

DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - TOMMIE TURTLE CHILD CARE CENTRE

**822. Mr T. BUSWELL to the Minister for Community Development:**

Is the minister aware that two workers from the Tommie Turtle Child Care Centre in Huntingdale have been charged today by police with assault? Is this yet another example of the ongoing failure of the minister, the previous minister and the department to protect Western Australian children?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:**

I thank the member for the question. The answer is yes, I am aware. That is important. The charges have been laid against the two workers in question and that means a court process will now need to be carried out in relation to the charges that have been laid. When I took over this ministerial position, the first thing I wanted to do was to ensure that the focus of the department and of the government on the protection of children became the number one priority.

Several members interjected.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** In the May budget, the department received a \$140 million increase, the biggest increase in the history of the department. When members opposite were in power, they did nothing. As the Premier has highlighted in this place previously, in the last eight years when the opposition was in power not one care and protection worker was employed under its tenure - not one! What does that say about the commitment of members opposite to the children of Western Australia? It shows their commitment is zip. We have a very clear record. We have introduced legislation to update outdated legislation. This government introduced the new children's services legislation. Members opposite did nothing while they were in power, nothing at all. They sat on their hands. We introduced the new legislation. We have provided for checks to be carried out on people working with children. We have increased the budget for the Department for Community Development. I have initiated a clear review process within the department to ensure that this state will have the best possible child protection. This government is 100 per cent committed to the children of Western Australia. To top it off, it was this government that introduced the Commissioner for Children and Young People. Our record stands on its own. The record of the previous government is absolute rubbish. As Minister for Community Development, I will continue to put children first in this state.