



Speech By  
**Hon. Leanne Linard**


**MEMBER FOR NUDGE**

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Record of Proceedings, 17 June 2021

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Youth Justice**

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.05 am): Two of the most important jobs of any government is protecting the community and keeping vulnerable children safe. As the Minister for Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs, I am acutely aware of the enormity of these tasks and the significant role safe Queensland communities play in our COVID-19 economic recovery plan. That is why this year's budget will continue to focus on programs and services to keep children safe, and to keep the community safe—and that means boosting our frontline services where needed.

This financial year, we will spend a record \$1.55 billion on the delivery of child protection services to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. We will recruit an extra 154 frontline child safety workers over the next two years. Sadly, following the pandemic, we are facing increasing pressure and demand in the child protection system. That is why we are providing an additional \$282.6 million over two years for out-of-home care to give children a safe roof over their heads and support to help them thrive.

Safety is at the heart of all our funding decisions. In youth justice, my department's budget includes a total of more than \$290 million for youth justice services to reduce offending and reoffending. This includes continued investment in the diversionary and intensive out-of-hours programs that work, and increased funding to intensify these in areas that need them most. We know Queenslanders want young people to be law abiding and have opportunities and a future. We also know Queenslanders want programs that get at-risk young people back into education, into training and into jobs. That is why we are tackling the causes, not just the symptoms.

Our investment includes an extra \$92 million over four years to fund practical actions to deal with repeat offenders and continue programs and services to tackle youth offending. This means the fantastic work of our co-responder teams of police and youth justice workers will continue in eight locations, including Townsville, Cairns and across South-East Queensland. It means the fantastic work of our services such as our co-responder teams, the Transition 2 Success program and the trial of an on country program in Townsville, Mount Isa and Cairns will continue. The package will also fund extended hours of supervision and extra youth workers on weekends and at night to intensively monitor high-risk repeat offenders and deliver intensive support to their families.

This budget is not just about continued investment in initiatives that work. It is also about looking forward, continuing systemic reform and addressing the criminogenic factors that lead to offending to keep our communities safe. We are partnering with the Ted Noffs Foundation to establish a new 10-bed drug and alcohol three-month residential treatment facility and program for young people who have or who are at risk of offending, through funding of \$7.7 million over four years. To complement our substantial legislative reforms this year, we will invest \$5 million to establish a short-term remand centre. Earlier this year our new 32-bed West Moreton Youth Detention Centre opened, which complements the extra 12 beds at Cleveland Youth Detention Centre and 32 beds at Brisbane Youth Detention Centre delivered under our government.

In this budget we have allocated \$5.7 million to start the next stage of planning, to undertake a business case to investigate options for additional long-term detention centre capacity. These moves underscore our commitment to keeping Queenslanders safe from that small cohort of repeat offenders. Unlike those opposite, we invest, we plan and we build for the future because community safety is paramount and community confidence essential in our youth justice system.