

CHILDREN IN CARE — WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN

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

I refer to the answer on 15 February 2023 to my question without notice 43.

- (1) Have the two children reported to the Western Australia Police Force as missing persons been found?
- (2) Have the four children recorded in the placement type “unknown—in contact” been found?
- (3) For how many days was each child recorded as missing?
- (4) 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?
- (5) How many missing person reports did the department submit in the last calendar year?

**Hon JACKIE JARVIS replied:**

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

If the honourable member has particular concerns about a child, he may wish raise them with the minister or report them to the central intake team by telephone or email. 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 as “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 report is submitted to the WA 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 in their approved placement.

The Department of Communities advises the following —

- (1) Yes. One child has further absconded and is currently recorded as a missing child.
- (2) Yes. There are three children. One child continues to be recorded as “unknown—in contact”.
- (3) They were missing for 29 days and 14 days before further absconding and are currently recorded as a missing child for one day.
- (4)
  - (a) There are three children.
  - (b) There are three children.
- (5) Information on missing children reports to WA Police Force is recorded on individual case files and not in a centralised and aggregated manner.