

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**312. Mr F.A. ALBAN to the Minister for Child Protection:**

Can the minister outline to the house the state government's recent work in supporting victims of domestic violence?

**Ms A.R. MITCHELL replied:**

I thank the member for the question and thank him for joining me in Ellenbrook this morning. I was delighted that we could open new crisis accommodation in Ellenbrook to support people in that area. It is disappointing that we need a crisis centre that women and children who need somewhere safe can go to get support. It is unfortunate, but it is a fact of life that it is required. It is not our preferred option but at this point in time, while we deal with the issues of family and domestic violence, we need crisis accommodation. This is an outstanding centre because it provides not only accommodation but also support services. We have a program called the Safe at Home program to work in conjunction with accommodation services. We can assist women and children in the centre and at the same time we can support people who may be at risk in the community. It is a comprehensive package, not just an accommodation service. It is a cluster model of accommodation comprising five fantastic units. It means we can cater for families of various sizes, and children of various ages or women without children. The member for Armadale raised in his speech last night that family and domestic violence comes under the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, so anyone suffering from family and domestic violence is supported by the Department for Child Protection and Family Support.

The police tell us that they have about 40 000 domestic violence dealings every year and 65 per cent of those involve children. It is a crisis in our society. Actually, it is a national disgrace. This government is making a firm commitment to tackle that.

**Ms S.F. McGurk** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Fremantle!

**Ms A.R. MITCHELL:** This government continues to make a strong investment in human services.

**Ms S.F. McGurk** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Fremantle, I call you to order for the first time.

**Ms A.R. MITCHELL:** I am very pleased to say that this government makes a firm and dedicated commitment to human services. We are making a difference, and we will continue to do that.