

WADE SCALE

**498. Mr P.D. OMODEI to the Premier:**

I refer to the tragic death of Wade Scale.

- (1) Does the Premier concede that the Department for Community Development and the former minister failed in their duty to protect Wade Scale from an abusive and drug-influenced environment?
- (2) Is it the case that the government funded a holiday on the Gold Coast for Wade's grandparents and two elder sisters following his death?
- (3) If yes, why was this funding provided, and what were the minister and the department trying to achieve?

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER replied:**

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question, and I welcome students from Shenton College to Parliament to observe question time.

- (1) Several questions were asked about this extremely tragic event last week. Everybody in the Parliament would express immense remorse at the outcome of this series of events - the death of toddler Wade Scale. Nobody would express anything other than great sadness at that occurrence. I do not believe, therefore, that we should automatically attribute the blame to the minister then presiding over the department. As I said last week, the department received streams of advice about this issue. The minister acted on the best advice available to her, from not just the department, but also non-government agencies such as Mofflyn.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** I believe that it is extremely, almost inexpressibly regrettable that the outcome was the death of the toddler Wade Scale. I do not believe that members opposite can attribute the blame for that to the minister or assert that the minister failed to protect this young toddler. The vast majority of ordinary Western Australians would understand that statement perfectly clearly.

- (2)-(3) Until the Leader of the Opposition asked the question, I had not heard of such a thing, but I am informed as I stand here that the answer to question (2) is, yes, Wade Scale's grandmother and his two older siblings were provided with a holiday after the event. They were provided with that holiday because, as I am informed, it was the express wish of the grandmother.