

Question on Notice

No. 1125

Asked on 14 September 2023

MR M HART asked the Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Seniors and Disability Services (HON C CRAWFORD)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister provide the number, if any, of children known to Child Safety who (a) have been declared a Serious Repeat Offender under s150A of the Youth Justice Act or (b) have a Serious Repeat Offender index of six or higher?

ANSWER

Young people within both the child protection and youth justice systems often come from households where they have experienced abuse, neglect, socio-economic disadvantage, violence and/or trauma. These young people can present with co-occurring challenges such as learning and behaviour problems, mental health and/or drug use issues and their complex needs require recognition and additional supports at all stages in both the child protection and youth justice systems.

In response to part (a) of the question, as part of the legislative changes made under the *Strengthening Communities Safety Act 2023*, a separate sentencing regime for 'serious repeat offenders' was introduced. The regime enables courts, on application by the prosecution, to declare a child a 'serious repeat offender'.

Data on the number of children declared a 'serious repeat offender' under s150A of the *Youth Justice Act 1992* is held by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General; this part of the question should be directed to the Honourable Yvette D'Ath MP, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence.

In response to part (b) of the question, the Serious Repeat Offender index is an index score that quantifies a young person's past offending behaviour relative to a specific point in time. This index score is managed by the Department of Youth Justice, Employment, Small Business and Training.

Data held by the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services includes the number of young people aged 10 and over who are subject to both a Child Protection Order (CPO) and a supervised Youth Justice Order (YJO) and where the young person has a Serious Repeat Offender index of six or higher on the last day of every quarter. The latest available data is as at 30 June 2023.

As at 30 June 2023, of the 6,889 young people aged 10-17 subject to CPOs, 85 were also subject to a supervised YJO and were identified as Serious Repeat Offenders.