

CHILDREN'S WEEK

Statement by Minister for Early Childhood Education

MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo — Minister for Early Childhood Education) [9.13 am]: I am pleased to inform the house about Children's Week, an annual event celebrating children, their rights and achievements, which recently ran from 21 to 29 October. This year's theme of "Children have the right to relax, play and take part in activities they enjoy" was based on article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

I was privileged to open Children's Week at a community event in Bullsbrook on Saturday, 21 October with the member for Swan Hills. This event was just one of many occurring across the state to celebrate the rights of children to enjoy their childhood. It was wonderful to see children, with their families and carers, enjoying the many activities on offer.

Meerilinga, which has convened Children's Week in Western Australia since 1985, received \$15 000 to deliver our Children's Week community grants program. This funding enabled 78 regional and remote community organisations, Early Years Networks and local governments to host Children's Week events. On Wednesday, I announced the Local Government Australian Early Development Census grants program. This grants program will offer funding of up to \$100 000 to local governments for programs aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of young children across WA.

On Thursday, I joined a play picnic in Kings Park organised by Early Childhood Australia WA. More than 200 children enjoyed the Children's Week's theme of relaxing, playing and taking part in activities they enjoy. Children, along with their families and educators, enjoyed a fun-filled morning of play-based activities and learning experiences that included construction, sensory, music, reading and much more. This successful play event was sponsored by the Department of Communities and the Department of Education.

During Children's Week, our government also promoted the implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations through the inaugural Child Safe Organisations Forum. The national principles outline behaviours and practices organisations should adopt to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is at the forefront of their organisation's culture, activities and services. The forum included keynote speakers Adele Cox from SNAICC and Paul Litherland from Surf Online Safe. The forum supported participants to identify ways to strengthen their organisation's child-safe approaches. Children's Week was a wonderful celebration of children's play and the importance of children's safety and wellbeing.

I encourage all members to support the children they know to relax, play and take part in activities they enjoy each and every single day.