

PUBLIC SPACES — NOISE

50. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

I refer to the recently released noise reduction guidelines for outdoor community facilities from the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and the Western Australian Local Government Association.

- (1) Was the minister or his office made aware of the new guidelines prior to them being published?
- (2) If not, will the minister be dictated to by bureaucrats or will he stand up for our kids and the opportunity to get outside and enjoy some basketball and some exercise?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

- (1)–(2) I am very, very pleased to respond. It is interesting that there is this sort of cyclone of outrage about an issue that I think all of us understand is focused on making sure that children and young people are out in parks and open spaces playing sport, kicking footies, playing netball and throwing basketballs through hoops. As the member would be aware, there have been a couple of examples—I think one in Belmont and one in the northern suburbs—of some noise issues that have caused some concern for some residents. My understanding is that the local governments sought some advice from the department responsible for noise issues, and some guidelines have been drafted. I do not think those guidelines are sanctioned. They are a draft.

Let us be sensible here. The reality is that we have public open spaces throughout Western Australia. Those public open spaces should be and need to be places for children and young people to play sport, both passively and actively. That includes having three-on-one basketball boards in place. It includes having spaces where kids can kick footies and throw frisbees and be out and about and active. We all know that. As Minister for Sport and Recreation, I can assure members that I will absolutely keep promoting that strongly. I know SportWest has raised the matter. Let us be very frank: common sense will and needs to be adhered to here.

I think anybody who lives around a park or a public space needs to understand that those public spaces are there for people to enjoy, and we want to encourage more active use of those spaces. We want to see kids and young people out and about—off their screens and out in those spaces. It is one of the reasons that we have programs such as the night light program to put in place lighting so that these young kids can be out there, a lot of times under the supervision of great coaches and volunteers, and doing really positive stuff.

The member might want to try to beat this up as a bit of an outrage, but the fact of the matter is that I will always be on the side of kids and young people having access to active spaces, including for basketball. I have to tell members about basketball. It is one of the fastest growing codes in terms of demand, and I want to see more kids on both informal and formal courts and making sure they are enjoying the great game of basketball because it is great for their mental health, “teammanship”, learning and physical health, and I will keep on encouraging it.