




Speech By
Hon. Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

First Nations Children

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Seniors and Disability Services) (10.09 am): Our children and young people deserve a childhood free from violence, abuse and neglect. This is why the Palaszczuk government supports parents and carers to build stronger families and keep their children safe from harm. However, we know First Nations children continue to be disproportionately represented in the child protection system. It is unacceptable and the Palaszczuk government is taking action. To turn the tide, we have been working hard to strengthen our services to ensure First Nations children and young people grow up safe and thriving, cared for in family and connected to community and culture.

This week the Secretariat for National Aboriginal and Islander Children in Care, or SNAICC, the national peak for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, published their latest progress report examining what Queensland and other jurisdictions are doing to reduce overrepresentation and improve outcomes. I can report to the House the *Family matters report* shows that overall Queensland is leading the nation. Queensland is outperforming all other jurisdictions based on all four 'Family Matters building blocks' for the second year running. Queensland has the second lowest rate of overrepresentation nationally of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care. Queensland is the second highest in terms of spending on First Nations community controlled organisations to deliver intensive family support services.

The Palaszczuk government is championing progress on key nation-leading reforms like delegated authority and we have backed our reform with over \$167 million over four years. I acknowledge more work needs to be done. This was rightfully called out in the *Family matters report*, but it shows that the Palaszczuk government has the right priorities and our investment is making a difference.

I am truly grateful for the dedication, focus and commitment of all the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders who work closely with my department on our shared goal, and that is to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children grow up safe and connected to family and culture. Together, we remain resolute in achieving this important goal.