




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

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ADJOURNMENT

Women in Sport

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (9.18 pm): I have spoken before in this House about the importance of keeping girls and women engaged in sport and fitness, including my own forays, and the FairPlay and Play On! vouchers are a critical part of that. Under a Labor government I was delighted to see dance included in those vouchers.

This is important because this is an activity that many girls and young women enjoy participating in. I am receiving reports from local families in my community that they find the rules around dance studio participation in the program to be a bit confusing and frustrating. I have studios in my electorate that are included but also those that would like to be but are not. Families do not want to have to switch from their beloved dance studio so they can access the vouchers, and I am sure we can all agree that they should not have to.

We know that getting girls and women involved in sport and physical activity has a myriad challenges, and I am proud of the work that our government did to get more girls and women involved in sport including helping local clubs build better change rooms and facilities, as is currently occurring at the mighty Jindalee Jags with a grant they received under our government.

Historically, dance has been one of the most popular activities for young women. I did a quick google search today to get some up-to-date information. Dance as a physical activity for young women, based on data from AusPlay and the ABS, is still one of the most popular organised physical activities for girls, with hundreds of thousands of participants Australia-wide.

It is wonderful that more and more young women are signing up for soccer and AFL et cetera, but it is important to recognise dance has long been a popular activity for our young women. It needs to be just as easy for them to access the FairPlay vouchers or Play On! vouchers for these sports. It is also fair to note that a lot of our traditional sports have mainly been played by blokes and that the transition to get more girls in is going to take time.

As I said, I consistently get complaints from parents like Lucy, who wrote to me last week, and dance studios in my community about how challenging the process is, so I will be writing to the Minister for Sport to ask that he makes it easier for dance studios that want to register to do so. I think it is imperative for the future of girls in sport and I am calling on the minister to act.

In the time I have left and while on the theme of women in sport, I want to give a shout-out to an amazing Mount Ommaney local Emily Noller, who has swum 61 kilometres—yes, over 61 kilometres—to raise money for the Starlight Children's Foundation. Emily is a Jindalee Girl Guides leader, and some of the young women she looks after in her work there access the Starlight Children's Foundation. That is why she decided to do the swim. Now, thanks to Emily and her fundraising efforts, around 60 young people will be able to access the Starlight Children's Foundation care. What a legend!