

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Ms Moss to the Minister for Children and Families:

Referring to WQ 423 - Out of Home Care

1. Of the 97% of case-plans that had been reviewed and approved in the last 6 months:

- (a) What proportion were developed with the child and carer and/or family?**
- (b) What proportion were a desktop review?**

(a) In order to answer this question, a manual review of the 1006 children's substitute care cases would be required as the information is not captured in the Department of Children and Families data reporting system. As such, this data request is too resource intensive to collate.

(b) As indicated above this data request is too resource intensive to collate as it would require a manual review of the children's substitute care cases.

Past independent reviews have indicated that after reviewing a sample of care plans, the Department of Children and Families consulted with a child or young person in 73 percent of the plans, and consulted with a child's family in 80 percent of the plans.

2. From 1 July 2015 – 31 January 2016, how many foster carers and kinship carers had:

- (a) Their registrations ceased or lapsed?**
- (b) Stopped being a foster or kinship carer?**

(a) The Department does not record 'lapsed' authorisations, as carers are authorised for a specific period of time. Authorised carers who decide not to continue to be carers, are captured as carers who have stopped being carers.

(b) From 1 July 2015 to 31 January 2016, there were 92 foster and kinship carers who stopped being Department of Children and Families carers.

- 3. Of the 216 children / young people who had absconded since 1 July 2014:**
- (a) How many were 12 years and under?**
 - (b) How many were between the ages of 13 - 15?**
 - (c) How many were between the ages of 15 – 18?**

Of the 216 children/young people who were recorded as having had an episode of a self-placed/unapproved placement type between 1 July 2014 and 2 March 2016:

- (a) 51 children were 12 years and under;
- (b) 101 children were aged between 13 to 15 years; and
- (c) 64 children were aged 16 to 17 years.

The children have been categorised based on their age at the time of the first placement event of this type since 1 July 2014. To ensure that children were not counted in more than one age bracket, the age groups have been amended.

- 4. Of the 216 children or young people that had absconded and self placed / unapproved placements**
- (a) How many were found to be homeless?**
 - (b) How many had returned to the residence they had been removed from on their Child Protection Order?**

A manual review of the 216 children's records would be required in order to answer this question and is too resource intensive to collate. The question is complex as 'residence' prior to removal is not recorded, and a Protection Order may specify that parental responsibility is shared between the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Children and Families and one or more family members.

- 5. Of the missing children as at 2 March 2016:**
- (a) How many have been found since 2 March?**
 - (b) What are the ages of the missing children?**

- (a) all five children whose whereabouts were recorded as unknown as at 2 March 2016 have been located by the Department of Children and Families; and
- (b) one child is 10 years of age, three are 17 years of age, and one is now an adult.