**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

# QUESTION NO: 1390

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## INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 24 OF 2020

 **Ms A L A Abrahams (DA) to ask the Minister in The Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities:**

Whether her Office has a safety plan for orphaned and vulnerable **youth** exiting Child and Youth Care Centres once they turn 18 years old and are no longer protected by the Children’s Act, Act 38 of 2005, and subsidised by the State to stay in the specified centres; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details of the specified safety plan?                                                                    NW1761E

**REPLY**

The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities does not render direct services to orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs), but supports the work done by the Department of Social Development (DSD) in this area.

The DSD has the mandate to deliver direct programmes to the OVCs. The DSD runs Child and Youth Care facilities (drop-in centres) as per Chapter 14 of the Children’s Act, Act 38 of 2005. This includes managing child and youth care centres as indicated in Chapter 13 of the Children’s Act.

A Child and Youth Care Centre (CYCC) is a facility which provides residential care to more than six children outside the child's family environment in accordance with a residential care programme suited for the individual. In terms of section 191 (3) of Chapter 13 of the Children’s Act, these centres offer: (a) therapeutic programmes designed for the residential care of children outside the family environment; (b) appropriate care and development for children with disabilities or chronic illnesses; (c) therapeutic and developmental programmes; (d) treatment of children for addiction to dependence-producing substances; (e) treatment of children with a psychiatric condition; and (f) assistance to persons when in transition or leaving a child and youth care centre after reaching the age of 18.

Children who have reached the age of 18 years do not exit the Child and Youth Care Centres if they are still within the education system. However, in instances where they are not within the education system or they have reached the age of 21, they are proactively prepared through the “permanency plans” and “individual development plans”, that are developed as part of the national norms and standards for CYCCs in terms of the Children’s Acts section 194 (2) of Chapter 13. The “permanency plans” and “individual development plans” are tailor made to respond to the individual needs of the child, but allow the children to acquire life skills training; job skills; financial support/ bursary and or access to education and training institution. All these programmes are intended to ensure independent living.

The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities advocates for improved continuous services for orphaned and vulnerable youth and facilitate access to skills training for those exiting Child and Youth Care Centres, through referral to organisations rendering relevant appropriate services.