

CHILD PROTECTION — SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES —  
PILBARA AND THE KIMBERLEY

**961. Mrs A.K. HAYDEN to the Minister for Child Protection:**

I have a supplementary question. Can the minister confirm that in the same estimates hearings it was revealed that 24 children under the age of 14 in the Pilbara and the Kimberley have confirmed cases of sexually transmitted diseases and can she categorically assure this place that these are isolated cases and not part of a much bigger crisis?

**Ms S.F. McGURK replied:**

Sexually transmitted diseases, whether it is children under 18 or the adult population, are a matter of interest to the Minister for Health and the Minister for Police. There is an ongoing evaluation of those cases across the state. There is historical data about where those cases are found and what that means. We have known since I was first given reports of Operation Fledermaus, as was the police minister, that there has been an incredibly thorough, proactive and cooperative effort on the part of government agencies and the community sector and, quite frankly, the community itself, to make sure that any level of harm was identified and acted upon and that safety and protective behaviours were put around those children who were victims or at risk. We continue to do that work. That is the west Pilbara plan. We have been up-front about saying an immediate effort needs to be put in place but we also need to arm the community so the community is well placed to make sure there is a safe system for children in those areas. The levels of sexually transmitted diseases are well understood by not only my agency, but also other government ministers and their agencies. We continue to work proactively, as we do across the state, to make sure we have the safest situation we possibly can for young people.

**The SPEAKER:** Can I advise members and ministers that it took over nine minutes for the first question. If we want to get through our quota, can we be a little bit quicker, ministers?