

RED NOSE DAY

Statement

HON LORNA HARPER (East Metropolitan) [5.20 pm]: This evening I rise briefly to discuss the fact that tomorrow is Red Nose Day. As many people know, Red Nose Day is about raising funds to look into the causes of sudden infant death syndrome. I imagine that for any parent who goes through anything like that, it would live with them for the rest of their life. It is pretty devastating. That is why Red Nose Day is so, so important.

If anybody has seen my car in the car park, they will know that it has a beautiful red nose. The Wiggles are involved this year. We have Henry the Octopus, Wags the Dog and a new character that I do not know the name of. I will be honest: I am still old-school Wiggles. I do not have a red car, but I know most of the songs. The Wiggles are helping to raise awareness about Red Nose Day and sudden infant death syndrome. Funds raised on Red Nose Day over the last 35 years have resulted in an incredible 85 per cent reduction in the incidence of sudden infant death syndrome. That is remarkable. That means that over 11 000 babies have been saved.

Red Nose Day sparked a global movement and catalysed research into the reasons why babies die suddenly in their sleep. Because of that, we now have six evidence-based steps that all parents can take to reduce the risk. Some of these steps are as simple as not overdressing their baby when they put them to bed; making sure that their feet are at the bottom of the cot and their arms and head are free, because they need their head to be free to reduce their temperature; making sure that they are in a smoke-free environment; breastfeeding, if possible; and having them in the same room for the first few months. A lot of us here who are parents have done a lot of that and we have been very lucky because of this research. If we do anything today, we should just remind people to please, please not overwrap their baby. It is one of the things I see when I am out and about at the shops. When I think it is quite warm, I see these wee red-faced little darlings who are overheated in their prams. On a personal note, I have noticed that a lot of children have amber beads around their neck. I have worked with a lot of children over time, so I ask parents to please take off everything their children have around their necks while they are sleeping. It horrifies me when I see people putting babies to bed with bibs on or anything around their neck. Parents have to take it off. We have to make sure that we do the best we can for our little darlings—even if they wake us up four or five times a night!

I encourage everyone to go to the Red Nose Day website and please give as much as you possibly can. Buy as many Wiggles toys, red noses, pens et cetera as you can, and spread the word and encourage as many people as possible to have a look at the website so that we can raise more and more money and have more and more understanding about what we can do to protect our precious little infants.