

Question on Notice

No. 1413

Asked on 14 November 2023

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

QUESTION

Will the Minister advise (a) the top five highest number of out-of-home care placements per child in the South West region since entering the Child Safety system and (b) the highest number of out-of-home care placements per child in the South West region between 2018 and 2023 to date (reported separately by year)?

ANSWER

When a child enters out-of-home care to ensure their safety, the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (DCSSDS) aims to provide a stable care arrangement to meet their need for safety, belonging and wellbeing. Providing ongoing stability means having as few changes as possible to the child's care arrangement. Sometimes, meeting the needs and best interests of the child may require a number of different care arrangements.

To select the right care arrangement for a child to ensure physical permanency and stability, DCSSDS assesses the child's strengths and needs, the supports required to meet those needs and the particular skills and abilities the care provider is required to have. There are a number of different care arrangement options considered to determine which placement would be in the child's best interests.

For young people with complex disability or mental health needs and those who are regularly moving between locations identifying the right care arrangement with the right provider or carer can take time.

Data held by DCSSDS to measure placement stability relates to the number of children exiting out-of-home care in a 12 month period, by the length of time in continuous care and the number of placements. The latest available data is as at 30 June 2023.

For the 12 months ending 30 June 2023, 463 children exited out-of-home care in the South West Region (including foster carer, kinship carer and residential care services). Most of these children (73.4 per cent) exiting out-of-home care had three or fewer placements, while a small proportion (4.5 per cent) had 10 or more placements.

In response to part (a) of the question, the five highest number of placements for children exiting out-of-home care in South West Region for the 12 months ending 30 June 2023 were: Child A: 19; Child B: 17; Child C: 15; Child D: 14; and Child E: 14.

In response to part (b) of the question, the highest number of out-of-home care placements for children exiting care in the South West Region were 30 June 2018: 18; 30 June 2019: 21; 30 June 2020: 21; 30 June 2021: 26; 30 June 2022: 22; and 30 June 2023: 19.