




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Families

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (9.41 am): I would like to speak about our support for families here in Queensland. There are so many services and community groups across this state doing valuable work to help our families. In this year's budget across my portfolios alone we are funding 341 groups which provide help to Queensland's vulnerable people, families, women and young people. But behind all these groups are the stories of individuals and families—stories which are both heartwarming and heartbreaking. We know that cost-of-living pressures have a big impact on families. Help to deal with budgeting can make a real difference in ensuring struggling families can make ends meet.

When I visited the Nerang Neighbourhood Centre a few months back, I talked to the workers who were preparing food parcels for people who were doing it tough. They told me that people were feeling the pinch so much that some people could no longer feed their family or their pets. Many of these people were ordinary families who were just not managing. That is why we have announced \$5.5 million for a financial resilience program which will deliver help with budgeting and money management skills to give people the practical skills they need to avoid reaching crisis point.

Last week I was delighted to be there when the Premier announced that we would be making the world renowned Triple P Positive Parenting Program available to all Queensland parents. Our \$6.6 million investment in Triple P is part of our commitment to provide services to help all Queensland mums and dads cope with the challenges they face in raising children and helping their families to thrive. At the event were the Fuller family from Carina Heights. Richard Fuller said—

My wife and I found ourselves arguing back and forth with our 2½-year-old daughter, Emily. The arguments were escalating and we would shout at her and we didn't think it was right.

So we did Triple P Online. It gave us strategies for dealing differently with the behaviour. None of us really raise our voices anymore. Triple P has made a big difference to our family.

Today, on Pyjama Day, I want to acknowledge the wonderful work that Bronwyn Sheehan and her team at the Pyjama Foundation do to support kids in out-of-home care to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. I know that the member for Bulimba is a big supporter of the Pyjama Foundation recruits and the wonderful pyjama angels who visit children each day to read to them, play educational games and help school-age kids with their homework.

It is vital that we continue our support for Queensland's most vulnerable families—those in need who need extra support—which is why the Family and Child Connect program will be expanded across the state so that in 2016, 19 services will be in place, helping 35,000 families a year. Family and Child Connect services will assist struggling families access a wide range of support services. This is about

offering help early to prevent bigger problems developing when children are at risk of harm or ending up in care. The best part of this new service is that families themselves are contacting Family and Child Connect centres. They are recognising that they need an extra hand and are being offered that support. We are determined to make sure that no struggling family falls through the cracks.