Child protection crisis

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CHILD PROTECTION CRISIS

The recent upsurge in the number of gangs of youth roaming the streets of Alice Springs at night has again thrown the crisis of child care in Central Australia into focus.

“A significant number children in these youth gangs are very young and are on the streets until very late at night,” says Jodeen Carney, Shadow Minister for Child Protection.

“Young children running at the edge of the packs of older children are at risk of harm and should be attracting the attention of Child Protection services.

“To date, there has been a deafening silence about the growing risk to these very young children from the new Minister for Child Protection Kon Vatskalis.

“These young children are at risk of physical, emotional, and sexual harm. At the same time, they are being exposed to criminal activity, and, sadly, some are being drawn into it”.

“The Minister for Child Protection must outline what additional resources he is going to allocate to the Alice Springs office deal with this problem. And he must do so urgently”.

“Children at risk should not have to wait until an announcement on Budget day in May”

“Central Australia has not, and does not have the funds necessary to deal with endemic child protection problems”.

“Both the recent Coroner’s inquest and the last Budget Estimates sittings found that there are too few child protection workers in Central Australia.

“Territory Labor’s failure to provide the necessary resources to tackle the neglect and abuse of children has fed the current crisis in law and order in
Alice Springs.

“There is a vicious circle in operation here as the very young children running at the edge of criminal gangs will graduate to leading them in the future.

“The Minister needs to outline just how he intends to deal with the hordes of very young children on the streets late at night.

“Turning a blind eye is no longer a viable option. Waiting until the May budget in the hope of additional funding is not an option.”