

CHILD PROTECTION — OUT-OF-HOME CARE

173. Hon Alison Xamon to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Child Protection:

I refer to the importance of support to young people who are transitioning from out of home care, and the proposal to extend out of home care from 18 years of age to 21 years, and I ask:

- (a) will the Minister increase the support provided to young people transitioning from out of home care;
- (b) if yes to (a), please advise what additional support will be provided to these young people;
- (c) if no to (a), why not;
- (d) will the Minister raise the age that young people must transition from care to 21 years; and
- (e) if no to (d), why not?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) The Department of Communities (Communities) Building a Better Future: Out-of-Home Care Reform in Western Australia April 2016 includes Transitioning to Adulthood Services. This is comprised of two initiatives to better support children and young people transitioning from out-of-home care:

Transition to Adulthood – Support Services – is being developed to provide intensive outreach, community based support for eligible care leavers aged 15 up until 24 years of age, with a strong focus on eligible care leavers obtaining stable housing and being engaged in training, further education or employment. A preliminary total expenditure of \$1 850 631 per annum has been allocated to Transition to Adulthood – Support Services.

Transitional to Adulthood – Group Living – will provide accommodation and support to older children leaving care and a pathway to stable community housing. A preliminary total expenditure of \$1 973 451 per annum and initial set up costs of \$90 660 (one off) has been allocated from the existing budget to a Group Living Transitional Support service to cover the metropolitan and South West areas.

- (c) Not applicable.
- (d) Not at this stage.
- (e) There are provisions under the Children and Community Services Act 2004 (the Act) for young people who leave out-of-home care to be provided with access to any social services the Chief Executive Officer of Department of Communities considers appropriate. This can include assistance to obtain accommodation, employment and legal advice, undertake education and training, and access counselling and health services.

Under the Act, Communities may also provide a young person who qualifies for leaving care support with financial assistance. This includes the provision of funding towards setting up accommodation or covering expenses incurred by a young person to live close to where they work, attend education or training, or a grant to enable a young person to meet expenses connected with their education or training.