

Legislative Council

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CHILDREN IN STATE CARE

In reply to the Hon. A. BRESSINGTON (25 May 2010).

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for State/Local Government Relations, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Government Enterprises, Minister for the City of Adelaide): The Minister for Families and Communities has advised that:

The support needs of each child or young person in residential care are reviewed every three months and a wide range of services are engaged in this process to ensure targeted supports are in place for individual children, including:

Families SA and private Psychological Services that provide one on one therapy for children and young people. Families SA Psychological Services also provide consultative support for staff on issues, such as, anger management and protective behaviours.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) provide one on one therapy and support.

The Second Story Youth Health Service provide health assessments conducted by Clinical Nurses and Community Health supports including counselling and group work for targeted health issues.

Behaviour Intervention Service (BIS), located next to the Cornerways Community Unit, provides specialist supports for children who are not succeeding in mainstream education programs.

Mentor programs are in place to offer meaningful recreational and social activities for these children.

Staff are on site to provide care and protection to children and young people who reside in residential care at all times. Residential care staff provide intensive support for the children and develop strong relationships and positive attachments with the children.

All 10 children and young people residing at Cornerways Community Unit are receiving support from wide ranging therapeutic services to meet their individual needs.

Families SA residential care staff are extensively screened as part of the selection process. Those selected undertake a six week training program provided by the Department's College for Learning and Development, a Registered Training Organisation.

They are supported to continue their learning and obtain Certificate 4 in Youth Work. In addition, regular training is provided to staff within a workplace learning environment.

Residential care staff are part of an integrated service team that includes social workers, psychologists and mental health workers.

All children living at Cornerways Community Unit are engaged in an educational program. When necessary, programs are modified to meet the individual needs of each child. Some of these children have a history of disengaging from school, often pre-dating their time in

alternative care. Alternative programs are regularly accessed to respond to the educational needs of these children.

All young people are offered a variety of activities, in and out of the Unit each day. Like any other children they also engage in many recreational activities.

Children are supervised closely at all times. Staff respond assertively to all instances of running away.

When children and young people engage in criminal activity they must take responsibility for their actions and accept the consequences. Staff residential care units work with residents who have offended to support them to address their offending behaviour.'