



# Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 23 June 2022

## STARKICK

*Statement by Minister for Sport and Recreation*

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Sport and Recreation) [9.05 am]:** I am really pleased about this brief ministerial statement. I rise to inform the house about a fantastic program for children with disability.

Starkick is an all-abilities Australian Rules football program that caters for five to 17-year-olds. The program is for all abilities and has a very clear message to kids and parents: if you want to play, we will find a way. Starkick has been going since 2015 and started down at the Coolbinia Bombers Junior Football Club. In the first year, there were 47 children involved. Now, in 2022, there are 15 Starkick centres, with new metropolitan ones starting up at Warnbro Swans, High Wycombe and Ellenbrook Junior Football Clubs. Regional centres in Manjimup and Albany have also joined this year. The program is now an official partner of the Fremantle Football Club's Purple Hands Foundation and the kids were invited to play at the Fremantle versus Brisbane game at Optus Stadium this month. Getting out on Optus Stadium, football's biggest stage, would have been an amazing experience for these children and their parents.

I had the great pleasure of visiting the original site of the Starkick program at the Coolbinia Football Club last Sunday with the member for Mount Lawley—a great member! The club is a great example of what sport should look like: the environment was welcoming and inclusive. The parents and volunteers work tirelessly across the Starkick and Auskick programs, right down to the sausage sizzle. The West Australian Football Commission now supports a full-time coordinator to expand the program across the state. Rob Geersen—what a great bloke he is, I might say; he is magnificent—who started the first Starkick, is now in that position and is doing a wonderful job. He really is great; Madam Speaker, you should meet him.

With 9.2 per cent of children aged five to 14 in Western Australia living with a disability, a program such as Starkick is pivotal in bringing families and communities together. I congratulate everyone who is involved in that program. It is magnificent.