




Speech By
Hon. Laura Gerber

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Youth Justice

 **Hon. LJ GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services) (9.46 am): Queenslanders were promised action to turn the tide on youth crime after a decade of decline under Labor. I am proud to say that we are a government that listens to Queenslanders. We are a government that sticks to our promises. We went to the election with our plan to restore safety to Queensland with tougher laws, more police and new youth crime fighting early intervention and rehabilitation programs. We are delivering on that plan.

Adult Crime, Adult Time is now law. Youth offenders will face tough consequences for their actions. We have recruited more than 1,000 police officers from Cooktown to Coolangatta and beyond, and we have rolled out our early intervention and rehabilitation programs right across the state. Today, I can announce that our intensive, youth crime rehabilitation program—Staying on Track—has been rolled out across Greater Brisbane. Right now, for the first time, every youth offender leaving detention will receive 12 months of rehabilitation under our Staying on Track program to stop the revolving door of youth crime and prevent these youth offenders from falling back into crime.

Youth offenders are partnered with a mentor while in detention and they are given tailored support to address the behaviours that are causing them to offend. These youth offenders are managed alongside their family before they are released back into our communities. These mentors help them get back on track, ensuring that when they are released back into our communities they are going to school, they have a job, they are in training, they have hope and, most importantly, they do not fall back into a pattern of offending and a life of crime.

Under Labor, we saw 94 per cent of youth offenders leaving detention reoffending within a year. In some of our facilities, like Cleveland, 96 per cent of youth went on to reoffend. Often this happened in the first two weeks of them being released. That is shocking. That is Labor's legacy. It is a direct result of their weak crime laws and their failure to invest in effective rehabilitation that addresses the factors that cause youth to offend. Under Labor, many youth offenders were released with zero support. They were dumped straight back into communities with no support. Only serious repeat offenders were given a measly 72-hour transition plan. For years, the sector called this out as ineffective and failing communities.

We have listened. Our Staying on Track program will ensure 12 months of rehabilitation so that youth offenders leaving detention have support so they can stop causing harm to our communities. By reducing the number of repeat youth offenders, we will have fewer victims of crime and a safer Queensland.