



Speech By  
**Hon. Grace Grace**


**MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL**

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Record of Proceedings, 30 March 2023

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Vaping; 'Look Before You Lock'; Sagigi-Baira, Mr R**

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.10 am): The health and safety of our school students is paramount, and I welcome the Premier's recent announcement of a parliamentary inquiry into vaping. Smoking including e-cigarettes and vaping is banned at all Queensland state schools, but we do not hide from the fact that vaping is happening and it is a problem we take very seriously.

In April last year I put the issue of vaping on the agenda for my Ministerial Student Advisory Council and in August it was on the agenda for the education ministers meeting. I also asked the department to review the alcohol and other drugs education program which is available to support students in years 7 to 12. As the Premier said, my department is now working with the University of Queensland's National Centre for Youth Substance Use Research to strengthen this program. My department continues to work closely with bodies like the Cancer Council, the Heart Foundation and the Lung Foundation to ensure information is being provided to schools about the dangers of vaping as well as materials to assist in reducing its prevalence. School-based youth health nurses work with students and staff every day to highlight the risks. We also work closely with Queensland Health through initiatives like vape truth videos with Dr Karl. Schools have an important role to play but they cannot solve this issue alone. This is a broader public health issue that society as a whole needs to address.

While I am on the subject of the health and safety of our children, I make a special plea to every parent, carer, educator, bus driver—anyone transporting children—to look before you lock. As a government we have taken a number of steps to prevent these incidents happening at early childhood centres including stronger regulations, taking enforcement action such as prosecution and ongoing 'Look Before You Lock' campaigns. Just this month my department sent a pack to around 3,500 services with information about the stronger regulations we called for that came into evident on 1 March and 'Look Before You Lock' stickers and posters. Unfortunately, despite these efforts, there was a recent reported case of a child being left on a bus for around an hour at an early childhood centre in Brisbane. Please, everyone, look before you lock without fail every single time.

I would also love to give two shout-outs before I finish. Firstly, I say congratulations to Royston, a former Weipa Western Cape College student and Creative Generation singer, who has just been named the winner of *Australian Idol*, and I know the member for Cook is particularly proud. Secondly, it is hard to believe term 1 comes to a close tomorrow. I trust all staff, students and school communities enjoy a well-earned and safe break over the Easter holidays.