

**Question on Notice**  
**No. 1590**  
**Asked on 29 October 2008**

MR STIRLING HINCHLIFFE MP asked the Minister for Child Safety (MRS KEECH) -

QUESTION:

Will the Minister update the House on progress of the Bligh Government's foster care recruitment campaign, especially on Brisbane's northside?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for his question, and for his continuing interest in and support of, the work done by my Department of Child Safety and foster carers.

On 9 May this year, I had the pleasure of launching the Foster and Kinship Carer Recruitment campaign.

This Bligh Government initiative was developed and implemented by my Department to provide increased protection for the nearly 7,000 children and young people who, up to May this year, were unable to live with their families because of abuse and neglect.

I am pleased to announce since the campaign's launch, my Department has received responses from more than 5,340 Queenslanders who have expressed an interest in opening their hearts and homes to children in need.

Our campaign goal is to recruit an additional 500 foster and kinship carers and to provide ongoing training and support to these carers. Early indications reveal we are on track to reach our goal.

As the campaign's emphasis now shifts from receiving enquiries to their continued progression through the assessment phase, my Department has identified resources to enhance the capacity of non-government organisations and departmental service centres to complete applications promptly.

As of 4 November 2008, a total of 41 new carers have been recruited and approved across the state.

365 prospective carers have now completed training with 192 of these currently in the final stages of the assessment and approval process.

Residents from Brisbane's northern suburbs have responded enthusiastically to the campaign. As at 4 November 2008, a total of 613 expressions of interest have been received and are being processed by my Department's Brisbane North Placement Team, in child safety service centres based in Alderley, Chermside, Fortitude Valley and further north in Pine Rivers.

Campaign data from suburbs in the Honourable Member's Electorate of Stafford indicate as at 4 November 2008, 37 residents living in Gordon Park, Kedron, Stafford, Stafford Heights and Chermside have expressed an interest in becoming foster carers.

I congratulate the Honourable Member and his Labor colleagues from neighbouring electorates for their support of the recruitment campaign through their individual 'Drive for 25' initiatives. I also thank the Honourable Member's constituents for their positive response to the campaign.

I would encourage my Parliamentary colleagues to continue to promote the campaign within their Electorates. It provides an opportunity for their constituents to play a positive role in the lives of some of Queensland's most vulnerable children and young people.