

YOUTH COUNSELLING SERVICES

181. Mrs L.M. O'MALLEY to the Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to supporting victims of family and domestic violence. Can the minister advise the house what initiatives this government is providing to young people affected by family and domestic violence, including its election commitment of providing specialist counselling services?

Ms S.E. WINTON replied:

I thank the member for Bicton for the question and her strong commitment to preventing family and domestic violence.

Since 2017, the McGowan government has committed an additional \$160 million to addressing family and domestic violence. That is a record investment. Of course, we know our focus has been on keeping victims safe, holding perpetrators to account and also ensuring that domestic violence does not happen in the first place. Our 10-year *Path to safety* strategy to tackle family and domestic violence identifies the need for a greater focus on supporting our young people. That is why we made the election commitment to establish two specialist youth FDV counselling services in Rockingham and Northam.

Last Friday, in the great electorate of Rockingham, I met with local service providers to see the dedicated family and domestic violence counselling services for young people, which is now up and running in Rockingham. It is called OpenSpace, and is operated by Communicare. This forms part of the McGowan government's \$60 million commitment package of reforms and programs towards preventing family and domestic violence. For young people, we know that the trauma of family and domestic violence can impact their health, mental health, education and, of course, their ability to establish healthy relationships themselves. We need to break the intergenerational cycle of family and domestic violence, and programs like this are critical to that. Communicare, which will be running the service in Rockingham, has a great track record of working with young people, and this service will provide assistance to over 200 young people aged 10 to 24 in Rockingham per year. Work is also underway to appoint a service provider for a second counselling service for young people, in Northam, and I look forward to providing the house with an update as that project progresses.

Violence in the home is never acceptable and these counselling services are a critical and important step to help protect our young people to disrupt the cycle of family and domestic violence and to support them to recover and grow. Our government is committed to supporting people impacted by family and domestic violence to recover and rebuild their lives, and this service, as well as the many other initiatives of this government, will serve that purpose.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition with the last question.