

CHILDREN IN CARE — WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN

531. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Child Protection:

I refer to the minister's answer to my question without notice 350 asked on 10 May 2022 in which the house was informed that five children in the care of the CEO were recorded in the placement type "unknown", and that one had been reported to the WA Police Force as missing.

- (1) Have these children been found?
- (2) For how many days have each of the children had their whereabouts recorded as unknown?
- (3) How many other children who are in the care of the CEO have their whereabouts currently recorded as unknown, and how many have been reported to WA police as a missing person?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(2) All the children referred to on 10 May 2022 are no longer recorded as placement type "unknown".
- (3) As of 15 June 2022, there are currently eight children recorded in the placement type "unknown". One of these children has been reported missing to the WA Police Force. The term "whereabouts unknown" or language such as "found" may lead to the assumption that every child with a placement type of "unknown" is a missing person, not in contact with caseworkers and unable to be supported by the Department of Communities. This is not always the case. Although a child is recorded in a placement type "unknown", they may still be in contact with their caseworker or other safety networks.