all non-government organisations out there who continue to help people during these times.

I am also pleased to today announce an extra \$1 million for an early intervention program which will support 1,000 young Queenslanders. The Building Family Capacity initiative will benefit children aged up to 18 right throughout Queensland, from Ipswich to Innisfail. It will also reach families in Bowen, Rockhampton, Gympie, the Darling Downs, Brisbane, Logan, Redlands, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast. Organisations funded through this program will help link children with a disability with training, education and social support opportunities.

The Autism Early Intervention Initiative is another example of our commitment to giving children with a disability the very best start in life. Next week I will be announcing the approved tenders for new autism centres of excellence to be established in Mackay and Bundaberg. Last year I did an autism listening tour around Queensland, and these two communities in particular sent the government a very strong message that they needed dedicated autism early intervention services. We listened, and we are delivering for families in Mackay and Bundaberg. The new autism services will make a real difference to their young lives, just like those already up and running in Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, the Sunshine Coast, Logan and Brisbane.