



Speech By  
**Hon. Shannon Fentiman**


**MEMBER FOR WATERFORD**

---

Record of Proceedings, 23 March 2017

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Child and Family Support Services**

 **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) (10.03 am): If we can give Queensland mums and dads the tools they need to be better parents then we can reduce the load on our child protection system. That means investing in child and family support services that give parents the helping hand they need earlier. That is why I am so proud today to talk about our \$65 million investment in family support services right across our state from the Torres Strait to the Gold Coast. This extra investment gives parents a leg-up, but it also boosts our local economies, with 95 jobs to be created within the child and family support sector. This is hands-on, in-home support that can include anything from help in the home to make school lunches or establish daily routines to budgeting advice, parenting courses and counselling. Support for drug and alcohol use, anger management and domestic and family violence are all included in this package.

We want to let parents know that it is okay to ask for help and, better still, that help is available. No matter where mums and dads live, if they call our dedicated 13FAMILY hotline for parenting advice when they are struggling, we will connect them with the right support. We have already helped almost 6,000 families across Queensland and we will not stop there.

By investing in building stronger, more resilient families, we can create a safer and happier Queensland for our kids. That means reducing the number of children who come into the child protection system because we want them to be safe at home with loving and capable parents. If parents do better, kids do not need to come into the care of the department. That is why we are investing record amounts in early intervention and prevention for families—\$152 million this financial year alone—because we believe Queensland families are worth investing in.

Our focus on early intervention and prevention does not mean we are losing sight of rebuilding the statutory child protection system. This financial year we have invested a record more than \$1 billion in child and family services and, of course, hired 129 new child safety officers. We have invested more than ever before to support our hardworking foster and kinship families, covering the childcare payment gap and empowering them to make decisions about the kids in their care.

Child safety is absolutely everyone's business, but it does take strong leadership to drive reform in this difficult policy area. I am proud that the Palaszczuk government has the determination to tackle this issue head on.