




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, Family Services

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (2.40 pm): The Palaszczuk government is committed to making sure that Queensland's children get the best possible start in life and to support their families so this can happen. Working in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to do this is particularly important, as we are determined to reduce the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in our child protection system.

Last week I had the pleasure of meeting with Lizzie, Natalie and Greg, part of the dedicated leadership team of Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak, or QATSICPP. I am pleased to announce today that the Palaszczuk government is providing QATSICPP with \$2.4 million over three years to help develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led agencies to deliver front-line services for families.

The Palaszczuk government is serious about enabling more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led organisations to play a bigger role in the community sector. We need these organisations on the ground, to give local families services they can trust and turn to for help. Only together can we hope to address the causes of overrepresentation in our child protection system and help more families before they reach crisis.

In short, Queensland needs more services like Ipswich's Kummara Association. The Kummara Association has been working for a number of years on local programs to help support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and it is the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled agency to operate one of our new Family and Child Connect services which is being set up in Ipswich. The Kummara Association will receive \$3.3 million over three years to make sure that families struggling to cope can access the help they need.

We are also providing \$7.2 million over five years for 10 specialist Indigenous practitioners across Queensland. These reform leaders will work in my department and the community sector to ensure the child protection system is more culturally appropriate and responsive to Indigenous families.

Finally, last Wednesday I helped launch my department's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Action Plan, known as *Respectfully Journey Together*. I was privileged to join with Indigenous community and departmental leaders to launch this powerful commitment to rethink our practice, embed culture into our programs and collaborate to improve the lives of Indigenous families. Through these initiatives and in partnership with the growing community sector, which includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led organisations, we are laying foundations for real and lasting change.