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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 3425**

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**3425. Ms L H Arries (EFF) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

What (a) programmes have been put in place to ensure that youngsters do not turn to juvenile inmates due to crime involvement and (b) total number of social workers are allocated to focus on such programmes? NW4227E

**REPLY:**

(a)The Department of Social Development as mandated by the Children’s Act 38 of 2005, Probation Services Act 116 of 1991 and the Child Justice Act 75 of 2008 provides programmes and interventions to children at risk and in conflict with the law.

These interventions includes amongst others implementation of services to children at risk and in conflict with the law included in the Integrated Social Crime Prevention Strategy (ISCPS). The main objective of ISCPS is to identify and promote innovative partnership-driven ways of reducing the current levels of crime and preventing crime from taking place.

The Strategy is implemented in all the provinces with the anticipated outcome of addressing social ills that are a contributory factor to committal of criminal activities that may lead to youth imprisonment.

1. The department conducts advocacy, education and awareness programmes in communities, schools, and institutions of higher learning in all provinces.These programmes are implemented on an ongoing basis by multi-disciplinary stakeholders, Probation officers who are social workers specialising in social crime prevention, probation services, Restorative justice and child justice services. The said advocacy, education and awareness programmes are implemented in a form of workshops, training, dialogue, debates, research and development and monitoring of the implementation of an integrated intervention plan. The strategy also emphasises the implementation of the secondary and tertiary prevention.
2. In line with the implementation of secondary prevention, the department, has developed social crime prevention and therapeutic programmes. These programmes focuses on the implementation of on life skills development, anger management, restorative justice, anti-substance abuse, sexual education, reintegration, and aftercare of persons. The said programmes have a valid status of accreditation and are published in Government Gazette No: 46059 Vol 681 of 18 March 2022.
3. Tertiary prevention: These are unification, reunification, rehabilitation and reintegration of persons back to their individual self, families and the community at large through the implementation of restorative justice programmes.
4. Aligned to the broad Anti-Gangsterism strategy led by SAPS the department has developed the Anti-Gangsterism strategy that deals with the education and awareness on the dangers of joining gangs. To date the department have reached to the following high risk hotspot districts: (Dr Ruth Mompati, Johannesburg metro, Amajuba, Lejweleputswa, Gert Sibanda, Nkangala, Vhembe, Mopani, Buffalo City, Xhariep, eThekwini South district and Francis Baard).
5. The department implements a policy framework on the accreditation of diversion services in South Africa. This policy is implemented in three-fold; by ensuring accreditation of the civil society organisations that implements prevention and diversion programmes.

 (b) There are **639** social workers or probation officers as referred to in Probation Services Act 116 of 1991 that have been allocated to render probation services.