



Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR YEERONGPILLY

Record of Proceedings, 30 November 2016

MOTION

Child Protection

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (6.16 pm): The Minister for Child Safety has my absolute confidence and the confidence of the government. There are 225 reasons why the LNP should hang their heads in shame, because that is the number of staff they sacked under their watch. Drunk with power and their record majority, they sacked 225 staff from Child Safety. It is ironic that I am following the member for Aspley, who was the minister responsible. There has been no apology and no 'mea culpa' from her about the mess she left that department in. I also follow the member for Mudgeeraba, who as minister for arts found that too taxing because she lasted nine months, and here she is judging the Minister for Child Safety, whose job it is to clean up the mess they left after three years in government. With their scorched earth policy on staff in Child Safety, how dare they wax lyrical about what is right. Their record is disgraceful. They are using child safety as a political plaything and it is a shameful disgrace.

Let me tell the House what the Palaszczuk government's hardworking Minister for Child Safety has been doing to clean up the LNP mess. Along with investing in extra front-line staff and rebuilding capacity, they are making early intervention and prevention a cornerstone of our child safety system as was recommended by the commission of inquiry. We are talking about reforms here, but the opposition is not interested. They do not want to know about it; they are not interested. In Child Protection Week the minister announced a \$2 million partnership with the National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect to run a statewide campaign urging Queenslanders to call out child abuse, which is an excellent reform. This is a whole-of-community education program that will engage all levels of the community because we all have to play our part.

We also recognise the links between domestic violence and the horrible impact it has on children. That is why this minister has funded the ReNew initiative, a partnership between Carinity and the Domestic Violence Action Centre which is soon to roll out in Ipswich and south-west Brisbane. This is another groundbreaking reform program that works with mothers and their adolescent sons and siblings to address abusive behaviours perpetrated by young men towards family members. Under this minister we have also funded Walking with Dads, a domestic violence informed approach to child protection work in Gympie and Mount Isa, after a successful trial in Caboolture.

By raising awareness and funding early intervention initiatives we help struggling families to help themselves. More than 15,000 families seek help through our early intervention and support service Family and Child Connect, and more than 20,000 people have accessed the Triple P Positive Parenting Program in recognition that parenting is not always easy. The prevention of child sexual abuse is an absolute priority for this minister. In Child Protection Week the minister joined Bravehearts founder Hetty Johnston to launch their Turning Corners program—another reform. In less than two years the reforms

keep coming out. This service works with young people who have engaged in or are at risk of engaging in sexual abuse. This year we are spending more than ever on early intervention and prevention services.

Our Minister for Child Safety is out there every day driving reforms to keep our children safe. More than that, the minister is rebuilding the child protection system after the widespread cuts by the LNP when they were drunk with power and had a record majority. Let us look at the record of those opposite. The LNP headline hunt and make the safety of kids in Queensland a political football, yet in government they sacked 225 staff. Child safety workers were so angered by the LNP that they took to the streets of Brisbane and marched against these cuts. The LNP slashed funding to child safety partners in the NGO sector by \$34 million a year. Theirs is a shameful, appalling record. They cut more than they invested as part of their reforms. Let us not forget the one and only budget for which the member for Mudgeeraba was sitting around the cabinet table and which contained those cuts.

We are rebuilding the child safety system. We are hiring an extra 129 new child safety workers this financial year alone—on top of the 166 recruited over the past two years. We are fixing the LNP mess. We are driving a record \$1 billion investment in child and family services this year. This minister is reforming the mess left by the LNP. This is a pathetic motion by an LNP with an appalling record.