



Speech By  
**Hon. Amanda Camm**


**MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY**

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Record of Proceedings, 28 November 2024

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Residential Care**

 **Hon. AJ CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.08 am): Since becoming a member of this House, I have travelled the state over the past four years and have engaged with foster carers, kinship carers, residential care providers, peak bodies, families, and survivors of domestic and family violence, and they have shared their concerns for community safety. They were also vocal about the connection that exists between youth crime and parts of the child safety system that have resulted in the growing correlation of youth offenders—a residential care program that is not fit for purpose.

Currently, more than 12,000 children are living away from home under the care of Child Safety. An estimated 2,100 of these are in residential care. One-third are under the age of 12—shame. This is unacceptable. As a government, we have inherited a broken residential care system and a residential road map to nowhere. This is why we announced a \$383 million Safer Children, Safer Communities policy, which includes a plan to reform the overburdened and unsustainable residential care system. I look forward to progressing this reform, working alongside the sector. The actions in this policy will not only help to protect our most vulnerable children but also work to stop children in the child safety system from heading down a path of crime. Our plan will ensure children who first come into contact with the child safety system receive the critical support and intervention they need to turn their lives around.

Over the past few weeks, as the new Minister for Child Safety, I have visited child safety services in Mackay, Rockhampton, Townsville, Cairns and across Brisbane. I have met the passionate and committed staff and have heard firsthand the need for additional resources and support and what they need to undertake their vital work to protect children and support families in our great state. To support our frontline services we have pledged to boost the number of frontline staff by 20 per cent, and I look forward to progressing this with my department. This will aim to end soaring caseloads and ensure that safety concerns raised about children are investigated on time to keep them safe.

When it comes to residential care facilities, we know many currently just have one worker on at any time. Given the often complex needs and behaviours of young people, we want to make sure that appropriate staffing models are in place. We will address this by developing and delivering a new dual-carer model which will be in place in full by 2030. It will provide two carers to be rostered on at residential care facilities 24 hours a day when it is needed. This will provide safety, restore behavioural consequences for children and support children in attending school and undertaking extracurricular activities. We will also deliver Queensland's first SecureCare facility to provide safer care to children who are a danger to themselves and others; we will pilot a new professional foster care program for children with disability and complex needs who are currently in the residential care system; and we will increase the allowance for extracurricular activities and education support for children in out-of-home care.

Queenslanders have told us clearly and repeatedly that public safety is a priority. Together, the Crisafulli government will work to build a brighter future for all Queensland children and families because we know safer children will deliver safer communities.