

**Question on Notice
No. 1802
Asked on 25 November 2008**

MRS JANN STUCKEY MP asked the Minister for Child Safety (MS KEECH) -

QUESTION:

With reference to the number of substantiations and children subject to substantiations in 2006-07 and 2007-08 as listed on page 23 of the Child Safety Annual report 2007-08-

- (1) How many substantiations were related to physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect (reported separately by type of abuse and year)?
- (2) How many children were subject to matters of concern and how many of those were substantiated (reported by type of substantiated abuse)?

ANSWER:

In answer to the first part of the Member for Currumbin's question:

- In 2006-07, there were 10,108 substantiations relating to 8,845 children. Of these substantiations, 2,348 related to physical harm; 656 to sexual abuse; emotional harm accounted for 4,474 and 2,630 substantiations related to neglect.
- In 2007-08, the Department recorded 8,028 substantiations relating to 7,331 children. Of these substantiations, 2,182 related to physical harm, 605 to sexual abuse, 2,955 to emotional harm and 2,286 substantiations related to neglect.

Secondly:

- A matter of concern is any concern raised in relation to the quality of care provided to children in the custody or guardianship of the Chief Executive (Director-General) and placed in out-of-home care, where a breach of the Standards of Care is indicated. A matter of concern notification will be recorded where the information gathered indicates a child in out-of-home care has experienced harm or risk of harm, in accordance with the legislative definition of harm.
- In 2007-08, there were 763 children subject to a matter of concern notification and 179 children subject to a matter of concern substantiation.
- The number of children subject to a matter of concern substantiation equates to around 3 per cent of all children subject to a protective order granting custody or guardianship to the Chief Executive (Director-General) as at 30 June 2008.
- The Department reports matters of concern according to the most serious harm types. Of the 179 children subject to a matter of concern substantiation, 88 were substantiated for emotional harm, 33 for sexual abuse, 32 for neglect and 26 for physical harm.
- I urge the Member for Currumbin to use care when interpreting these figures. Figures are reported according to the financial year in which the Department recorded the concern and not necessarily when the actual event took place. As a result, counts may include children for whom the breach of standards and/or harm occurred several years ago, but the event was only brought to the Department's attention during the financial year in which it was measured. As such, a proportion of figures reported for any given period may represent instances of historical harm.