




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Domestic and Family Violence

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (2.43 pm): When we announced the government's response to the landmark *Not now, not ever* report we committed to delivering the most comprehensive plan to tackle domestic and family violence this state has ever seen. We pledged to deliver change to our judicial system and the service support systems which help victims and, importantly, change the culture in our society which has allowed this devastating violence to occur. Across the last year we have made changes in all of these areas.

We have just delivered the introduction of respectful relationships education into our curriculum for prep to year 12, but we know that we must also look more broadly at how we influence the next generation and challenge negative ideas. If we are to have any hope of breaking the tragic cycle of domestic violence and violence against women, it has to start with young people.

On Monday I was pleased to join Australia's ambassador for women and Our Watch chair Natasha Stott Despoja and Our Watch CEO Mary Barry to launch The Line's consent campaign at QUT during O-week. The Line's consent campaign, which is running across a number of Australia's universities, is a great way to reach young people and encourage a discussion about sex, consent and respect. This is a national social media campaign that communicates the importance of asking for and giving consent before engaging in safe sex.

The research from Our Watch's new survey, revealed at the launch on Monday, showed some disappointing and shocking attitudes, in particular about boys' attitudes towards consent and respect. Sixty per cent of young people believe that it is up to the woman to make it very clear if she does not want to have sex. The same survey found that more than a third of young people said it is hard to respect a woman when she is drunk and more than a fifth said it is hard to be respectful of a woman who is wearing revealing clothing. These shocking statistics show that still many young people are not being exposed to the right information and guidance about sex, consent and respectful relationships.

It is clear that we must start early to help children and young people learn healthy attitudes about gender equality. There is a clear link between the negative attitudes of ownership and control over women and domestic and family violence, and we need to change these attitudes now. It is vital that we reinforce messages about respectful relationships in our schools, in our universities and in the broader community.