



Reece Walton was one of many locals to require an ambulance this year. Picture: Marcelo Palacios

A city of emergencies

By **ALEISHA ORR**

CANNING is one of the metropolitan areas to which ambulances are most commonly called out.

The City of Canning was the fifth most common call-out area for ambulances in a list released by medical insurance company HBF.

The top five regions for members calling an ambulance between July 2010 and June 2011 were the Perth CBD, Morley, Belmont, Karrinyup and Canning.

Canning Vale teenager Reece Walton was one of the many people to require an ambulance recently.

The 13-year-old was taken by am-

bulance to hospital in August following an incident on the footy field while playing for the Canning Vale Cougars.

Dad Andrew said it was the first time he had called for an ambulance. "He got a hard boot in the bottom of the spine and blacked out," Mr Walton said.

HBF spokeswoman Melanie Claessen said calling an ambulance was far more common than many people realised and many HBF members had to call an ambulance more than once during the 12 month period.

For the year, ambulance usage was highest on Mondays and lowest

on a Sunday. May was the busiest month for ambulance callouts and February the quietest.

Ms Claessen said the data followed a survey released by HBF in 2011, which showed that one in three West Australians believed an urgent ambulance would be free.

"In actuality, it costs \$800 if an urgent ambulance is called, and unless the patient has urgent ambulance cover, that amount is coming straight from their own pocket," Ms Claessen said.

However, aged pensioners receive free ambulance services and senior citizens 65 years and older receive a 50 per cent subsidy.