

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL CHILD HEALTH SURVEY

5940. Hon Shelley Archer to the Minister for Local Government representing the Minister for Education and Training

I refer the Minister to the Report on the Western Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey, carried out by the Kulunga Research Network at the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research. I draw the Minister's attention to Recommendation 7 of the Report, namely, 'Develop specific development prevention training curricula and formulate policies to guide the content, implementation and access to workforce and professional development programmes, as well as direct measures of staff attitudes, knowledge and skills, and frequency or extent of participation in them', and I ask —

Will the Minister advise the House what progress has been made in respect of this recommendation?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH replied:

The wording of this recommendation is not very clear. However given the context of building capability in families and communities with Aboriginal children and skilling staff in schools, the following response is provided.

The Department works closely with relevant local Aboriginal community people, school nurses, the Department of Health and other appropriate regional partners in delivering its preventative behaviours measures in schools, which include pastoral care strategies. A School Health Services 2007-2010 Memorandum of Understanding has been implemented in conjunction with the Health Department. There has been a strong emphasis on improving the awareness and understanding of teachers relating to the protective behaviours and skills required by students.

The Department of Education and Training has implemented the Family Links Program to support schools to work collaboratively with parents, caregivers and the school community. A key component of the Family Links initiative is the employment of school-based community liaison officers. At present, 120 primary schools have access to a school-based community liaison officer who may assist in: assessing family needs, interests and aspirations and advocate for them in policies and programs; home visits to better enable two-way communication; developing mechanisms to inform families and communities about family involvement opportunities; and fostering involvement in school decision making..