

SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL LEGISLATION COMMITTEE
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

Question No. 43

Senator Stott-Despoja asked the following question at the hearing on 31 October 2005:

a) Can you please provide details of the program to develop the parenting skills of people in prison, referred to by the Minister in his speech to the National Conference of the Australian Crime Prevention Council this year?

b) How much funding is allocated to this program?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

a) *Prisoners and their Families*, a national pilot program funded under the Australian Government's National Crime Prevention Program, provided practical support to the children and families of prisoners and to improve the parenting skills of prisoners. The *Prisoners and Their Families Program* provided activities at thirteen prisons across the country and concluded in 2004. The program was delivered by *Good Beginnings*, a community-based organisation with special skills in developing parenting programs across the country.

The program generally consisted of an 8 week course (two to three hours per week), covering:

- relationships and responsibilities
- parenting and prison
- ages and stages of development
- play and enjoying being a parent
- conflict and coping with hard times, including difficulties in communication and abuse
- returning home - what to expect.

The program is the subject of an evaluation report *National Evaluation of the Prisoners and their Families Program* which is available on the internet at www.crimeprevention.gov.au.

b) The Government committed \$5 million to the project. Funding included \$150,000 for an external evaluation of the national program