

CHILDREN IN CARE — WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN

43. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the minister representing the Minister for Child Protection:

I refer to the answer to my question without notice 1290, answered on 29 November 2022.

- (1) Has the child recorded in the placement type “unknown—in contact” been found?
- (2) Have the four children reported to the Western Australia Police Force as missing persons been found?
- (3) For how many days was each located child recorded as missing?
- (4) For how many days has each remaining child been recorded as missing?
- (5) How many children who are in the care of the CEO have their whereabouts currently recorded as —
 - (a) a missing person; and
 - (b) unknown—in contact?
- (6) Further to (5), how many have been reported to WA police as a missing person?

Hon JACKIE JARVIS replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Child Protection.

Children and young people may move between living arrangements, which are recorded by case management in the child’s or young person’s placement type. A child is recorded in a placement type “unknown—in contact” if the young person is unwilling to disclose their location but is still in contact with their caseworker or other safety networks that keep in contact with them.

If the child cannot be located or contacted, they are recorded in placement type “missing child”, and a missing person’s report is submitted to the Western Australia Police Force. The Department of Communities and police work to contact and locate the child and ensure their safety.

Many of these children are teenagers. Every child still has access to the same supports that would be made available to them if they were residing with their approved placement.

The Department of Communities has provided the following advice.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes. One child has further absconded and is currently recorded as a missing child.
- (3)–(4) They were missing for six days; 18 days; 41 days; and 20 days, before further absconding and currently recorded as missing for 20 days.
- (5)
 - (a) There are two children.
 - (b) There are four children.
- (6) There are two children.