

COMMUNIFIED

Statement by Member for Kingsley

MRS J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI (Kingsley) [12.55 pm]: I acknowledge the amazing work of Greenwood resident Rhiannon Williams. Rhiannon founded Communified after her son was treated for cancer at 12 months old. Communified (Inc) helps children who are living with serious illness or disabilities and their families through projects designed to enhance their mental health, happiness and wellbeing, with practical and emotional community-based support. Communified runs the Dial-an-Elf program. It is a micro-volunteering program that connects volunteers with families in their area to assist with everyday activities such as cleaning, gardening, laundry, cooking and child care. Communified currently operates across the Perth metropolitan area and Bunbury region. It has 55 volunteers, with seven carers and 48 helpers, and 36 registered families. The micro-volunteering model allows volunteers to choose how and when they can help, making volunteering accessible to many more people who may be unable to commit to the regular hours required by many organisations. Research shows that parents are the most affected when their child is diagnosed with a chronic disease and may exhibit physical and emotional symptoms such as loss of self-control or self-esteem, depression, anxiety and a higher risk of developing mental illness. Social support is one of the most common resources used by families to counter the demands of looking after their children with a disability. I encourage my community to volunteer if they can with Communified and to get in contact with my office if they need more help.