

QUESTION ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES

The Hon R M Parker MLC asked the Minister for Community Services –

What is the timeline for Community Service Centres' receiving training to improve the management of case files?

ANSWER:

The timeline for Community Service Centres' receiving training to improve the management of case files is October – November 2009.

Linda Burney

Minister for Community Services

QUESTION ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES

The Hon Ian Cohen MLC asked the Minister for Community Services –

Do you recall how many motel nights have been organised?

ANSWER:

Emergency accommodation arrangements, such as in a motel, are only considered in exceptional circumstances when all other placement options have been exhausted.

Data on the number of motel nights organised in 2008/09 is not available.

Linda Burney
Minister for Community Services

QUESTION ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES

The Hon Ian Cohen MLC asked the Minister for Community Services –

The out-of-home care budget shows that the spend per child with high and complex needs has dropped from \$151,000 in 2006/07 to \$122,000 in 2008/09. Could you explain where those savings have been found?

ANSWER:

In addition to information provided in response to this question at the Budget Estimates Hearing, the Director General agreed to provide details of relevant contracts for high needs placements. The contract details for 2008/09 are as follows:

- Allambi Youth Services contracted to provide 30 high needs placements
- CentaCare Broken Bay contracted to provide 18 high needs placements
- Life Without Barriers contracted to provide 156 high needs placements
- Marist contracted to provide 20 high needs placements
- Youth Off the Streets (New Pathways) contracted to provide six high needs placements
- Lifestyles contracted to provide 15 high needs placements

Linda Burney
Minister

QUESTION ON NOTICE

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The Hon Ian Cohen MLC asked the Minister for Community Services –

‘What will be the cost of these units’?

ANSWER:

Child Wellbeing Units are being established in the four major mandatory reporting agencies (NSW Health, NSW Police and the Departments of Education and Training and the Department of Human Services).

The four year forward budget estimates period identifies an allocation of \$47.3 million from 2009-10 to 2012-13 for the costs of these units. In addition \$1 million has been allocated for set up costs in 2008/09.

Linda Burney
Minister for Community Services

QUESTION ON NOTICE

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The Hon Ian Cohen MLC asked the Minister for Community Services –

How would you respond to a concern that there is cost shifting in the area of joint training opportunities for government and non-government organisations?

ANSWER:

A communication, training and cultural change program has been developed in close consultation with stakeholders. The plan was subject to extensive consultation with non-government organisations, peaks, government agencies and unions.

A key initial focus of the program is to equip mandatory reporters to implement the required changes to the child protection system from January 2010. Face-to-face briefings and training will generally be delivered on an interagency, cross-sector basis and include staff from a range of government agencies and non-government organisations. This will help reinforce Keep Them Safe's philosophy of shared responsibility for child wellbeing.

The first phase of the training and communication plan includes the following key components:

- A Regional Engagement Tour across 11 locations in NSW to brief and receive feedback from senior managers of government and non government agencies on changes to occur as part of Keep Them Safe. These Tours are occurring between September and October 2009. The Association of Children's Welfare Agencies has been funded to coordinate this initiative on behalf of the Government and is working closely with Department of Premier and Cabinet. To date over 1200 people have registered to attend these forums.
- The Department of Education and Training (TAFE) has been funded to develop and deliver State-wide information sessions for mandatory reporters, including approximately 550 joint non-government/government face-to-face sessions across the State to approximately 27,500 mandatory reporters. These sessions will occur from mid October to early December 2009 and are being offered without charge.

- Remote learning, such as e-learning resources and DVD's, and other training is also being developed.

Linda Burney

Minister for Community Services

QUESTION ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES

The Hon Robyn Parker MLC asked the Minister for Community Services –

There was an Ernst and Young report into Community Services Grants Program. When will that be available?

ANSWER:

The report from the Review of the Community Services Grants Program is attached.

Linda Burney
Minister for Community Services

QUESTION ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES

The Hon Robyn Parker MLC asked the Minister for Community Services –

How much money has the Government committed to Brighter Futures in 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13?

ANSWER:

Community Services will provide more than \$210 million over the next four years to non-government organisations to deliver Brighter Futures services to families: The funding is allocated as follows:

- \$50.0 million in 2009/10
- \$54.4 million in 2010/11
- \$54.3 million in 2011/12
- \$54.3 million in 2012/13

This includes \$27 million allocated through the Keep Them Safe government initiative.

The money committed by the Government towards Community Services delivery of Brighter Futures cannot be entirely disaggregated from expenditure within the Early Intervention program.

Linda Burney
Minister for Community Services

QUESTION ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES

The Hon Robyn Parker MLC asked the Minister for Community Services –

In regards to the Brighter Futures budget, is that about \$100 million overall?

ANSWER:

No.

Community Services will provide more than \$210 million over the next four years to non-government organisations to deliver Brighter Futures services to families. This includes \$27 million allocated through the Keep Them Safe government initiative.

The money committed by the Government towards Community Services delivery of Brighter Futures cannot be entirely disaggregated from expenditure within the Early Intervention program.

Linda Burney
Minister for Community Services

QUESTION ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES

The Hon Robyn Parker MLC asked the Minister for Community Services –

How much will the change for name from Department of Community Services to Community Services cost in relation to stationary, signage etc, particularly at the Community Services Centres?

ANSWER:

Currently the cost is nil.

Linda Burney

Minister for Community Services

QUESTION ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES

The Hon Ian Cohen MLC asked the Minister for Community Services –

What were the terms of reference in the brief given to Boston Consulting Group?
What were the key recommendations? When will the findings of the review be made public?

ANSWER:

In addition to the response provided to these questions at the Budget Estimate Hearing, the Director-General agreed to table on notice a brief on what the consultants were being asked to look at. The brief is attached.

Linda Burney
Minister

NSW Out-of-Home Care Review Scoping Summary

In response to rapid growth in NSW's OOHC population and budget increases, the Government has urgently requested an independent review of the underlying causes and recommendation of measures to address the situation.

The Review will specifically examine the drivers behind an ever-increasing number of children and young people entering OOHC, in a bid to gain a clear picture of the current state of OOHC and form a better capacity to predict costs. The review will help develop a sound and fair basis for contracting with NGOs.

The scope of the review includes:

- The recent performance of the OOHC system to determine in detail the underlying cost drivers and reasons for the continual escalation in expenditure
- The method for modelling future patterns of entry into, staying in and exiting care, including associated costs
- Policy settings and their effect on numbers of entries into care and duration of care and exit rate, including comparison with other Australian jurisdictions (factoring in demographic and other relevant differences)
- Relative balance of early intervention/family preservation with statutory removal in all Australian jurisdictions
- The process for contracting with NGOs, including existing policies and guidelines; the tender process and documentation; the nature of contract negotiations and contract provisions (including service levels and tolerance for variation in unit costs, e.g. carer allowances); service monitoring and review
- The use of Header Agreements/Individual Client Agreements and whether alternative arrangements would be preferable
- The reporting and accounting systems of DoCS and NGOs on the provision of OOHC services.

The Review will be directed by a Joint Steering Committee comprising the Director-General of the Department of Community Services as chair, the Deputy Director-General (Policy and Performance) of the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Deputy Secretary (Human and Social Services) of NSW Treasury.

The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) has been engaged to conduct the Review, which will result in specific advice to the Budget Committee of Cabinet.

A range of NGOs will have input to the review, and DoCS will also encourage the consultants to meet with peaks such as ACWA and AbSec. This provides an additional opportunity for those agencies who may not be directly involved to have input to the Review through those channels.

QUESTION ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES

The Hon Ian Cohen MLC asked the Minister for Community Services –

What resources is DOCS directing towards preventing bullying schools of kids in out-of-home care given that a disproportionate number of these children are being suspended or expelled from Government schools following episodes of bullying by other children?

ANSWER:

The Department of Education and Training is primarily responsible for developing strategies in government schools to prevent bullying of students. I am advised that comprehensive resources to prevent bullying are provided to schools by the Department of Education and Training.

I am also advised that all government schools are required to develop and implement an anti bullying plan. The plan includes a range of specific strategies for identifying, reporting and dealing with bullying behaviours. These strategies target all students, rather than focusing on specific groups such as children and young people in out-of-home care.

When a child or young person in out-of-home care is the victim of bullying at school, it would be expected that the school, the child's carer and caseworker, and the child or young person would work together to develop a plan to support them to deal with the situation.

Under *Keep Them Safe*, the Department of Education and Training will develop and implement individual education plans for children and young people in out-of-home care in government schools, and these will be reviewed annually. When being a victim of bullying at school is identified as a problem for a child or young person in care, strategies for addressing this issue can be included in the individual education plan.

Linda Burney
Minister for Community Services

QUESTION ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES

The Hon Ian Cohen MLC asked the Minister for Community Services -

How many of the promised 25 home school liaison officers have been appointed to reduce the number of children at risk of poor educational performance due to habitual truanting during the compulsory school year?

ANSWER

No home school liaison officers have been appointed at this stage.

However, I am advised by the Minister that the Department of Education and Training has started the process of identifying priority areas and determining allocation of home school liaison officers to these areas.

Recruitment and appointment of the home school liaison officers will be finalised by the end of the 2009 school year. The newly appointed officers will commence duty at the beginning of the 2010 school year.

Linda Burney
Minister for Community Services

QUESTION ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES

The Hon Ian Cohen MLC asked the Minister for Community Services –

What is the actual breakdown and planned roll-out of Keep them Safe funding to the non-government sector over the next five years? How much funding is to be allocated to non-government services in first year of Keep them Safe? What is it for?

ANSWER:

Keep Them Safe is a \$750 million package over five years. The 2009/10 NSW State Budget details forward estimate funding over four years and Keep them Safe non-government sector funding for this period is as follows:

- \$45.9 million in 2009/10
- \$63.1 million in 2010/11
- \$66.3 million in 2011/12
- \$68.8 million in 2013/14

The programs that NGOs are being funded to deliver over the next four years are:

Prevention & Early Intervention Services

- Brighter futures (320 additional places for children)
- Prevention and early intervention, including family support
- Regional Intake and Referral Services (now Family Referral Services)

Improving services for Aboriginal children & young people

Supporting Aboriginal children and families which includes the non-government sector trialling a new decision making model that works with Aboriginal family and community members.

The 180 extra places under Intensive Aboriginal Family Based Services is to be allocated to the non-government sector.

Increasing investment in acute services

Extending Intensive Family Preservation to around 420 children and young people which will be operated by the non-government sector

Service expansion in Out of home care services

Additional out-of-home care services which will be managed by non-government organisations.

Linda Burney

Minister for Community Services

QUESTION ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES

The Hon Ian Cohen MLC asked the Minister for Community Services –

What budget allocation is available to non-government organisations for the family preservation services pilot due June 2010?

ANSWER:

\$3 million has been allocated for 2009/10.

Linda Burney
Minister for Community Services

QUESTION ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES

The Hon Ian Cohen MLC asked the Minister for Community Services –

I refer to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family preservation services scheduled for delivery in 2011. What money will be allocated to those services in the 2009/10 budget?

ANSWER:

\$3 million has been allocated in 2009/10 for Aboriginal family preservation services.

In addition, \$3 million is allocated in 2009/10 for additional Intensive Family Preservation Services. These services will support both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal families.

Linda Burney
Minister for Community Services

QUESTION ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES

The Hon Ian Cohen MLC asked the Minister for Community Services –

Will building commence in this term of Parliament?

ANSWER:

Building works have not yet commenced on the nine integrated Children and Family Centres in NSW. Local Reference Groups are being established in the first three locations of Blacktown, Campbelltown and Ballina. The role of the Local Reference Groups will be to determine specific sites for the Centres and guide the establishment of the Centres in local communities.

Once Local Reference Groups have determined specific sites for the Centres, Expressions of Interest will be sought in each location for organisations to design, build and operate the Centres.

Indicative timelines for the establishment and operation of the Centres have been agreed to by States and Territories in the National Partnership Agreement. Planning and construction of the first three Centres will commence in the first quarter of 2010. It is anticipated that the first three Centres will be operational by the first half of 2011. Planning and construction of the remaining six Centres will commence in 2011 with all nine Centres operational by the first half of 2012.

Linda Burney
Minister for Community Services