

**NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION WEEK 2017**

*Statement by Minister for Child Protection*

**MS S.F. MCGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Child Protection)** [12.13 pm]: I rise to mark National Child Protection Week 2017, which is being held from 3 September to 9 September. It is a great opportunity to reflect on all the positive work that happens in child protection in our state. The National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect coordinates the week and supports all jurisdictions to hold events and activities. Now in its twenty-seventh year, the overall theme of the week is “protecting children is everyone’s business”. It is important that we all pause and reflect upon this because children are our most precious resource, but can also be our most vulnerable. The Department of Communities plays a major role in promoting the themes of National Child Protection Week through regional and metropolitan district events. There are 25 events planned by Communities over the week to be held right around the state, from a family fun event and blue light disco in the Kimberley to an event I know you will be interested in, Mr Speaker—a colouring-in competition for children in the great southern, with a public display of entries. We often hear about child protection in the media a lot of the time only because something has gone wrong. During my six months as minister, I have travelled to nine district offices and met with hundreds of staff who often go unthanked but who do difficult work under trying circumstances. They work with their hearts as well as their heads. This week especially, I thank all staff for the important role they play in our community. Often, by the time a child comes into contact with Communities, they have had contact with multiple departments, services and community members, which is why early intervention and family support are crucial. I further congratulate all other agencies and individuals involved in National Child Protection Week on their continued efforts to keep vulnerable children safe and ensure that we are all reminded that this important task is everyone’s responsibility.