

## NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION WEEK

### *Statement by Minister for Child Protection*

**MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo — Minister for Child Protection)** [9.16 am]: Last week, 3 September to 9 September, was National Child Protection Week and its enduring theme of “Every child in every community needs a fair go” was complemented with the important message “Where we start matters”. National Child Protection Week is coordinated by the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect and highlights the role the whole community has in keeping children safe and supported and reminds us that protecting children is everyone’s business. Since becoming the Minister for Child Protection, I have had the privilege of visiting child protection workers and family support services across our state and hearing from hundreds of staff about their work and the difference they make in our communities.

I began the week meeting child protection workers in Perth at an inaugural event organised by the Community and Public Sector Union–Civil Service Association of WA and ended the week in Bunbury. In between, I visited Geraldton, Carnarvon and Armadale. I took the opportunity to thank child protection workers and support services for their hard work and dedication to making children’s lives better and our communities stronger. I met key stakeholders providing critical supports in the child sexual abuse therapeutic services and Indigenous healing services sector at the launch of the national minimum standards and announced Phoenix Support and Advocacy Services as the successful recipient of a grant to provide a sector support secretariat function.

I visited local volunteers making a big difference at Fostering Hope Australia, a charity established to provide free items to children and young people in care. In doing so, it has also created a welcoming community for foster families across WA. I also visited the Armadale Aboriginal representative organisation pilot and the south west health navigator pilot. Both of these innovative programs are led by local Aboriginal community–controlled organisations and are having positive results for children in out-of-home care.

I am proud to be part of a government that prioritises and invests in initiatives to support better outcomes for children at risk of, or who are currently in, out-of-home care. I was also pleased to announce grants to 11 ACCOs to build their capacity to become Aboriginal representative organisations, the appointment of Geraldton’s Streetwork Aboriginal Corporation to deliver Labor’s flagship Home Stretch WA program in the midwest–Gascoyne region, and the launch of the child safe organisations knowledge hub to support organisations to develop child safe cultures and practices. I thank my parliamentary colleagues who joined me during the week and community members who generously supported the book and toy drive.

Finally, I acknowledge the significant contribution that child protection workers, foster and kinship carers and support services make in keeping children safe throughout the year. When we support children’s wellbeing and safety, we are investing in their future and the future of our community.