

Question on Notice

No. 979

Asked on 24 August 2023

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

QUESTION

Will the Minister provide the most recent figures for the number of children living away from home in the South West Region (reported separately by age group if possible) in (a) kinship care, (b) foster care, (c) residential care, (d) Queensland youth detention centres, (e) supported independent living, (f) hospitals and (g) specified other locations?

ANSWER

Children and young people are taken into care when it is necessary to ensure their safety and when there is not an acceptable alternative. A child may be removed from their home during an Investigation and Assessment, or while the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (DCSSDS) is providing ongoing support. Removing a child from their home is a means of providing for the child's safety, belonging and wellbeing and to ensure their ongoing needs are met.

DCSSDS uses various care arrangements for the children and young people in its care, including family-based care (foster and kinship care) and residential care services. Children and young people may also be in other living arrangements, such as supported independent living, hospitals, youth detention centres and other locations such as boarding schools.

Wherever possible, DCSSDS seeks to have children and young people living with family in order to maintain their connections. This is particularly important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to maintain their connection to culture and community. DCSSDS reports publicly on the number of children in Queensland living away from home on the last day of every quarter. The latest available reporting period is 31 March 2023.

As at 31 March 2023, the number of children living away from home in the South West Region was 2,548. Nearly half of these (47 per cent) are living with kin.

The breakdown by primary placement type is:

- Kinship care – 248 (0-4 yrs.); 360 (5-9 yrs.); 387 (10-14 yrs.); 194 (15-17 yrs.);
- Foster care – 221 (0-4 yrs.); 287 (5-9 yrs.); 201 (10-14 yrs.); 81 (15-17 yrs.);
- Residential care – <5 (0-4 yrs.); 50 (5-9 yrs.); 178 (10-14 yrs.); 161 (15-17 yrs.);
- Youth Detention Centre – 0 (0-4 yrs.); 0 (5-9 yrs.); <5 (10-14 yrs.); 12 (15-17 yrs.);
- Living independently – 0 (0-4 yrs.); 0 (5-9 yrs.); 0 (10-14 yrs.); 10 (15-17 yrs.);
- Medical Facility – <5 (0-4 yrs.); 0 (5-9 yrs.); 0 (10-14 yrs.); 0 (15-17 yrs.);
- Watchhouse – 0 (0-4 yrs.); 0 (5-9 yrs.); 0 (10-14 yrs.); <5 (15-17 yrs.); and
- Other placements – <5 (0-4 yrs.); 9 (5-9 yrs.); 45 (10-14 yrs.); 95 (15-17 yrs.).