




Speech By
Jarrold Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

#BinTheBladeForBalin

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): Just before midnight on 20 January 2022, 16-year-old Balin Stewart was fatally stabbed outside his home in Buddina on the Sunshine Coast in my electorate. The much loved and hugely popular 16-year-old died in his family's arms as they, together with paramedics, tried desperately to save him from a stab wound to the chest.

Balin was a Sunshine Coast larrikin with a big smile and the ability to light up a room, and he has unintentionally become the new face of the state's battle against youth knife crime. While dealing with the enormous sadness, pain and anger, Balin's parents, Michael and Kerri-Lyn, have shown immense strength in wanting to effect change in the Sunshine Coast community.

In the wake of Balin's passing, they have set up the #BinTheBladeForBalin campaign in the hope that the devastation they have experienced can be avoided by other families. The primary aim is to get anyone who carries a knife to dispose of it immediately. The premise of the movement is that if a knife is not present during an altercation it cannot be used to cause any harm. Similar campaigns in the UK and Australia have shown incredible improvements in the reduction of knife crime and the devastation those instances cause.

The Stewart family started the #BinTheBladeForBalin campaign in a bid to rid today's youth of its knife culture, and it has taken off on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. I have met with Balin's parents, Kerri-Lyn and Michael. I will be the first to admit that I underestimated how many young Queenslanders, and how many young Sunshine Coast teens, are carrying knives around with them. A lot of the time they are the kitchen knife or the steak knife that one has in the kitchen drawer.

The #BinTheBladeForBalin campaign is growing, as I said, on social media. There are stickers on Sunshine Coast cars with #BinTheBladeForBalin. There is the Balin Forever Festival on 9 September 2022 at NightQuarter from 5 pm to 10 pm. Through education and change, #BinTheBladeForBalin will be make a difference and Balin's legacy will live on. Money raised at the Balin Forever Festival—and I table a copy of the invite—will go the Balin Stewart Foundation.

Tabled paper: Flyer for music event titled 'Balin Forever Festival' to be held 9 September 2022 [1263](#)

I want to thank Kerri-Lyn and Michael for the strength that they have in raising these issues and for the support I have seen from our community gathering around this wonderful family at this time. I have a 16-year-old daughter. For Balin's family, when Balin died in his family's arms on 20 January just before midnight because of a knife altercation at the front of his home, that can never be appreciated or understood unless you have lived in their shoes.

I thank the Stewart family for what they are doing in our community to rid us of the youth knife crime culture that we have. I encourage all Sunshine Coast young teens to get rid of the knife: don't take it. If you do not have the knife, no-one is going to get killed again.