

KEY EARLY YEAR SERVICES

07 June 2006

The Hon. A.L. EVANS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Emergency Services, representing the Minister for Education and Children's Services, a question concerning Key Early Year Services.

The Hon. A.L. EVANS: Key Early Years Services is a not-for-profit organisation that provides early intervention and support for children with autism. The program has been running for one year and uses an American early intervention plan called Intensive Applied Verbal Behaviour Therapy. AVB therapy includes teaching children how to communicate and perform everyday tasks for themselves as well as training parents to continue the therapy at home. Even though approximately 20 children are diagnosed with autism every month in South Australia, KEYS can only manage to assist seven children at a time at a cost of \$1 100 per week to parents. KEYS already has a waiting list. My questions are:

1. Will the minister explain why the government has not provided funding for KEYS to expand its program despite its proof of success in assisting autistic children and their families?
2. Will the minister advise whether the government will allocate funding to KEYS in the next budget; and, if not, why not?