




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Linard

MEMBER FOR NUDGE

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENTS

Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation) (2.28 pm): May is Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month—a month aimed at raising awareness of domestic, family and sexual violence, of coercive control and of the support services available, and it is an opportunity to send a clear message that violence in our communities will not be tolerated. The only issue is that the perpetrators of such violence are not listening. Already this year, one woman has been killed every four days—almost twice as many as this time last year, and it is only May. I send my heartfelt condolences to the families of those women—families who will forever carry the grief and trauma of their loss. I acknowledge too that men are victims of domestic and family violence, but this is predominantly a gender-based crime and we should never shy away from calling that out. I will not. It is a national shame.

While October each year is Sexual Violence Awareness Month, the two are too often indelibly linked. Both relate to power, to dominance, to anger, to shame and, undoubtedly, to trauma, and my comments here today relate to both. Almost one in four Queensland women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15. In Australia, one in six women report that they have been physically or sexually abused before the age of 15. I note the use of the word 'report'. An estimated 70 per cent do not report so the real figure is even more sobering.

The fact is that girls and women continue to grow up in 2024 in this country lucky if gender-based violence does not touch their lives in some way. I was not one of the lucky ones; my mother wasn't, my cousin wasn't, my childhood neighbour wasn't, my childhood friend wasn't—she did not survive it—and my neighbour right now isn't.

It is not through a lack of goodwill. It is not through a lack of generations of girls and women rallying exhaustively for change, for equality and for respect. It is not through a lack of investment. Our government alone has invested more than \$1.75 billion towards ending domestic, family and sexual violence and keeping women safe. It is fundamentally because of a lack of respect for girls and for women. That is what ultimately is at the heart of all gender-based violence, and that ultimately is something that men must address. So much of our focus is still about educating young women from the moment they are born that, because of their gender, they are more likely to be a target of violence. Constant vigilance is, frankly, exhausting.

This month, I acknowledge every girl or woman who is a survivor of domestic, family or sexual violence and those who sadly did not survive. I acknowledge the services, including Northside Connect in my own community, who dedicate their lives to supporting those who experience violence and fight for change. I acknowledge brave bystanders and frontline services who render help, and I acknowledge every parent who raises their sons to respect and honour women.