

## SELECT COMMITTEES ON ESTIMATES 2009-2010

### Question on Notice

### Minister for Children and Young People

#### Table of Contents

<b><u>QoN</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>	<b><u>Page</u></b>
	Table of Contents	1
406	Children and Young People Dunne Children youth and family services .....	2
407	Children and Young People Dunne Care and protection services .....	6
408	Children and Young People Dunne Early intervention .....	7
409	Children and Young People Hunter Children and Young People Act .....	8
410	Children and Young People Hunter Funding for community organisation counselling services .....	9
411	Children and Young People Hunter Intervention programs - 9-11 year olds .....	10
435	Children and Young People Le Couteur Parents as tutors .....	11
590	Children and Young People Dunne QTON Funding for foster care .....	13
591	Children and Young People Smyth QTON Climbing points at Bimberi .....	15
592	Children and Young People Dunne QTON CC Cares program at Canberra College .....	16
593	Children and Young People Hanson QTON Indigenous grandparents .....	17
594	Children and Young People Hunter QTON Therapeutic facility .....	18

**VICKI DUNNE MLA** : To ask the Minister for children and Young People

In relation to : **Output Class 2 – Early Intervention**  
**Output Class 4.2 – Care & Protection Services**

**1. Output Class 2.1 – Child and Family Centre Program**

- (a) Of those ACT families that enter the Care and Protection system, what proportion of them typically are diverted to the Integrated Family Support Project (IFSP)?
- (b) Why would diversion usually be made?
- (c) What outcomes are achieved
- (d) How would those outcomes differ if the families were not diverted to the IFSP?
- (e) Who are the members of the IFSP Management Committee?
- (f) What improvements have been made to the IFSP as a result of the on-going evaluation work of the IFSP by The Institute of Child Protection Studies?
- (g) In relation to the Ministerial Statement given in the Assembly on 2 April 2009:
  - i) Is 15 hours of preschool each week now available to four year olds?
  - ii) If yes, are all four year olds accommodated?
  - iii) If no, why, and when will this commitment be delivered?
- (h) In relation to the Vardon Report (“The Territory as Parent”) and the Murray-Mackie Study:
  - i) Of the recommendations the government committed itself to implement, which have been implemented?
  - ii) What has been learned as a result?
  - iii) What changes have been made to programs and service delivery as a result of that learning?
  - iv) What output efficiencies and client outcomes have been achieved?
  - v) Which recommendations remain to be implemented?
  - vi) Why have they not been implemented?
  - vii) When will they be implemented?
- (i) Accountability Indicators [ref BP4, P239]
  - i) Indicator a – Parenting Sessions:
    - (1) How many parents typically attend parenting sessions?
    - (2) What is the mix between single parents and couples?
    - (3) Are same sex couples attending parenting sessions?
    - (4) What is being done to encourage them to attend?
    - (5) How much do the sessions cost to run?
    - (6) Do participants pay to attend? If so, how much? If no, why?
    - (7) What are the partnership arrangements with other organisations and services?
    - (8) Do partners receive government funding to be involved in the parenting sessions? If yes, how much? If no, why?
    - (9) What outcomes have parenting sessions achieved for:

- (a) parents;
  - (b) families; and
  - (c) the community generally?
- ii) Indicator b – Community development/education programs
  - (1) What kinds of programs and activities are offered?
  - (2) Who facilitates them?
  - (3) What do they cost to run?
  - (4) Do participants pay to attend? If so, how much? If no, why?
  - (5) How many people usually attend?
  - (6) What outcomes have been achieved for:
    - (a) parents;
    - (b) families; and
    - (c) the community generally?
- iii) Indicator c – Parents as Teachers
  - (1) How are families identified as being candidates for this program?
  - (2) Who facilitates and who actually delivers the provision of information and skills to families under the program?
  - (3) What does it cost?
  - (4) What outcomes have been achieved for:
    - (a) parents;
    - (b) families; and
    - (c) the community generally?
- iv) Indicator d – Schools as Communities Program
  - (1) What are the activities of this program?
  - (2) Who facilitates/delivers it?
  - (3) To whom is it targeted?
  - (4) What does it cost?
  - (5) What outcomes have been achieved for:
    - (a) parents;
    - (b) families; and
    - (c) the community generally?

## 2. **Output Class 2.2 – Child Youth and Family Support**

- (a) What kinds of assessment modules are included in the new Childcare Services Standards?
- (b) How will the Standards contribute to an improvement in:
  - i) output efficiency; and
  - ii) client outcomes?
- (c) In relation to the Ministerial Statement given in the Assembly on 2 April 2009:
  - i) Who are the members of the Children’s Services Forum?
  - ii) What ideas has the Forum put forward to ‘beat the shortage of child care workers’ and what action has the government taken in relation to those ideas?
  - iii) In relation to the new Children’s Plan:
    - (1) What is the status of its development?

- (2) When will it be released publicly?
- (3) In what way is the public engaged in its development?
- (d) Accountability Indicators [ref BP4, P240]
  - i) Indicator a – Licence administration and compliance monitoring:
    - (1) What is the rate of incidents of non-compliance with licence requirements by children’s services operators?
    - (2) What remedial and follow-up action is undertaken?
  - ii) Indicator e – Adoptions:
    - (1) On average, how many adoption applications are received in any one year?
    - (2) On average, how long does it take for an adoption order to be given?
    - (3) On average, how many adoption applications are declined each year?
    - (4) In general terms, why are adoption applications declined?
- (e) In relation to the CCCares Program:
  - i) What services and activities does this program offer?
  - ii) What does the program cost?
  - iii) In what ways are the offerings of this program different to other programs offered by the department?
  - iv) Who operates the program?
  - v) Are the operators appropriately licensed? If no, why?
  - vi) What accreditation process is undertaken for the:
    - (1) program offerings; and
    - (2) operators?
  - vii) How many families are engaged in the program?
  - viii) What is the age range of the children?
  - ix) In what way does the program respond to the needs of individual families? If none, why?
  - x) Have there been requests for more and expanded services?
  - xi) If yes, what services have been requested?
  - xii) Have those requests been accommodated?
  - xiii) If no, why?

**3. In relation to Output Class 4.2 – Care and Protection Services**

- (a) Since the functional realignment in October 2007, what has been achieved in terms of output efficiency and client outcomes?
- (b) Did the realignment result in cuts to any programs, services or staff. If yes, what were they?
- (c) What changes did the realignment bring to staff workloads?
- (d) What process is involved in providing a family with a differential response and what follow-up or further referral action is taken?
- (e) What improvements have been made to the differential response approach as a result of the ongoing evaluation of the approach?
- (f) What child protection management and process improvements were made as a result of the Demand Management Strategy?
- (g) Is ACT Policing involved in the Common Assessment Framework? If not, why?

- (h) What was learned from the Common Assessment Framework pilot?
- (i) Will the Common Assessment Framework become a permanent program?
- (j) What is the status of the Out of Home Care Framework 2009-2012?
- (k) In relation to the Ministerial Statement given in the Assembly on 2 April 2009:
  - i) and noting the more than doubling of enrolments in the Diploma of Children's Services at the CIT, and the recruitment of 33 child protection workers from the UK, what level of graduate intake will the department be able to offer CIT graduates?
- (l) Accountability Indicators [ref BP4, P244]
  - i) Indicators a, b and c:
    - (1) Why is there such a small percentage (8%) of reports assessed as proceeding to appraisal?
    - (2) Why is there such a convoluted, three-stage process before a person at risk can expect to receive care and protection service-delivery?
    - (3) How long does the process take to actually deliver into care and protection a person identified in a report?
    - (4) How is the risk facing that person managed in the meantime?
  - ii) Indicator e – What factors contribute to such a high proportion of the indigenous population being in need of care and protection services?
  - iii) Indicators f and g – The increasing number of children in the care of the Chief Executive and the number of foster and other carers will require increased resources, both in the administration and in the community. How is the government accessing those additional required resources?



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**  
**SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2009-2010**

---

**NOTICE OF QUESTION**

---

**VICKI DUNNE MLA** : To ask the Minister for Children and Young People

In relation to: **Output Class 2 – Early Intervention**  
**Output Class 4.2 – Care & Protection Services**

**1. Output Class 2.1 – Child and Family Centre Program**

- (a) Of those ACT families that enter the Care and Protection system, what proportion of them typically are diverted to the Integrated Family Support Project (IFSP)?
- (b) Why would diversion usually be made?
- (c) What outcomes are achieved
- (d) How would those outcomes differ if the families were not diverted to the IFSP?
- (e) Who are the members of the IFSP Management Committee?
- (f) What improvements have been made to the IFSP as a result of the on-going evaluation work of the IFSP by The Institute of Child Protection Studies?
- (g) In relation to the Ministerial Statement given in the Assembly on 2 April 2009:
  - i) Is 15 hours of preschool each week now available to four year olds?
  - ii) If yes, are all four year olds accommodated?
  - iii) If no, why, and when will this commitment be delivered?
- (h) In relation to the Vardon Report (“The Territory as Parent”) and the Murray-Mackie Study:
  - i) Of the recommendations the government committed itself to implement, which have been implemented?
  - ii) What has been learned as a result?
  - iii) What changes have been made to programs and service delivery as a result of that learning?
  - iv) What output efficiencies and client outcomes have been achieved?
  - v) Which recommendations remain to be implemented?
  - vi) Why have they not been implemented?
  - vii) When will they be implemented?
- (i) Accountability Indicators [ref BP4, P239]

Note: Questions should be lodged with the Committee Office within 2 working days of the relevant public hearing, electronically and in hard copy.

i) Indicator a – Parenting Sessions:

- (1) How many parents typically attend parenting sessions?
- (2) What is the mix between single parents and couples?
- (3) Are same sex couples attending parenting sessions?
- (4) What is being done to encourage them to attend?
- (5) How much do the sessions cost to run?
- (6) Do participants pay to attend? If so, how much? If no, why?
- (7) What are the partnership arrangements with other organisations and services?
- (8) Do partners receive government funding to be involved in the parenting sessions? If yes, how much? If no, why?
- (9) What outcomes have parenting sessions achieved for:
  - (a) parents;
  - (b) families; and
  - (c) the community generally?

ii) Indicator b – Community development/education programs

- (1) What kinds of programs and activities are offered?
- (2) Who facilitates them?
- (3) What do they cost to run?
- (4) Do participants pay to attend? If so, how much? If no, why?
- (5) How many people usually attend?
- (6) What outcomes have been achieved for:
  - (a) parents;
  - (b) families; and
  - (c) the community generally?

iii) Indicator c – Parents as Teachers

- (1) How are families identified as being candidates for this program?
- (2) Who facilitates and who actually delivers the provision of information and skills to families under the program?
- (3) What does it cost?
- (4) What outcomes have been achieved for:
  - (a) parents;
  - (b) families; and
  - (c) the community generally?

iv) Indicator d – Schools as Communities Program

- (1) What are the activities of this program?
- (2) Who facilitates/delivers it?
- (3) To whom is it targeted?
- (4) What does it cost?
- (5) What outcomes have been achieved for:
  - (a) parents;
  - (b) families; and
  - (c) the community generally?

## 2. Output Class 2.2 – Child Youth and Family Support

- (a) What kinds of assessment modules are included in the new Childcare Services Standards?
- (b) How will the Standards contribute to an improvement in:
  - i) output efficiency; and
  - ii) client outcomes?
- (c) In relation to the Ministerial Statement given in the Assembly on 2 April 2009:
  - i) Who are the members of the Children's Services Forum?
  - ii) What ideas has the Forum put forward to 'beat the shortage of child care workers' and what action has the government taken in relation to those ideas?
  - iii) In relation to the new Children's Plan:
    - (1) What is the status of its development?
    - (2) When will it be released publicly?
    - (3) In what way is the public engaged in its development?
- (d) Accountability Indicators [ref BP4, P240]
  - i) Indicator a – Licence administration and compliance monitoring:
    - (1) What is the rate of incidents of non-compliance with licence requirements by children's services operators?
    - (2) What remedial and follow-up action is undertaken?
  - ii) Indicator e – Adoptions:
    - (1) On average, how many adoption applications are received in any one year?
    - (2) On average, how long does it take for an adoption order to be given?
    - (3) On average, how many adoption applications are declined each year?
    - (4) In general terms, why are adoption applications declined?
- (e) In relation to the CC Cares Program:
  - i) What services and activities does this program offer?
  - ii) What does the program cost?
  - iii) In what ways are the offerings of this program different to other programs offered by the department?
  - iv) Who operates the program?
  - v) Are the operators appropriately licensed? If no, why?
  - vi) What accreditation process is undertaken for the:
    - (1) program offerings; and
    - (2) operators?
  - vii) How many families are engaged in the program?
  - viii) What is the age range of the children?
  - ix) In what way does the program respond to the needs of individual families? If none, why?
  - x) Have there been requests for more and expanded services?
  - xi) If yes, what services have been requested?
  - xii) Have those requests been accommodated?
  - xiii) If no, why?

### 3. In relation to Output Class 4.2 – Care and Protection Services

- (a) Since the functional realignment in October 2007, what has been achieved in terms of output efficiency and client outcomes?
- (b) Did the realignment result in cuts to any programs, services or staff. If yes, what were they?
- (c) What changes did the realignment bring to staff workloads?
- (d) What process is involved in providing a family with a differential response and what follow-up or further referral action is taken?
- (e) What improvements have been made to the differential response approach as a result of the ongoing evaluation of the approach?
- (f) What child protection management and process improvements were made as a result of the Demand Management Strategy?
- (g) Is ACT Policing involved in the Common Assessment Framework? If not, why?
- (h) What was learned from the Common Assessment Framework pilot?
- (i) Will the Common Assessment Framework become a permanent program?
- (j) What is the status of the Out of Home Care Framework 2009-2012?
- (k) In relation to the Ministerial Statement given in the Assembly on 2 April 2009:
  - i) and noting the more than doubling of enrolments in the Diploma of Children's Services at the CIT, and the recruitment of 33 child protection workers from the UK, what level of graduate intake will the department be able to offer CIT graduates?
- (l) Accountability Indicators [ref BP4, P244]
  - i) Indicators a, b and c:
    - (1) Why is there such a small percentage (8%) of reports assessed as proceeding to appraisal?
    - (2) Why is there such a convoluted, three-stage process before a person at risk can expect to receive care and protection service-delivery?
    - (3) How long does the process take to actually deliver into care and protection a person identified in a report?
    - (4) How is the risk facing that person managed in the meantime?
  - ii) Indicator e – What factors contribute to such a high proportion of the indigenous population being in need of care and protection services?
  - iii) Indicators f and g – The increasing number of children in the care of the Chief Executive and the number of foster and other carers will require increased resources, both in the administration and in the community. How is the government accessing those additional required resources?

Minister Barr : The answer to the Member's question is as follows:-

**Question 1 - Output Class 2.1 – Child and Family Centre Program**

- (a) As of 3 June 2009 there are 15 families (43 children) involved with the IFSP. All families involved have previous or current involvement with Care and Protection Services.
- (b) Families referred to IFSP have consented to participate in the project, will have had current or previous involvement with Care and Protection Services, a number of emerging difficulties for eg: substance misuse, domestic violence, significant parenting issues and multiple services involved with their family.
- (c) Anecdotally, families are reporting that the integrated approach to service delivery is supporting them to achieve their goals. Outcomes for families will be measured via the formal evaluation process.
- (d) Families have sustained access to ongoing, supported and coordinated services.
- (e) Management Committee consists of the following people:
  - Ms Fiona MacGregor – Marymead
  - Ms Sue Sheridan – Parentline
  - Mr Chris Redmond – Woden Community Service
  - Ms Dira Horne – Belconnen Community Service
  - Ms Mary Pekin – Relationships Australia
  - Ms Alison Taylor – Barnardos (Co-Chair)
  - Ms Lyndall Read – Department of Education and Training
  - Ms Yvonne McCann – ACT Health
  - Ms Maria Kanellopoulos – Care and Protection Services - DHCS (Co-Chair)
  - Ms Helen Pappas – Early Intervention and Prevention Unit - DHCS
  - Ms Austin Kenny – Strategic Policy and Programs -DHCS
  - Ms Narelle Rivers – Project coordinator
  - Ms Denise Morris – Secretariat
- (f) The Institute of Child Protection Studies have run two Progress Evaluation Workshops with the IFSP Management Committee and Selection Advisory Panel. These workshops were held on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008 and the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2008. Actions followed up by the IFSP as a result of these workshops include:
  - Action research training to IFSP MC;
  - Increasing the collection of qualitative feedback from families;
  - An additional position being created within the project to mentor and support case coordinators (particularly in the community sector);
  - Use of a Common Assessment within the project; and
  - More cohesion within the governance structure.
- (g) In relation to the Ministerial Statement given in the Assembly on 2 April 2009:
  - i) Yes.
  - ii) No.
  - iii) The implementation of universal access for four year olds to 15 hours of preschool education is to be phased in over the period 2009-2013. All ACT four year olds will have access to 15 hours of preschool at the beginning of the 2013 school year. The implementation timeline corresponds with the roll out of Australian Government funding.

(h) In relation to the Vardon Report (“The Territory as Parent”) and the Murray-Mackie Study:

**In relation to the Vardon-Murray Study:**

The Vardon Report recommendations have been reported on regularly through tabling of reports to the Assembly and the annual report. In summary:

In 2004, a Review of the Safety of Children in Care in the ACT and of ACT Child Protection Management was undertaken by the Public Service Commissioner, Ms Cheryl Vardon and Ms Gwenn Murray. The reports led to the ongoing reform process in the provision of care and protection services to children and young people in the ACT.

Government tabled in the Legislative Assembly three progress reports regarding the implementation of the recommendations of the reports. The major reforms undertaken and completed include:

- The centralisation of child protection service provision and an outreach model of service to children and families;
- The establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services Unit to inform and advise on Indigenous policy development and jointly work with agencies to support vulnerable Indigenous families;
- The undertaking of an Indigenous Gathering and consultation with members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities regarding the provision of care and protection services;
- Establishment of two Child and Family Centres to promote and develop early intervention and prevention services for vulnerable children and their families;
- Agreement of all relevant Government Departments and agencies to a shared responsibility for the protection of children in the ACT;
- Development and implementation of the Children and Young People Act 2008 , legislation affecting children, young people and families in areas of child protection, youth justice, child care and employment;
- Improved child protection policies and practices reflecting child centered, family focused, inclusive, consultative, holistic and best practice policies;
- Compliance with the statutory requirements of the Children and Young People Act 2008 and the Human Rights Act 2004;
- Establishment of the Institute of Child Protection Studies at the Australian Catholic University to inform and support the development of evidence based child protection policies and practices;
- Development of a consistent casework management model for the Office for Children, Youth and Family Support;
- Development of strong working relationships with other Departments providing services to children and families such as ACT Health, Department of Education and Training, Department of Justice and Community Safety;
- Development of Memoranda of Understanding with departments and agencies including ACT Policing (SACAT), Domestic Violence Crisis Service and ACT Health;
- Recruitment and retention initiatives for maintaining and improving the quality of services provided by staff, including training, tertiary education and supervision;
- Development of accredited training for foster and kinship carers;

- Review and recontracting with the out of home care and family support sectors to enable innovative and targeted program delivery;
- Independent review and implementation of recommendations concerning the death or near death of children who at some time in their lives were known to Care and Protection Services;
- Development of Integrated models of Family Support provision for vulnerable families; and
- Engagement with statutory oversight bodies to ensure positive outcomes are achieved for children and young people.

The reforms have been undertaken within the context of increasing demands for child protection services, including an increase in child protection reports – from 5,322 in 2003/4 to 9,729 in 2007/8 (Ref: Annual Report 2007/8) - appraisals and children in the care of the Territory.

The current directions for child protection are: consolidation of the reform processes, particularly in areas of prevention and early intervention, promoting ongoing improvements in evidence based policy and practice development, the staged implementation of the Children and Young People Act 2008 and improving working relationships across the government and non-government sector.

In relation to the Murray Mackie Study:

i) All fifty-five recommendations of the Murray Mackie study have been implemented. Three of the recommendations are processes which will require continuing work.

As a result of the Murray Mackie Study, a Memorandum of Understanding was endorsed between OCYFS and ACT Health in January 2009 to undertake clinical reviews of mutual clients when a critical incident has been identified.

ii) For Vardon-Murray please see above.

As a result of the Murray Mackie Report the following has been learned:

- ❑ The need for increased collaboration between services and sharing of information for enhanced service provision and improved outcomes for children and young people.
- ❑ The importance of ensuring parental awareness of safe sleeping practices. Staff have ongoing education and an easy to read pamphlet has been developed in a collaborative project with SIDS.
- ❑ The importance of accurate record keeping and details of decision making practices

iii) For Vardon-Murray please see above.

Greater collaboration has resulted in several initiatives, for example; Recommendations centred on improving policy and practice for children at risk and enhanced collaboration and communication across the ACT service system working with vulnerable children and their families. Examples are the joint CPS and ACT Health Integrated Multi-agencies for Parents and Children Together (IMPACT) Program and the introduction of joint case reviews between CPS and ACT Health.

Implementation highlights include improved relationships and protocols with:

- o ACT Health;
- o Domestic Violence Crisis Service;
- o Alcohol and Drug sector; and
- o ACT Policing.
- o Improved relationships has since been extended to include:
  - Department of Education and Training; and
  - Companion House

iv) For Vardon-Murray please see above.

Early intervention to implement services and supports minimise the number of children and families reaching a level of need/risk that require statutory intervention. This has been through the Differential Response Process ( Notice Paper 5 May 2009 Question Number 214 )

v) For Vardon-Murray please see above.

Nil

vi) Not applicable

vii) Not applicable

**(i) Parenting Sessions:**

1. The number of parents attending parenting session depends on the program that is being delivered. Generally the numbers for specific programs can range from 5 to 20 parents. The program Paint and Play can range from 20 to 80 parents.
2. Data is not collected.
3. Data is not collected.
4. The Child and Family Centres have a strong philosophy of being inclusive of all families to services and programs.
5. The funding of these programs are within the base of the Child and Family Centres.
6. No.
7. Many parenting programs are run in partnership with other agencies. These partnerships are established through mutual agreement with agencies as part of the collaborative and integrating model of service delivery. Examples of partnerships include: Fernwood Women's Healthy Club run the "Venus Program" with both centres; "Paint and Play" is run with a range of partners from both centres including the local regional community service, DVCS, NAPCAN, Salvation Army, UnitingCare and local businesses and "Learn, Giggle and Grow" (targeted group) is run in partnership with DVCS and Care and Protection Services).
8. No. The development of partnerships is based on the understanding that 'integrating' or 'joined up' service delivery provides better opportunities for children and families.
9. (a) & (b) Each parenting program has specific aims and the outcomes are measured against the stated aims. For example one of the stated aims for Paint and Play is to improve community connectedness. Surveys conducted have found that parents report they have made new friends and that they have maintained friendships with these parents outside of the context of Paint and Play.

At the completion of each program families are asked to provide feedback as to the success of the group which assists workers to refine the programs in accordance with the feedback. The Child and Family Centres have a strong emphasis on offering evidenced based programs such as Triple P, Parents as Teachers, Poppy Playgroup, Parent and Infant Relationship Support - PAIRS.

(c) There is an increasing body of evidence of the value to the community of the kinds of prevention and early intervention being offered through the Child and Family Centres. This includes improved development outcomes for children, decreased need for remedial programs, decreases in future entry into the justice and mental health systems and increased workforce participating.

**(ii) Indicator b: Community development / education programs**

1. ‘*Over the Trolley*’ aims to connect with the general community in local shopping centres and to profile the range of services and programs available in the local community. This program is run in partnerships with a range of government and community agencies (partners depend on the “theme” for the program); *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultations and pilot programs* which build relationships and engagement with families, the community generally and agencies; ‘*Welcome To...*’ brings new families in the community into the Child and Family Centres where they are able to find out about services. There are also a range of festivals which staff attend in order to profile the centres and it’s services and program.
2. The programs are organised and resourced by the Child and Family Centres, however are run in partnership with other government and community organisations. Example, “Gungahlin Parenting Expo” was organised by the Gungahlin Child and Family Centre which facilitated approximately 40 other government and community agencies to participate in order to provide information to the residents of the ACT.
3. The funding of these programs are within the base of the Child and Family Centres.
4. No.
5. The numbers of people varies. ‘*Over the Trolley*’ can attract approximately 20 to 60 parents at each session. The ‘*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultations and pilot programs*’ have attracted approximately 2 to 80 people depending on the activities and who the program is targeting.
6. (a, b & c) Outcomes vary in line with the stated aims of each program. For example an increasing number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people now access various services and programs as a result of the consultation and community development sessions. More parents are aware of the Child and Family Centres as a result of the “*Over the Trolley*” and “*Welcome to ...*” programs, the “*Gungahlin Parenting Expo*” connected families with a broad range of service providers.

**(iii) Indicator c – Parents as Teachers**

1. Families and other agencies are able to refer to the Parents as Teachers program. All families received a broad based needs assessment. Families are accepted onto this program where a sustained (3 year ) home visiting parent education program is assessed as being required in order to achieve improved child development outcomes. Increasingly, more vulnerable families are being placed onto this program.

2. All families receiving the Parents as Teachers program have a worker with a professional qualification in human services. They have undertaken a specific accredited training course via Macquarie University to become a Parents as Teacher advisor.
3. The funding of these programs are within the base of the Child and Family Centres.
4. (a & b) Parents learn about the normal stages of child development and ways of using everyday opportunities to promote optimal development (physical, social, emotional and well-being). Parents report an increased awareness of child development, increased confidence in parenting, connections with other required services and programs, parents have an increased confidence about their children being more ready for learning in the formal school setting.  
(c) The program does not generally have a focus on the community as a whole. The program has however provided an opportunity for the broader community (who do not require the 3 year home visiting component) to access the information by way of group programs that are run over the course of the year.

**(iv) Indicator d – Schools as Communities Program**

1. The program workers are primarily linked with primary schools to deliver individual (case work and case management) with children and their families, provide group work programs within the school setting for children, and provide opportunities for parents to connect with Schools as Communities workers in a school setting.
2. The SAC workers actively work with school personnel and involve them in the work that is occurring from the school site. The SAC workers deliver programs within the school setting in partnership with the school, and other local service providers.
3. The program targets children and their families who are identified as ‘vulnerable’ or ‘at risk’ across a number of domains including social, emotional, well-being, abuse and neglect.
4. All costs associated with this program are within base funding. The salary component is the biggest costs to this program. There is minimal costs associated with running programs.
5. (a, b & c) The variety of programs offered on school sites reduces some barriers to parents accessing services and helps facilitate early help seeking behaviour. Services are tailored to meet the individual needs of the school community and are done in partnership with parents, school and local service providers. The program provides opportunities for parents who would not ordinarily seek assistance for various reasons and facilitates increased access to the broader service sector. The school community benefits from this program via the SAC workers building linkages between families and their schools, and the skills and expertise the individual workers bring to the school community.

**2. Output Class 2.2 – Child Youth and Family Support**

- (a) The ACT Childcare Services Standards 2009 (Standards) provide the minimum requirements providers must meet to operate a licensed child care service. The Standards cover operating procedures including requirements for record keeping such as enrolment information, operating policies for staff and families, staffing requirements, safety health and hygiene requirements, programming and planning and building requirements.
- (b) (i) Monitoring of service compliance with the new standards will ensure a stronger regulatory system resulting in better outcomes for children.

(ii) A number of new requirements in the Standards improve outcomes for children by ensuring a more accountable and robust regulatory system. Some changes to standards to improve client outcomes include:

- police checks on all staff are required;
- Proprietors are to ensure all staff know their responsibilities as mandated reporters;
- Staff – child ratios are to be maintained throughout the whole day including sleep and rest times to ensure adequate levels of supervision are maintained;
- A Childcare Standards Report published annually will be available to the public. This report will provide information to families about the compliance of individual licensed services.

(c) (i) ACT Children’s Services Forum membership:

Andrew Barr MLA (Chair)	Minister for Children and Young People
Amanda Morphet	ACT Children’s Services Association
Beth Brunskill	ACT Apprenticeships and Tertiary Education, ACT Department of Education and Training
Careen Leslie	Division of Communication and Education, The University of Canberra
Chris Stanilewicz (Secretariat)	Children’s Policy and Regulation, Office for Children, Youth and Family Support (OCYFS), DHCS
Dira Horne	Representing Regional Community Services
Helen Pappas	Senior Manager, Early Intervention and Prevention Unit
Jayne Kinley	ABC Developmental Learning Centres
Jocelyn Vasey	ACT Apprenticeships, Training & Tertiary Education, DET
John Bowen	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
Kathy Melsom	Director, Indigenous Education and Early Years Learning ACT Department of Education and Training (DET)
Keith Burnham	ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA)
Kerry Fitzroy	Australian Community Children’s Services - formerly NACBCS
Kim Davison	Gugan-Gulwan Aboriginal Health Corporation
Lee Maiden	Out of School Hours Care ACT (OOSHACT)
Leslie Ralph	Faculty of Communication & Community Services, Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT)
Lisa Syrette	Association of Community Based Long Day Care
Lorna Clarke (Observer)	Adviser to Minister Barr ACT Branch Secretary
Lyndal Ryan	Liquor Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union
Martin Hehir	Chief Executive, ACT Department Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS)
Maureen Cane	Communities @Work: Professional Support Coordinator & Inclusion Support Agency
Megan Mitchell	Executive Director, Office for Children, Youth and Family Support (OCYFS), DHCS
Pauline Wassall	Early Childhood Australia, ACT Branch
Sue Burns	Manager, Children’s Policy and Regulation, DHCS

The members are appointed by the *Minister for Children and Young People* to represent the broad range of stakeholders and interests across the child care sector in the ACT

(ii) In January 2008, the Forum established a *Children's Services Workforce Sub-Committee* to examine options to address workforce issues in the ACT children's services sector. This Sub-Committee considered the range of workforce issues facing ACT children's services and identified national and local initiatives that address recruitment and retention; professional development and training; status and standing; and sector development and capacity building. The report is available on the Department's website at:  
[www.dhcs.act.gov.au/ocyfs/services/childrens\\_services](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/ocyfs/services/childrens_services)

Initiatives that have been or are being developed in response to the report include:

- Development and distribution of a *Contact List* of support services for children's services, management committees and proprietors;
- Marketing workshop held on 17 March 2009 for Forum and Workforce Sub-Committee members on how to market the children's services sector;
- Submission of an ACT proposal to the Australian Government's *Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Best Practice and Innovation Project* to pilot an *ACT Children's Services Induction Program*. It is anticipated that the ACT will be advised if the proposal has been successful by the end of the month;
- Research into the development of a sector-wide pamphlet directed to potential recruits to the children's services workforce, advising them of pathways to employment in this industry, and pathways to become qualified.

(iii)

1. The *ACT Children's Plan* is operational until 2014. A 'refresh' of the Children's Plan will occur over the coming months.
2. It is anticipated the refresh will be launched alongside the release of the new ACT Young People's Plan in December 2009.
3. A consultation process with children and the community will be undertaken.

(d)(i) Indicator a – License administration and compliance monitoring

1. Approximately 35% of complaint investigations result in non-compliance being identified.
2. Follow up action is based on the compliance strategy developed by the Children's Policy and Regulation Unit. Advisers assess the risk associated with the non-compliance against the safety and well-being of children at the service. Advisers will then determine timeframes that the service must adhere to address the issues of non-compliance. The service representative or proprietor will be advised of the timeframe to address the issue. Advisers will then check that the issues of non-compliance has been addressed. If the issue has not been addressed in the required timeframe a compliance notice as specified in the *Children and Young People Act 2008* may be issued.

ii) Indicator e – Adoptions:

- 1) This is variable. Over 20 were received in 2006-2007, this year it is expected that only half that number will be recorded.
  - 2) This is variable. Overseas adoptions vary from country to country and can take up to 3 years. Locally, from the time a child is placed with a potential adoptive family until an adoption order is granted would be a minimum of 6 months.
  - 3) None were declined in the last financial year.
  - 4) Reasons may include parental capacity to care for the child or a history that precludes them as suitable (eg: a concerning record of harming a child).
- (e) i – iv) The CC Cares program is a Department of Education and Training program. All questions that relate to that should that program should be directed there.
- v) There is no licensed child care service at CC Cares. In some circumstances where parents remain on the premises where children are being cared for, the service is exempt from being licensed. This is commonly referred to as 'adjunct' care.
- vi)-xiii) Please see i.

### **3. Output Class 4.2 – Care & Protection Services**

- a) The realignment was a process of changing the structure of Care and Protection Services (CPS) to improve the continuity of a client's journey through the service. This was achieved by reducing four operational teams into three teams and bringing together policy and practice support under the new Practice Support Unit. This allowed for the consolidation of policy development, compliance monitoring and the establishment of practice leader positions to support operational staff.

The introduction of the differential response approach was supported by these changes, and included the introduction an initial safety visit to families which allowed assessment of the report resulting in a reduction of children and young people progressing further down the statutory pathway.

By merging two Care and Protection operational areas as part of this process there has been a reduction in case transfer for children and young people (ie: less case managers) .

The demand allocation strategy was consolidated, and there was increased ongoing monitoring and reporting of client need. This resulted in ensuring reports requiring appraisal were responded to more efficiently and although the number of reports appraised were reduced, the appraisals were more targeted and appropriate as the substantiation rate of reports appraised increased from 29% in 2006-7 to 46% at the end of 2007-08.

- b) Please refer to QON response 214.
- c) Please refer to QON response 214.
- d) Please refer to QON response 214.

- e) Please refer to QON response 214.
- f) Please refer to QON response 214.
- g) Please refer to QON response 214.
- h) Please refer to QON response 214.
- i) Please refer to QON response 214.
- j) Please refer to QON response 214.
- k) The Diploma of Children's Services Canberra Institute of Technology is a diploma qualification to work in childcare services. The Department does not employ childcare workers.

### Question 3

#### l) Accountability Indicators [ref BP4, P244]

##### i) Indicators a, b and c:

- (1) The figure of reports assessed as proceeding to appraisal is predicted to be 19% not 8% for the end of the 2008-2009 financial year.
- (2) All reports are responded to through the Centralised Intake Service in a streamlined responsive process that is administered efficiently and effectively to immediately respond to child protection concerns and reports. The reporter will be responded to by an individual staff member who may both deal with the matter directly with the reporter and may effectively then assess and visit the alleged child subject to the report.

For more information about the assessment processes please refer to QON Response 214.

- (3) Care and Protection Services can respond immediately to reports dependent on the information contained and the circumstances of the child reported. The highest urgency rated reports will receive the immediate response. This service is available 24 hours a day.
- (4) Urgency and response time are assessed at time of receipt of a report and concerns are addressed appropriately.

##### ii) Indicator e -

Nationally there is an over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children reported to care and protection services. The overall pattern of substantiated abuse and neglect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is similar to that of other children.

The reasons why Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children might be more likely to be abused or neglected are complex, and need to be approached with consideration of multiple historical, social, community, family and individual factors (Calma, 2008; Cripps & McGlade, 2008; Stanley et al., 2003).

Some of the factors include the following: the inter-generational effects of previous separations from family and culture, poor socio-economic status and systemic racism in the broader society. These causes combined have resulted in higher levels of substance abuse, violence, poor nutrition, alienation from social institutions including the education system and family support services, limited and poor housing options, involvement in the criminal justice system and a loss of hope, particularly among younger Indigenous people.

- iii) The Department is currently undertaking a foster care recruitment initiative. This initiative involves a collaborative response between the Department and the funded Out of Home Care agencies. The purpose of the initiative is to increase the numbers of foster carers within the ACT.

Parallel to the generalist recruitment process, the Department is embarking on a single select tender process to engage a Non-Government Organisation to provide therapeutic foster care to ACT children and young people (Therapeutic Foster Care Project). The successful agency will provide twelve home based therapeutic placements to ACT young people.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Estimates 2009-2010

Signature: 

Date: 20. 7. 2009

By the Minister for Children and Young People, Andrew Barr MLA

*Care and protection services*

**VICKI DUNNE MLA :** To ask the Minister for Children & Young People

In relation to : **Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services  
Output Class 4.2 – Care & Protection Services**

1. Staffing in the Output Class:
  - (a) How many staff will be employed on 1/7/2009 and 30/6/2010?
  - (b) What are the reasons for any changes in staff numbers?
  - (c) What proportions of the total budget and total staff numbers are used for service delivery (achieving outcomes) and administration (outputs)?
  - (d) What percentage of total expenditure and total staff can be attributed to:
    - i) initiatives in 2009-10; and
    - ii) existing/ongoing tasks?
2. What options are under active consideration in the Output Class for savings and efficiency measures in future budgets?
3. Service programs delivered in the Output Class during 2009-10:
  - (a) What is the name and description of each program?
  - (b) What government policy drives each program?
  - (c) How many staff are engaged in each program?
  - (d) What are the objectives for each program?
  - (e) What is the total budget for each program?
  - (f) When did/does each program start?

**Minister Barr : The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–**

1. a) It is anticipated that on 1/7/2009 there will be 148.9 staff employed across Care and Protection Services (CPS). In relation to the staffing numbers on the 30/6/2010, CPS are unable to predict the number of staff that will be employed at this particular time.  
  
b) Not applicable, please see above.  
  
c) Approximately 87% of budget expenditure is service delivery and approximately 13% of budget expenditure is administrative costs.  
  
d) i) Approximately the equivalent of an extra 3 full time employees will be established as part of the 2009-10 initiatives.  
  
ii) The ratio in c) is applicable to this question.
2. This question can not be answered until the 2009-2010 budget has passed the Assembly.
3. Programs, policy directions will be provided in the Annual Report.

*Early intervention*

**VICKI DUNNE MLA :** To ask the Minister for Children & Young People

In relation to : **Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services  
Output Class 2 – Early Intervention**

1. Staffing in the Output Class:
  - a. How many staff will be employed on 1/7/2009 and 30/6/2010?
  - b. What are the reasons for any changes in staff numbers?
  - c. What proportions of the total budget and total staff numbers are used for service delivery (achieving outcomes) and administration (outputs)?
  - d. What percentage of total expenditure and total staff can be attributed to:
    - i. initiatives in 2009-10; and
    - ii. existing/ongoing tasks?
2. What options are under active consideration in the Output Class for savings and efficiency measures in future budgets?
3. Service programs delivered in the Output Class during 2009-10:
  - a. What is the name and description of each program?
  - b. What government policy drives each program?
  - c. How many staff are engaged in each program?
  - d. What are the objectives for each program?
  - e. What is the total budget for each program?
  - f. When did/does each program start?

**Minister Barr :** The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1.
  - a) On 30/6/2009 it is anticipated that 38 full time equivalent positions will be filled in this output class. Figures for 30/6/2010 will be contained in the 2009-10 Annual Report.
  - b) Any changes in staff numbers are due to natural attrition.
  - c) Approximately 90 % of budget expenditure is service delivery and approximately 10% of budget expenditure is administrative costs.
  - d) i) No funds were allocated to new initiatives in 2009-10.  
ii) 100 per cent.
2. Please see BP2, page 13.
3. The information requested will be available in the in the 2009-10 Annual Report.

*Children and Young People Act*

Meredith Hunter MLA: To ask the Minister for Children and Young People –

1. Implementing the *Child and Young People Act 2008* is listed as one of the 2009/10 priorities. Could you please advise what programs/sections of the Act have not yet been implemented and when will they begin?

**Minister Barr : The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–**

Provisions relating to the employment of children and young people will commence in July 2009.

*Funding for community organisation counselling services*

Meredith Hunter MLA: To ask the Minister for Children and Young People –

Regarding funding for community organisation counselling services -

1. Community organisations indicate there are many families using counselling services where work is undertaken with younger children and families on a range of significant issues. In the main this is funded by the Community organisations with around 10% of Government support. Has there been consultation with community groups on these services and what scope is there to increase funding rather than rely on community fund raising?

Minister Barr : The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

- a) The Family Support Program and its role and function will be further explored in discussions with providers due to contract renegotiations in 2010/2011.
- b) None.

*Intervention programs - 9-11 year olds*

Meredith Hunter MLA: To ask the Minister for Children and Young People –

What prevention or intervention programs are available for 9 to 11 year olds who experience problems at school, home or in the community and require assistance.

**Minister Barr : The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:–**

The Office for Children, Youth and Family Support provides through the Family Support Program funding to 20 non- government organisations to provide 24 Family Support Programs within the ACT community. The primary objective of the Family Support Program is the provision of services to children, young people and their primary carers that focus on enhancing parenting capacity and the wellbeing and safety of the children and young people.

The Schools as Communities program also seeks to improve the social, emotional and developmental outcomes for children and their families who are vulnerable, by helping to identify and address potential issues as early as possible. The program targets children in primary schools and their families who are identified as ‘vulnerable’ or ‘at risk’ across a number of domains including social, emotional, well-being, abuse and neglect.

OCYFS works in partnership with the Department of Education and Training who also provide a wide range of programs for school aged children.

*Parents as tutors*

Caroline Le Couteur MLA : To ask the Minister for Children and Young People, Regarding the *Parents as Teachers* and *School as Communities* programs:

1. How many staff are involved in these schemes.
2. Are they only centred on Child and Family Centres, or do they work through all schools?
3. How are school staff supported in strengthening the connections between schools and families.
4. Do the programs target individuals and their families?
5. Do the programs connect to the development of an inclusive ethos in schools?
6. If so, how is that done or is it about the ethos of a school?
7. Is the focus of this support on literacy and numeracy?
8. How is that literacy and numeracy support delivered?
9. Are these programs informed by any formal position on the social purposes of schooling, if so what is that position?

Minister Barr : The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. The Schools as Communities (SAC) has 7 outreach workers working in primary schools in the ACT. The Parents As Teachers (PAT) programs has 5 trained professionals.
2. The SACs workers are primarily linked within their schools, but use the Child and Family Centres as their home base for data entry, access to resources, program planning, consultations and supervision. The PAT workers deliver programs within family homes, and also provide group programs from the Child and Family Centres or other chosen locations.
3. The SAC workers actively work with school personnel and involve them in the work that is occurring from the school site.

4. Yes.
5. The SAC program yes. The PAT program does not work within a school based setting.
6. The SAC Program works in partnership with school personnel to deliver programs which meet an identified need in the school. The schools that have SAC workers have welcomed the program and seek out opportunities to work together. The workers have particular skills in case management of complex family issues.
7. The focus of the SAC program is focused on family based issues. One of the goals of the PAT program is delivering a program which supports the development of early literacy in children.
8. The PAT workers role model the use of books at each visit as a strategy for parents to use when interacting with their child.
9. The SAC program is committed to ensuring children have the best possible start in life by ensuring that services and communities are inclusive for children and families, particularly those who are vulnerable or at risk. School is one of the environments where this is crucial. The SAC program is specifically targeted at maintaining children's participation in the educational and social environment of the school.

*QTON Funding for foster care*

**Mrs Dunne:** To ask the Minister for Children and Young People

In relation to: Increased funding for foster care BP 3 p 81:

Minister, could you take on notice and get back to the committee with a breakdown of the figures on what the \$4 million will be spent on?

**Minister Barr:** The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

The \$4 million is the budget for 2009-2010 financial year with the budget reducing over the out years to \$2 million in 2012-2013.

The following is a breakdown of what these funds will be spent on:

- \$144,233 in 2009/10 increasing to \$150,550 in 2012/13 will provide for additional support to enhance and streamline the Department's involvement in court processes.
- \$140,777 in 2009/10 increasing to \$146,959 in 2012/13 will provide increased placement management services to better ensure children are placed with suitable carers. A placement services unit within the OCYFS will manage and coordinate placement options for children and young people with relevant Non Government agencies and carers.
- \$119,702 in 2009/10 increasing to \$125,051 in 2012/13 will provide a Carer Liaison Officer (CLO) position to assist in meeting the Government's commitment for *Carers' Grandparent Support Services* (including Indigenous Grandparents). This new position will provide support and advocacy to foster carers, grandparents and kinship carers. This position will also support the valuable roles carers provide in caring for our most vulnerable children and young people and involve establishment and maintenance of a number of support groups and networks for these carers.
- The CLO position will also be undertaking a foster care recruitment program. This will be a joint initiative with the Non Government sector to attract new foster carers to provide stable and supportive home based care for vulnerable children

The remaining funds of \$3,595,288 in 2009/10 reducing to \$1,577,440 in 2010/13 will be used towards:

- A new program to support the most complex children and young people in out of home care system. A new Therapeutic Foster Care Support program will commence by providing clinical expertise to specialist foster carers in the area of trauma counselling and support to children in care. This nationally recognised program will improve stability in care for the most complex children leading to a reduction in the dependency on high cost residential models. This program will be established over 2009/10 and 2010/11, involving set up costs and transition processes for existing clients.
- Assisting with the delivery on and the compliance with the commitments of the *Children and Young People Act 2008*.
- Assisting in addressing the increase in the number, complexity and cost of children and young people in out of home care arrangements.

- Assisting to support the introduction of the Out of Home Care framework and new models of service provision.

These initiatives will provide a continuum of service from early intervention and prevention services through to tertiary service provision. The investment in these areas will reduce the long term likelihood of more expensive residential interventions in later years.

591 Children and Young People Smyth

*QTON Climbing points at Bimberi*

Mr Smyth: To ask the Minister for Children and Young People

In relation to: Potential climbing points at Bimberi:

Did the Department consider potential climbing points during the design and construction of Bimberi Youth Justice Centre?

Minister Barr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

Assessment of potential security risks was undertaken throughout all stages of the project (design, construction and commissioning) by architects, Departmental project officers and the contracted project manager/builder.

*QTON CC Cares program at Canberra College*

**Mrs Dunne: To ask the Minister for Children and Young People**

In relation to: **CC Cares program at Canberra College**

Can the Minister advise:

- a) What early intervention programs are provided into the CC cares program, and if not, has there been any approach for early intervention programs by Canberra College
- b) Who provides the childcare while their mothers are at study?

**Minister Barr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–**

- a) The Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre have responded to requests for parent education sessions from CC Cares. These requests come from either the CC Cares staff or from the Maternal and Child Health nurses who offer clinics at the program.

Tuggeranong CFC currently work with some of the young parents attending the CC Cares program, on an individual basis. This work focuses on their parenting and early childhood development. Interventions are tailored to the particular needs of the family.

- b) The provision of care for the children whilst the mothers are studying is coordinated through the Department of Education and Training.

593 Children and Young People Hanson

*QTON Indigenous grandparents*

Mr Hanson : To ask the Minister for Children and Young People

In relation to : Indigenous Grandparents

1. Has \$120,000 of funding for Indigenous grandparents been rolled into the Office for Children, Youth and Family Support.

Minister Barr : The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

Yes. The \$120,000 has been rolled into the Office for Children, Youth and Family Support.

*QTON Therapeutic facility*

Ms Hunter: To ask the Minister for Children and Young People

In relation to: A Therapeutic facility for children and young people.

When will it be able to accommodate children or provide a service to children? Is there a time line that has been set down for that?

Minister Barr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

Refurbishment of an appropriate facility will be complete in August 2009 and it is anticipated that, subject to a competitive tendering process for a therapeutic service, the use of the new facility for Therapeutic Protection will be an option for a small minority of young people from late 2009.