

**Question on Notice
No. 1765
Asked on Wednesday 11 November 2009**

MR DEMPSEY ASKED THE MINISTER FOR CHILD SAFETY AND MINISTER FOR SPORT (MR REEVES)—

With reference to the Department of Child Safety specialised sexual abuse counselling service—

- (1) How much money has been allocated to this service in 2008–09 and 2009–10 (reported separately)?
- (2) How many children accessed this service in 2007–08 and 2008–09 (reported separately)?
- (3) What was the average number of visits children made to this service in 2007–08 and 2008–09 (reported separately)?

ANSWER:

As the Member should be aware, the Department of Child Safety became part of the all inclusive Department of Communities in 2009.

The 2008–09 budget allocation for the Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) Sexual Abuse Counselling Service was \$550,000 and the allocated budget for 2009–10 year is \$590,000. This is in addition to the Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) investment of \$2.037 million in 2008–09 and allocation of \$2.191 million for 2009–10 to 10 non-government sexual abuse counselling services across the State.

In addition to specialised sexual abuse counselling services, the Bligh Government through the Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) invested over \$6.868 million in other counselling and intervention services across Queensland in 2008–09. This has risen to more than \$7.467 million in 2009–10.

The Department of Communities (Community Services) also invests \$2.01 million in nine Specialist Counselling Services, which may include sexual abuse counselling, throughout Queensland.

Furthermore, in 2009–10 the Bligh Government through the Department of Communities (Community Services and Child Safety Services) invests over \$700,000 for a targeted family support service, which delivers sexual abuse counselling.

As Minister for Child Safety, I am committed to ensuring Queensland's most vulnerable children and young people can access appropriate supports and assistance. One of the important ways the Bligh Government is doing this is through the Sexual Abuse Counselling Service.

The Sexual Abuse Counselling Service provides expert assistance to children and families affected by sexual abuse and to Child Safety staff working with these families.

In Queensland, 7.2 per cent of all substantiated notifications were as a result of sexual abuse or risk of sexual abuse during 2008–09.

Currently, Child Safety Services is unable to generate corporate data regarding the number of children who have accessed the Sexual Abuse Counselling Service or the average number of sessions children have attended the service. To extract data from the department's systems would require a manual process of review and divert staff from core frontline service delivery.

The Bligh Government is committed to supporting children and young people to help them reach their full potential. This is demonstrated by the significant investment in non-Government organisations who work in partnership with Child Safety Services to support children and families across Queensland.