



Speech By
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JUSTICE, INTEGRITY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.52 pm): I rise to speak to the Justice, Integrity and Safety Committee report *Oversight of the Queensland Child and Family Commission*. At the outset, I thank the commission for their dedication to their very important role. Alongside the members for Moggill and Mansfield, I was honoured to attend the Children's Rights Queensland event, which is one of the many events referenced in this report. That is a very small part of the work of the commission. They do many different events, but this one is very important.

This event not only highlighted the rights of children and how we can better educate our children about their rights but also involved an awards component. It was at these awards that I was delighted to get to know one of their Bravehearts ambassadors who was up for an award, young Amelia. Amelia has previously spoken very bravely and very publicly about her experience. It is young people like Amelia who have dealt with the incredibly serious issues canvassed in this report, and it is these incredibly serious issues that are the reason the children's commission exists and the reports of the commission are so important.

We have heard a lot about how alarming the different statistics in the committee report are, but when reading this report there was one statistic that stood out to me and absolutely took my breath away. It reads—

Suicide is the leading cause of death for Queensland children aged 10 to 17 years.

That should shock everybody in this House. The report continues—

Of the cases the CDRB reviewed in 2023-24, six children died by Suicide.

The report goes on to state—

The cohorts of children at greatest risk of mental ill-health are children and young people who have experienced child maltreatment, children experiencing sexual abuse—

that is children like Amelia—

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and gender diverse young people.

I am deeply concerned, after reading that report, about the decision this government has made to once again go against the health advice and stop young people who are explicitly named in this report from accessing the health care they need. This report clearly outlines the increased risk that these young people are at. Despite knowing that, this government has chosen to take that action. According to this report we have a cohort who are at increased risk of suicide, and the government has made a decision that will put their mental health at the risk. What we can see from this report is that that puts their lives at risk. I do not know about others, but that sits terribly with me. We are putting young people's lives at risk with the decision this government has made. That is shocking. I hope members opposite read this report and see how important it is that young people have access to the health care they need, especially when they sit in one of these vulnerable cohorts. I will read those cohorts out again for the benefit of the House—

... children and young people who have experienced child maltreatment, children experiencing sexual abuse, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and gender diverse young people.

We heard the voices of gender diverse young people. They spoke loudly and clearly at City Hall earlier this week when they came together to appeal to this government to listen to their voices and give them back their healthcare rights and put those decisions back in the hands of clinicians where they belong. Clinicians will make the best choices for young people based on their healthcare needs and not their ideological bent. This part of the report spoke to me loudly and clearly and concerningly. On behalf of the young people this report speaks about, I say to the LNP government, 'Please reconsider your decision. This report demands it.'