



Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Child Protection Week

 **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) (2.29 pm): This morning I attended with the Premier the annual Child Protection Week remembrance ceremony organised by Micah Projects, which acknowledges adult survivors of childhood abuse in institutional settings. It is a time to reflect on past injustices of child abuse, the personal lifelong costs and the commitment we have to see justice restored, healing journeys continue and abuse never repeated.

This is the 31st Queensland Child Protection Week, reminding Queenslanders of our responsibilities and the role we all play in keeping children and young people safe. Many Child Protection Week events not only raise awareness but also educate and inform us on what to look for or how to respond when we think a child or young person may be in harm's way. I am pleased to say that the Palaszczuk government is providing \$150,000 to this year's Queensland Child Protection Week and \$750,000 over the next five years to Act for Kids to support this important week.

I would like to again acknowledge the efforts of the vital work that child safety staff do to keep Queensland children safe. These workers literally save children's lives every day and they deserve every support from their government and the community. The Palaszczuk government is investing in our child safety workforce with more child safety officers and essential support staff, improved career pathways and better management and supervision. We are directing our investment toward areas under pressure and we are restoring front-line services. We are also ensuring that we have the right infrastructure and supporting services that help keep children and families safe.

Our \$200 million child safety package rolled out from 2016-17 has delivered more than 400 new staff and created senior positions so that experienced staff stay on the front line. It was an investment in improved quality and connection across the system. New teams have been created to review and monitor performance at child safety service centres across the state. Soon nurses will work in our family support services and child safety officers will work with hospitals to ensure that the best possible care is provided for vulnerable children.

We also know that domestic and family violence is a significant cause of harm to children and young people, and the impacts can be severe and long lasting. This is why we have provided child safety staff and community based domestic violence practitioners with the David Mandel 'safe and together' training. We have placed domestic and family violence specialists in our family support services. Protecting children and young people is everybody's business. I am proud that in Child Protection Week, and every other week, the Palaszczuk government is playing our part.