

DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, WARDS OF THE STATE, POWERS

1831. Mr R.F. Johnson to the Minister for Community Development, Women's Interests, Seniors and Youth
- (1) Does the Minister agree that the Department for Community Development does not have the power to detain, confine or restrain a child who is a ward of the State?
 - (2) Does the Minister intend to clarify the power of the State in detaining, confining or restraining a child who is a ward of the State in the new legislation?
 - (3) In preparing for new legislation have models in other States and countries, where Departments with similar responsibilities to the Department for Community Development, that have the power to detain children in secure welfare settings, separate from adjudicated offenders, been investigated?
 - (4) If so, were any of these models considered effective?
 - (5) Was the Kath French Centre in Stoneville funded to provide an assessment service for children with special needs?
 - (6) Are children free to come and go from the Kath French Centre at Stoneville as they wish?
 - (7) Will the Minister provide copies of agreements that her department has with other State departments and instrumentalities to clarify lines of responsibility and service standards for children who are wards of the State, particularly those who are in danger of offending (Department of Justice); those with suspected mental health problems (Health Department of Western Australia); those with a recognised disability (Disability Services Commission); those with special education needs (Education Department of Western Australia); and those with drug and alcohol abuse problems (Health Department of Western Australia)?
 - (8) Will the Minister provide copies of agreed reciprocal child abuse reporting arrangements with the State departments and instrumentalities, where they exist?

Ms S.M. McHALE replied:

1. Yes.
2. Yes, in relation to restraint, search and seizure.
3. Legislation in the United Kingdom and other Australian states has been examined in the preparation of the new legislation.
4. The literature examined at the time highlighted the tension between the rights of children and the power of the State to detain them against their will.
5. Yes, it was established to provide an assessment service for children who have had a number of placements.
6. They are free under law to come and go, but staff receive specialised training to engage children and young people to stay at the centre.
7. Yes, attached. [See paper No 1526.]
8. Yes, attached. [See paper No 1526.]