

Question on Notice

No. 881

Asked on 22 August 2023

MS A CAMM asked the Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Seniors and Disability Services (HON C CRAWFORD)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister provide the number of children under the custody of Child Safety who have self-placed (reported separately by year) for the last five years?

ANSWER

Safe and stable care arrangements are a priority for the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (DCSSDS).

Care arrangements include a child being placed with kin, a foster carer, or a residential service with youth workers to support their needs.

Young people are considered to be self-placing when they leave placement for an arrangement not supported by the DCSSDS. This may include a young person staying with friends or family.

DCSSDS continues to case manage young people while they are self-placing to ensure they are supported and their welfare and needs are met. Additional supports may also be provided by non-government services.

The number of young people who choose to self-place is not recorded in the DCSSDS's corporate data. To provide the specific data requested would require the manual review of individual client files and would divert resources from important frontline service delivery.

However, I can advise that as at 31 March 2023, there were a total of 12,560 children and young people living away from home.

Of these, 9867 were in foster or kinship care, 1759 were in residential care and 934 were in other living arrangements.

Of the 934 young people in a placement type of other, 69 were in youth detention; eight were in a watchhouse; 30 were supported to live independently; four were in hospital; three were attending boarding school; one young person was missing; and 819 young people were in other locations such as living with a friend or relative.

Of those in other living arrangements, nearly three-quarters (74 per cent) are aged 14 and above.