

CANNABIS USE

**754. Mr JOHNSON to the Minister for Community Development, Women's Interests, Seniors and Youth:**

I refer the minister to a recent study by the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne that found that there was very strong association between cannabis use at the ages of 20 and 21 and mental health problems; that is, depression and anxiety. Given the minister's statement that mental disorders from substance abuse among young males and anxiety disorders among young women are prevalent among young persons between the ages of 18 and 24 years, how can she support the Government's decision to decriminalise marijuana?

**Ms McHALE replied:**

I can support the Government's policy very well and with a very clear conscience.

Mr Barnett: What a disgraceful response from a minister who is responsible for children.

The SPEAKER: Order, Leader of the Opposition.