

SAFE, THRIVING AND CONNECTED: **GENERATIONAL CHANGE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

2022 Generational Change Impact Report





Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands and waters. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging. We are committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contributions to society.

Table of contents

Acronyms	1
Introduction.....	2
The Way Forward.....	3
Recommendations.....	3
Generational Change Reform Schema	4
Investing in Generational Change	5
Reform Outcomes.....	6
Key Achievements and Highlights	9
Putting Children and Families at the Centre.....	17
Improving Care and Protection	25
Improving Youth Justice.....	28
Strengthening Governance and Systems.....	34
Preventing Child Sexual Abuse.....	38
Supporting Survivors and Victims.....	40

The Reform Management Office was established to coordinate a whole-of-government reform in response to the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory's findings and recommendations, working closely with all stakeholders including Aboriginal organisations, non-government organisations and the Australian Government. It also provides administrative support for the NT Children and Families Tripartite Forum.

All photos courtesy Northern Territory Government

rmo.nt.gov.au | Published August 2023

Some acronyms/abbreviations used in this report

ACCO	Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation
AMSANT	Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory
APONT	Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory
CFC	Child and Family Centre
CMC	Chief Minister and Cabinet (Department of)
CMSA	Client Management Systems Alignment
CWSP	Client Wellbeing and Safety Partnerships
FACES	Families and Children Enquiry and Support
FaFT	Families as First Teachers
Menzies	Menzies School of Health Research
MESCH	Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home Visiting program
NAAJA	North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency
NTCOSS	NT Council of Social Services
NTG	Northern Territory Government
OOHC	out-of-home care
PHC	Primary Health Care
RCIRCSA	Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
RCPDCNT	Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory
SEBF	Starting Early for a Better Future
STC	Safe, Thriving and Connected
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TFHC	Territory Families, Housing and Communities

Introduction

In 2017 the Northern Territory Government accepted the intent and direction of the recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory (RCPDCNT).

The Northern Territory Government had begun making significant changes in child protection and youth justice when the RCPDCNT handed down its final report.

In April 2018, the Northern Territory Government allocated more than \$229 million in new funding to strengthen early and targeted support for vulnerable families while also addressing issues with the child protection and youth justice systems.

The Safe, Thriving and Connected (STC) Generational Change Reform Agenda had become the Northern Territory Government's key social reform schema encompassing three significant elements:

- Safe, Thriving and Connected – the response to the RCPDCNT;
- Starting Early for a Better Future (SEBF) – the Northern Territory Government's early childhood plan; and
- The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (RCIRCSA) – the Northern Territory Government's response.

Seven Northern Territory Government agencies contribute to and are collectively responsible for the implementation of the STC Generational Change Reform Agenda.

Since 2017-2018, each department has delivered projects and programs which enhance and complement the work of other agencies. This collaborative approach is an important component of the reform agenda.

The work across the reform continues with many projects and programs adapting and evolving to better suit the challenges and conditions of supporting families experiencing vulnerability and improving the child protection and youth justice systems.

The reform approach places children at its centre and works closely with Aboriginal people, communities and organisations on the design and delivery of the reforms and programs in recognition that Aboriginal people are best placed to respond to the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal children and families.

The Northern Territory Government has built the necessary foundations to make the critical changes required to better support children and families at risk of or experiencing vulnerability, with the aim of keeping Northern Territory children and communities safe, thriving and connected.

The next phase of reporting will be through the evaluation process with a three stage evaluation plan of the reform agenda underway at the time of publication.



The Way Forward

Implementation of the reform will continue while the government and its community sector and Commonwealth partners progress the implementation of the 10 Year Generational Strategy for Children and Families in the Northern Territory (the strategy).

The strategy creates a shared vision and policy framework to strengthen coordination and improve the effectiveness of the service system for children, young people and families in the Northern Territory. It was co-designed by the Australian Government, Northern Territory Government, Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory (APO NT), North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) and the NT Council of Social Service (NTCOSS).

With the STC Generational Change Reform moving into an evaluation phase, the Strategy will build on the reforms. The NT Children and Families Tripartite Forum will monitor the implementation of the Strategy's action plans.

This will be the fifth and final annual impact report for the reform agenda. Reporting on individual RCPDCNT recommendations will continue each year with status tables provided to the Tripartite Forum as well as posted online.

Recommendations

There are 227 recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory.

The Northern Territory Government is responsible for 218 of the recommendations, eight are specific to the Australian Government and one is aimed at the land councils.

As at January 2023, 185 of the 218 recommendations that require action by the NT Government have been completed. The status of the recommendations is included in the table below.

The Northern Territory Children and Families Tripartite Forum monitors the implementation of the recommendations throughout the year.

A full list of each of the RCPDCNT recommendations and their status is an appendix to this report. This list is updated each year and posted online.

It is a 'live' list and subject to change as agencies work on providing more up to date approaches and changes which may affect the status of a recommendation.

All the actions from SEBF have been implemented and continue as embedded programs.

The relevant recommendations of the RCIRCSA continue to be implemented. They are reported on through the Australian Government's annual report of the RCIRCSA.

Status of Recommendations of the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the NT

Lead	Complete	Underway	N/A	Total
NT Government	185 (85%)	33 (15%)	-	218
Commonwealth	-	-	8	8
Other	-	-	1	1
Grand Total				227

Generational Change Reform Schema

1. Putting Children and Families at the Centre					
1.1 Prevention and Early Support		1.2 Work with Families and Children	1.3 A Legal System for Families	1.4 Support Transition and Restoration	
Ready to Learn		Family Group Conferencing	Representation and Advocacy	Supported Accommodation for Care Leavers	
Getting it Right for Life		Preserve Contact with Family	A Single Act for Children	Transition from Detention and Through-Care	
Family Support Services		Respect Children's Voices	Training for the Legal Profession	Transition from Out-of-Home Care	
Children and Family Centres			Youth and Children's Court		
			Youth Parole		
2. Improving Care and Protection			3. Improving Youth Justice		
2.1 Care and Protection Practice	2.2 Children in the Child Protection and Youth Justice Systems	2.3 Transforming Out of Home Care	3.1 Police and Young People	3.2 Keep Children out of Detention	3.3 Youth Detention that Works
Reporting and Investigation	Meeting the needs of Children in Care who are involved with Youth Justice	Foster and Kinship Care and Aboriginal Out-of-Home Care	Custody Notification	Youth Engagement Grants	Youth Detention Operations
Clinical Practice and Case Management		Trauma Informed and Therapeutic Care			Youth Detention Infrastructure
Care and Protection Orders	Responding to complex behaviour in Out-of-Home Care	Out-of-Home Care Governance and Oversight	Police Youth Division	Youth Justice Programs	Youth Detention Services and Programs
4. Strengthening Governance and Systems					
4.1 Advocacy, Accountability and Quality Improvement	4.2 Managing and Sharing Information	4.3 Community-led Responses	4.4 Evidence-based Practice	4.5 Coordinated Effort Towards Better Outcomes	
Commission for Children and Young People	Information Management and Sharing	Local Decision Making	Research and Evaluation	Operational Coordination and Service Integration	
Internal Accountability and Complaints			Reporting and Monitoring	Strategic Coordination	
				Developing Workforce Capacity	
5. Preventing Child Sexual Abuse			6. Supporting Survivors and Victims		
5.1 Child Safe Organisations	5.2 Sexual Health and Harm		6.1 Redress and Civil Claims	6.2 Support and Professional Care	6.3 Supporting Survivors and Victims through the Justice System
National Child Safe Standards	Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviours		National Redress Scheme	Community Support Services	Limitation Periods
Foster and Kinship Carer Register	Online Safety		Civil Claims	Counselling and Psychological Care	Police and Survivors and Victims
Working with Children Checks	Child and Community Education		Liability and Non-Delegable Duty	Institutional Support	Survivors and Victims in Court
Teacher Registration	Children in Out of Home Care			Sexual Assault Services	

Investing in Generational Change

In response to the Royal Commission into the Prevention and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory, the Northern Territory Government has been investing in generational change for children, families and communities.

In 2018, the new funding allocated included:

\$229.6 MILLION	in new funding over five years to reform and improve services for children, young people and families experiencing vulnerability. Including:		
\$11.4 MILLION	over four years to establish the coordination hubs and expand the number of Child and Family Centres to seventeen	\$5.7 MILLION	over four years to work with families and introduce family group conferencing
\$1.2 MILLION	over three years to operate the Youth and Children's Court in Alice Springs	\$5.2 MILLION	over four years to support Care Leavers to access and secure housing
\$2.8 MILLION	over four years to improve care and protection practice	\$5.4 MILLION	over four years to transform out-of-home care
\$9.9 MILLION	over four years to divert young people from crime and stop future offending	\$12.9 MILLION	over four years to effectively and constructively engage young people
\$22.9 MILLION	over four years to improve youth detention operations and reduce recidivism	\$71.4 MILLION	to replace Don Dale and Alice Springs Youth Detention Centres
\$2.5 MILLION	over four years to expand the oversight of child protection and youth justice systems	\$8.9 MILLION	over four years to empower local decision making and community-led reform
\$2.5 MILLION	over four years to build the evidence base for approaches and evaluate what's working	\$66.9 MILLION	over five years to develop a new platform to manage cases and share information

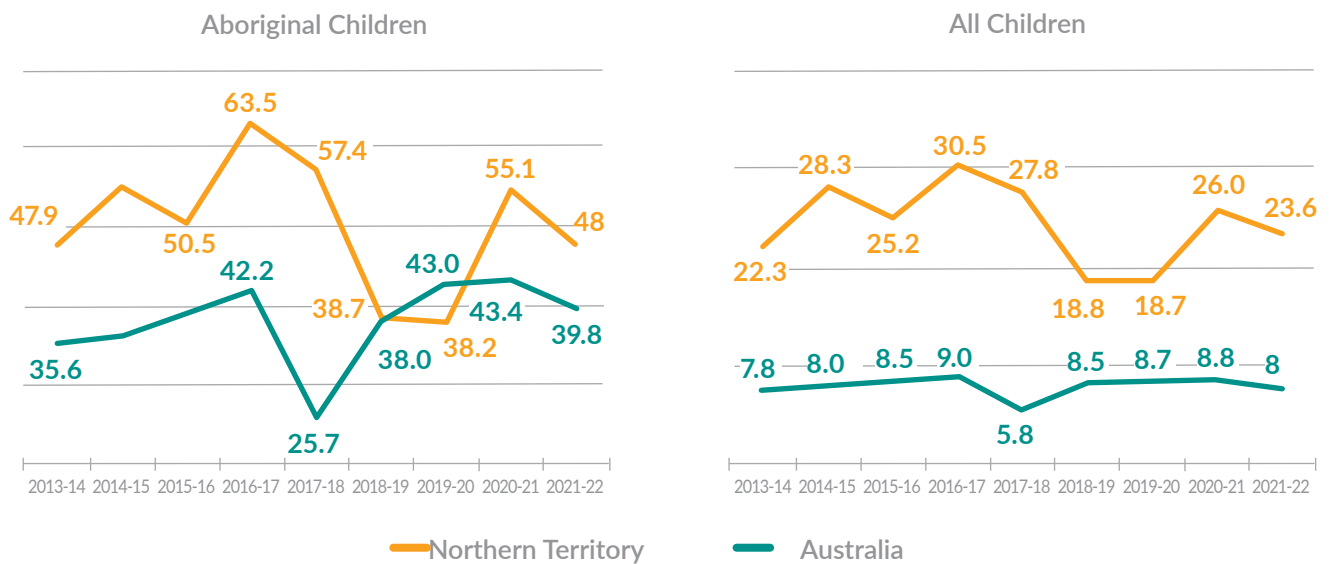
It built on the 2017-18 investment which included:

\$18.2 MILLION	per year invested in strengthening youth diversion and bail support	\$1.1 MILLION	over ten years invested in improving housing in remote Aboriginal communities
\$1.75 MILLION	per year for after-hours services for young people in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek	\$4 MILLION	per year supporting Families as First Teachers sites across the Territory
\$32 MILLION	over four years for early intervention and support for school students with challenging behaviours, disabilities and mental illness	\$92 MILLION	over four years invested to strengthen schools and support services for students
\$15.5 MILLION	per year to provide specialised services to tackle alcohol misuse and dependence	\$3 MILLION	per year invested in Family Enhanced Support Services for earlier, better support to families
\$5 MILLION	per year to support increased police resourcing and recruitment	\$1 MILLION	per year to expand the Nurse Home Visiting Program

Reform Outcomes

Children subject to child protection substantiation per 1,000 children

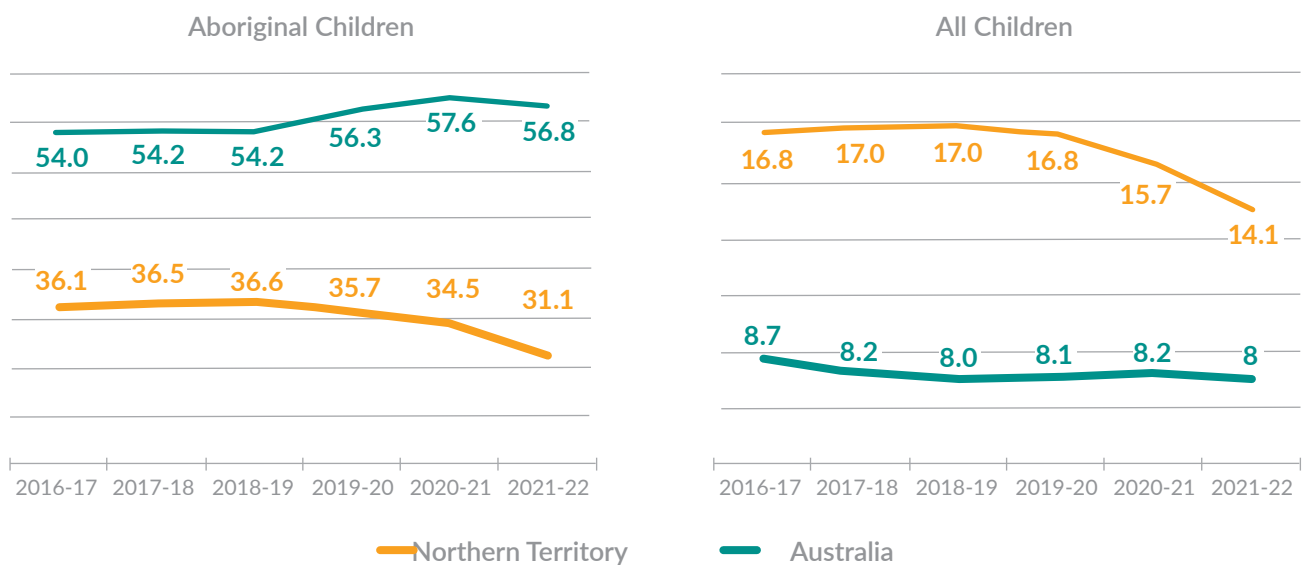
Report on Government Services 2023 - Table 16A1



The rate of child protection substantiation for Aboriginal children and all children in the Northern Territory dropped in 2021-22 after the increases in 2020-21. The rate is currently below the highs seen in 2016-17 and 2017-18.

Children in Out of Home Care at 30 June per 1,000 children

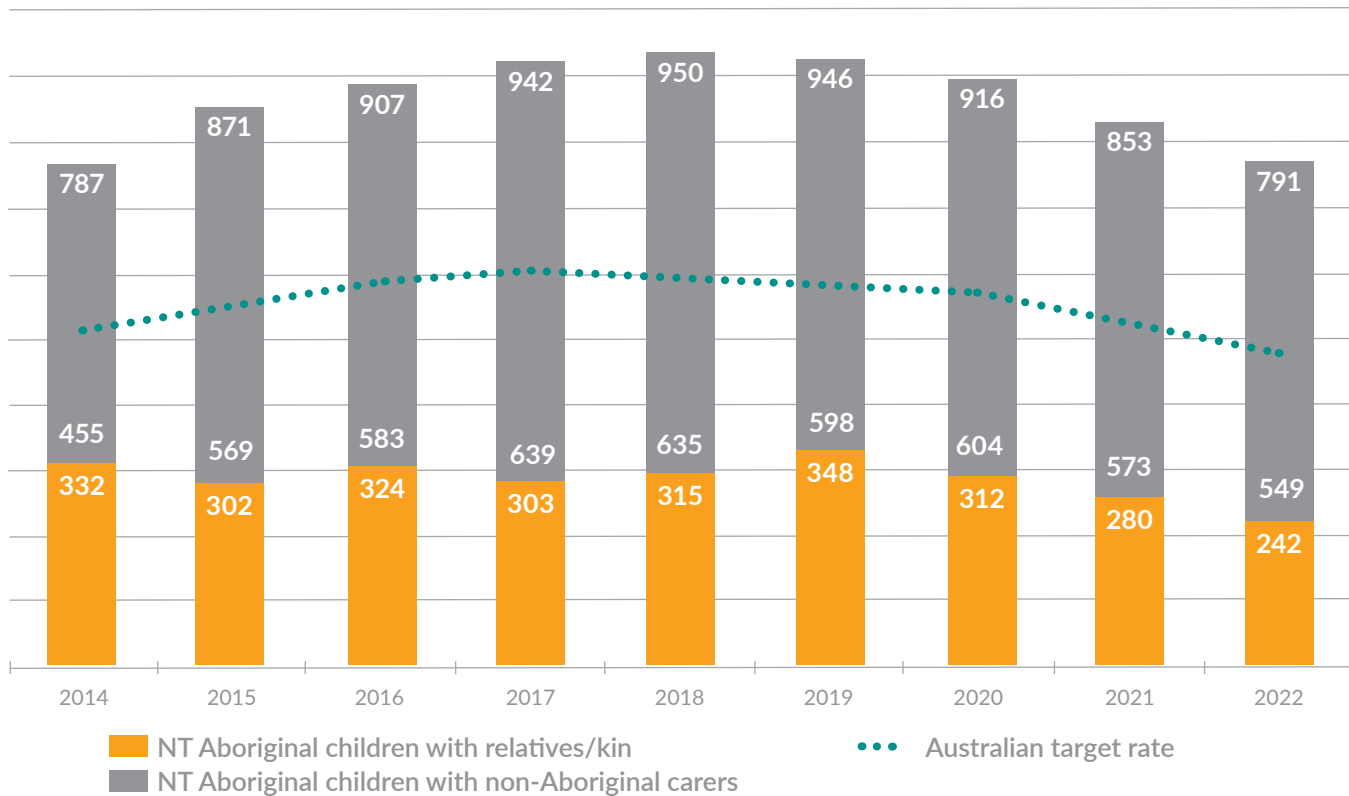
Report on Government Services 2023 - Table 16A2



The rate of Aboriginal children in out of home care at 30 June continued to drop in the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory now removes the fewest Aboriginal children (and non-Aboriginal children) by population in Australia.

Aboriginal children in care with relatives/kin or other Aboriginal carers

Report on Government Services 2023 - Table 16A21

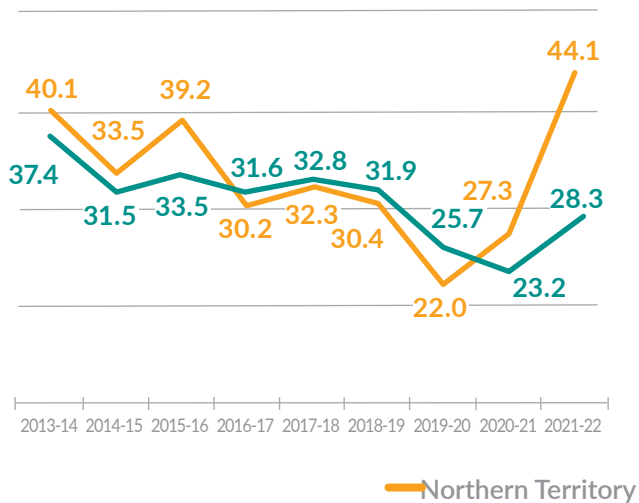


With the reduction in the overall number of Aboriginal children in care, the Northern Territory saw a drop in the number of Aboriginal children placed with Aboriginal carers as children were reunified to families. Since 2020 there has been a steady decline in the number of NT Aboriginal children with non-Aboriginal carers.

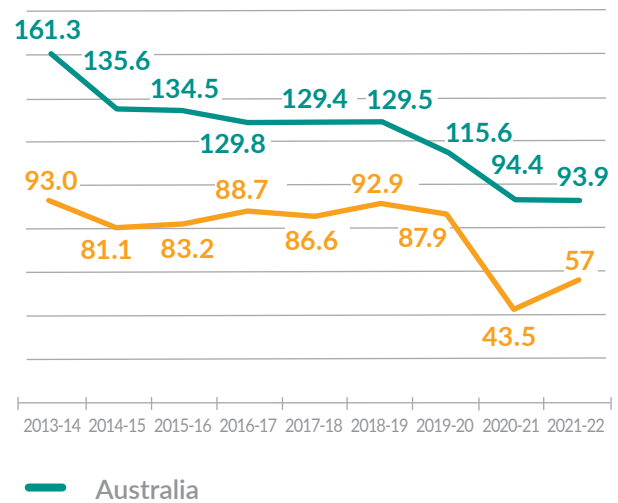
Aboriginal young people in detention and subject to community-based supervision

Report on Government Services 2023 - Tables 17A5, 17A6

Rate of Aboriginal young people in detention on an average day per 10,000 young people (Table 17A.5)



Rate of Aboriginal young people subject to community-based supervision per 10,000 young people (Table 17A.6)



In 2021-22 there was a continuation of the significant increase in Aboriginal young people in detention in the Northern Territory and a slight increase in the number of Aboriginal young people subject to community based supervision.



Key Achievements and Highlights

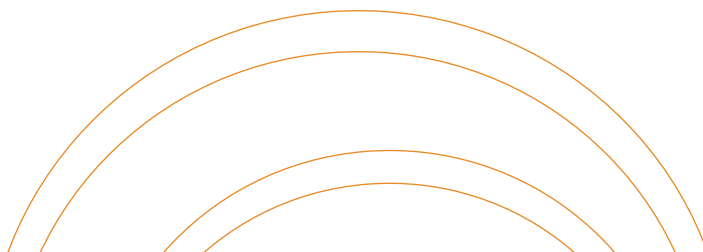
The Safe, Thriving and Connected Reform Agenda started with a multi-million-dollar investment.

An allocation of \$229.6 million over five years, including \$31 million ongoing funding, provided a solid start to the agenda's implementation. Major funded initiatives included:

- development of a new case management system and information sharing capability (\$67m);
- replace and upgrade youth justice facilities (\$71m);
- expansion of youth engagement and diversion (\$22m);
- establishment of additional Child and Family Centres (\$11m); and
- expansion of the CMC Regional Network (\$9m);

The SEBF allocation was \$45.6 million over five years (including \$10 million ongoing funding). Major funded initiatives included:

- expanding early childhood support in new and existing Child and Family Centres including through the Child and Family Community Fund (\$23m);
- establishing new FaFT Stay Play Learn Sites (\$6.7m); and
- expanding hearing health initiatives and embedding the Healthy Under 5 Kids Partnering with Families Program (HU5K-PF) (\$12.5m).



Putting Children and Families at the Centre

Key achievements and highlights since 2018 include:

- Opened five new Child and Family Centres in Alice Springs Town Camps, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Darwin and Kalkarindji. A service is also operating in Wadeye. All established through partnering with local Aboriginal leaders and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.
- Provided grants through the Child and Family Community Fund which is aimed at innovative, community-led initiatives to improve outcomes for children in the Northern Territory. Initiatives have included the Bubba Baskets project in Tennant Creek, the Play 2 Learn Program in Palmerston, culturally safe programs to support access to school in Katherine, and domestic, family and sexual violence early intervention programs in Ngukurr. The allocation for the 2022-23 Child and Family Community Fund has commenced with \$3.9 million available across 15 communities.
- The Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home Visiting Program (MECSH) is being provided in three regions by four Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) with a total of 164 clients enrolled (as at December 2022). The program has an average retention rate of 50 percent over the three-year period.
- The HU5K-PF program completed scoping for evaluation readiness with plans for evaluation in 2023/2024. HU5K-PF was developed to standardise care for all children receiving healthcare through a government clinic across the NT regardless of their geographical location. The program aims to monitor and improve health and well-being outcomes for children 0-5 years of age, using key developmental milestones.
- Development of clinical reports for the HU5K-PF program for each NT Health Primary Health Care Centre are nearly complete. These reports will provide a monthly overview on coverage, compliance and timeliness of the elements of HU5K-PF for their child population. They are part of continuous quality improvement in service delivery.
- Established four additional Hearing Health Partnerships with the Families as First Teachers (FaFT) sites. NT Health continued to partner and provide funding towards the Hearing Health Partnerships in the FaFT program with the ongoing employment of Community Hearing Workers who promote preventative healthy hearing information and the importance of language development in children to families and community members.
- The Menzies School of Health Research is conducting the Hearing for Learning Initiative research, where 20 communities have signed up to reduce chronic ear disease and train community workers in ear health.
- Continued to implement programs and strategies including the NT Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) strategy and Alcohol Harm Minimisation measures to help manage the prevalence of FASD in the community.
- Families as First Teachers – Stay Play Learn (FaFT-SPL) programs continue to support children and families in remote locations of the NT to engage in early learning and build parent capacity to support their children's growth and development. There are currently 14 established FaFT-SPL programs across the NT.
- FaFT programs across the NT implement the evidenced based Abecedarian Approach Australia pedagogy that includes Conversational Reading, Enriched Caregiving and Learning Games®. The approach emphasises language priority and the development of early literacy and numeracy.
- The Literacy for Parents program is being delivered successfully in six sites (Larapinta, Maningrida, Ngukurr, Palmerston, Galiwinku and Gapuwiyak) and is currently supporting 111 young parents under the age of 25 with flexible pathways into education and/or employment while also promoting positive parenting.

- Early Childhood Education and Care Quality – Successful delivery of the 2022 NT Education and Care Awards and the Little People Big Dreams Conference.
- Completed a pilot project to implement the *Reggio Emilia* approach at Malak Preschool.
- Developed and distributed the NT Preschool STEM Games to preschools and early childhood services.
- Continued to provide Little Scientists workshops, within the parameters of the current contract with Froebel Australia. Two accredited Department of Education trainers deliver face-to-face workshops to early years educators in schools and early childhood services in all regions throughout the year.
- Implemented major legislative reforms to the *Care and Protection of Children and Youth Justice* acts providing for a range of measures from early support for families to removing barriers to youth diversion programs.
- Recognised through care services which are implemented and operational via three mechanisms: NAAJA Youth Through Care program; the TFHC Specialist Assessment and Treatment Services team (planning for National Disability Insurance Scheme disability supports); TFHC Youth Outreach and Re-Engagement Team activities.



Improving Care and Protection

Key achievements and highlights since 2018 include:

- In February 2022, the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (TFHC) instigated the transfer of carer support for Darwin based foster carers to the Foster and Kinship Care Association NT as part of a trial program. This work complemented earlier action taken for Aboriginal carers to be provided with culturally informed support by Aboriginal Carer Services providers.
- In August 2022, TFHC launched Family and Foster Care Training online, a comprehensive training package available to all carers as an ongoing resource accessible at any time.
- Seven Aboriginal Carer Services providers were funded (\$1.3m) to assist in finding and supporting kinship carers. Aboriginal Carer Services provide family finding services to ensure Aboriginal children have the best chance at being placed with kin; assist with recruitment and assessment of Aboriginal carers; and support Aboriginal carers to successfully care for Aboriginal children and maintain their connection to family and identity.
- In June 2022, the fifth Community of Practice for Aboriginal Carer Services was held over two days to enable service providers to share successes and knowledge, and to collaboratively discuss and create solutions between service networks. Communities of Practice provide a valuable opportunity for networking and sector and service development as part of the transition of out-of-home care (OOHC) services to the Aboriginal Community Controlled sector.
- The *Territory Families Legislation Amendment Act 2021* commenced in early 2022 and made a number of changes to the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007*, and the *Youth Justice Act 2005*. The changes enabled greater access to relevant child safety information for child protection practitioners to make timely and informed decisions; clarified the provision of voluntary prenatal support to families and strengthened the entitlements of care-leavers to support for their independence.
- Completed more than 90 consultations to scope a review of the Child Wellbeing and Safety Partnerships (formerly Multi-Agency Children and Community Safety Teams) model. The revised model will strengthen engagement and input from Aboriginal community leaders, Elders and families.
- Family support services were refined to deliver early intervention and intensive support programs that keep children safe at home and reduce the need for statutory intervention. During 2022 \$42.5 million was awarded for five-year, place-based grants to 14 organisations (predominantly Aboriginal) to deliver family support services.
- In 2022, 249 Aboriginal children in OOHC were placed with Aboriginal carers and 159 children in OOHC were supported in their reunification with family.
- Significantly expanded the regional and remote child protection workforce.
- Introduced and embedded the Signs of Safety practice framework focussing on holistic family safety assessments and support.
- In March 2021 launched the Northern Territory Domestic and Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management framework and Northern Territory Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Workforce and Sector Development Plan.
- Released the Domestic and Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Framework (RAMF), and the Common Risk Assessment Tool (CRAT).
- Activated the online reporting tool, Professional Reporter's Guide and ELearning materials, and a new staffing structure for Central Intake.
- Contracted a new Intensive Therapeutic Residential Care (ITRC) model for up to 100 young people, funded at \$200 million over five years.
- Partnered with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to better support kinship and foster carers, and improve outcomes for children in care and introduced the Aboriginal Carers Growing Up Aboriginal Children grants.
- Established a supported accommodation service for care leavers in Darwin with similar projects underway in Katherine and Alice Springs.

Improving Youth Justice

Key achievements and highlights since 2018 include:

- Released a Model of Care in Youth Detention in October 2022, following a comprehensive 18-month consultation and co-design process with the youth justice sector. Staged implementation will continue in 2023.
- Continued works to deliver the new Darwin Youth Justice Centre and the redeveloped Alice Springs Youth Justice Centre, with both projects having incurred delays due to COVID-19 pandemic related material shortages and resourcing impacts. About \$83 million is now allocated for infrastructure works and the new purpose-built centre.
- Congress Aboriginal Medical Services assumed responsibility for the provision of culturally informed medical and wellbeing services at Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre.
- The Northern Territory Police Force (NTPF), in partnership with stakeholders, streamlined youth diversion processes resulting in efficiency gains that improved timely engagement and completion of youth diversion.
- The NTPF, through continued engagement with the Northern Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA), assisted in the extension of the Custody Notification Scheme funding for a further 12 months.
- Restructured the Police Youth Division to improve service delivery and outcomes for young people.
- Invested \$4.54 million across five years to develop new short and long-term youth intervention work camps at Seven Emu Station near Borroloola.
- Expanded night patrol hours and youth drop-in centres in Alice Springs.
- Improved the physical amenities and staffing arrangements to better support young women in detention.
- Progressed a closed circuit television program at current youth detention centres to enable 12 months CCTV capture.
- Transferred the provision of health and wellbeing services in the youth detention centres to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations. Danila Dilba Health Service delivers primary health care and community services to detainees at Don Dale Youth Detention Centre. In August 2022, Congress Aboriginal Medical Services assumed responsibility for the provision of culturally informed medical and wellbeing services at Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre.
- \$15 million renovation of the Alice Springs Local Court to include a multi-purpose court for matters relating to children and young people as well as domestic violence matters.
- Continued the successful implementation of Signs of Safety into Youth Justice with the implementation of the tailored Signs of Success practice model.
- Recruitment of additional school-based police members and provision of prerequisite training prior to placement in schools, including additional schools in Darwin.



Strengthening Governance and Systems

Key achievements and highlights since 2018 include:

- Connect for Safety (C4S) was implemented in 2020 to share information across jurisdictions to better protect Australia's children. C4S helps practitioners to access child protection information held by other jurisdictions, to assist with timely information sharing and inform assessments and decision making. In February 2022, amendments to the information sharing provisions of the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* came into effect to support the Northern Territory's full participation in the C4S scheme.
- The detailed \$64.4 million Client Management Systems Alignment (CMSA) program development has progressed – data cleansing, user testing and training activities have been undertaken to assist the 'go-live' implementation of the CARE solution, scheduled for early 2023. Data sharing arrangements and access agreements are on track for completion in 2023.
- Progressed further local decision making agreements across the NT including with the Nauiyu community (with the Green River Aboriginal Corporation), Beswick and Barunga (with Bangala Traditional Owners), and Djalkiripuyngu (Blue Mud Bay).
- Partnered with Menzies School of Health Research to write the Story of Our Children and Young People, a biennial state of Northern Territory children report.
- Established the Children and Families Tripartite Forum which has been meeting quarterly since 2018. The Forum was a key recommendation of the RCPDCNT and involves senior representatives of the community sector, Northern Territory and Australian governments.
- Coordinated and co-developed (with the Australian Government and community sector) the 10 Year Generational Strategy for Children and Young People in the Northern Territory under the auspices of the Tripartite Forum.
- Co-developed the Coordinated Investment Framework with the Australian Government in partnership with the Tripartite Forum.
- Multi Agency Community and Child Safety Teams commenced in remote communities in 2020. In 2022, Government partnered with AMSANT to complete a consultative based review and reset of MACCST. The Framework is now known as Child Wellbeing and Safety Partnerships. In place based partnership meetings, delegates from agencies and services partner with community leaders to plan collaborative, practical responses to meet the needs of identified children and families in their community.
- Improved legislation to allow for information about people experiencing or committing domestic and family violence to be shared without consent if it is necessary to prevent or respond to a serious domestic and family violence threat. Organisations participating in the domestic and family violence Information Sharing Scheme are called Information Sharing Entities.

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

Key achievements and highlights since 2018 include:

- Consultations began on the establishment of a three tier service system across the Northern Territory for children with harmful sexual behaviours. 14 consultation meetings occurred with both internal and external stakeholders and the system proposed was extremely well received by the community.
- The first tier or stream of the service system will target abusive and violent behaviour, the second tier or stream will be aimed at problematic and abusive behaviour while the third tier or stream will tackle inappropriate and problematic behaviour. Service will be provided to under 16 year olds.
- NT Health will operate Stream 1, the Australian Childhood Foundation will operate Stream 2 and a mixture of non-government and Aboriginal organisations will operate Stream 3. The first two streams are expected to be fully operational by March 2023.
- In 2020, the Northern Territory released the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Framework 2020-2028 and activity is underway. As part of the framework implementation, \$300,000 per annum is allocated for initiatives that assist in supporting key outcomes.
- Continued to deliver key educative presentations to school aged children through the School-based Policing Program. In 2021-22 this included:
 - » 70 Think U know cyber safety lessons presented to 1,808 students
 - » 34 personal safety lessons presented to 627 students
 - » 52 alcohol and other drug lessons to 814 students
 - » 67 Love Bites respectful relationships lessons presented to 1,038 students
- Operation Squire is an ongoing investigation targeting sexual offending of people who use online accounts and carriage services to commit NT and Commonwealth offences in relation to children. As at end of 2022, Operation Squire had identified and arrested 20 previously unknown and unreported offenders.
- Implemented an NT carer register.
- Signed up to the National Standards for Working with Children Check and Child Safe Standards and Principles.
- Amended *Teacher Registration (Northern Territory) Act 2004* to expand the Teachers Registration Board's power to take disciplinary actions and increase transparency in decision making.
- Establishment of the NT Joint Anti-Child Exploitation Team (NT JACET) – 2018–2021, a partnership with the NTPF and Australian Federal Police. Under NT JACET, Operations May and Squire were NT Police operations with interstate law enforcement agencies aimed at investigating children being exploited on social media platforms.



Supporting Survivors and Victims

Key achievements and highlights since 2018 include:

- Facilitated two consultations with AMSANT, APONT and NTCOSS members seeking membership to form a working group to assist in the development of a culturally embedded, Aboriginal led, designed and operated specialist sexual assault service. NT Health aims to establish the model in 2023.
- Established the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFS) Aboriginal Advisory Board which reports directly to the Minister for the Prevention of DFS and provides advice and information to improve the prevention of, and response to, DFS as it affects Aboriginal people and communities.
- Ongoing training delivered by Northern Territory Police to other partner agencies has ensured a standardised approach and provided additional lines of communication to ensure the needs of victims and families are channelled through to the relevant support services in a timely manner.
- Aboriginal Community Police Officer positions in Alice Springs, Katherine and Darwin, have been embedded into the domestic and family violence portfolios to engage with Indigenous agencies and victims of crime to provide where appropriate, cultural advice, support or referral to another service provider.
- A police response is made in relation to any allegations of child sexual abuse reported from a youth detention centre or prison. Police have attended and spoken directly to the parties involved and obtain this information firsthand. This includes reports where the complainant has advised there is no formal complaint forthcoming.
- Introduced and passed legislative amendments meeting a wide range of RCIRCSA recommendations as well as implementing legislation to provide for a victim's right to speak about their experience and identify themselves publicly.
- Committed to training NT Police through the investigative interviewing of vulnerable persons courses that provides specialist training to interview children involved with sexual abuse.
- Became a full participant in the National Redress Scheme.
- Continued to support victim offender conferencing.
- Launched the first Northern Territory Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Framework 2020-2028.
- Introduced the Safe, Respected and Free from Violence Prevention Grant program to fund violence prevention activities across the Northern Territory. A total pool of \$3 million is available for projects of up to a three-year duration.
- Creation and implementation of an electronic victim referral process to allow members from the Youth Diversion Unit to refer matters directly to Victims of Crime NT.

Program Evaluation

The Menzies School of Health Research has been commissioned to conduct the first stage evaluation of *Safe, Thriving and Connected*.

It is a review of the progress to implement the *Safe, Thriving and Connected* reform agenda, including the implementation of the recommendations of the RCPDCNT.

The first evaluation is focussing on the internal implementation of the program and includes a brief examination of the initial outcomes of the reform agenda and identification of data sets known and needed for further evaluations.

At time of publication, outcomes of the Stage One Evaluation were being finalised.

The Stage Two Evaluation is planned for at least five years after the embedding of the reform agenda and will concentrate on the continued progress, impact and outcomes of the reform. It will also examine the progress of the 10 Year Generational Strategy and Coordinated Investment Framework.

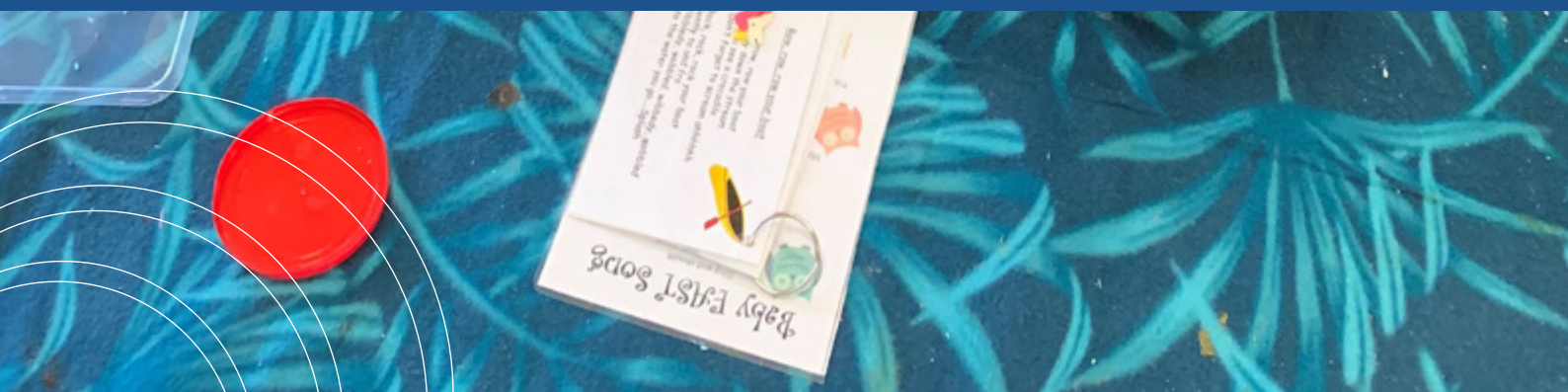
The Stage Three Evaluation is aimed at a 10 year full evaluation of the impact of the reform program.

All evaluation reports will be presented to the NT Children and Families Tripartite Forum.



Putting Children and Families at the Centre

This reform approach includes early intervention and prevention projects and programs designed to support families earlier and avoid issues escalating into crises. The portfolio also includes programs to reorientate the legal system towards a child and family centred approach, and actions to ensure that the voices of children and families are heard and respected.



Putting Children and Families at the Centre

This reform approach encompasses the following programs and projects.

1.1 Prevention and Early Support

Families and children are being helped in culturally secure ways to keep them strong and make communities safer.

- 1.1.1 Ready to Learn—early childhood and education initiatives
- 1.1.2 Getting it Right for Life—childhood health and disability initiatives
- 1.1.3 Family Support Services—family and parental support initiatives
- 1.1.4 Child and Family Centres—child and family centres and the child and family community fund

1.2 Work with Families and Children

Families are actively engaged as partners in improving outcomes for their children and their communities, and are involved in decisions affecting them.

- 1.2.1 Family Group Conferencing –family group conferencing initiatives
- 1.2.2 Preserve Contact with Family—measures to maintain detainees contact with families
- 1.2.3 Respect Children's Voices—advocacy by children initiatives

1.3 A Legal System for Families

Children, young people and families involved in legal matters will be effectively engaged through a culturally appropriate and family-focussed legal system.

- 1.3.1 Representation and Advocacy—initiatives for legal representation of children
- 1.3.2 A Single Act for Children—a single piece of legislation replacing the Care and Protection of Children Act and Youth Justice Act
- 1.3.3 Training for the Legal Profession – covers training on children and young people's development and behaviour
- 1.3.4 Youth and Children's Court – covers the establishment of a youth court in Alice Springs
- 1.3.5 Youth Parole – covers expertise for Parole Board on youth matters

1.4 Support Transition and Restoration

Children and families who have experienced vulnerability or crisis successfully transition from crisis to productive, rewarding lives.

- 1.4.1 Supported Accommodation for Care Leavers – housing and support service initiatives
- 1.4.2 Transition from Detention and Through Care – support for the Commonwealth investment in through care initiatives
- 1.4.3 Transition from Out-of-Home-Care – initiatives supporting care leavers to transition into the wider community

Putting Children and Families at the Centre

Recommendations addressed under Putting Children and Families at the Centre

SEBF	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 4.1, 4.2, 4.5
RCPDCNT	2.1, 2.2, 11.3, 11.4, 22.5, 22.7, 24.1, 25.23, 25.24, 25.25, 25.26, 25.27, 25.28, 25.29, 25.30, 25.31, 25.32, 25.34, 25.35, 25.36, 25.37, 25.38, 25.41, 25.43, 27.1, 32.8, 33.1, 33.21, 33.22, 33.23, 33.24, 34.4, 34.5, 34.6, 34.7, 34.8, 34.9, 34.10, 34.11, 34.16, 39.3, 39.4, 42.1
RCIRCSA	Criminal Justice – 67, 68 Final Report – 12.10, 12.22

The Child and Family Community Fund – projects on the ground

The Child and Family Community Fund provides once-off funding of \$260,000 per annum to support improved outcomes for children aged 0-5 years and their families. Designed to support activities that reflect community priorities, the fund focuses on:

- child health, development, safety and wellbeing
- family resilience, problem solving and parenting capability and confidence
- communities as places where children and families live and thrive.

Following are some examples of outcomes from funded programs.

Community Footpath – Chalk Art

Local Aboriginal Larapinta CFC staff worked in partnership with a chalk artist to plan and create five interactive 'chalk bombs' on footpaths in the local area to spark interest and conversation. Increased visual representation of the culture in the community gives Larapinta a greater sense of belonging, builds pride and encourages better engagement. Improved outcomes include, increased awareness of road safety for Larapinta families, usage of the Lyndavale Drive bike paths and greater visibility of positive stories of Aboriginal families. The drawings provide colour and interactive hopscotch for children to play and learn. The drawings also feature traditional language – connecting children and their families to culture.



Putting Children and Families at the Centre



Bike project - Bikes Mwerre

Bike Mwerre (roughly translates to 'Bikes are good' in Arrernte) is a community bicycle program that engages young people in bike riding and fixing, activities and community events - with the aims of increasing youth engagement, wellbeing, and reducing youth offending and mental health concerns. In late 2022 Bikes Mwerre ran its first school holiday program based in Larapinta. Children engaged in many bike focused activities throughout the week including; fixing bikes, community bike rides, games, races, art activities and much more.

Bikes Mwerre is part of a community developed vision 'Lhere Pirnte Impatye' (Larapinta Tracks).

The after school community sessions have provided an excellent opportunity for young people to engage with their peers in healthy, meaningful activities - making friends, working together, showing teamwork and learning new skills.

For example, a 12 year old boy who regularly talks about how much he loves the program, how he gets to spend time fixing and riding bikes with his friends - and how proud he is of his hard work. He is regularly dropped off by his grandpa - who commented "how great it is to see [his grandson] engaged in bike riding ... keeps him out of trouble". In the past, this participant has been in trouble with police, and been sent to youth detention - as a result of boredom and disengagement from school and community. During one session, the boy told facilitators "Bikes Mwerre is good for spending time doing something useful - hanging out with friends ... having fun and fixing bikes ... then we can ride around during the week".

Putting Children and Families at the Centre

BabyFAST – a positive parenting program

The BabyFAST program was delivered across eight weeks through August and September at Ngukurr. The program was a success with families not wanting the program to end. BabyFAST is a research based family support, prevention program for infants (0-3 years). It is a multi-family group process which builds relationships between new parents, their baby, supportive adults (eg grandparents) and community agency professionals.

Other services within the Guluman Child and Family Centre were able to use the momentum of BabyFAST to improve family engagement with their services during and following the program.

The Guluman Centre staff also reported that the program brought families to the Guluman Centre who had never engaged with them before. The Young Parents Program staff reported seeing the benefit of bringing people together and have, since BabyFAST, continued to coordinate other activities from BabyFAST to support young parents and their children. In addition, the same team reported that following the BabyFAST Program, the BabyFAST families have engaged with their programs increasing their client base. The FaFT Coordinator also reported that more mums were coming to their program as a result of BabyFAST and will continue to incorporate more elements of BabyFAST into FaFT.

The evaluation conducted pre and post program revealed:

- increased parent awareness of appropriate and effective parenting strategies and child developmental needs.
- 100% of parents/carers evaluated reported improved knowledge and skills about parenting and taking care of baby.
- 100% of parents/carers evaluated reported improved understanding of child developmental needs.
- 100% of parents/carers evaluated reported that their baby had learnt new things through attending BabyFAST.

All parents reported that they loved the bonding between parents and the child and have learned how to continue this in the home.



Putting Children and Families at the Centre



Putting Children and Families at the Centre



Sports therapy kicking along

The Child and Family Counselling Sports Healing Program funded through the community fund in Ngukurr, is a type of therapy program that combines sports and physical activity with counselling and therapy for children and families. The goal of this program is to help children and families cope with emotional and psychological issues through physical activity, teamwork, and other sports-related activities. This program can be used to help children and families dealing with issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, trauma, and other mental health concerns.

Putting Children and Families at the Centre

MESCH Community of Practice

The first NT face to face MECSH Community of Practice was held in Darwin in November 2022. This brought together the four Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations contracted to provide the program, NT Health, the MECSH Support Service and a number of keynote speakers. The Community of Practice was well received with many positive comments from participants. A common statement:

"Discussions with practitioners across the NT, shared challenges and gained insight into Menzies role in evaluating the programs".

Scoping plan for HU5K-PF

Charles Darwin University has been engaged to undertake a scoping plan for the HU5K-PF program. This was delivered in October 2022 in preparation for 2023. This involved engaging with NT Health stakeholders from across the Territory about the program, developing a program logic and identifying evaluation needs. This resulted in a scoping plan with key recommendations for the upcoming evaluation of HU5K-PF.

Increasing families' confidence

There has been an obvious increase in families' confidence in their roles as their children's first teachers and in their capacity to support their children's learning and development, and positive transitions to schools.

The principal at Canteen Creek School has highlighted that "there has also been a difference in attendance and engagement between the families that have participated in the FaFT Stay Play Learn program compared to those who have not... These families show an openness to school now they are in primary school. They feel much more comfortable in talking to the school and just being involved".



Improving Care and Protection

This reform portfolio includes the programs and projects designed for improving the child protection, family support and OOHC systems in the Northern Territory. It has a focus on working with Aboriginal families to keep their kids safe.



Improving Care and Protection

This reform approach encompasses the following programs and projects.

2.1 Care and Protection Practice

Children are protected from harm, and children and families entering the child protection system receive high quality responses informed by contemporary practice.

- 2.1.1 Reporting and Investigation – initiatives to improve the reporting and investigation of child protection cases
- 2.1.2 Clinical Practice and Case Management – initiatives to improve child protection practice
- 2.1.3 Care and Protection Orders – appropriate legislative changes

2.2 Children in the Child Protection and Youth Justice Systems

Children and young people in care who are also engaged with the youth justice system are effectively case managed and helped to avoid future offending.

- 2.2.1 Meeting the Needs of Children in Care who are Involved with Youth Justice – initiatives aimed at strengthening case management particularly of crossover young people
- 2.2.2 Responding to Complex Behaviour in Out-of-Home Care – agency collaboration initiatives aimed at managing challenging behaviours

2.3 Transforming Out-of-Home Care

Children who require OOHC are cared for in culturally-secure, trauma informed therapeutic environments and by their families where possible.

- 2.3.1 Foster and Kinship Care and Aboriginal Out-of-Home Care – system reform and initiatives to increase Aboriginal kinship carers
- 2.3.2 Trauma Informed and Therapeutic Care – initiatives supporting those with complex needs and behavioural issues
- 2.3.3 Out-of-Home Care Governance and Oversight – covers quality assurance initiatives across OOHC services

Recommendations addressed under Improving Care and Protection

RCPDCNT	31.1, 32.1, 32.2, 32.3, 32.4, 32.5, 32.6, 32.7, 32.9, 32.10, 32.12, 33.2, 33.4, 33.5, 33.6, 33.8, 33.9, 33.10, 33.11, 33.12, 33.13, 33.14, 33.15, 33.16, 33.17, 33.18, 33.19, 33.20, 34.1, 34.2, 34.3, 34.13, 34.14, 34.15, 35.2, 35.3, 35.5, 35.6, 37.2, 37.5
RCIRCSA	Criminal Justice – 32, 33, 34 Final Report – 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 12.4, 12.5, 12.6, 12.7, 12.8, 12.11, 12.12, 12.13, 12.14, 12.16, 12.17, 12.18, 12.19, 12.20, 12.21

Improving Care and Protection

Supporting staff to improve care and protection

In September 2021, nine TFHC staff graduated with the inaugural Graduate Certificate in Safe Communities from Charles Darwin University. TFHC co-designed the qualification to be tailored to child protection practice in the NT, teaching cultural security, trauma informed care and how to work with vulnerable young people.

TFHC staff quotes:

"I have my dream job, every day I get to spend with the beautiful young people I work with"
– Katherine Chippendale

"Through the support our department has given me, I have rekindled my love for learning and am now studying a Bachelor of Social Work"
– Bayley Valentine.

Essential support provides hope

Since receiving a Family Support Services grant, Tangentyere Council has recruited five positions including a Connecting Dads Support Worker, to engage men in services centred on the wellbeing of their children. This may include drug and alcohol services, Men's Behaviour Change, fathering supports, housing and counselling. A single dad of two young children, Mark (not his real name), received support from Tangentyere to get his children's immunisations and health checks up to date, access family tax benefit and enter the private rental market. While all these issues appear small separately, they were overwhelming for Mark collectively and working through them assisted him to feel organised, more able to support his children into school, engage them in activities and ensure they were feeling stable. Since his engagement, Mark has started working as an Aboriginal Liaison in his children's school and remains a member of Tangentyere's Men's Family Safety Group.

"We recognised the need to have Aboriginal male workers undertaking these roles and the importance of engaging men in supports that are non-judgmental, non-shaming and culturally safe." – Maree Corbo, Co-Manager Tangentyere Family Safety and Social Services Division

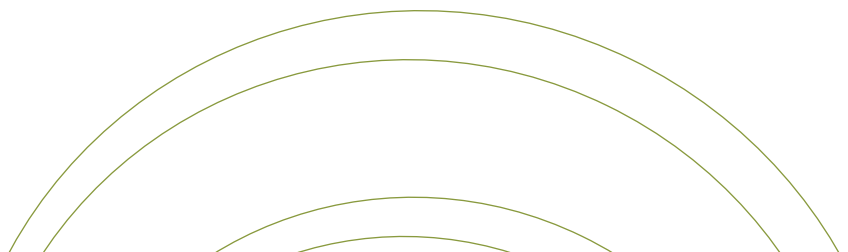
Footprints of our Journey conference

The 2022 Footprints of our Journey conference was held in Darwin with TFHC staff and partner agencies building connections and sharing learnings to ensure children are at the centre of everything they do.

The event was a celebration of both challenges and achievements that have occurred since the implementation of the Signs of Safety Practice framework in 2019, which focuses on bringing families and relevant professionals together and sharing information to support children to feel safe and secure.

Elder in Residence, Dr Christine Fejo-King, provided a Larrakia Welcome to Country, focusing on the deep spiritual connection Aboriginal people have to country, sea, ceremonies and song lines.

The theme for the event was 'Strengthening inclusive and collaborative practice', which is the heart and soul of good child protection and youth justice work.



Improving Youth Justice

The Improving Youth Justice reform portfolio includes the programs and projects designed to improve the youth justice system in the Northern Territory and ensure that there are effective interventions that provide appropriate consequences for young people who offend and work to stop future offending. The portfolio also includes a suite of measures to prevent young people from entering the youth justice system.

Improving Youth Justice

This reform approach encompasses the following programs and projects.

3.1 Police and Young People

The community is safer through Police working effectively and engaging with young people, and focussing on practices that prevent offending.

- 3.1.1 Custody Notification – initiative to ensure legal representation for a child brought into police custody
- 3.1.2 Police Youth Division – initiatives to improve police interaction with young people in the youth justice system

3.2 Getting Kids Back on Track

Children and young people who offend or at risk of offending are provided with evidence-based interventions that stop continued offending before they end up in detention.

- 3.2.1 Youth Engagement Grants - funding for initiatives aimed at helping at risk and vulnerable youths
- 3.2.2 Youth Justice Programs – initiatives for constructive programs for young people in the justice system

3.3 Youth Detention that Works

Young people in detention are housed in secure therapeutic facilities that support their rehabilitation and receive the help, guidance and structure necessary to stop future offending.

- 3.3.1 Youth Detention Operations – initiatives to improve the operation of youth justice facilities
- 3.3.2 Youth Detention Infrastructure – replacement and upgrades of youth detention facilities
- 3.3.3 Youth Detention Services and Programs – initiatives to improve programs within youth detention facilities

Recommendations addressed under Improving Youth Justice

RCPDCNT	10.1, 10.2, 11.1, 11.2, 11.5, 11.6, 11.7, 11.8, 11.9, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 13.4, 13.5, 13.6, 13.7, 13.8, 13.9, 14.1, 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 16.2, 16.3, 16.4, 16.5, 16.6, 16.7, 16.8, 16.9, 16.10, 17.1, 17.2, 17.3, 17.4, 18.1, 19.1, 20.1, 20.2, 20.3, 20.4, 20.5, 20.6, 20.7, 20.8, 20.9, 21.1, 21.2, 21.3, 21.4, 21.5, 22.1, 23.1, 23.2, 25.1, 25.2, 25.3, 25.4, 25.6, 25.7, 25.8, 25.9, 25.10, 25.11, 25.12, 25.13, 25.14, 25.15, 25.16, 25.17, 25.18, 25.19, 25.20, 25.21, 25.22, 25.33, 25.39, 25.40, 25.42, 28.1, 28.2
RCIRCSA	Final Report – 15.3, 15.4, 15.5, 15.6, 15.7, 15.8, 15.9

Improving Youth Justice

Creating a more positive future

In November 2021, Eugene (not his real name) entered Saltbush Supported Bail Accommodation in Alice Springs. Initially, adjusting to a new area and routine proved to be very challenging, coupled with the uncertainty of the pandemic lockdowns. Through program provider Balanced Choice, Eugene received sessions that focussed on social, emotional, psychological and physical wellbeing, and encouraged connection through positive healthy relationships. This included learning how to generate graphic designs and transfer them onto T-shirts. Eugene was a natural at the art, creating his own shirt with a custom design that he now wears with pride. Recognising Eugene's strong interest in the arts, he was encouraged to further explore this creative passion. He became a regular attendee at the music program, composing his own music, learning to play new instruments, and writing his own lyrics. Through creative trauma-informed approaches to youth justice, young people like Eugene are supported to shift their behaviours, engage in personal development and in turn reduce the likelihood of future reoffending.

Evolution Regional Dance Competition

In July 2022, as part of the early intervention Dance Program, 10 young people competed at the Evolution Regional Dance Competition in Darwin.

Mala'la Health Service Aboriginal Corporation, funded by TFHC to provide youth diversion in Maningrida, promote dance as a way to grow confidence and leadership skills.

The group entered five routines across two different dance categories (hip hop and open). All of their routines placed first and they all qualified for the national finals in January 2023 on the Gold Coast, providing an opportunity for the young people to compete against dancers from across Australia and to show their skills and talent on a national stage.

The group has reflected that dancing competitively has helped them to build their skills in encouraging and supporting each another and sets a great example for other young people to do something they are passionate about and that makes them happy.

Dance has been an alternative pathway for several of the young people involved and has supported them to take a leadership role.



Improving Youth Justice

Mural brightens up new building in Alice Springs

A group of young people involved in a youth justice program funded by TFHC has teamed up with a number of Central Australian artists to brighten up a new building in Alice Springs.

The five youth, aged 14-17, were involved in painting a mural on the side of the Lhere Artepe building during school holidays as part of the Back on Track program operated by Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation and Saltbush.

Farley Fraser, Coordinator Congress Youth Services and Back on Track Program, said their involvement in the mural taught them life skills and gave them an opportunity to engage with other young people. "It provided training and education on how to paint a mural and it was an opportunity to further develop their artistic skills and try out different painting styles," Ms Fraser said.

They teamed up with artists including Tamara Cornthwaite, Jeremiah Daniels-Pepperill, Letitia Firth and Larry Mccrabb to design and paint the totems of the three estates groups: ANTULYE, IRLPME and MPARNTWE.

Ms Cornthwaite said the project was about providing something of quality and providing a space for young people to learn and share. "Every day we were sharing cultural knowledge and learning something new, down to where we should place the totems that represented the different estates including the eagle, dingoes and stinky beetle," Ms Cornthwaite said.

"We spoke about the flowers representing regrowth, through fire and then after the rain the shoots coming back. This reflected coming back from diversity and hardship and working together.

The mural was difficult to paint as it was a mammoth project, but this also reflects life – that life is difficult and we are all facing hardships. Being there and being present, everyone who was involved, passers-by and neighbours, tourists and organisational representatives, all agreed on one thing – young people need more things to do."

The Back on Track Program helps at-risk young people understand the implications of their anti-social or offending behaviour for themselves, their family and

their community. It's open to 8 to 17-year-olds who live in Alice Springs, Darwin, Katherine, Nhulunbuy and Tennant Creek.

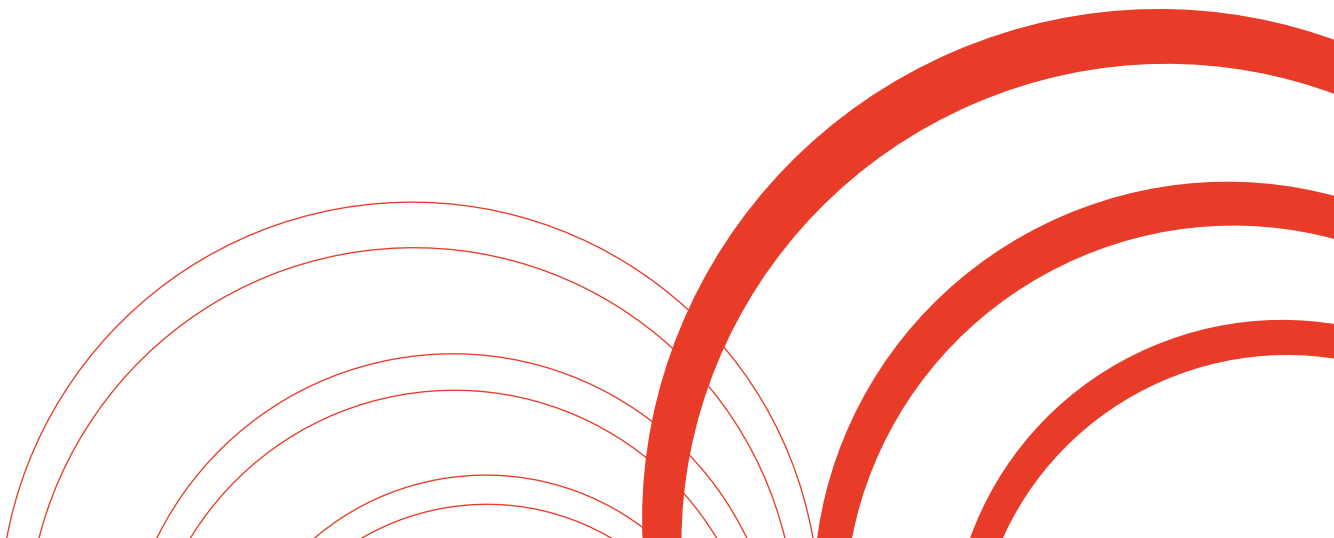
They can be referred, or the court can sentence them to this program as an alternative to detention.

TFHC's Acting Executive Director Youth Justice, Michael Hebb, said the Northern Territory Government provided \$5 million in funding each year for seven organisations to deliver programs for at-risk youth in the Back on Track Program.

"These programs educate young people about the impact their offending has on the community while providing an opportunity for them to do some good," Mr Hebb said.

"The difference it can have on a young person's life when they have something positive they've contributed to is something they can feel very proud about. I hope these young people will view this mural as an example of the lasting impact positive actions can have on a community."

Improving Youth Justice



Improving Youth Justice

Developing new skills at Don Dale

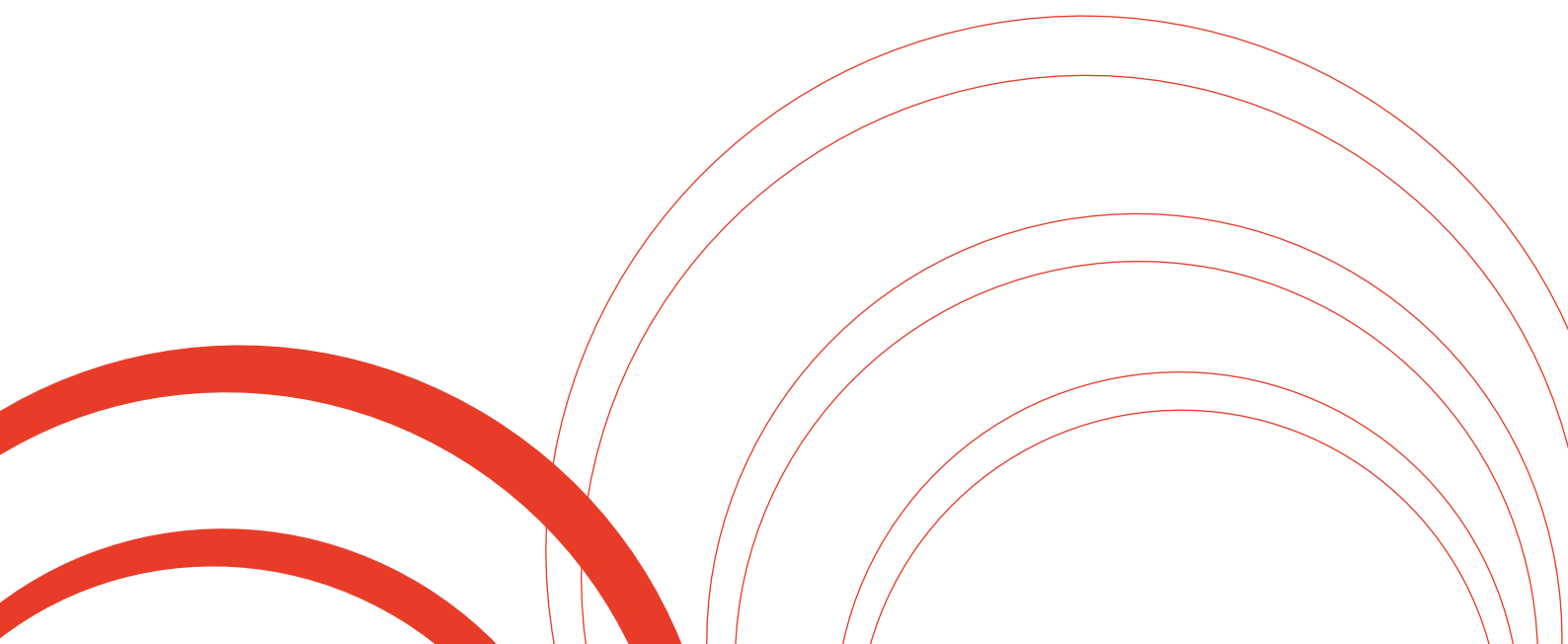
The Certificate 1 in Agrifoods operations program at Don Dale helps young people develop skills and create job opportunities in the agricultural, horticultural and conservation industries.

Since the program began in early 2022, 13 young people have completed the course, three are enrolled and two have got jobs as a result of having the certificate.

As part of the program young people learn how to maintain the work place, work safely, support irrigation and gardening work and learn how to operation and maintain small machinery.

The young people in the centre have established a cultural garden, a yarnning circle and their own vegetable garden where they grow sweet potatoes, basil, cucumber, tomatoes, bok choy, bananas, paw paws, sweet corn and other herbs and vegetables which are then used in their school cooking classes.

The program is delivered by Aboriginal man Don, along with Top End School of Flexible Learning coordinator Jess McIver, operating out of Don Dale Youth Detention Centre.





Strengthening Governance and Systems

This reform portfolio includes programs and projects designed to increase scrutiny and accountability of services for children and families experiencing vulnerability and put in place strong systems and processes that ensure efficiency, coordination and efficacy.

Strengthening Governance and Systems

This reform approach encompasses the following programs and projects.

4.1 Advocacy, Accountability and Quality Improvement

Organisations and departments working with families are held to account for ensuring that the services they provide reflect or are on a monitored pathway towards best practice and are achieving desired outcomes.

- 4.1.1 Commission for Children and Young People – a possible Commission for Children and Young People
- 4.1.2 Internal Accountability and Complaints – initiatives aimed at improving accountability and complaints mechanisms

4.2 Managing and Sharing Information

Best practice care and support for children, young people and families is enabled and underpinned by contemporary information management approaches and systems.

- 4.2.1 Information Management and Sharing – initiative to implement a new client information system
- 4.2.2 Information Exchange Scheme – initiative to develop an information exchange scheme
- 4.2.3 Institutional Record Keeping – initiatives to improve and ensure appropriate records are kept

4.3 Community Led Responses

Local Decision Making is a key NT Government policy that helps facilitate a new working relationship between Aboriginal communities and government agencies to support self-determination.

- 4.3.1 Local Decision Making – the Northern Territory Government's initiatives to increase the role of local communities in designing and delivery of services.

4.4 Evidence Based Practice

Service models and practices are underpinned by research and evidence, and supported by comprehensive planning, monitoring and evaluation.

- 4.4.1 Research and Evaluation – further research of child protection and youth detention issues and program evaluations
- 4.4.2 Reporting and Monitoring – initiatives to provide for reporting mechanisms and improved monitoring

4.5 Coordinated Effort Towards Better Outcomes

Government will work in partnership with local communities and the community sector to develop and successfully implement a long-term strategy to improve outcomes for children and young people.

- 4.5.1 Operational Coordination and Service Integration – initiatives aimed at improving cross-border cooperation on child protection matters
- 4.5.2 Strategic Coordination – strategic coordination initiatives
- 4.5.3 Developing Workforce Capacity – improving workforce capacity initiatives

Strengthening Governance and Systems

Recommendations addressed under Strengthening Governance and Systems

SEBF	3.8, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9
RCPDCNT	1.1, 3.1, 6.1, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 16.1, 22.2, 22.3, 22.4, 22.6, 24.2, 25.5, 33.3, 33.7, 33.25, 34.12, 35.1, 35.4, 35.7, 37.1, 37.3, 37.4, 37.6, 37.7, 37.8, 37.9, 37.10, 39.1, 39.2, 39.5, 39.7, 40.1, 40.2, 40.3, 40.4, 40.5, 40.6, 40.7, 41.1, 41.2, 41.4, 41.5, 43.1, 43.2, 43.3, 43.5, 43.6, 43.7
RCIRCSA	Criminal Justice – 2, 82 Final Report – 2.1, 6.11, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 8.8, 8.13, 8.14, 8.15, 8.16, 12.1, 12.2, 12.3, 12.15, 14.4, 15.2, 15.10, 17.1, 17.2, 17.3 Working with Children – 35, 36

Developing our workforce

In November 2022, a new round of child protection practitioners graduated in Darwin, setting them up with skills to help keep children safe and supported.

The 16 new recruits undertook a three week face-to-face training program with a focus on child protection best practice.

They considered investigations and assessment, court and legal processes, trauma informed practice, working with children and disabilities, effectively navigating domestic and family violence, strengthening families and how to effectively manage cases of children in care.

The new graduates will be allocated roles across Darwin, Katherine, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek as outreach officers, child protection practitioners, Aboriginal community workers and case workers.

TFHC Deputy Chief Executive, Families, Sasha Dennis said child protection practitioners were some of the most resourceful and passionate people and it was fantastic to welcome these new practitioners to the department.

“No matter the circumstances, they always rise to the occasion to prioritise our communities,” Ms Dennis said.

“It’s just one of the reasons we’re so appreciative of their unwavering commitment to keep kids, families and communities safe.”



Strengthening Governance and Systems



Client Management System Alignment project moves ahead

\$64.4 million investment to provide contemporary integrated case management solution to support frontline workers in child protection, youth justice and adoptions and deliver a business intelligence and reporting capability that will enable a 360 view of the child.

The CMSA Program is implementing an integrated case management solution, known as CARE.

CARE is a contemporary, secure, reliable, supported, single and integrated case management solution that supports child protection, youth justice and adoption activities across the Northern Territory.

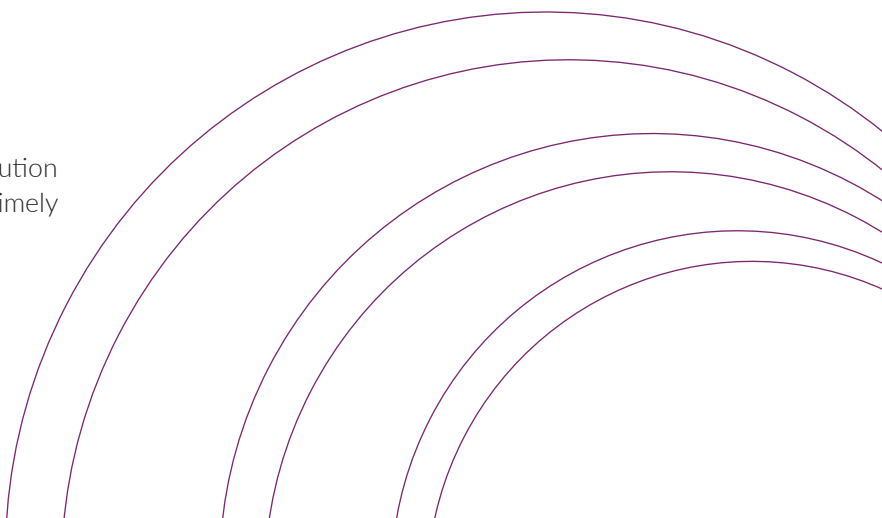
This is the first time TFHC will have an integrated case management system for the following TFHC functions:

- care and protection
- youth justice
- adoption
- finance related activities

CARE is a contemporary case management solution that draws data from multiple sources to inform timely decision making.

The CARE system delivers:

- case management and record keeping for children in care and protection, adoption and youth justice
- financial related data surrounding service providers, carers and their current contracts
- capability to synchronise case data when working offline or out of internet range
- access for young people or their carer to view their demographic information
- access for external service providers to provide input to case management workflows and forms.



A close-up, profile view of a young girl with dark hair. She has a black spider with a pink body painted on her cheek. She is wearing a red shirt. In the background, a person is wearing a black and white striped shirt and a gold chain. The image is used as a background for the page.

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

The programs in Preventing Child Sexual Abuse recognise that all children deserve to be safe, happy and protected from harm and are designed to prevent and respond to the sexual exploitation of children and young people in the Northern Territory.

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

This reform approach encompasses the following programs and projects.

5.1 Child Safe Organisations

The Northern Territory Government continues to work with other jurisdictions, the Australian Government and key stakeholders to implement national standards for Working with Children Checks and Child Safe Standards. Work is also continuing on nationally consistent foster and kinship carer and teachers registers.

- 5.1.1 National Child Safe Standards – initiatives to adopt national standards
- 5.1.2 Foster and Kinship Carer Register – initiatives to implement a register
- 5.1.3 Working with Children Checks – updates and improvements to checks
- 5.1.4 Teacher Registration – moves to improve teacher registers and information sharing

5.2 Sexual Health and Harm

Addressing a complicated, complex and challenging area. Initiatives to tackle sexual health and harm in the community are broad reaching and targeted

- 5.2.1 Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviours - services offered through sexual assault referral centres
- 5.2.2 Online Safety – initiatives to improve online safety
- 5.2.3 Child and Community Education – covers sexual violence prevention and response framework
- 5.2.4 Children in Out-of-Home Care and Detention – covers initiatives aimed at sexual abuse prevention education for children in care and detention

Recommendations addressed under Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

RCPDCNT	36.1, 36.2, 36.3, 36.4, 36.5
RCIRCSA	<p>Final Report - 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8, 6.9, 6.10, 6.12, 6.15, 6.17, 6.19, 6.20, 6.21, 6.22, 6.23, 6.24, 7.7, 7.8, 8.9, 8.10, 8.11, 8.12, 8.17, 8.18, 8.19, 8.20, 8.21, 8.22, 8.23, 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, 10.5, 10.6, 10.7, 12.9, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 13.4, 13.5, 13.6, 13.7, 13.8, 14.1, 15.1</p> <p>Working with Children – 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34</p>



Supporting Survivors and Victims

The Supporting Survivors and Victims portfolio includes programs which aim to provide the best possible support mechanisms for victims as well as supporting their needs. The programs recognise survivors and victims should be helped to be empowered including providing them with the tools to thrive.



Supporting Survivors and Victims

This reform approach encompasses the following programs and projects.

6.1 Redress and Civil Claims

The NT Redress Coordination Team, along with Northern Territory Government agencies, continues to investigate and process claims relating to NT institutions. This is ongoing work and will continue to progress the claims brought forward by survivors and victims.

- 6.1.1 National Redress Scheme – an initiative to provide eligible survivors with a redress payment
- 6.1.2 Civil Claims – an initiative to provide for guidelines for responding to compensation claims
- 6.1.3 Liability and Non-Delegable Duty - covers legislation providing for non-delegable duty on institutions

6.2 Support and Professional Care

Access to good professional care is integral to support for survivors and victims of sexual assault. The Northern Territory Government supplies funding to a variety of organisations offering suitable programs at a community level.

- 6.2.1 Community Support Services – funding initiatives for support services
- 6.2.2 Counselling and Psychological Care – initiatives to support expansion of services
- 6.2.3 Institutional Support – covers NT institutions providing direct responses to survivors
- 6.2.4 Sexual Assault Services – covers funding to address gaps in services

6.3 Supporting Survivors and Victims

The Northern Territory Government continues to seek and implement appropriate approaches to support survivors and victims through the justice system.

- 6.3.1 Limitation Periods - legislation to remove limitation periods applying to damages claims
- 6.3.2 Police and Survivors and Victims - covers initiatives to change police practices to encourage and support reporting of child sexual abuse allegations
- 6.3.3 Survivors and Victims in Court – covers initiatives to support vulnerable witnesses in the court

Recommendations addressed under Supporting Survivors and Victims

RCIRCSA	Criminal Justice – 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, 52, 53, 54, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 77, 78, 84 Final Report – 9.1 to 9.9 Redress and Civil Litigation – 1 to 99
---------	---

Supporting Survivors and Victims

Supporting violence prevention

The Safe, Respected and Free from Violence Prevention Grants and the Community and place based partnerships for DFSV prevention and response grants support initiatives on the ground.

Tarntipi Homelands Aboriginal Corporation (THAC) partners with CatholicCare NT to deliver services for the purpose of violence prevention on the Tiwi islands, supported by the grants. This includes on-country experiences at Tarntipi Bush Camp, workshops, community meetings and the production of a picture book.

THAC held two days of planning and yarning to increase shared understanding. One day was held at Tarntipi Bush Camp, Bathurst Island, and the second day at the CatholicCare office in Wurrumiyanga. These facilitated workshops were well attended with both local community members, and local staff participating in designing the Tiwi DFSV project. This included creating a shared understanding about the key issues, definitions and context of this work.

THAC will continue to run community meetings and deliver key messages about violence prevention across the Tiwi Islands. Family camps will be a feature of the Dry Season.

Family Safety Framework

The Family Safety Framework is operationally coordinated by police to assist victims in high risk domestic violence situations and is active in Darwin, Katherine, Nhulunbuy, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs and Yuendumu. The Family Safety Framework is an ongoing partnership between multiple government and non-government agencies with the primary role to assist high-risk victims and their children to reduce the risk of serious harm.

Assistance for victims

Strike Force Trident, the NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services property crime team, continued to invest time and effort engaging with commercial and residential victims of crime to provide them with resources and information to minimise the opportunities of repeat victimisation.

The command also worked with other command areas to develop a victim survey tool to continue to provide valuable information and improve service delivery.

Frontline officers and their management teams were actively engaged with community groups, commercial groups and other relevant stakeholders involved in community safety and crime prevention, to maximise opportunities for early intervention and provide reassurance to the community.



Supporting Survivors and Victims

Working on Redress

The National Redress Scheme (the scheme) was created in response to recommendations by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

It began on 1 July 2018 and will run for 10 years. The Northern Territory Government is a full participant in the scheme along with all other states and territories. The Northern Territory Redress Coordination Team (NTRCT) is responsible for meeting the NT Government and local councils' obligations as a responsible institution, as well as a participating jurisdiction. It also provides client services through brokerage of counselling and psychological support and direct personal responses, and advocacy for survivors in the NT. The NTRCT is designed to be the one-point of contact for the scheme.

To date the NT Government has paid about \$1.5m in redress payments to survivors.

The Ministers' Redress Governance Board provides oversight to the scheme and has decision making powers in relation to any proposed amendments to the legislation and policy guidelines. The board is supported and advised by the Inter-Jurisdictional Committee (IJC), which is chaired by the Australian Government Department of Social Services and is made up of senior officials from state and territory departments responsible for the scheme.

The NTRCT, through the IJC, is working alongside the national, state and territory jurisdictions to implement recommendations from the Second Year Review of the scheme, to enhance access and support for survivors in the NT.

The NTRCT also provides information sessions to support the uptake of the scheme in the NT including to relevant government and non-government service providers. Sessions are in the form of short, succinct, intensive sessions covering the scheme, trauma informed care and vicarious trauma.

The NTRCT continues to work with the Australian Government to ensure survivors' voices are represented and NT issues are raised.

Alternative Response Team trial

Police trialled an Alternative Response Team to improve call centre operations and response tasking for incident attendance and support to victims of crime.

The Alternative Response Team reduced the dispatch of frontline resources and were able to effectively resolve or redirect reported incidents to other agencies or service providers. This provided a better service to the community while also providing better response times to victims that required immediate response.

