

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

2018 - 2019

ANNUAL REPORT





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The Reform Management Office has been established to coordinate whole-of-government reforms 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 Commonwealth Government.



Introduction

The Northern Territory Government is continuing to make progress on its plan to improve the child protection and youth justice systems and improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

This report describes the achievements and challenges of implementing reforms that aim to better support children, young people and families experiencing vulnerability and those who are in contact with or at risk of being in contact with the child protection and youth justice systems.

This is the first full year of the reform journey, which started with the release of *Safe, Thriving and Connected: Generational Change for Children and Families* in April 2018.

Since the release of *Safe, Thriving and Connected*, the reform agenda has expanded to include recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the Northern Territory Government's Early Childhood Development Plan, *Starting Early for a Better Future*.

Together these reports and plans form the *Generational Change Reform*.

The *Generational Change Reform* aims to reform child and family services and systems to improve the long term health, development and safety outcomes for children, young people, families and communities.

The *Generational Change Reform* is a coordinated reform approach that 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.

Through the *Generational Change Reform*, the Northern Territory Government will continue to work in partnership with communities, the Aboriginal community controlled sector and the community services sector to strengthen outcomes for all children and families, with a particular focus on those who are in contact with or at risk of being in contact with the child protection and youth justice systems. The Northern Territory Government will also continue to work with the Commonwealth Government to coordinate programs, policies and funding for Territory children, young people and families.

Background

The *Generational Change Reform* comprises three significant and interrelated reform programs arising from:

- Safe, Thriving and Connected: Generational Change for Children and Families
- Starting Early for a Better Future: Early Childhood Development in the Northern Territory 2018-2028
- Responses to the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Safe, Thriving and Connected

In April 2018 the Northern Territory Government released *Safe, Thriving and Connected: Generational Change for Children and Families* and allocated over \$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.

Starting Early for a Better Future

The Northern Territory Government released the implementation plan for *Starting Early for a Better Future: Early Childhood Development in the Northern Territory 2018-2028* in August 2018. *Starting Early for a Better Future* outlines the Northern Territory Government's strategic direction to build the early childhood service system into a comprehensive, high quality integrated sector.

Through *Starting Early for a Better Future* the Northern Territory Government is investing \$35.6 million over four years. In 2018-19 this included establishing the NT Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home visiting program, expanding the Healthy Under-5 Kids – Partnering with Families Program, establishing seven new Families as First Teachers Stay, Play Learn sites and four new Hearing Health Partnership programs.

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse submitted its Final Report to the Governor-General on 15 December 2017. This Final Report comprised 17 volumes with 189 recommendations to better protect children against sexual abuse and alleviate the impact of abuse when it occurs.

In addition to this Final Report, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse previously released three reports:

- 2017 Criminal Justice Report
- 2015 Redress and Civil Litigation Report
- 2015 Working with Children Checks Report.

The Northern Territory Government provided an initial response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Final Report on 22 June 2018 and published the First Progress Report in March 2019.

This report does not repeat the content of the First Progress Report published in March 2019. The 2019-20 Generational Change Reform report will include comprehensive content from Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Generational Change

The reports from both the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory were concerned with the safety and wellbeing of children and were primarily focussed on tertiary responses or statutory interventions.

Both Royal Commission reports highlighted the need for integrated and sustainable responses from governments, service providers and communities to address the complex issues faced by children and families who experience vulnerability, disadvantage or trauma. *Starting Early for a Better Future* recognises the importance of early childhood development and its impact on future opportunity and success. Both Royal Commission reports acknowledge the importance of early intervention approaches, but do not fully address them in their recommendations; *Starting Early for a Better Future* provides that focus.



Reform principles

Under the *Generational Change Reform Agenda*, all partners have a shared responsibility:



What has been done?

Key achievements in 2018-19 include:

- Establishing Families as First Teachers: Stay Play Learn in Braitling, Malak, Belyuen, Epenarra, Kintore (Wulungurru), Harts Range (Atitjere), Robinson River and Peppimenarti.
- Establishing the NT Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home-visiting programs to improve parenting skills and the health outcomes of young children in the East Arnhem, Katherine and Barkly regions. \$8 million is being invested over three years to deliver this program.
- Supporting an increased number of families through the Family and Children Enquiry and Support (FACES) service managed by Territory Families.
- Collaborating with Mission Australia to establish the Housing for Young People Program in Darwin and Palmerston.
- Working with child and family centres in communities to achieve local decision making about initiatives to improve outcomes for children through the Child and Family Community Fund.
- Implementing the Signs of Safety practice framework and making changes to child protection practice by moving child protection processes away from an incident and risk focused response.
- Partnering with Aboriginal organisations to introduce the Aboriginal Carers Growing up Aboriginal Children grants.
- Collaborating with Tangentyere Council to develop 'Children Safe, Family Together', a comprehensive culturally safe Aboriginal kinship care service model.
- Establishing the Police Youth Division from 1 January 2019 within Northern Territory Police Fire and Emergency Services.
- Investing an additional \$2.35 million into Regional Youth Services Programs to support delivery of after-hours services for young people including school holiday programs with both day and evening activities, bringing the total amount invested to \$4.1 million per annum.
- Investing \$5.5 million in Darwin and Alice Springs bail programs that provide support, accommodation and supervision to children and young people on bail and other court orders.
- Partnering with Aboriginal communities to sign further local decision making agreements in Blue Mud Bay, Katherine, Groote Eylandt, Daly River Region and Gurindji.
- Investing an additional \$2.35 million to Regional Youth Services Programs, bringing the total amount invested to \$4.1 million per annum. This funding supports delivery of after-hours services for young people including school holiday programs with both day and evening activities, with a particular focus on linking young people experiencing vulnerability to relevant support services.
- Investing \$5.5 million in bail programs in Darwin and Alice Springs that provide support, accommodation and supervision to children and young people aged 10 – 17 years on bail and other court orders.
- Partnering with Aboriginal communities and signing a further six local decision making agreements in Blue Mud Bay, Katherine, Groote Eylandt, Daly River Region and Gurindji.
- Establishing the Children and Families Tripartite Forum in July 2018, as the primary advisory body established to guide, inform and oversee implementation of the reforms.

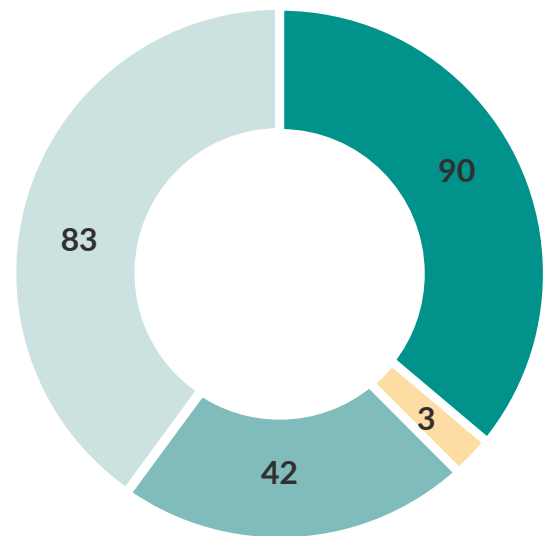


- Signing the first regional deal in Australia; the Barkly Regional Deal between the Australian Government, the Northern Territory Government and Barkly. The Deal is a 10 year \$78.4 million commitment to improve the productivity and liveability of the Barkly region by stimulating economic growth, improving social outcomes and supporting local Aboriginal leadership.
- Providing grants of up to \$50,000 to 14 remote Aboriginal community controlled organisations under the Remote Aboriginal Governance and Capacity Building Grants. These grants aim to strengthen the capacity and capability of Aboriginal organisations develop and implement community-led initiatives and programs.
- Establishing the Children and Families Tripartite Forum, in July 2018, as the primary advisory body to guide, inform and oversee implementation of the reforms.

Details about progress in each reform program are included in remaining chapters of the report.

Recommendations of the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory

The Northern Territory Government accepted the intent and direction of the 218 recommendations of the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory that required action from the Northern Territory Government and committed to a broader reform program described in the Northern Territory's implementation plan *Safe, Thriving and Connected: Generational Change for Children and Families*. The body of this report describes the actions and achievements against the broader reform program and includes a summary of the individual recommendations. In the first year of the reform program, the Northern Territory Government has delivered on 90 of the recommendations



- Completed
- Well progressed
- Work underway
- Not yet started

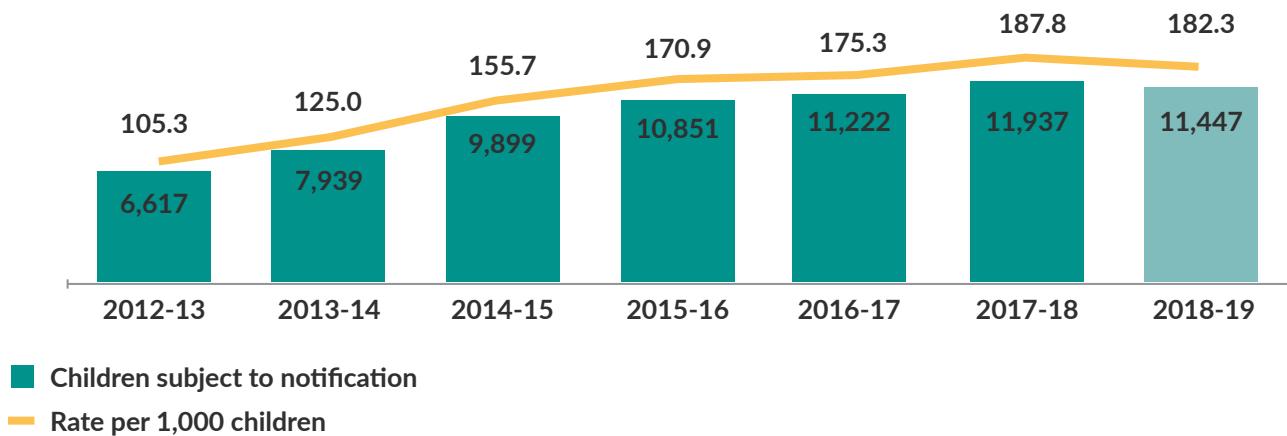
The status of the recommendations associated with each reform program is included in each section below. A summary of the recommendations closed including the actions taken is included at the end of each section of this report.

What impact is it having?

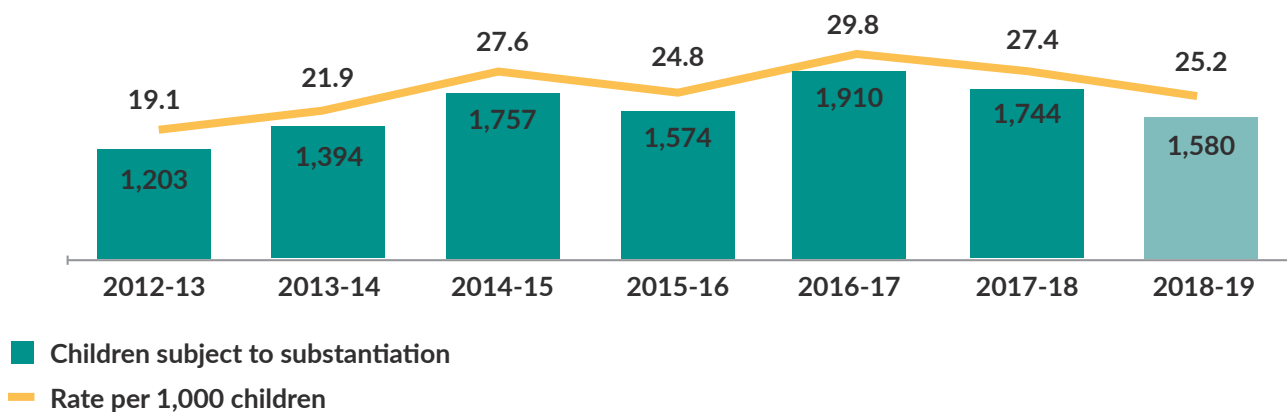
Care and Protection

The data reported below is extracted from the Productivity Commission's Report on Government Services (RoGS) 2019, and supplemented with preliminary results for 2018-19. Final results for 2018-19 will be reported in RoGS 2020 in early 2020.

Children subject to Child Protection Notification



Children subject to Child Protection Substantiation



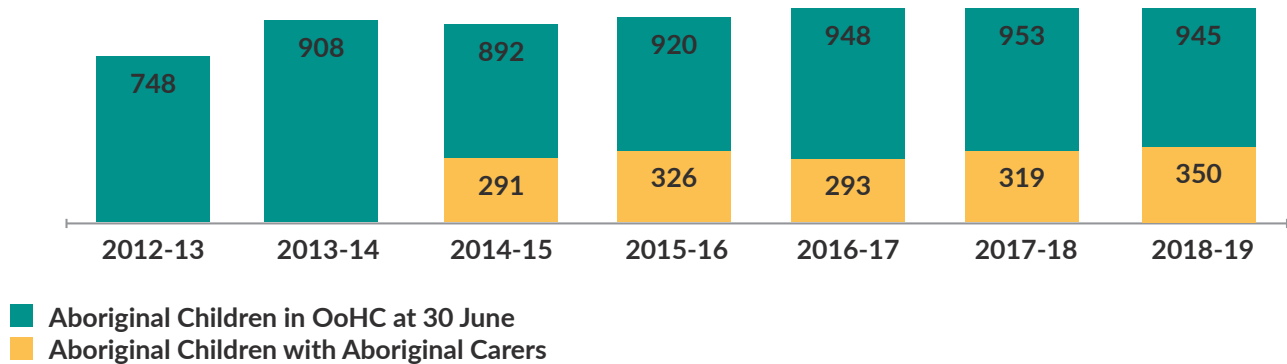
Preliminary results for 2018-19 reveal a decrease (4 per cent) in the number of children subject to notification about child protection concerns and a substantial (9 per cent) decrease in the number of children that are subject to substantiation for abuse and neglect in the Northern Territory, compared to 2017-18. There are a number of reform projects targeted at supporting families earlier and reducing families involvement in statutory child protection described in this report including one-

child-one-case, Central Intake reforms, the professional notifiers portal, the Signs of Safety Practice Framework, the FACES Family Support hotline, and family support reforms. Reforms implemented through the Alcohol Harm Minimisation Action Plan are also expected to impact on families' involvement with the child protection system.

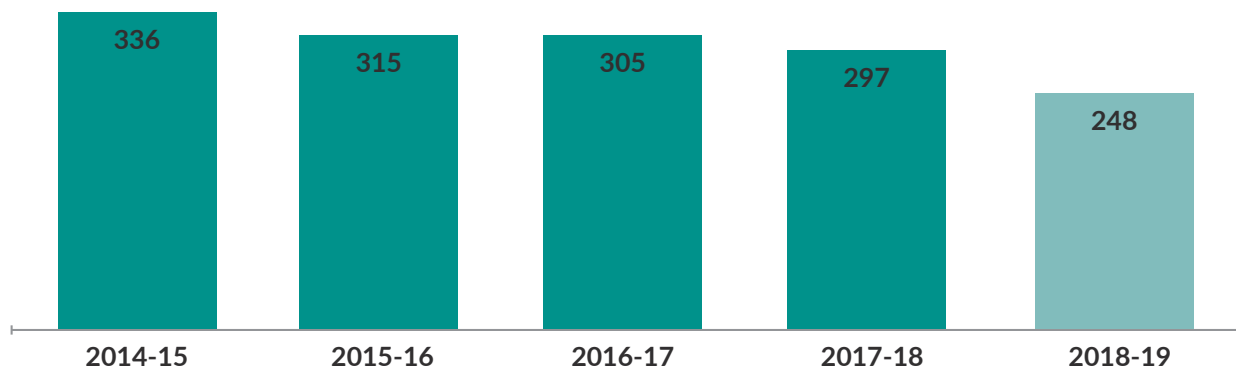
What impact is it having?

Care and Protection

Aboriginal Children in Out-of-Home Care



Children admitted to Out-of-Home-Care



Preliminary results for 2018-19 show a very small increase in the number of Aboriginal children in care and a significant increase of Aboriginal children placed with Aboriginal carers alongside a significant decrease in the number of children removed from their families and admitted to care. Reforms targeted at maintaining children safely at home and increasing the number of

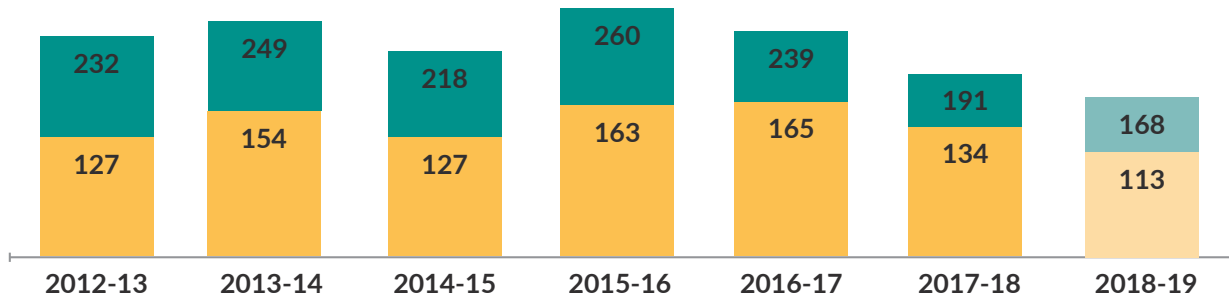
Aboriginal kinship carers include the Aboriginal Carer Grants Program, the Mikan group in East Arnhem, family support reforms and the implementation of Signs of Safety.

What impact is it having?

Youth Justice

The data reported below is extracted from the Integrated Offender Management System.

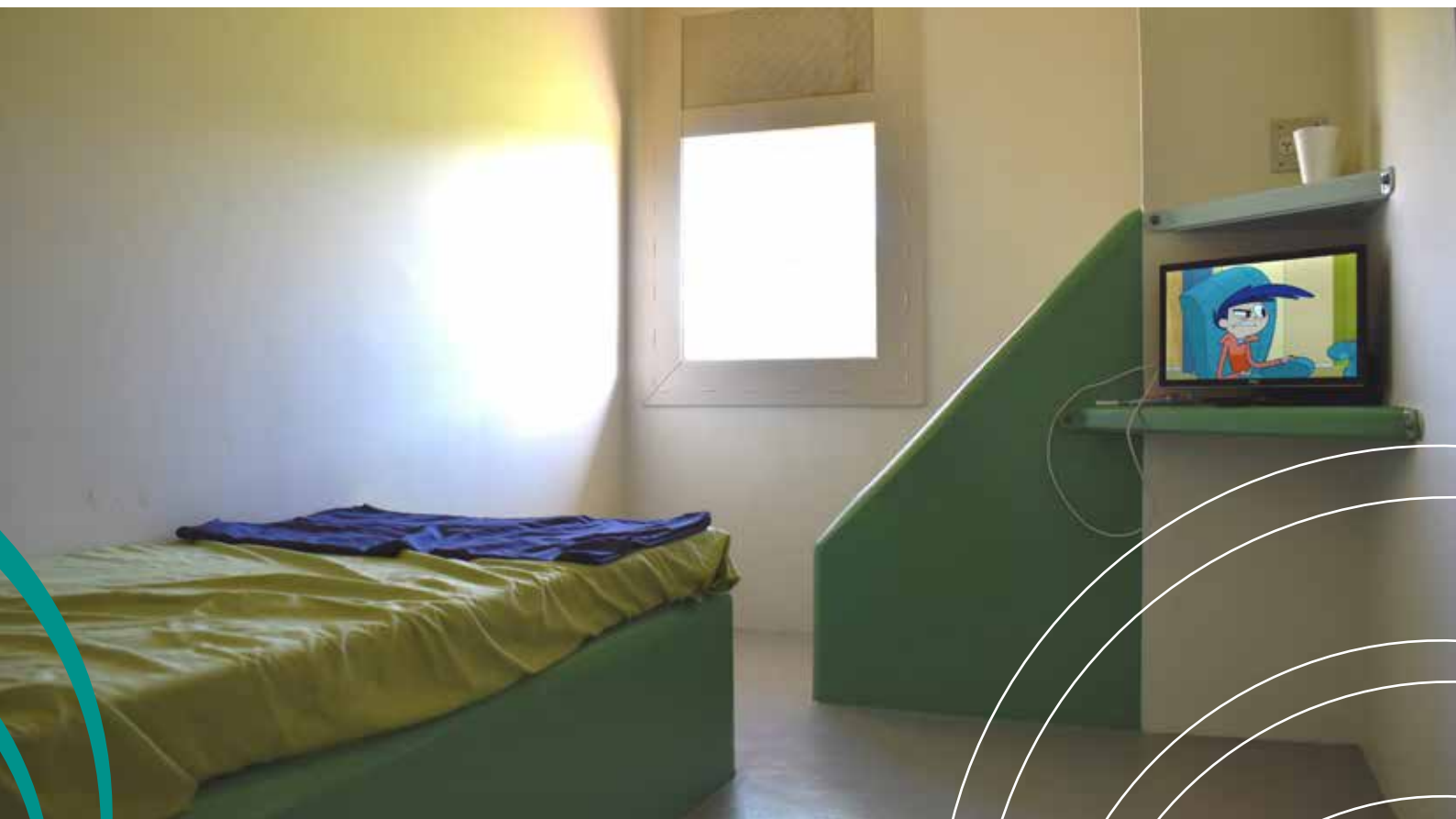
Young people that have spent at least one night in Youth Detention



- Total young people
- % of young people who returned within 12 months

Since 2015-16, there has been a significant decrease (35%) in the number of children that have spent at least one night in youth detention over the financial year. Over the same period, there has also been a significant decrease (31%) in the number of children in youth detention who

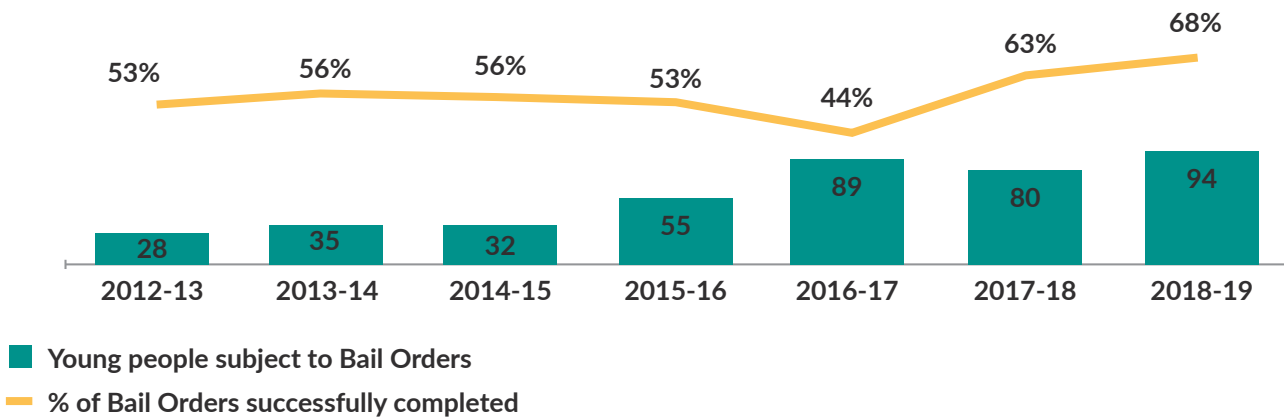
had previously been in detention in the 12 months prior indicating that the programs implemented are reducing the number of young people cycling through detention.



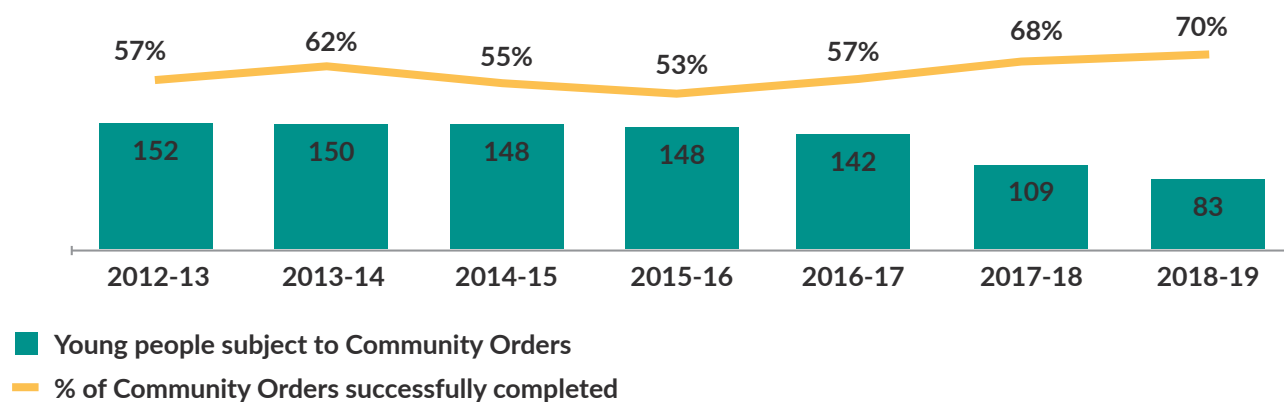
What impact is it having?

Youth Justice

Young people subject to Bail Orders



Young people subject to Community Orders



Since 2015-16, there has also been a significant increase in the number of children that are subject to Bail Orders in the Northern Territory. With the exception of 2016-17, this increase in the number of children has coincided with a significant increase in the number of Bail Orders that were successfully completed. In 2018-19, 68 per cent of Bail Orders for young people were successfully completed.

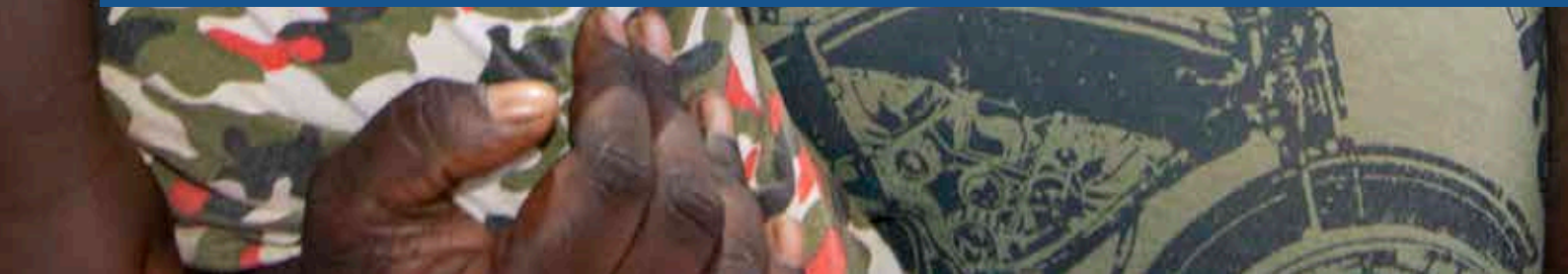
Over the same period there has been a significant decrease in the number of young people subject to community orders, and a significant increase in the proportion of Community Orders that are successfully completed.

The measures relating to youth detention, bail orders and community orders indicate that over the last three years there has been significant progress in reducing the number of young people who repeatedly enter youth detention while also improving the successful supervision of young people on Bail Orders and Community Orders.



Putting Children and Families at the Centre

The Putting Children and Families at the Centre reform portfolio 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.



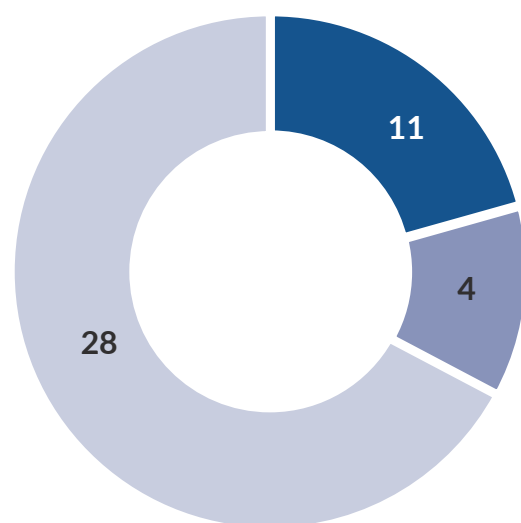
Putting Children and Families at the Centre

Key achievements include:

- Publishing the early childhood development plan *Starting Early for a Better Future*.
- Partnering with Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance of the Northern Territory (AMSANT) to co-design an early intervention service for families.
- Commencing the establishment of 11 new child and family centres.
- Re-invigorating Child Safety Coordination Groups in 10 communities.
- Establishing a Youth Advisory Group which includes young people in detention, and engaged with young people in care.
- Continuing our work with the Mikan Community Reference group in East Arnhem.
- Developing an Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework for Territory Families.
- Allocating a total \$1.82 million for activities identified by local communities to improve outcomes for their young children.
- Establishing Families as First Teachers: Stay Play Learn programs in Braitling, Malak, Belyuen, Epenarra, Kintore (Wulungurru), Harts Range (Atitjre), Robinson River and Peppimenarti.
- Establishing the NT Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home-visiting programs in the East Arnhem, Katherine and Barkly regions.



Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



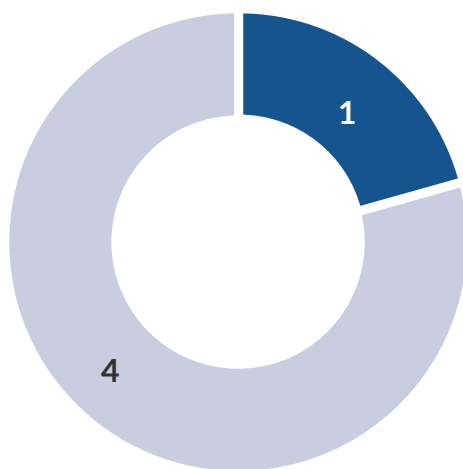
- Completed
- Well progressed
- Work underway

Putting Children and Families at the Centre

Prevention and Early Support

Families and children are helped in culturally secure ways at an early stage to keep them strong and make communities safer.

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



■ **Completed**
 ■ **Work underway**

Children's early years are vital to their development and future wellbeing and helping families early to address challenges and concerns is fundamental to achieving strong and capable children, families and communities.

The Northern Territory Government is investing in a number of programs in urban and remote communities to support parents and young children as they grow, learn and develop. Programs include working with communities to establish new Child and Family Centres, new Families as First teachers Stay Play and Learn programs, expansion of the Healthy Under 5 Kids – Partnering with Families Program and implementing the NT Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home-visiting Program.

Child and Family Centres

Child and Family Centres are a focal point for the integration of services for children and their families within a community. They provide some services for young children and their families for example Families as First Teachers; child care; maternal and child health and connect families and children to other services in a community. Currently there are six existing Child and Family Centres operating in:

- Gunbalanya;
- Larapinta (Alice Springs);
- Maningrida;
- Ngukurr;
- Palmerston; and
- Yuendumu.

Under the Generational Change Reform Agenda, the Northern Territory Government is investing an additional \$11.4 million over four years to establish 11 new Child and Family Centres.

The new Child and Family Centres will improve a range of wellbeing outcomes for children and families experiencing vulnerability by supporting them to access services that will help address their priority needs.

This includes addressing any child safety issues within families so as to avoid the need for further involvement with the statutory child protection system.

The model and sites for the new centres, were developed in consultation with the Children and Families Tripartite Forum in late 2018. The Forum developed the summary service model through sector workshops and then considered regional and local indicators of vulnerability to advise on the locations for the new centres.

Putting Children and Families at the Centre

Using local decision making principles, the Northern Territory Government is progressing the establishment of the first three new Child and Family Centres in Tennant Creek, Katherine, and Wadeye with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and local leaders. While also commencing engagement with local Aboriginal organisations in Darwin's Northern Suburbs and East Arnhem land.

In each location, the Reform Management Office is working with local Aboriginal leaders and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to establish Leadership Advisory Groups. The Leadership Advisory Groups determine the service model, governance and leadership arrangements and potential operator of the new Centre.

The first two new Child and Family Centres located in Tennant Creek and Katherine are on schedule to be established in the latter half of 2019. In Katherine, Kalano Community Association has been selected by the local leadership group to operate the centre. In Tennant Creek, the leadership group has identified Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation to operate the centre.

Discussions with communities and Aboriginal Community Controlled organisations in Wadeye, East Arnhem and Darwin's Northern Suburbs are continuing and local organisations are working to identify providers and locations for the centres in the first half of 2020.

Child and Family Community Fund

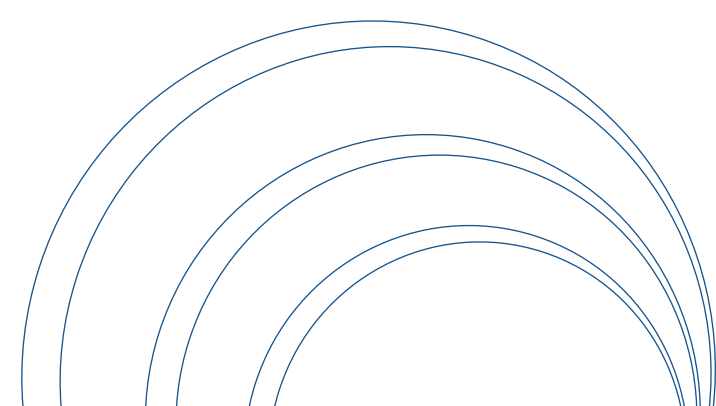
The Community Child and Family Community Fund was established under *Starting Early for a Better Future* and allocates up to \$260 000 per annum for communities with Child and Family Centres to fund priorities for families of children from birth to age five. The activities supported through the Fund are chosen by the local community focussing on:

- children's health, development, safety and wellbeing;
- family functioning and parenting capacity; and
- communities as places where children and families live and thrive.

The Reform Management Office is working with Department of the Chief Minister's Regional Network and the Department of Education operated Child and Family Centres to identify activities to be funded under the Child and Family Community Fund.

For the 2018-19 financial year initiatives funded in the first year of the Child and Family Community Fund total \$1.82 million and include:

- early learning resources in Kriol and Aboriginal languages, including those supporting paired learning activities with the Families as First Teachers program (Ngukurr);
- beds for children with (or at risk of) Rheumatic Heart Disease (Yuendumu);
- transportation for families (Maningrida, Gunbalanya and Katherine);
- shade over the public swimming pool (Yuendumu);
- environmental health education for families (Yuendumu, Maningrida);
- computer lab with financial literacy training (Gunbalanya);
- mobile laundry with literacy/numeracy training as part of a supported playgroup (Gunbalanya)
- a speech therapy service at Palmerston primary schools; and
- community activation of a local park and community centres in town camps in partnership with Tangentyere Council (Larapinta).





Katherine Child and Family Community Shuttle Bus

The Katherine Child and Family Community Advisory Group, using local decision making principles, determined that transport was the greatest need for young families in Katherine.

The Katherine Child and Family Centre Community Advisory group received funding through the Community Child and Family Fund to purchase a 25-35 seat coach to enable young families to travel safely from the surrounding communities to attend appointments and access support services and to return home afterwards.

The shuttle follows a set route covering residential areas between the Katherine Child and Family Centre and Myalli Brumby, Rockhole, Binjari, Katherine North including the hospital, Katherine East including Geyulkgan and Katherine South.

The shuttle will enable young families to travel safely from the surrounding communities to attend appointments and access support services, and importantly being able to return home afterwards.

Children, young people and families will now be able to access services in Katherine, where they may previously been unable to. The Community Advisory Group, with representatives from each of the Katherine and surrounding communities, will work to ensure that local children and family's needs are being met by the service.

This project is an example of collaboration between the Katherine Child and Family Community Advisory Group, the Department of the Chief Minister Big Rivers Region and the Reform Management Office.

Putting Children and Families at the Centre

Ready to Learn

All Northern Territory children are born ready to learn, and continue to learn in nurturing and stimulating environments, and successfully transition to school.

Families as First Teachers: Stay Play Learn

In *Starting Early for a Better Future* \$5.25 million over four years is invested to expand the Families as First Teachers (FaFT) program through the establishment of 14 additional FaFT: Stay Play Learn programs. These new programs use the Abecedarian Approach Australia to deliver quality early learning and build the capacity of parents to engage in their children's early learning, and link families to primary health and other local support services.

Between January and June 2019 FaFT: Stay Play Learn programs were established in eight new locations across the Northern Territory, including Braitling, Malak, Belyuen, Epenarra, Kintore (Wulungurru), Harts Range (Atitjre), Robinson River and Peppimenarti. A further six FaFT: Stay Play Learn programs will be established in 2019-20.

Quality Early Learning Programs

The Department of Education is working with early childhood education and care providers across the Northern Territory to improve the quality of education and care services provided to young children and families. Early learning and education programs have a significant impact on children future learning and development.

As at 31 March 2019, 73 per cent of all NT early childhood education and care services had a quality rating of meeting or above the National Quality Standard (NQS) compared to 62 per cent at the same time the previous year (2018). As at 31 March 2019, 87 per cent of government preschools had a quality rating of meeting or above the NQS. The increase in the number of services delivering quality education and care programs translates into improved learning and development environments for children.

Little Scientists workshops have been held in Darwin, Alice Springs and Katherine for educators of 3-6 year olds in the following topics: Water, Air, Engineering, Optics, Human Body and Mathematics. Workshops in Chemistry and Digital Technology will be offered in 2019-20. The Little Scientist programs aims to build early childhood educators confidence and skills in supporting young children's exploration and understanding of Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM). Two NT Department of Education employees have been trained to deliver these workshop on an ongoing basis.

Malak Primary School has engaged the services of an Australian consultant specialising in the Reggio Emilia approach to mentor and guide implementation of the Reggio Emilia in the school. The Reggio Emilia approach is an educational philosophy focussed on preschool and primary education that is based on the principles of respect, responsibility, and community through exploration and discovery through a self-guided curriculum. The Reggio Emilia educational principles are strengthening relationships between Malak Primary School and Malak Family Centre, providing educators and families across both educational services with common understandings and philosophies.

The Literacy for Parents program seeks to increase family involvement and child attendance in early learning programs. The program employs 11 local Aboriginal Coordinators delivering eight young parents programs (six mothers and two fathers) across the six existing child and family centres (Palmerston, Larrapinta, Gunbalunya, Maningrida, Yuendumu and Ngukurr). Through the program, 61 young parents are currently re-engaging in education and training and their 74 children are engaging in quality education and care programs.



Putting Children and Families at the Centre

Getting it Right for Life

Every child in the Northern Territory is safe, cared for and living in healthy environments.

NT Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home-Visiting

The NT Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home-visiting (NT MECSH) programs designed to improve parenting skills and the health outcomes of young children, has been established in the East Arnhem, Katherine and Barkly regions. \$8 million is being invested over three years to deliver this program; with \$5 million ongoing.

The NT MECSH was developed in Australia and is currently being delivered in Australia, America, South Korea and the United Kingdom. In the Northern Territory the program has been co-designed in partnership with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations and is being delivered by Miwatj Health, Katherine West Health Board, Sunrise Health Service and Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation.

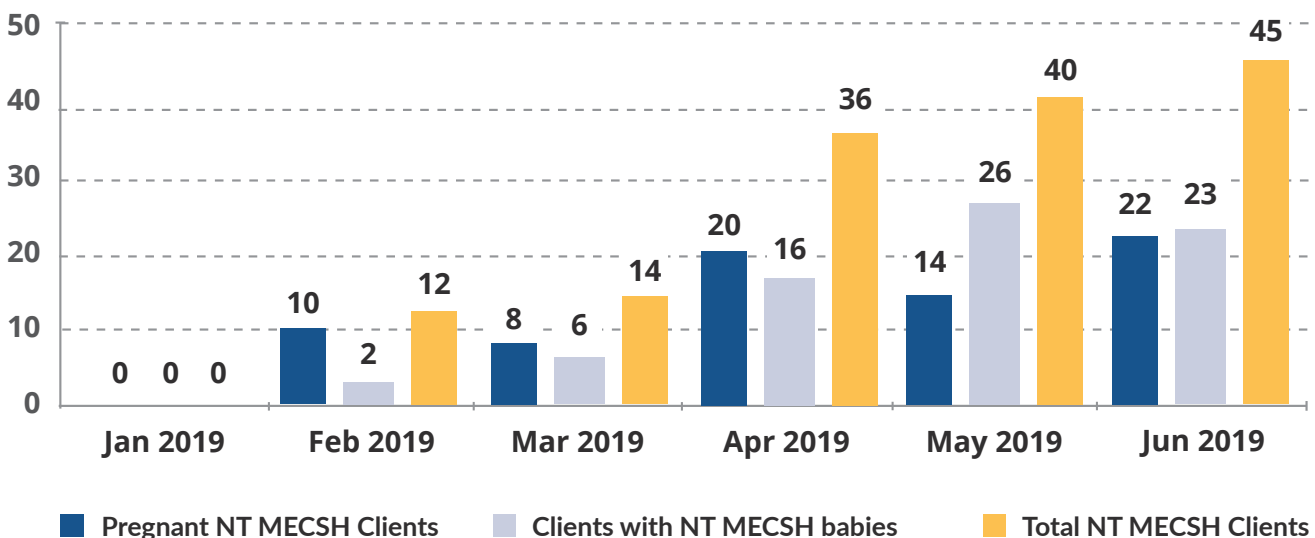
The program was adapted for the Northern Territory in consultation with families, communities and the Boards of the four Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHO). Adaptations include:

- extra visits until the children are three years of age;
- incorporation of Aboriginal Health Practitioners;
- upskilling existing workforce; and
- training held in the regions where the program is being delivered.

To date, the implementation of NT MECSH is progressing well and is within the parameters of what the Consortium (ARACY, Western Sydney University, the Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne and the Murdoch Children’s Research Institute) expected to see at this point in time.

Recruitment of families in the program is commensurate with the birth rates in each area, and the steady pace is assisting to build a sustainable case load for the staff delivering the program.

NT MECSH enrolled Clients and NT MECSH Babies (Cumulative)



Putting Children and Families at the Centre

Hearing Health

A four year partnership agreement was executed on 16 January 2019 with Menzies School of Health Research (Menzies) for the Hearing for Learning Joint Venture initiative. A full research team of five staff have been recruited and Menzies has established an Aboriginal Reference Group and Steering Group to guide implementation of the initiative.

Menzies has developed agreements with 20 communities and has commenced consultation with these communities to identify burden of disease, knowledge gaps and service opportunities. This information will inform local implementation of the initiative.

Four additional Hearing Health Partnerships have been integrated into the Families as First Teachers (FaFT) sites in Katherine, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs and Palmerston, with a one community hearing worker appointed to each of these Hearing Health Partnerships.

Healthy Under 5 Kids – Partnering with Families

The Northern Territory Government is investing \$7.7 million over four years to expand the Healthy Under 5 Kids; Partnering with Families program to support families with children 0-5 years of age. The program promotes a partnership between the family and health professional to empower and build the confidence of parents and care givers.

Implementation of the Healthy Under 5 Kids – Partnering with Families Program (HU5K-PF) began in Central Australia Health Service (CAHS) remote Primary Health Care (PHC) centres in November 2018. Implementation across NT Health urban PHC centres is scheduled for August 2019. Implementation of the program across all NT Health PHC is anticipated to be completed in the first half of 2020.

Family Support Services

Access to the Territory Families Family and Children Enquiry Service (FACES) Hotline by families in need of support has been steadily increasing since it commenced operation in May 2018. The FACES team connects families with services or resources in the local areas which can support the family and meet their needs, providing a pathway away from the child protection system.

To June 2019, Territory FACES received 869 calls, and made 779 referrals to local service providers. It is currently receiving approximately 72 calls per month and making 65 referrals for support based on those calls. Calls to Central Intake are also being diverted to FACES when it is clear the family would benefit more from a family support response.

In May 2018, Territory Families funded Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT) to design an Early Intervention Family Support service that works with Aboriginal families to prevent them from entering the child protection system. This funding was provided in recognition of the high number of Aboriginal children and families in the child protection system and the importance of Aboriginal people and organisations identifying solutions to the challenges that Aboriginal families face.

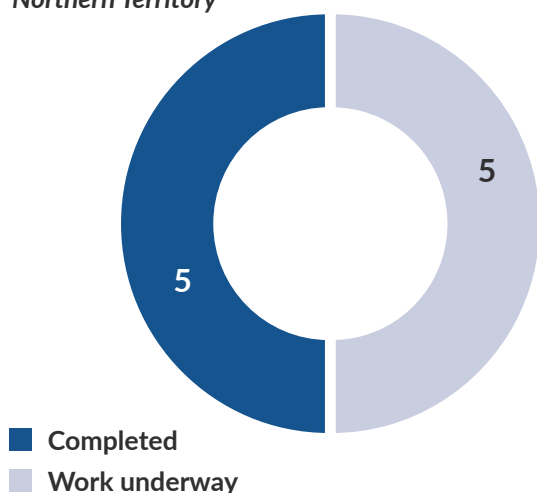
The Early Intervention Family Support Service model was finalised in November 2018. It offers holistic support to Aboriginal families without the stigma and negativity often associated with a child protection response and builds on the community connections and skillsets of Aboriginal Controlled Health Services.

Putting Children and Families at the Centre

Work with Children and Families

Children and families are involved in the design and delivery of services, and services reflect their needs and preferences.

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



Programs and services are more effective when the people receiving them are informed and are active participants in any decisions about what affects them. Listening to and responding to children’s voices is central to understanding and addressing their needs. Listening to children and families is also one of the best ways to know if the reforms are making a difference.

Family Group Conferencing

On 19 March 2019, Price Waterhouse Coopers Indigenous Consulting (PIC) was awarded \$174,910 to design a Family Group Conference model that suits the Northern Territory context and which supports children, families and communities. Family Group Conferencing brings children, young people, families, service providers and child protection professionals together to discuss child safety and protection concerns in order to develop and implement agreed responses to ensure a child’s safety and wellbeing.

PIC commenced consultations with stakeholders and the community sector in May 2019 through workshops, focus groups, targeted interviews, and online surveys to inform the development of the model. Consultations are due to finish in July 2019, with a draft model to be delivered in the second half of 2019.

Preserve Contact with Family

Helping young people involved in the youth justice system to maintain connection with their families and communities helps to improve outcomes for those young people. Territory Families has invested in video conference technology at the Don Dale and Alice Springs Youth Detention Centres and works to support detainees have face to face contact with family by locating and providing transport for family members.

A focus of the new Youth Justice Centre in Darwin is to ensure that visitor areas support families to maintain contact with their young people while they are in detention. In the interim, the visitor area at the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre has been updated and two additional visitor areas have been added in Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre.

Respect Children’s Voices

A Youth Advisory Group operates in Don Dale Youth Detention Centre to seek the input of young people on centre operations. Meetings are held weekly with each block and serve as an opportunity for the young people to raise any issues, including accommodation, food, program or education concerns. These concerns are minuted and actioned by the relevant business areas. Young people are also able to provide private written feedback to Don Dale Youth Detention Centre management.

To better understand the issues facing children and young people in care Territory Families’ Senior Executives meet twice yearly with young people in care. The young people are identified through the CREATE Foundation. The first meeting was held on 15 January 2019. This first meeting discussed out-of-home care placements and communicating to young people about their placements.

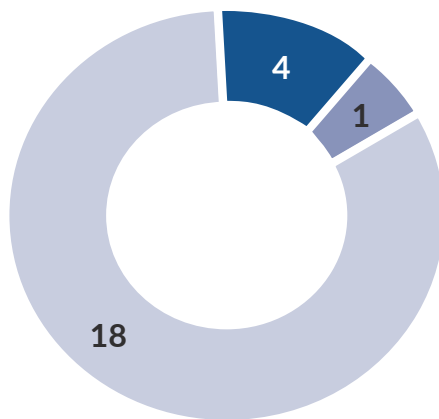
Territory Families has also continued to fund the CREATE Foundation to support young people in care and care leavers to advocate for their rights. CREATE Foundation completed and analysed the feedback from over 300 children in care who were included as part of the national survey. The results for the Northern Territory showed that 92 per cent of children felt safe where they lived at the time and 95 per cent believe they have an adult in their life who cares about what happens to them now and in the future. 44 per cent of children surveyed reported that they felt they did not know enough about their family background. Territory Families is invested in improving connections to family and culture for children in care and will use feedback from the survey to inform practice and service delivery.

Putting Children and Families at the Centre

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.

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



- Completed
- Well progressed
- Work underway

The Northern Territory Government is developing a child and family focussed legal system that acknowledges that children, young people and families who are in contact with or at risk of being in contact with the child protection and youth justice systems often have complex and multifaceted needs. They require trauma informed and culturally secure responses that support their participation in the legal processes. Key initiatives that highlight this commitment include the development of the Youth and Children's Court in Alice Springs and the development of the Single Act for Children.

Alice Springs Children's Court

The Northern Territory Government is progressing with the Alice Springs Children's Court reform to provide children, young people, their families and carers a more inclusive and less overwhelming space than a traditional courtroom. The construction of the new court room five for children's court proceedings is leveraging off the work to establish an Alice Springs Local Court that will provide a specialist approach to domestic violence.

Refurbishment of the Local Court has been delayed due to technological and construction issues. As a result, the new court room five will now be operational in late 2019, approximately six months behind schedule. In the interim, guidelines for the use of video conferencing and fortnightly call-over meetings have been implemented to maximise the use of video conferencing in a consistent manner and enhance communication between all court stakeholders.

In May 2019, fortnightly call-over meetings to discuss matters concerning young people appearing in court commenced. These meetings involved the Criminal court registrar, Youth Outreach and Enjoyment Team, Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre, North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) and Northern Territory Legal Aid Commission (NTLAC).

To better support the young people and their families attending court, the additional Senior and Junior Youth Aboriginal Liaison Officer positions are in the process of being established. The Alice Springs Children's Court Reform project has also resulted in greater involvement of the Department of Education Youth Court Liaison Officer with improved information sharing, leading to enhanced transitional care planning and court reporting.

The Alice Springs Children's Court Reform Project is supported by the Project Reference Group which consists of representatives from 20 different local stakeholders and various government agencies. A sub-working group on youth mental health assessments has been established to investigate options for collaboration and practice reform.

Putting Children and Families at the Centre

Training for the Legal Profession

A range of actions to increase the court practitioners' knowledge of child and adolescent development and the impact of trauma, adolescent mental health, cognitive and communication deficits and development and Aboriginal cultural competence have been implemented:

- The Children's Court Training Executive Steering Committee which consists of executive managers from NT Legal Aid Commission, North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency, Law Society NT, Director of Public Prosecutions and the Managing Judge of the Children's Court was established in early 2019;
- Nominations were sought from all Northern Territory Government agencies and legal service providers for the Youth Proceedings Education Committee with the view for the first meeting of the Committee to be held in mid-2019; and
- The Inaugural Children's Court Practitioners Training Conference was held on 28 and 29 March 2019. Among the 74 attendees at the conference, there were lawyers, educators, youth workers and police prosecutors from across the Northern Territory, local and external guest speakers from other Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand. The key areas of focus of the conference were on trauma, Aboriginal cultural competence, child and adolescent development, adolescent mental health, and cognitive and communication deficits and development.



Legislative reform

Territory Families is progressing the most significant reform of legislation that concerns children in the Northern Territory. This includes the wholesale reform and re-write of youth justice and care and protection laws into a single Act for the wellbeing of children and families.

The Legislative Amendment Advisory Committee (LAAC), which comprised a broad group of legal and community sector partners has been actively involved in the development of legislative reform proposals for the legislative changes in child protection and youth justice. The Committee has involved representatives from the Northern Territory Government and:

- Danila Dilba Health Services;
- North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency;
- the CREATE Foundation;
- Criminal Lawyers Association of the Northern Territory;
- Northern Territory Legal Aid Commission;
- Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory;
- Human Rights Law Centre;
- Law Society NT;
- Northern Territory Council of Social Services;
- Making Justice Work; and
- Jesuit Social Services.
- Office of the Children's Commissioner (observer);

The LAAC met 25 times since its inception in 2017, including 11 times in 2018-19. The LAAC has held detailed discussions on the type and extent of legislative amendments in youth justice and care and protection. The LAAC's role is to provide advice to the Northern Territory Government who consider the systemic and operational implications of the advice before developing the final legislative amendment proposals for implementation.

Putting Children and Families at the Centre

In March 2019, the Northern Territory Government introduced three significant amendment Bills to progress the child protection and youth justice reforms:

- Youth Justice Amendment Bill;
- Youth Justice and Related Legislation Amendment Bill; and
- Care and Protection of Children Amendment Bill.

The Youth Justice Amendment Bill was debated and passed on 21 March 2019 Sittings of the Legislative Assembly. The Bill was assented to on 1 April 2019, and applied retrospectively to 24 May 2018, the date that the **Youth Justice Legislation Amendment Act 2018** commenced. The Youth Justice Amendment Bill clarified matters related to force and restraint, separations and emergency situations and provided clear direction regarding searches and transfers between detention centres.

On 20 March 2019 the Youth Justice and Related Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 was introduced to the Legislative Assembly and referred to the Social Policy Scrutiny Committee for inquiry and report. The Youth Justice and Related Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 aims to improve access to youth outreach and reengagement services, diversion programs, bail support services and accommodation. The Bill includes amendments to:

- reduce the length of time young people are held in remand;
- improve access to legal assistance while in police custody;
- access to bail and diversion programs;
- protecting young people's rights in detention and through court processes.

The Social Policy Scrutiny Committee received 26 written submissions and on 30 May 2019 held a Public Hearing. The Scrutiny Committee delivered its report on 6 August. The Scrutiny Committee recommended the Bill be passed subject to minor technical amendments. This Bill compliments Territory Families and police reforms to the youth justice system.

The Care and Protection of Children Amendment Bill 2019 was introduced to the Legislative Assembly on 20 March 2019 and referred to the Economic Policy Scrutiny Committee. The Scrutiny Committee tabled their report on 20 June 2019 and recommended that the Bill be passed subject to minor amendments. The Care and Protection of Children Amendment Bill 2019 includes amendments that:

- mandate early assessment, intervention and support to families with child safety concerns;
- require that services provided to families:
 - involve meaningful engagement in a language and manner they understand (for example, by providing the use of an interpreter);
 - are culturally responsive;
 - involve a holistic assessment of children and families; and
 - promote decision making processes that seek to empower and strengthen families to make decisions for their families.
- improve care planning;
- improve Court orders;
- enhance the legal process; and
- formalise the transition to independence.

Territory Families is continuing to progress development of the Single Act for Children that:

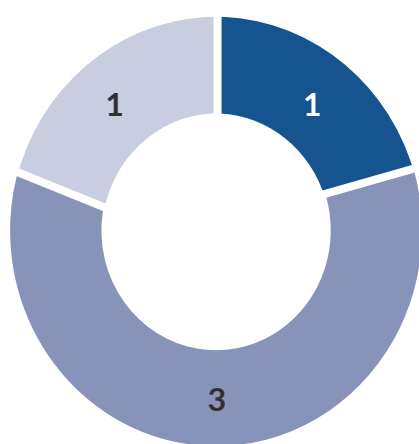
- is inclusive of the rich and diverse cultures of children and their families across the Northern Territory, particularly recognising the cultural needs of Aboriginal children, families and communities; and
- places the wellbeing and safety of children at the centre all policy, systems, service design across Government.

Putting Children and Families at the Centre

Support Transition and Restoration

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

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



- Completed
- Well progressed
- Work underway

The Northern Territory Government recognises the importance of supporting children and young people as they transition from out-of-home care and the youth justice system and has implemented a range of measures to support their re-integration into the community, living independently, engaging in education or training, obtaining employment, and accessing and sustaining appropriate and affordable housing.

Supported Accommodation for Care Leavers

On 9 April 2019, the Northern Territory Government executed an agreement with Mission Australia to deliver the Housing for Young People Program in Darwin and Palmerston. The Program will support up to 15 young people who are leaving, or previously been in out-of-home care to access and maintain appropriate housing.

The Program will operate from June 2019 to June 2020 on a small scale initially, with the learnings used to inform broader program implementation and expansion to other locations in 2019-20.

The Anglicare Moving On program was provided additional funding to employ a case support worker to support the young people participating in the program. This support will be tailored to meet the individual needs of each participant.

An assessment panel, comprising Mission Australia (Chair), Department of Local Government, Housing and Community Development, Territory Families, Anglicare NT, and two non-government support organisations, has been established to assess applications from young people. The Assessment Panel met in June 2019 to consider the first wave of applications to the program. Three applicants were accepted, with one young person housed in late June 2019. Mission Australia and Anglicare NT have commenced working with this applicant to ensure the housing and support arrangements meet their needs.

Mission Australia and Anglicare NT are also working with the other two young people, to source appropriate housing and transition them into a tenancy under the program. The timing of transitions takes into consideration the needs and circumstances of each young person to facilitate seamless transitions and ensure they are appropriately prepared to participate in the program.

The program has not been implemented previously in the Northern Territory and is a new approach to providing housing assistance for vulnerable young people. A process evaluation of the small scale program to inform the program's scale up and expansion is scheduled for October 2019. An evaluation framework for the overall program is being developed to ensure the service is operating as effectively as possible and to identify key learnings to improve and expand the program. The Department of Local Government, Housing and Community Development is working with the Real Estate Institute of the Northern Territory and Mission Australia to host an industry forum for real estate agents to learn about the model and the potential benefits for landlords. This forum was held on 1 August 2019.

Putting Children and Families at the Centre

Transition from Youth Justice and Through Care

Territory Families is working with the Department of Education Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs that are delivered in the youth justice centres and aligned to mainstream schools. Programs such as construction, conservation and land management, hospitality and horse care are delivered 1 day a week over a school calendar year.

In January 2019, the Department of Education funded First Step Enterprise, a Aboriginal owned and operated non-government organisation, to develop and implement training, mentoring and employment pathways program for disengaged and at risk youth in the greater Darwin region. This program has also been trialled as part of a day release initiative for a young person in detention. Through the program a young person undertakes training in a project based learning setting where they get to experience a range of trade areas, such as construction, mechanical, civil construction, logistics and electro-technology. The training is provided at the First Steps East Arm workshop facility.

To assist young people transition to schooling upon their release from detention the Department of Education is progressing work to align VET programs offered in both centres with curriculums offered at schools in the wider community.

Where permitted by security classifications, young people are supported to attend local shopping centres before their release to purchase items for use in their post-release accommodation.

Transition from Out-of-Home Care

In January 2019, Territory Families recruited three additional Transition from Care Officers to provide an increased focus on supporting young people transitioning from out-of-home care. Territory Families has improved its practices and outcomes to young people transitioning from care, by:

- establishing formal leaving care planning meetings that prioritise young people and their views;
- developing referral pathways for young people;
- building frontline workers skills and knowledge of leaving care case management; and
- improving the quality of leaving care plans and case management systems by strengthening collaborative cross agency planning and prioritising cross agency responsiveness to young people.

Case study – *working with Max*

Max* came into the care of Territory Families due to severe and prolonged domestic violence and significant cognitive impairment of one of their parents and was placed with kinship carers.

Starting from when he was 15, Territory Families worked with Max and his family to plan for his transition from care. When Max turned 18 years this support has resulted in a smooth transition to independence.

By involving Max's family in the planning, Max has maintained strong connections to his cultural group, ensuring traditional stories, skills and knowledge are part of everyday life, and is also connected with non-Indigenous groups, sharing knowledge, culture and land.

Recently Max was provided with an opportunity to travel interstate to exhibit art work.

**Not the child's real name*



Case study – working with Sam

The Territory Families Strengthening Families Team had been actively working with the parent of Sam* for a significant period of time. The decision was made for Sam to come into care due to ongoing chronic neglect, physical abuse, lack of supervision, exposure to parental alcohol abuse and domestic violence.

Sam has a high level of care needs due to his disability, and a cognitive impairment. Due to his disability Sam requires supervision at all times and does not have the capacity to live fully independently. Sam requires ongoing long term supported accommodation.

To support Sam's transition from care, Territory Families worked with Sam's extended family who acknowledged Sam's high level needs and felt his needs would be best met in supported accommodation, where Sam would have access to the services needed.

Through effective planning and working with the family, Sam moved to Supported Independent Living accommodation prior to turning 18 years, with an NDIS plan and adequate support in place post his 18th birthday.

Sam is on track to complete year 12; and has participated in work experience to help build his skills.

**Not the child's real name*

Putting Children and Families at the Centre

Putting Children and Families at the Centre portfolio recommendation completions

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
2.01	<p>The Northern Territory Government establish mechanisms for children and young people in care and detention to be able to express their views in the development and implementation of laws and policies affecting them, and that those views be given due weight.</p>	<p>In 2018 Territory Families entered into a five year contract with the CREATE Foundation to advocate for, and organise the collection of views of children with a care experience. This includes scheduled Roundtable meetings, surveys, and Advisory Groups including biannual attendance of young people with Territory Families Senior Executive meetings.</p> <p>A Youth Advisory Group operates in Don Dale Youth Detention Centre and meet each week in each block to raise any issues, including accommodation, food, program or education concerns. These concerns are minuted and actioned by the relevant business areas. Young people are also able to provide private written feedback to Don Dale management. A similar group operates in Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre as a forum for all young people at the Centre.</p> <p>Section 11 of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act</i> was amended following the passage of the Care and Protection of Children Amendment Bill 2019 on 6 August 2019 to create an obligation on staff that children are involved in care planning.</p> <p>In 2018 Territory Families purchased the Viewpoint software system to seek young people's views through consistent means.</p>



Putting Children and Families at the Centre

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
2.02	<p>The Northern Territory Government:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. amend the legislation in the areas of child protection and youth detention to require that children and young people be provided with meaningful opportunities to express their views on the operation of, and amendments to, that legislation and any policy developed to implement that legislation. 2. Establish a mechanism – for example, a representative council of children in out-of-home care and youth detention – to enable children and young people to participate in the development and implementation of policy relating to, and any rules of, those institutions. 	<p>In 2018 Territory Families entered into a five year contract with the CREATE Foundation to advocate for, and organise the collection of views of children with a care experience. This includes scheduled Roundtable meetings, surveys, and Advisory Groups including biannual attendance of young people with Territory Families Senior Executive meetings.</p> <p>A Youth Advisory Group operates in Don Dale Youth Detention Centre and meet each week in each block to raise any issues, including accommodation, food, program or education concerns. These concerns are minuted and actioned by the relevant business areas. Young people are also able to provide private written feedback to Don Dale management. A similar group operates in Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre as a forum for all young people at the Centre.</p> <p>Section 11 of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act</i> was amended following the passage of the Care and Protection of Children Amendment Bill 2019 on 6 August 2019 to create an obligation on staff that children are involved in care planning.</p> <p>In 2018 Territory Families purchased the Viewpoint software system to seek young people's views through consistent means.</p>
11.03	Restrictions on contact with family associated with security classification and behaviour management systems be removed.	Security classifications restricting family contact has been removed.
22.05	Territory Families introduce a Detainee Representative Group program to enable detainees to meet formally each fortnight with the superintendent of youth detention.	A Youth Advisory Committee has been established and is co-chaired by a young person in detention
22.07	Section 215B of the <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i> be amended to reflect the provisions of sections 4 and 36 of the <i>Limitation Act (NT)</i> , to recognise that by reason of age or sentenced imprisonment status a person may be incapable of managing their affairs in respect of legal proceedings.	Territory Families addressed this recommendation through the Youth Justice and Related Legislation Amendment Bill 2019.
25.25	Proceedings under the <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i> should be heard in closed court, similar to child protection proceedings under the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act (NT)</i> . The court should retain a discretion to publish all or part of a proceeding upon application.	Territory Families addressed this recommendation through the Youth Justice and Related Legislation Amendment Bill 2019.

Putting Children and Families at the Centre

Putting Children and Families at the Centre portfolio recommendation completions (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION
32.08	<p>Territory Families in developing its dual pathways model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. consult with stakeholders regarding the design and operation of the model b. ensure a range of services are available providing 'soft entry' referral pathways c. develop strategies to encourage families to access those services, and d. amend the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act (NT)</i> to implement a dual-pathways model
<p>Territory Families introduced the Family and Children Enquiry Services (FACES) family support hotline to support and refer families to appropriate services. The FACES hotline provides a mechanism for soft entry into the family support system and its implementation has included a communications strategy to encourage families to access the service. Territory Families has developed a suite of materials to promote the FACES service.</p> <p>Territory Families also funded the NTCOSS online NT Social Services Directory to support families and providers to link to relevant support services.</p> <p>The Care and Protection of Children Amendment Bill was introduced to Parliament on 20 March 2019 and was passed on 6 August 2019. The Bill legislates a dual-pathways model in introducing new requirements on the CEO to provide preventative and support services to children and families.</p>	
33.01	<p>Territory Families develop strategies to give better effect to section 11 of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act (Child Participation)</i> at all stages of their engagement with children in their care.</p>
<p>Section 11 of the Care and Protection of Children Act was amended following the passage of the Care and Protection of Children Amendment Bill 2019 on 6 August 2019 to create an obligation on staff that children are involved in care planning.</p>	
33.21	<p>Territory Families ensure that all young people between aged 15 and 18 have leaving care plans in compliance with section 71 of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act (NT)</i>.</p>
<p>Since 2017 dedicated Transition from Care Officers have been employed in every Territory Families regional office. They work to ensure all young people between 15 – 18 years have appropriate leaving care plans. The Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2019 strengthened requirements for care planning.</p>	
34.11	<p>Territory Families ensure access to Aboriginal interpreters as required</p>
<p>The Care and Protection of Children Amendment Bill, passed by the Legislative Assembly on 6 August 2019, requires that the Chief Executive Officer ensures that the services provided to families under the Act, where appropriate, involve meaningful engagement with families in a language and manner they understand – for example, by providing the use of an interpreter (Clause 8, section 42 amended).</p>	
42.01	<p>The Northern Territory Government, as part of its review of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act (NT)</i> and the <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. consider whether optimal outcomes for children can best be achieved by a single Act, and f. establish a consultative working group, with input from children and young people who have direct experience of the child protection and youth justice systems to guide this legislative review.
<p>The development of a Single Act for children and young people is on track to be introduced mid 2021.</p> <p>The Legislative Amendment Advisory Committee (LAAC) provided input into the development of legislative amendments through staged development of a single Act, with stakeholders including legal organisations, foster and kinship support agencies, and Aboriginal organisations.</p> <p>The CREATE Foundation holds a seat on the LAAC, and CREATE Roundtables held with young people and Territory Families Senior Executives contribute to the legislative reform.</p>	

Improving Care and Protection

The Improving Care and Protection reform portfolio includes the programs and projects designed at improving the child protection, family support and out-of-home care systems in the Northern Territory. The reform portfolio has a focus on working with Aboriginal families to keep their kids safe.

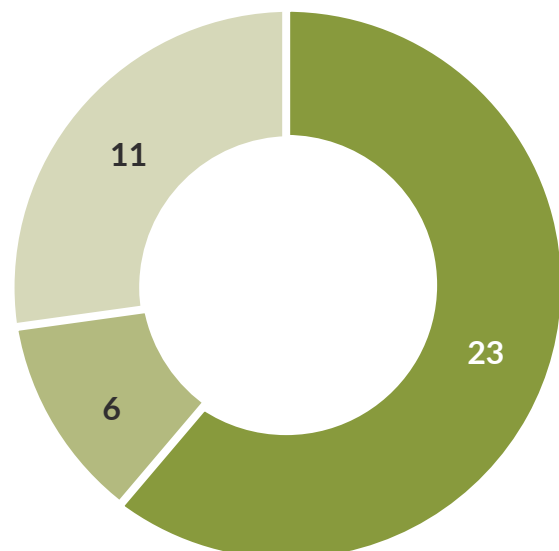
Improving Care and Protection

Key achievements include:

- Implementing the Signs of Safety practice framework and focussing on holistic family safety assessments and support.
- Implementing a new staffing structure for Central Intake to better manage the high demand of notifications and provide a more timely service.
- Activating the online reporting tool, Professional Reporter's Guide, and eLearning materials for professional notifiers.
- Implementing a new 'one-child one-case policy' to better manage child safety concerns.
- Distributing mobile tablets to frontline child protection workers to improve their ability to access information and record their work while away from the office.
- Improving support to children and young people who are in the care of Territory Families and who undertake offending or risky behaviour.
- Partnering with Aboriginal organisations to better support kinship and foster carers, and improve outcomes for children in care.
- Increasing the number of registered kinship carers to the highest number ever recorded with 287 kinship carers as at 30 June 2019.
- Continuing the downward trend of children entering out-of-home care.



Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



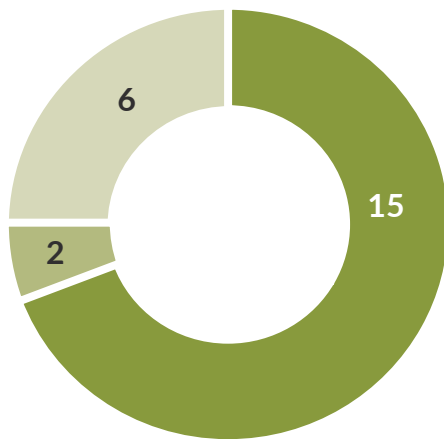
- Completed
- Well progressed
- Work underway

Improving Care and Protection

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.

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



- Completed
- Well progressed
- Work underway

Territory Families has strengthened their commitment to working with families and communities to better protect children. Territory Families has progressed a number of key initiatives designed to improve systems and practices that will support positive outcomes for children, young people and families, including implementing the first practice framework for Territory Families staff, improving reporting processes and reforming the out-of-home care system.

Clinical Practice and Signs of Safety

Implementation of Signs of Safety is being led by the Clinical and Professional Practice Leadership Directorate, which was established in July 2018 within Territory Families. The Northern Territory Government has invested an additional \$2.4 million over four years to enable the Directorate to promote best practice within Territory Families to better support children, young people, families and communities.

In October 2018, Territory Families began implementation of the Signs of Safety practice framework across Territory Families' child protection, family and parenting support, and children in care and youth justice services. Signs of Safety is a professional practice framework focussed on working with families to keep their children safe. Working with Resolutions Consultancy, the Signs of Safety training has been delivered to 530 Territory Families staff, accounting for approximately 90 per cent of care and protection staff. External staff have also participated in the training.

Signs of Safety is making a significant change to practice. Through Signs of Safety Territory Families is focussing on holistic family safety assessments and support and is moving child protection processes away from an incident and risk focussed response. The demand for statutory child protection services is reducing and changing in response to the system improvements introduced in 2017-18.

Case study – Signs of Safety

Using the Signs of Safety approach a Child Protection Practitioner working in East Arnhem Land has been very creative in incorporating the Aboriginal language and tools into the existing templates and documents used in the region to help Aboriginal people to better understand and participate in decisions.

This also helps to ensure that their work remains compliant with current policy and procedures. The Practitioner has been able to incorporate culture into all aspects of her work, for example, developing flash cards with Yolgnu Matha words for various emotions and utilising Yolgnu descriptions for relationships on genograms making them more accessible for families.

Improving Care and Protection

In April 2019, Territory Families adopted the *Safe and Together Framework* as the preferred approach to support implementation of the *Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018 – 2028, Action Plan 1: Changing Attitudes, Intervening Earlier and Responding Better*. Key focus areas for the next three years are:

- Challenging the values, norms, attitudes and behaviours that drive domestic family and sexual violence;
- Understanding the role of key early responders and building their capacity;
- Strengthening the specialist domestic family and sexual violence sector; and
- Building a stronger shared understanding of the needs of survivors and perpetrators.

Practice sessions introducing domestic violence informed practice have been provided to frontline Territory Families staff. Measures to improve collaboration between child protection and domestic and family violence staff are being implemented, including the development of Memorandums of Understanding with women's shelters across the Territory.



Clinical Governance

The Clinical and Professional Practice Leadership Directorate's work is guided by the Clinical Governance Professional Practice Committee. The Practice Committee is a group of local Territory experts selected to bring expertise in research, best practice and training across a range of professional fields including youth justice, trauma and rehabilitation, child protection, academia, social work and public health. Membership of the Committee includes Dr Howard Bath, Dr Christine Fejo-King, Her Honour Judge Sue Oliver and Dr Denise Riordan.

The Clinical Governance Professional Practice Committee meets quarterly to discuss a range of topics including, providing therapeutic and trauma informed support, working more effectively with Aboriginal families and working in partnership with families, communities and service providers.

Since August 2018, the Directorate has held intensive practice sessions across the Northern Territory on a range of topics including harm/cumulative harm; collaborative practice, introduction to Domestic Violence informed practice, understanding harm, and the power of inquiry and questioning approaches. Directorate staff have also been providing group supervision to new child protection practitioners and conducting case review. Directorate staff are working closely with the Policy and Education and Training Teams within Territory Families to develop practice guidance in relation to Investigations and Safety Assessments and Strengthening Families and to include new practice guidance in relation to Investigations and Safety Assessments and Strengthening Families in the Induction Program.

Directorate staff, alongside the Chief Executive of the Katherine Women's Shelter co-presented at the Northern Territory's very first Family and Sexual Violence Sharing and Strengthening our Practice Conference in Darwin 9 to 10 May 2019.

Improving Care and Protection

Central intake

In January 2019, a new staffing structure for Central Intake to better manage the high demand of notifications and provide a more timely service, was completed and implemented. The new staffing model and roster includes a call triage team that is trained to ensure the most appropriate responses are provided to the issues raised by notifiers.

On 30 January 2019, the online reporting tool, including Professional Reporter's Guide, and eLearning video went 'live' and commenced operation. These resources provide professionals in Territory Families; NT Police; the Departments of Health, Education; and Local Government, Housing and Community Development, with another pathway for the mandatory reporting of child safety concerns and improves the way the reports are received and assessed. Expanding access to the tool by non-government professionals is being explored.

In July 2018, Territory Families adopted a new 'one-child one-case policy' which meant that all concerns received about a child are assessed and addressed through one open case. This approach replaces the historical practice where new administrative cases were opened for each new concern. This new approach reduces the administrative burden of duplicate open cases for a single child and has enabled a greater focus on providing casework services to help families make their children safe.

Mobile devices

On 30 October 2018 Territory Families commenced distribution of mobile tablets to frontline child protection workers to improve their ability to access information and record their work while away from the office.

The mobile tablet devices enable child protection practitioners to access information in the field, record service events and progress notes onto the case management system without returning to the office, increasing the time available to engage with children and families. Mobile tablet devices are an important tool in enabling child protection practitioners to better understand and respond to the children and families they are working with. The devices can also be used offline and can connect to the network even when there is no mobile coverage. This is particularly important for staff working in remote communities.

Since October 2018 Territory Families has provided over 320 Child Protection and Youth Justice frontline staff with tablet and smartphone devices. The new tablets provide automatic secure connection to the Northern Territory Government network and primary application systems such as CCIS, IOMS, and Territory Records Manager, as well as the Agency's data collection forms and templates.

These reforms, together with the increased focus on improving access to support services for families who are at risk of entering the child protection system, have contributed to a reduction in the number of child protection notifications made to Territory Families in eight years.

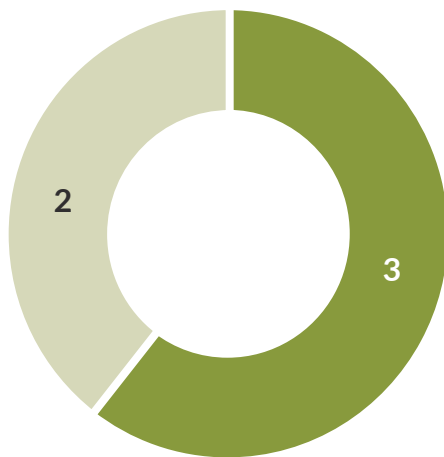


Improving Care and Protection

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.

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



■ Completed
■ Work underway

Children and young people in out-of-home care are among the most vulnerable in the community. They are also at greater risk of engagement with police and with the youth justice system. These children and young people need tailored support to prevent further offending and improve their life outcomes.

In February 2019, Territory Families established the Crossover Families Management Unit in Palmerston to address the needs children and young people who are in the care of Territory Families and who undertake offending or risky behaviour.

The Unit work with a core group of complex, at risk youth and their families to address issues such as overcrowded housing, alcohol abuse, family violence, poverty, school attendance and employment. They work closely with police and the Courts to advise on appropriate alternative sentencing or diversion programs that fit each individual young person and their current circumstances.

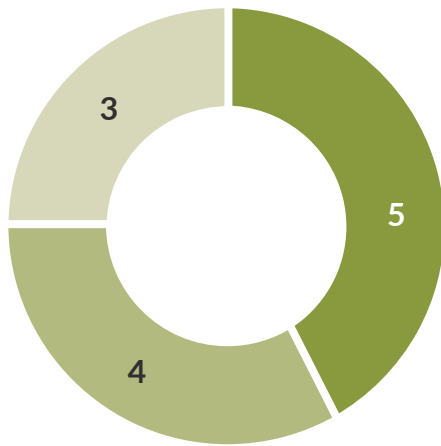
Territory Families and NT Police worked together to develop a protocol to reduce unnecessary police contact with children in the out-of-home care system. In some situations bringing in the police as a response to challenging behaviours exhibited by young people in out-of-home care can exacerbate the situation, contributing to poorer outcomes for all involved and possible criminal charges. Providing a different response and managing the behaviour is necessary to prevent children in out-of-home care ending up in the youth justice system.

Improving Care and Protection

Transforming Out-of-Home Care

Children who require out-of-home care are cared for in safe, culturally secure, trauma informed, therapeutic environments and by their families where possible.

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



- Completed
- Well progressed
- Work underway

Since its formation Territory Families has been working with partners in the non-government sector to significantly improve the out-of-home care system. In 2018-19 this has included a focus on family-led practice, improving the quality of care; seeking the views of children; increasing the number of Aboriginal Carers and establishing the Aboriginal out-of-home care System.

In 2018-19 the Northern Territory Government invested an additional \$20 million to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people involved in the out-of-home care system. This took the total investment in out-of-home care up to \$128.4 million per annum. The additional investment includes improving the day to day supports provided to children and carers and implementing a new out-of-home care system which prioritises children being placed with family when it is safe to do so and increasing the number of Aboriginal family and foster carers in the Northern Territory.

Aboriginal Out-of-Home Care

As at 30 June 2019 1,054 children were in Out-of-Home Care in the Northern Territory. Of these children 90 per cent are Aboriginal, with thirty-seven per cent placed with Aboriginal carers. During 2018-19, 248 children entered care (at 30 June 2019), continuing the downward trend since 2014-15 of children entering out-of-home care.

In August 2018, Territory Families introduced the *Aboriginal Carers Growing up Aboriginal Children* grants program to improve support to kinship and foster carers, and outcomes for children in care in partnership with Aboriginal Organisations as part of the Northern Territory Government's \$5.4 million commitment to reforming the child protection system. Through this program, three Aboriginal organisations received funding.

- Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation in Darwin and Ngurratjuta/Pmara Ntjarra Aboriginal Corporation in Central Australia were funded \$150,000 each to recruit and support Aboriginal Kinship and Foster Carers in their respective locations. These organisations find family for Aboriginal children already in care, and identify, recruit and support Aboriginal families who may be interested and able to care for children who enter care.
- Tangentyere Council, in consortium with the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA), worked with the community sector and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to develop a comprehensive culturally safe Aboriginal kinship care service model '*Children Safe, Family Together*'. The learnings from the pilots in Central Australia and Darwin also informed development of the model. *Children Safe, Family Together* aims to increase the number of Aboriginal children in care being placed with Aboriginal family, foster and kinship carers by implementing family and kin care scoping and support services throughout the Northern Territory. The model is expected to be released later in 2019.

Improving Care and Protection

As a direct result of the *Aboriginal Carers Growing up Aboriginal Children* grants program, the number of registered kinship carers has increased to the highest number ever recorded with 297 kinship carers as at 30 June 2019. This is up 15 per cent from 30 June 2018 (254). The number of children in residential

and purchased home based care has decreased from 476 at 30 June 2018 to 438 at 30 June 2019. Forty-four additional Aboriginal children are now placed with a kinship carer. As at 30 June 2019, 264 children were placed within kinship places of care across the NT.

Case study – working with Carol

Carol* came into out-of-home care when she was four months old due to concerns around neglect by their parents. Territory Families worked with the family and were able to identify extended family who could look after and support the parents in strengthening their parenting capacity.

With the support of Territory Families, the family was able to create a plan that enabled Carol to be safely reunified with her parents and into their care.

Carol was returned to her parents, and the parents have been engaging well with the clinic, Families as First Teachers (FaFT) and counselling services in their community. Carol is now a healthy child, growing well and meeting all of her milestones. Mother and Carol regularly attend FaFT, and read together during every visit.

**Not the child's real name*



The second round of *Aboriginal Carers Growing up Aboriginal Children* grants will be launched in August 2019. This program and its expansion across the next three years is a key pillar in supporting and delivering Aboriginal led out-of-home care services across the Northern Territory.

In July 2018, Territory Families engaged Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory (APO NT), and the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) to deliver an Aboriginal out-of-home care strategy for the Northern Territory. Two Aboriginal Out-of-Home Care (OOHC) strategies, one by APO NT for the Top End and the other by SNAICC for Central Australia, were provided to Territory Families in November 2018.

Both strategies align with and have been used to inform the current reform work occurring within Territory Families and across Government to transform the out-of-home care system to better meet the needs of Aboriginal children, and ensure Aboriginal communities and organisations play a greater role in the planning, design, management and delivery of services for Aboriginal children and families.

Improving Care and Protection

Out-of-Home Care governance

In 2018, Territory Families engaged consultants; Deloitte Australia and NOUS to review the current out-of-home care model, practices and processes. The consultants worked with Territory Families staff and community sector partners to identify the critical system changes required to improve out-of-home care in the Northern Territory. The report, 'Reforms to the out-of-home care Service System in the Northern Territory' was provided to the Territory Families in April 2019.

Using the information provided in the 'Reforms to the out-of-home care Service System in the Northern Territory' report and the Aboriginal out-of-home care strategies Territory Families developed the *Transforming Out-of-Home Care Program*. The *Transforming Out-of-Home Care Program* focusses on the Aboriginal community controlled sector and cultural changes across Territory Families and is designed to change the way out-of-home care services are designed, funded, contracted and delivered by:

- placing Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities at the centre;
- listening and including children, families and young people;
- partnering with community and government;
- establishing supportive systems to deliver out-of-home care services;
- prioritising family/kin care-givers and improve support for all family and kin carers;
- delivering services that are tailored to meet the needs of children and young people in care; and
- designing therapeutic services to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people in care.

In December 2018, Territory Families established the Quality Assurance Program to assess the standard of care being provided to children and young people and to form the basis of a system for ongoing improvements in the delivery of out-of-home care and Residential care services.

Implementation of the Quality Assurance Program requires all out-of-home care service providers to provide comprehensive evidence of how they deliver services that uphold the National Out-of-Home-Care Standards and the nationally agreed Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Under the Quality Assurance Program, Territory Families reviewed Residential Care providers and purchased home based care providers across Darwin, Alice Springs, Katherine and Tennant Creek. Each provider received a formal report on the quality of care provided and where required, were to develop and submit a Recommendation Action Plan. These Actions Plans are used to monitor the quality of the services and inform the 2019 continuous quality improvements program.

By 30 June 2019, Territory Families had undertaken 15 scheduled and unscheduled inspections of places of care, and further meetings with groups of carers and is on target to meet 2019 requirements of assessing all general residential care and a portion of purchased home based.

Territory Families continues to expand the Quality Assurance Program, and in 2019 will include Bail Supported Accommodation services and an increase of the sample size of Purchased Home Based Providers to 30%. Territory Families is also continuing to work with the CREATE Foundation to strengthen the voices of children and young people in the Quality Assurance Program.



Improving Care and Protection

Foster and Kinship Care

On 21 January 2019, the *Guide for Kinship and Foster Carers, Caring for Children and Young People in the Northern Territory* was launched. The Guide is an updated version of the *Foster and Kinship Carer Handbook* which was re-written in consultation with the Foster and Kinship Carers Association of the NT, CREATE Foundation and other key stakeholders. The Guide welcomes new carers and provides information on becoming a kinship or foster carer in the Northern Territory. The Guide is available online. Work will continue throughout the year to strengthen the content and guidance for carers looking after Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory

Delivery of Foster and Kinship Carer training is undergoing changes in line with the 'Transforming Out-of-Home Care' Program. This includes developing Kinship and Foster Carer eLearning Module and Training Programs in consultation with Foster and Kinship Carers Association

Northern Territory, the Aboriginal Interpreter Service and other stakeholders. The eLearning module and training program are expected to be completed by late 2019. The eLearning course will be accessible on computers, tablet and smartphones and will allow Regional Territory Families staff to train and support foster and kinship carers in small groups and in a more engaging format.

The forward schedule of dates for the delivery of the 'Foster and Kinship Carer Induction 2-day Course' in Darwin was released on 18 June 2019 for the August to December 2019 period. Foster and Kinship Carer training is conducted on request in Nhulunbuy, Tennant Creek and remote communities. The Katherine Carer Services team have requested the ability to deliver their training locally as required and discussions regarding the scheduling of carer training dates in Alice Springs commenced in September 2019.



Improving Care and Protection

Improving Care and Protection portfolio recommendation completions

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
31.01	The Northern Territory Government review periodically its compliance with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.	<p>Consideration of placement options is a core part of current legislation, policy, practice and procedures. The measure of Aboriginal children placed with family and Aboriginal carers is regularly reviewed and reported nationally through two independent bodies – Australian Institute for Health and Welfare (AIHW) and the Productivity Commission.</p> <p>Territory Families recently undertook a review of compliance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle at the request of the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC).</p>
32.01	Territory Families review the Structured Decision Making tools to ensure they are appropriate to the Northern Territory.	<p>In 2017-18, Territory Families funded the provider to review the use of Structured Decision Making (SDM). The early work of this evaluation was provided to the Royal Commission. Following the Royal Commission report Price Waterhouse Coopers Indigenous Consulting reviewed Central Intake, leading to major reforms. SDM remains in place in Central Intake.</p> <p>From 1 July 2019, Signs of Safety replaced the use of SDM tools in child protection and family support cases.</p>
32.02	Territory Families commission an independent audit of the outcomes of notifications reported to the Central Intake Team to examine the assessment process, the application of the structured decision-making tools and whether cases have been incorrectly screened out.	Territory Families audited the outcomes of notifications to Central Intake through the implementation of the Office of the Children's Commissioner's recommendations in response to an incident in Tennant Creek in 2018.



Improving Care and Protection

Improving Care and Protection portfolio recommendation completions (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
32.04	<p>Territory Families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. develop mandatory reporting guidelines for professional and community notifiers b. conduct information seminars and provide written guidelines to assist professional notifiers meet their reporting obligation under section 26 of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act (NT)</i>, and c. explore the establishment of central points to receive notifications from police and educators 	<p>A Professional Reporters Guide, to assist professional notifiers meet their mandatory reporting obligations, was published on 30 January 2019 and is available through the new online Professional Reporters Tool. An online tutorial is also now available through the Tool.</p> <p>Territory Families is collaborating with partner agencies to incorporate child protection training as part of their induction programs.</p> <p>Central Intake processes have been separated into two functions with the new triage team receiving and escalating priority reports.</p>
32.05	<p>Territory Families amend data-recording processes so that any subsequent substantiated notifications in relation to a particular child are separately recorded notifications, so there is a clear recording of the total number of notifications pertaining to that particular child.</p>	<p>Territory Families introduced the one-child-one-case approach in 2018. This approach requires subsequent notifications to be recorded against an individual child's record.</p>
32.06	<p>Territory Families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. adopt a consistent definition of cumulative harm, and a. develop internal guidance for practitioners regarding the assessment of cumulative harm 	<p>Territory Families developed and implemented guidance and training to increase the understanding of, and support consistent practice in relation to cumulative harm through the implementation of recommendations from the Office of the Children's Commission's investigation into an incident in Tennant Creek in 2018.</p>
32.07	<p>Territory Families ensure that Central Intake is adequately resourced to accommodate peak periods including by the provision of standby practitioners.</p>	<p>Nine new positions have been created. These positions have been funded through savings made from redesigning the staff structure and service roster and a further \$520,000 investment from within existing resources.</p>
32.09	<p>Territory Families develop a strategy to address the current backlog of overdue investigations.</p>	<p>Territory Families introduced the one-child-one-case approaches in 2018, which is reducing the backlog of overdue investigations by investigating the circumstances regarding children holistically.</p>

Improving Care and Protection

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
32.12	Territory Families ensure that any family where a child is to be removed is given all appropriate information about the reason for the removal, the steps the family must take to have the child returned, and legal advisors the family may contact in a form and language suitable for the family.	The Care and Protection of Children Amendment Bill 2019 inserted provisions requiring meaningful engagement with families in a language and manner they understand and strengthens provisions around personal services.
33.02	Care plans must be kept up to date and provided to parents in clear and understandable language, with an interpreter if necessary, about what is required for reunification with their children.	<p>The Care and Protection of Children Amendment Bill, passed by the Legislative Assembly on 6 August 2019, legislates that an Aboriginal child, in addition to the child's family, has the right to nominate a kinship group, representative organisation or community of Aboriginal people to participate in the making of a decision involving the child (amendments to s 12).</p> <p>The Bill also inserted a new section, 72A, in the Act to encourage and facilitate the participation of the child, their parents and family in the preparation or modification of the child's care plan.</p> <p>The Care Plan Template has also been streamlined and simplified.</p>



Improving Care and Protection

Improving Care and Protection portfolio recommendation completions (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
33.04	<p>To ensure timely and quality care plans are developed and implemented for each child in out-of-home care:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the Care and Protection of Children Act (NT) be amended to the effect that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. an application to the court for a 'protection order', as that term is defined in the Act, be accompanied by a care plan for the relevant child ii. if the application is not accompanied by a care plan, the court may set a date by which the care plan is to be filed with the court that is no longer than three weeks after filing the application for a protection order, and iii. any subsequent care plan developed and approved by the Chief Executive Officer of Territory Families during the course of the proceedings must be filed with the court within 14 days of its creation or review b. section 130 of the Care and Protection of Children Act (NT) be amended to provide that a court may not issue a protection order unless satisfied that the Chief Executive Officer has developed, approved and filed with the court a care plan that meets the needs and best interests of the child c. the Northern Territory Government collect care plan data in a form that will allow it to provide such data to the Productivity Commission for comparison with other states and territories d. section 74(4) of the Care and Protection of Children Act (NT) be amended to provide that the Chief Executive Officer 'must obtain, to the extent reasonably practicable, and have regard to the views expressed' by the specified persons, and 	<p>This recommendation is addressed through Care and Protection Amendment Bill, passed on 6 August 2019, specifically by the following clauses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 9 Section 70 (CEO must prepare care plan) • Clause 10 section 71 amended (Modification of care plan) • Clause 11 Section 72A (Participation in care plan) • Clause 12 section 73 amended (Provision of care plan to interested parties) • Clause 13 section 74 amended (Review of care plan) • Clause 14 section 76 amended (CEO must prepare interim care plan) • Clause 20 section 122 amended (How application is made) • Clause 25 section 130 amended (Court must not make an order unless a care plan prepared) • Clause 137B (How an application is made).

Improving Care and Protection

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
33.04 (cont.)	e. section 70 of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act (NT)</i> be amended to include a requirement that a cultural component of a care plan must be included in all care plans specifically tailored to the child.	
33.05	<p>Territory Families:</p> <p>a. develop and implement a campaign in conjunction with Foster Carers Association NT, current carers and other relevant organisations to recognise the contribution of existing foster and kinship carers, draw attention to the current shortage of carers and encourage people in the Northern Territory, particularly in remote areas, to apply to become carers</p> <p>b. review the financial support provided to carers in the Northern Territory and - work with Aboriginal organisations to implement a joint program dedicated to increasing the number of Aboriginal foster and kinship carers, using community awareness and individualised community engagement.</p>	<p>Territory Families has expanded the foster and kinship carer awards and the carer recruitment campaign in partnership with Foster Care NT.</p> <p>On 16 August 2018, Territory Families launched two funding streams for Aboriginal Organisations in the Northern Territory. The funding aims to increase the number and proportion of Aboriginal children in care that are placed in safe, suitable and culturally connected placements with Aboriginal Kinship or Foster carers.</p>



Improving Care and Protection

Improving Care and Protection portfolio recommendation completions (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
33.12	<p>The Northern Territory Government reconsider outsourcing out-of-home care services to the non-government sector. If it proceeds to do so, it should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> identify service solutions, including placement types, that meet the specific needs of this population design an out-of-home care accreditation scheme that meets the specific needs of this population develop a framework for measuring the wellbeing of children in out-of-home care, and set clear goals and requirements for service providers, and ensure robust oversight which will include both Territory Families and the Commission for Children and Young People. 	<p>In April 2019, the Territory Government launched the <i>Transforming Out-of-Home Care Project</i>. The plan is based on significant work and consultation including by NOUS, PWC IC and Deloitte Australia.</p> <p>The Office of Children Commissioner provides oversight of the out-of-home care system.</p> <p>Territory Families continues to work with the Department of Chief Minister to establish the Commission for Children and Young People.</p>
33.13	<p>The Northern Territory Government implement a collaborative inter-agency approach between Territory Families and Northern Territory Police to manage children and young people absconding from out-of-home care placements.</p>	<p>In August 2019, Territory Families released a policy in relation to the management of children who are absent or missing from placement.</p> <p>The policy and procedure were designed in collaboration with out-of-home care Providers, key stakeholders and Northern Territory Police in 2018 and have now been formally endorsed by the Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services.</p> <p>The Foster and Kinship Care Association, residential care providers and purchased home based care providers have all been briefed about implementation of the new policy and procedure. Guidelines have been developed to assist carers understand their role in responding to children who are absent or missing from placement.</p>
33.18	<p>Territory Families, in partnership with Foster Carers Association NT, establish regular forums to provide carers an opportunity to raise issues with Territory Families that relate to the experience of being a carer.</p>	<p>In 2018, Territory Families entered into a partnering agreement with the Foster and Kinship Carers Association for five years. The agreement includes contract conditions relating to regular coordination of forums.</p>

Improving Care and Protection

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
33.19	Territory Families provide support to foster and kinship carers, including through implementation of training targeting specific populations in out-of-home care. This training should be accessible to all foster and kinship carers, including those in remote communities, and those who cannot attend training during business hours.	In 2018, Territory Families entered into a partnering agreement with the Foster and Kinship Carers Association for five years. The agreement includes contract conditions relating to the delivery of training and support services across the Territory, including remote locations.
34.01	Amend sections 121 and 129 of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act (NT)</i> so that the term 'the best means' is replaced with a requirement that the most appropriate order be made, but that it be the least intrusive order which can be made in the circumstances.	The Care and Protection Amendment Bill passed on 6 August 2019, included clauses to reflect similar provisions in other jurisdictions. This includes a principle in section 9(2)(c) of the <i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 NSW</i> to say that an order must be most appropriate and the least intrusive means to safeguard the wellbeing of the child.
34.02	Amend section 129 of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act (NT)</i> to provide that the court must not make a protection order unless it has considered, and rejected as being contrary to the best interests of the child, an order allowing the child to remain in the care of their parent.	Territory Families addressed this recommendation through Care and Protection Amendment Bill passed on 6 August 2019 at clause 24 and 25.
34.03	Amend section 130 of the <i>Care and Protection of Children Act (NT)</i> as section 130(1)(cc) to the following effect: 'In making the decision, the Court must consider if all reasonable steps have been taken by the government agency to provide the services that are necessary in addressing any risks of harm to the child'.	Territory Families addressed this recommendation through Care and Protection Amendment Bill passed on 6 August 2019, through Clause 25. This clause which amends the Act to insert section 130(1)(c) 'the steps taken by the Territory: to provide the services necessary to address any likely risks of harm to the child; and to ensure the services were provided in accordance with section 42(4).



Improving Care and Protection


Improving Care and Protection portfolio recommendation completions (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
34.14	Amend section 104 of the Care and Protection of Children Act (NT) to require the Chief Executive Officer to take reasonable steps, commensurate to the urgency of the application, to provide notice of the application to the parents of the child.	<p>Territory Families addressed this recommendation through Care and Protection Amendment Bill passed on 6 August 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 17 Section 104A; <p>Inserted new section to give effect to the recommendation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 18 Section 106 amended (Notice of Order) • Clause 22 Section 124 replaced (Notice of Application) • Clause 28 Section 137C replaced (Notice of Application)
34.15	Amend section 106 of the Care and Protection of Children Act (NT) to include the requirement that at the time the order is given to a parent of the child, the length and effect of the order, the right of appeal and information about how to appeal must be appropriately explained to the parent in their preferred language.	<p>Territory Families addressed this recommendation through Care and Protection Amendment Bill passed on 6 August 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 18 Section 106 amended (Notice of Order): <p>Inserted requirement that the direction and effect of the order is explained to the parent in their preferred language or if it is not reasonably practicable to do so in a language and manner they understand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 22 Section 124 replaced (Notice of Application): <p>Additional provisions to strengthen the intent and direction of the recommendation.</p>

Improving Care and Protection

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION
<p>35.02</p> <p>A joint protocol be developed between Territory Families, the out of home care service sector and the police to address the management and response to criminal behaviour in the out of home care environment, with an evaluation of the protocol carried out within two years.</p>	<p>In August 2019 Territory Families released a policy in relation to the management of children who are absent or missing from placement.</p> <p>The policy was designed in collaboration with Out of Home Care Providers, key stakeholders and Northern Territory Police in 2018 and have now been formally endorsed by the Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services.</p> <p>The Foster and Kinship Care Association, residential care providers and purchased home based care providers have all been briefed about implementation of the new policy and procedure. Guidelines have been developed to assist carers understand their role in responding to children who are absent or missing from placement.</p>
<p>35.06</p> <p>Child protection caseworkers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> have regular face-to-face contact with any child in detention who is also under care and protection orders; monitor the wellbeing of children in detention and ensure that their needs are being met; and be involved in transition planning for a child in detention from the time of their entry into detention, in consultation with detention staff, key stakeholders and the child. 	<p>As detailed by the Child Protection and Youth Justice Policy and the Case Manager Responsibilities – Bail and Youth Justice Court Outcomes, Territory Families must work collaboratively with persons who have shared parental responsibility for the young person in supporting the young person during their involvement in the youth justice system.</p> <p>To address the needs of children who are in contact with both the Child Protection and Youth Justice Systems, Territory Families has appointed specialist officers to a new Crossover Families Management Unit to case manage a core group of reoffenders and their families in Palmerston.</p>





RESPECT OTHERS
AS YOU WANT
OTHERS TO RESPECT
YOU

Improving Youth Justice

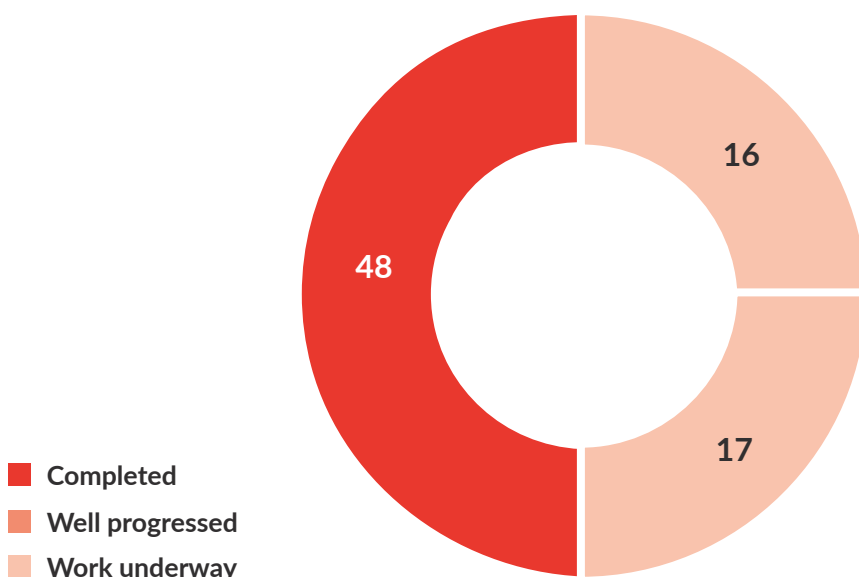
The Improving Youth Justice reform portfolio includes the programs and projects designed to improve the youth justice system in the Northern Territory and ensure that there are effective interventions that provide appropriate consequences for young people who offend and work to stop future offending.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

Improving Youth Justice

Key achievements include:

- Establishing the Police Youth Division within Northern Territory Police Fire and Emergency Services to refocus Police's engagement with young people.
- Commencing the Custody Notification Service to promote the wellbeing of Aboriginal children and young people who are in custody.
- Continuing the delivery of the Regional Youth Services Programs, focussing on linking vulnerable young people to relevant support services and school holiday programs.
- Improving the connection and coordination of services for young people in Tennant Creek, Alice Springs, Katherine, East Arnhem, Darwin and Palmerston to ensure the activities reflect locally identified need and priorities.
- Introducing programs to deliver consequences for antisocial and offending behaviour and provide alternative pathways tailored to the needs of children and young people aged eight to 17 years.
- Establishing the Palmerston Youth Skills Centre to focus on training young people for the skills of the 21st century.
- Expanding night patrol hours and youth drop-in centres in Alice Springs.
- Establishing the Youth Engagement Night Officers team in Alice Springs.
- Improving training for Youth Justice Officers and implementing behaviour management strategies to better respond to and support young people in detention.
- Improving the physical amenities and staffing arrangements to better support young women in detention.

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory

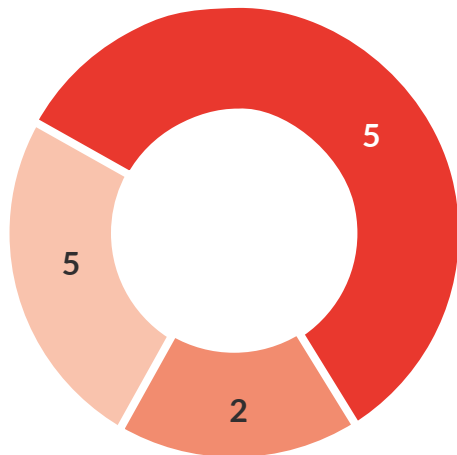


Improving Youth Justice

Police and Young People

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

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



- Completed
- Well progressed
- Work underway

Northern Territory Police play an important role in promoting pro-social behaviour, diverting youth at risk and in determining a young person's future.

Police Youth Division

On 1 January 2019, the Police Youth Division was established within Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services to refocus Police's engagement with young people. The Division includes school based policing, youth diversion, youth engagement and Neighbourhood Watch and supports a proactive and responsive approach to working with children and young people.

School based policing is an important strategy in building positive relationships between police and young people. The refreshed school-based police program was introduced in 10 government schools across the Territory in October 2018. A review of the program undertaken earlier this year found positive relationships have grown between the school-based officers, students, staff and families. Schools have reported higher student engagement and the development of positive relationships between students and police officers.

Northern Territory Police are undertaking a broad review of policy and procedures related to youth and are developing a youth engagement strategy that will focus on and support police working in partnership with communities to deliver improved outcomes for at risk young people and their families and to ensure safe and resilient communities.

Northern Territory Police have developed an education and training package in relation to dealing with youth and vulnerable youth. The initial face to face training program has been rolled out to 600 officers. The program has now been developed into an online training program which is available to all police officers across the Northern Territory.

The youth engagement superintendent travelled to New Zealand at the end of April 2019 to closely examine youth engagement, youth diversion programs, including locally managed indigenous youth programs whose focus on was on diverting youth from the criminal justice system. The visit also provided the opportunity to explore the New Zealand Police Youth Officers and their specialist training program. The learnings from this visit are being used in the work currently underway to enhance the existing Police Youth Diversion Scheme and inform Northern Territory Police Youth Policy.

Improving Youth Justice

Custody Notification Scheme

On 11 June 2019, the Custody Notification Service, operated by North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency, commenced. The Custody Notification Service promotes the wellbeing of Aboriginal children and adults who are in custody by referring them to health services, interpreters and legal assistance that are culturally secure.

The service aims to reduce the recidivism rate of young people by working with Aboriginal children, young people and adults who have been arrested to help them deal with their issues.

Twelve staff are employed in the Service; six Aboriginal staff who make first contact with the client and support ongoing engagement and six legal professionals to provide any required legal advice. The Service operates 24 hours day and through all police stations throughout the Northern Territory.

The Northern Territory is one of only four Australian states or territories (Western Australia, New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory) to introduce a scheme. As a commitment following the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, the Commonwealth Government provided initial funding for the service for three years. The Northern Territory Government is committed to providing ongoing funding after the initial three years, if the model is feasible for the Northern Territory.

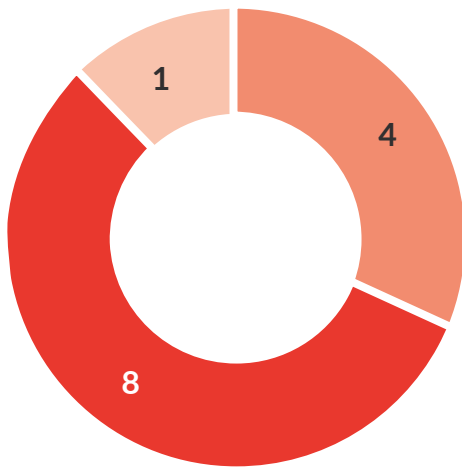


Improving Youth Justice

Helping young people get Back on Track

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

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



- Completed
- Well progressed
- Work underway

Regional Youth Services

In 2018-19, the Northern Territory Government allocated an additional \$2.35 million to Regional Youth Services Programs, bringing the total amount invested to \$4.1 million per annum. This funding supports delivery of after-hours services including school holiday programs with both day and evening activities, focussing on linking vulnerable young people to relevant support services.

Separately and in addition, the Regional Youth Activities one year grants provided 18 organisations with a total of \$1.13 million to deliver youth activities and services in Darwin, Palmerston, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek. This funding will also support activities through 2019 including school holiday periods until October 2019.

In each school holiday period during 2018-19 this investment has resulted in hundreds of activities for children and young people. Through these activities children and young people are able to try new sports and leisure activities, learn or develop artistic or musical skills and develop positive relationships in safe stimulating environments. Examples of the activities being offered during the school holidays include:

- Darwin - over 90 activities including laser-tag, accessible 3x3 basketball game at Lake Leanyer and all the YMCA Darwin pools will include pool parties, competitions and BBQs.
- Alice Springs - over 110 activities including the Geek in Residence, special Territory Day celebrations, basketball, drop-in centre social and recreational activities, arts, games and digital art, exhibitions, sports clinics, movies, rock wall, crafts, and disco.
- Tennant Creek - over 50 activities including circus workshops, basketball, drop-in centre, recreational activities, snack and chat youth week sessions, NAIDOC celebrations, disco, and arts and craft.
- Katherine - over 80 activities including arts, gaming, movies, drop in centre and sports.
- Palmerston - over 80 activities including drop-in sports and evening events, segway excursions, dancing, breakfast and chill out mornings, movie marathons, fitness and theatre activities, gaming and a street party.
- East Arnhem - multiple activities in communities across the Gove Peninsula including sport and recreation, movies, youth and community BBQ, and a disco.

Improving Youth Justice

Geek in Residence and the Indigemoji project

The Geek in Residence program was originally funded through a Youth Services Innovation Grant to operate 39 computer youth engagement sessions across seven locations in Alice Springs through the 2017-18 summer school holidays. Since then the program has been based in the Alice Springs Public Library through each school holiday period delivering a range of computer/iPad based activities including stop animation, video creation, t-shirt design and printing and digital art creation. In the 2018-19 summer school holidays the theme for Geek in Residence became the creation of Indigemoji's for the development of an Emoji application for smart phones and tablets. This will be the first set of Indigenous Australian Emojis created by young Indigenous Australians for daily use by Indigenous Australians and the whole community in general.

Youth engagement in the Geek in Residence program has grown considerably since its inception with not only computer literacy skills being learned but also the social awareness and personal development skills needed to enable successful integration of young people with challenging behaviours into a publicly accessed environment.

The City of Darwin is currently investigating replicating the program in their Darwin libraries. The Geek in Residence and Indigemoji programs are funded through the Regional Youth Services Grants Program and have attracted additional funding through the Centrecorp Foundation, CAYLUS and Alice Springs Town Council and are supported locally by GAP Youth Centre and Tangentyere Council.

Regional Youth Program Coordinators have been recruited in Tennant Creek, Alice Springs, Katherine, East Arnhem, Darwin and Palmerston. In each location, Youth Actions plans are being developed with the local community in line with local decision making approaches. These Action Plans aim to improve the connection and coordination of services for young people and ensure the activities reflect locally identified need and priorities. Youth Action plans have been finalised in Palmerston, Katherine and Alice Springs.

The Youth Action Plans in Tennant Creek, Darwin and East Arnhem are being developed with local providers and communities.



Improving Youth Justice

Youth Justice Programs

Significant reforms to the youth justice system are continuing. These reforms aim to implement a youth justice system that teaches children and young people that there are consequences to their offending behaviour and to place them on a path away from a lifetime of crime towards more productive and fulfilled lives. The reforms include a suite of initiatives that strengthen intervention programs and provide therapeutic responses.

In December 2018, Territory Families established the Youth Services Directorate to provide oversight and management of community youth programs, including the Back on Track Program, bail support services and other youth diversion and alternatives to detention programs.

The Directorate is also developing, in consultation with the community sector, a new Youth Diversion Framework. This framework will include the delivery of youth camp interventions and training pathways for young people at risk of becoming involved in the youth justice system. Public consultations were held from mid-October to mid-December 2018, the Framework is due to be finalised in second half of 2019.

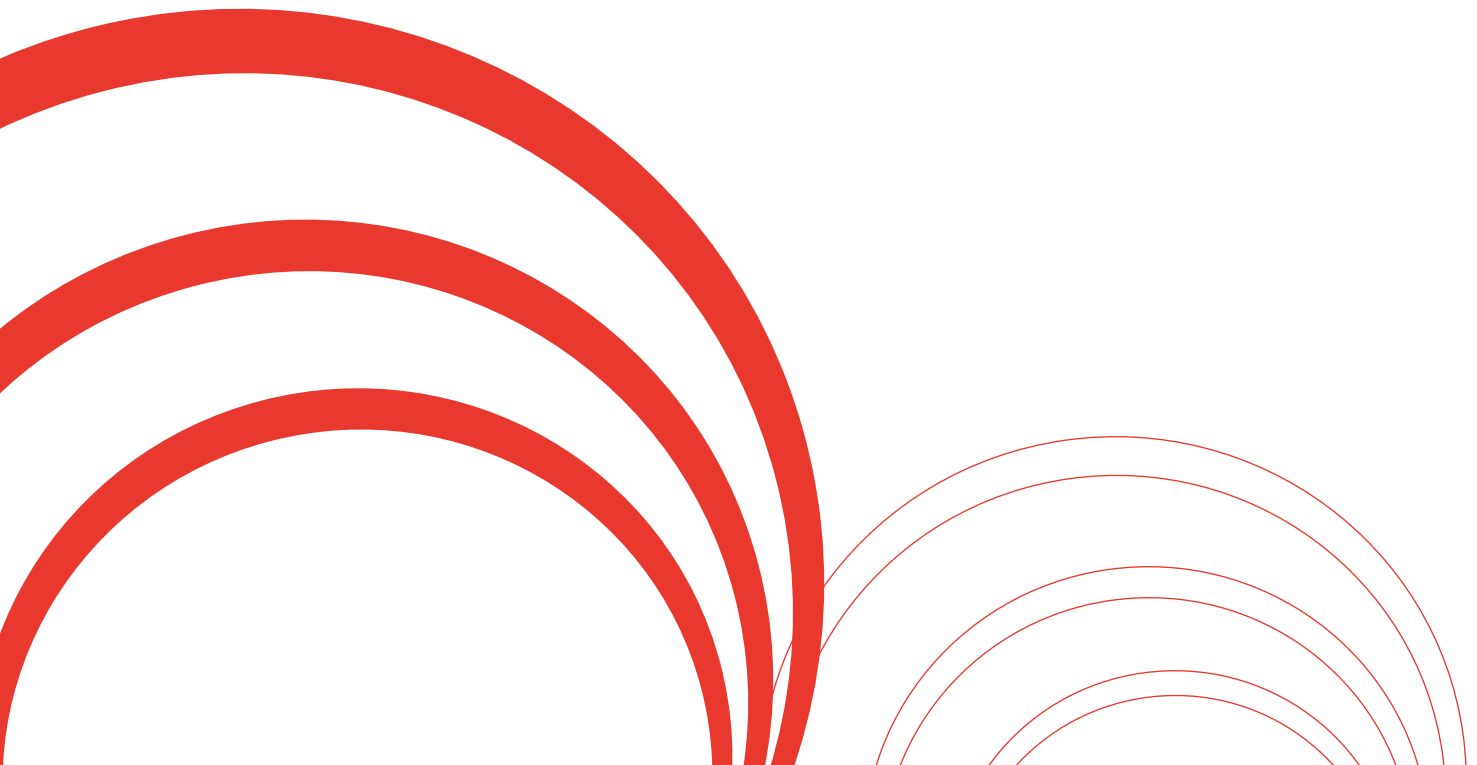
Supported bail accommodation

In 2018-19, \$5.5 million was allocated to bail programs in Darwin and Alice Springs that provide support, accommodation and supervision to children and young people aged 10 – 17 years on bail and other court orders and to establish the bail support line (1800 BAILED):

- Alice Springs Youth Accommodation and Support Services – providing supported accommodation for up to four young people;
- Saltbush Bail Support Accommodation Services – providing bail support, accommodation and supervision for up to 12 male youth in both Darwin and Alice Springs. When it is safe to do so, the Darwin service has some capacity to support young women on bail.

From 1 July 2018 to 31 March 2019 there were 93 separate periods of bail support provided across the three services. Of these and where young people were accommodated in the bail support service, approximately 75 per cent successfully completed their bail orders.

Saltbush Bail Support Accommodation Services operate 1800 BAILED 24 hours a day every day of the year to ensure referral enquiries from police, Court and legal services can be responded to. For the period July 2018 to March 2019 246 calls were made to 1800 BAILED.



Improving Youth Justice

Case study – working with Simon

Simon* was referred to Youth Diversion for offences relating to stealing. Simon attended three sessions with an Alcohol and Other Drugs clinical nurse for support in relation to his marijuana use.

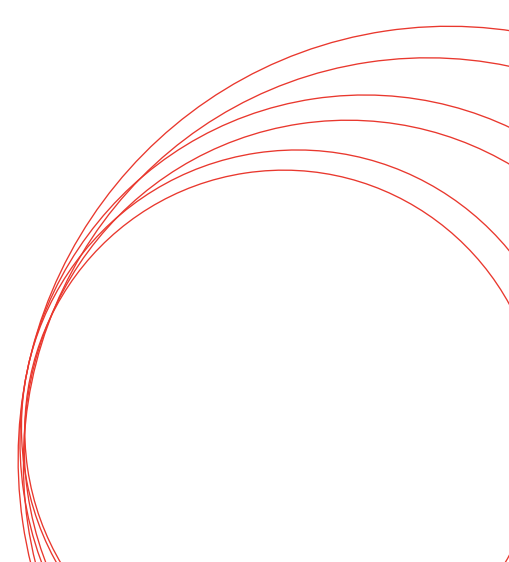
Simon undertook and completed 30 hours community service in his local community ranging from cooking for youth events, garden work and was engaged in a number of activities across the community including pressure cleaning for aged clients. The Program coordinator was very happy with his engagement and he attended all activities punctually.

With his Case Manager's assistance Simon completed apology letters to all the victims and attended a Victims of Crime conference hosted by the Case Manager and senior police. At completion of the conference Simon demonstrated that he understood the impact of the crime and the effect that this has on the victim, their family and their community. Simon's Case Manager completed 22 case management sessions and worked with him to support his behaviour and return to schooling.

**Not the child's real name*

Additional funding in 2018-19 to deliver alternatives to detention and which aim to break the cycle of offending includes:

- \$3.6 million to establish the Barkly Youth Work Camp – as an alternative to detention in Tennant Creek. This program is funded as part of the Barkly Regional Deal and will support young people who are participating in the Back on Track program. The facility will provide the young people with accommodation and opportunities for skills development and community work programs;
- \$8.5 million for the new Palmerston Youth Skills Centre. The Centre is the first Government education training centre to focus on training young people for the skills of the 21st century. Training includes artificial intelligence, Virtual Reality, computers and information technology including the use of drones as well as training in life skills, cooking, cleaning, banking and finance;
- \$700,000 to expand the night patrol hours and youth drop-in centres in Alice Springs. This investment has seen the operating hours of the Tangentyere Council Brown Street Youth Drop-in Centre, the Gap Youth Centre and Community Centre and the Tangentyere Night Patrol to increase operation to seven days a week. The youth drop-in centres provide safe structured activities for at risk children and young people that focus on health, wellbeing, positive relationships and education programs;
- The Tangentyere Night Patrol operate from 6.00 pm to 3.00 am to get young people off the streets and support young people who are sleeping rough; and
- Establishment of the Youth Engagement Night Officers team in Alice Springs. The Team includes seven Youth Engagement Night Officers to work with young people up to the age of 18 who are unsupervised in public places in Alice Springs and engaging in anti-social behaviour. The service operates seven days a week from 8.00 pm – 3.00 am and will work with NT Police, Territory Families and non-government youth services to address anti-social behaviour and refer the young people to ongoing support services.



Improving Youth Justice

Restorative justice conferencing

Court-ordered youth justice conferencing is a process where, after a guilty finding, the victim, offender, facilitator and where appropriate, any other individuals or community members affected by the crime, participate in a conference. Youth justice conferencing ensures that offenders face their victim(s) and undertake agreed actions to provide restitution to victim(s) and the community.

Jesuit Social Services deliver conferencing services in Darwin, Palmerston and Katherine. As at 30 June 2019, 361 Restorative Justice Conferences were completed. This exceeded the target of 175 Conferences and Agreements and demonstrates the agency's commitment to working to achieve better outcomes for young people involved in the criminal justice system, victims and communities.

A Restorative Youth Justice Conferencing Pilot Program is being planned in three remote communities. The conferencing model will be co-designed with elders groups and law and justice groups in line with Local Decision Making commitments. This approach acknowledges the importance of involving Aboriginal people in developing responses to problems experienced by Aboriginal children and young people.



Case study – working with Lucas

Lucas* was referred to Restorative Youth Justice Conferencing for stealing motor vehicles. He had a previous history of offending, used cannabis, poor school attendance and cognitive difficulties. Despite being charged, he was reluctant to take ownership over his role in the stealing, denying that he was part of it.

Participating in the group conference was a confronting process for Lucas. The victims were very emotional when talking about the impact of the offence on them. Lucas had difficulty expressing himself during the conference, however he did try to respond to everyone's questions and was able to control himself and manage the situation when the victims were impassioned.

Lucas has since showed a commitment to making some changes to his life and showed that he was sorry for his actions. Following the group conference, Lucas agreed

to increase his attendance at school, engage in sports activities and get support for his cannabis use. As a result of this engagement, Lucas has been doing really well in his sporting endeavours and was selected to play in a representative Northern Territory team to play interstate.

Lucas' relationship with his father has also improved as a result of the conference. His father participated in the conference, and this was also a turning point for him. He was shocked to hear that the vehicle had been written off as a result of his son's behaviour. He now takes a stronger parenting role and greater responsibility in caring for his son. As a result, his relationship with his son has improved greatly.

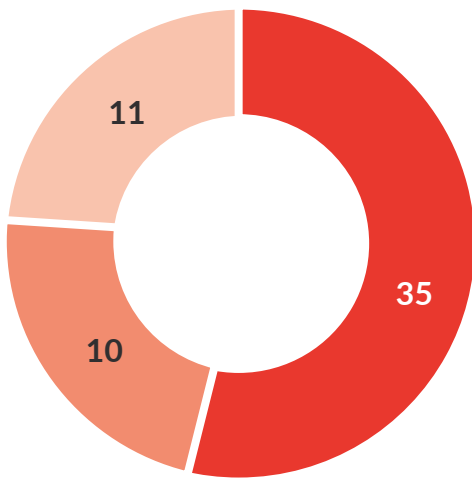
**Not the child's real name*

Improving Youth Justice

An effective youth detention system

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.

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



- Completed
- Well progressed
- Work underway

The Northern Territory Government is implementing a cultural shift in the way the youth justice system works. A strong youth justice system includes ensuring the detention facilities for young people who have committed offences enable the delivery of high quality therapeutic programs, education services, interpersonal and life skill development opportunities and access to training for young people.

Youth detention operations

Territory Families has improved Youth Detention Operations by reviewing behaviour management strategies, recruiting specialist staff and improving training for Youth Justice Officers.

The Centre Cycle Classification system (the Cycle) was introduced into Don Dale Youth Detention Centre in November 2018 and into Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre in March 2019. The Cycle provides a clear and transparent set of rules that provide incentives for ongoing good behaviour and immediate consequences for poor behaviour. Incentives and privileges for young people are aligned to their consistent positive behaviour and engagement with school. Consequences are applied based on severity of any incident a young person is involved with. Early indicators show a reduction in the frequency and severity of incidents on both centres since the introduction of the program.



Improving Youth Justice

Workforce and training

The Youth Justice Detention organisational structure has been implemented; senior youth workers have replaced shift supervisors and additional senior youth justice officer positions have been created. The selection criteria for youth justice officers has been amended to ensure staff better understand and are able to meet the needs of children and young people in detention. These changes have included requiring staff to demonstrate experience of working with vulnerable young people and an understanding of child and adolescent development and the impacts of drug use, poverty, cultural identity, mental health and disability.

Territory Families has also recruited additional female staff to support young women in detention. As at 31 March 2019, there were 10 female staff and 31 male staff at Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre, with 33 female staff and 76 male staff at Don Dale Youth Detention Centre

All new staff now undertake a six week Youth Justice Officer induction course, with senior leaders receiving an additional two weeks training. All Youth Justice Officers are now required to have or obtain a Certificate IV in Youth Justice. Key Youth Justice Leaders are also completing a Graduate Certificate in Developmental Trauma with the Australian Childhood Foundation.

Territory Families is also working with Australian Juvenile Justice Administrators to review the youth justice officer training program and is liaising with the Centre for Cultural Competence Australia to implement policies that incorporate Aboriginal cultural competence and safety in the design and delivery of programs, activities and services for children and young people in detention.

Youth detention infrastructure

During 2018-19 implementation of the 'Fix and Make Safe' programs continued at the two Youth Detention Facilities. The Fix and Make Safe Program aims to strengthen the existing infrastructure to improve the safety and wellbeing of young people in detention, work environments for youth justice staff and other service providers operating in the centres, and operational security management.

The improvements made in 2018 -19 include:

- \$2.25 million allocated to upgrade CCTV cameras at both Don Dale and Alice Springs Detention Centres; and
- \$3 million for Stage 3 upgrades to youth accommodation at the Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre.

Physical improvements have also been made to provide improved amenity to support programs for young women in detention:

- Don Dale Youth Detention Centre: refurbishment of L Block was completed in June 2019. This section can house up to five young women; and
- Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre: standalone accommodation for up to four young women was installed in late 2017.

To modernise record keeping and make information more secure as well as accessible an electronic record keeping system was trialled in Don Dale Youth Detention Centre over February and March 2019.



Improving Youth Justice

Darwin Youth Justice Centre

On 13 March 2019, the Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics listened to the overwhelming feedback provided to the Planning Commission and declined the rezoning application for new Darwin Youth Justice Centre to be located at the then preferred Pinelands site due to

- community concerns received through the planning and consultation processes;
- perceived potential impacts on local businesses; and
- perceived potential impacts to traffic in the area.

There were 102 submissions provided to the Northern Territory Government through the public consultation process associated with the rezoning application. Of the 102 submissions, only three submissions were made in support for the location. The supporting submissions were from the NT Council of Social Services, Anglicare NT, and Jesuit Social Services.

After considering the overwhelming public feedback on the Pinelands site, the Northern Territory Government announced the alternative sites considered and the preferred site at Holtz on 13 August 2019.

While the planning process for the site was proceeding, the Northern Territory Government engaged Bennett Design a local business to develop the draft infrastructure Design Brief for the new Centre. The brief was delivered in June 2019 and will guide the development of concept designs at the new site.

To ensure the design of the Youth Justice Centre is based on co-design principles and is informed by best practice Specialist Advisory Groups have been established. The Specialist Advisory Groups consists of government, community and sector stakeholders. The first meetings of the Groups commenced in January 2019 with further workshops to be scheduled throughout the design process.

Alice Springs Youth Justice Centre

On 30 May 2019 the Government announced that after an extensive process it was unable to identify a new site for the Alice Springs Youth Justice Centre and that plans for new site and a new build would not continue. The preferred sites raised issues which include proximity to residential areas and did not meet community expectations and needs.

The Northern Territory Government has committed \$10 million to significantly redevelop and upgrade the existing Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre to better meet the needs of the young people, staff, families and visitors. The upgrade will focus on improving the space available for young people to engage in learning and training, improving the amenity of facilities for visitors, and provide more flexible accommodation options for young people.

Specialist Advisory Groups, focussed on the redevelopment project in Alice Springs, commenced in June 2019 and will continue throughout the design process.



Improving Youth Justice

Youth detention services and programs

Education in detention

Access to a good education is the right of every child and provides the basis for their future success. Ensuring young people in detention are able to continue their learning and or develop new skills and knowledge is an important part of breaking the cycle of offending and promoting better outcomes.

To better meet the educational needs of young people in detention the Department of Education and Territory Families are working in partnership. The partnership supports improved co-operation, coordination and information sharing between the two agencies. This includes Territory Families providing the Owen Springs at the Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre and Tivendale campuses at the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre with detailed assessments and case management information of the detainees to support the identification of learning needs and appropriate interventions. To support the ongoing learning of young people leaving detention this information is also shared with destination schools. A Memorandum of Understanding signed by the agencies underpins the partnership.

In 2018-19, the Department of Education has established differentiated literacy and numeracy classes where detainees are assessed and placed in relevant instructional groups. Individual education plans are developed for young people and education adjustment plans are also developed if assessments identify that one is needed. Young people in detention also have access to a range of other educational programs including NT Social and Emotional Learning Curriculum, health, art, music, Aboriginal culture and language, as well as vocational education and training.

An Indigenous languages and culture program is now delivered weekly at Owen Springs. The program caters for students from a range of Aboriginal language backgrounds and uses a locally relevant curriculum based on the 'NT Indigenous Languages and Culture, Language and Cultural Awareness Pathway.' Tivendale continues to establish the Indigenous languages and culture program.

Access to Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses are increasing in both schools. VET Certificate I in Skills for Vocational Pathways is operating at Owen Springs School. Tivendale School offers: Certificate II in Construction; Skill Sets in Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management (Landscaping); Certificate II in Horse Care; Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management (Wildlife Care); and Certificate I in Hospitality. Courses accessed by young people while in detention are also available to them upon their release. This has the benefit of ensuring that young people can continue studying and complete their training after they are released.

Non-attendance procedures in Tivendale and Owen Springs have been updated, with both centres implementing measures that encourage students to return to class. Owen Springs is implementing a behaviour management policy where staff use a flow chart to monitor a young person's behaviour. This was created using trauma informed practice principles. School work is provided to students during periods of non-attendance. Tivendale uses a tiered system where young people are offered feedback about their behaviour to enhance their engagement in education.

Department of Education staff working with young people in detention have access to a range of professional learning opportunities to assist them to provide appropriate support to young people. The learning opportunities include training in trauma informed practice and Introduction to Special Education. Department of Education staff work with Territory Families to understand the supports that are available through the youth detention centre and the case management principles that govern the management of the young people.



Improving Youth Justice

Health in detention

Many young people in detention require specialist health and mental health services. Young people entering detention receive comprehensive health assessments and are provided with primary health care services.

To support young people to access these needed services, the Northern Territory Government is negotiating with Aboriginal medical health services to provide the required health services in Darwin and Alice Springs detention centres.

A Specialist Assessment and Treatment Services (SATS) Team have been established to provide case management and coordination services to young people in detention. The Team also provides high level assessment and targeted intervention to address young people's needs and delivers therapeutic programs.

Recruitment to the Team is now almost completed, with 11 of 13 positions including psychologists, occupational therapists and speech therapists now appointed. SATS staff create support plans for all young people in detention more than seven days, and convene monthly case management conferences to coordinate service delivery to each young person.



Improving Youth Justice

Improving Youth Justice portfolio recommendation completions

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
10.01	<p>The Northern Territory Government immediately close the High Security Unit or by whatever name it is known in the current Don Dale Youth Detention Centre.</p>	<p>In November 2017 Territory Families closed B Block (the former Behaviour Management Unit) and updated its policies, directives and way of operating. As at November 2017 there was no comparable function or unit to the former High Security Unit.</p> <p>The work to amend operations coincided with another round of renovations, including changes to B Block that included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> removal of bars and concrete window shields in the education room and replacement with perspex, removal of grill mesh from windows in the dining room area and replacement with perspex, and removal of bars which previously controlled access into A Wing and the education room. <p>In March 2018 these works were completed and the block was re-opened.</p>
11.01	<p>Section 150 of the <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i> be amended to the following effect:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the word 'health' is inserted between the words 'maturity' and 'cultural background' a new subparagraph be added to section 151(3): 'must take all reasonable steps to ensure section 150 of the <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i> is complied with', and develop an admissions process into youth detention centres to comply with section 150 of the <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i>. 	<p>Territory Families addressed this recommendation through the Youth Justice and Related Legislation Amendment Bill 2019.</p>
11.05	<p>Face-to-face visits with the families of detainees be facilitated through increased weekend visiting hours to strengthen and preserve family relationships.</p>	<p>Weekend visiting hours have been extended and reconfirmed as part of the introduction of the Centre Cycle Program in 2018.</p>

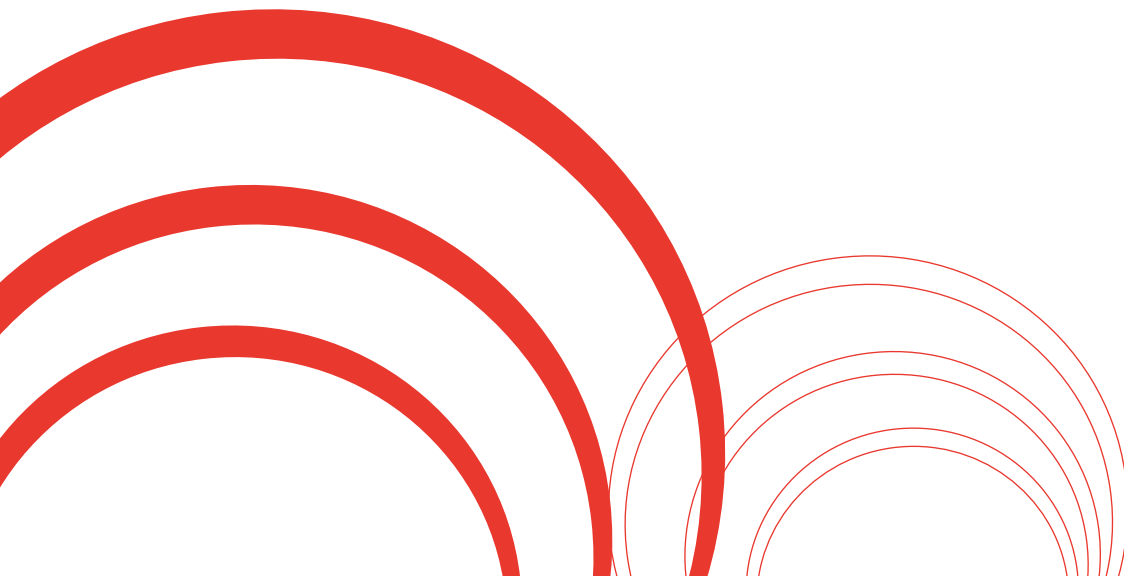
Improving Youth Justice

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION
<p>11.06</p> <p>The incentive schemes currently in use in youth detention centres be reviewed with detainee input to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. remove any elements which might be counter-productive 2. ensure the schemes are effective at encouraging positive behavioural change 3. ensure that the behaviours detainees must exhibit to earn rewards are defined clearly for detainees in ways that they can understand easily, and 4. ensure the scope for staff discretion and inconsistent application are minimised. 	<p>In 2018 a Security Classification Assessment was reintroduced to allow for a more informed assessment of a young person's security risk. This assessment informs planning for security escorts and will assist to keep staff and young people safe when leaving the centre.</p> <p>The Centre Cycle Program now operates to regulate security classifications and the incentives available to young people. Incentives include access to a television, AM/FM radio, books, magazines and canteen orders.</p>
<p>11.07</p> <p>Section 154 of the Youth Justice Act (NT) should be amended to the following effect:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the transfer of a detainee to an adult facility occur only with the approval of a Judge, and 2. for no more than five consecutive days unless a further order is subsequently sought within that five-day period to extend for a further five days and that multiple extensions are permitted. 	<p>The NT repealed section 154 of the Youth Justice Act (NT) in 2017; the transfer of a young person to adult facility is not legally possible.</p>
<p>11.08</p> <p>The Youth Justice Regulations (NT) be amended to require the superintendent of the youth detention centre at the time of transfer to ensure that the staff at the adult facility are made aware that the Youth Justice Act (NT) and its protections apply to the detainee.</p>	<p>The Youth Justice Amendment Bill passed in March 2019 inserted new section 168A created an express power in the Youth Justice Act 2005 for a detainee to be transferred from one detention centre to another to clarify the superintendent's powers.</p>
<p>13.01</p> <p>The use of spit hoods should continue to be prohibited. If spitting by detainees is a concern for staff numbers at youth detention centres, other practical alternatives should be investigated to prevent exposure.</p>	<p>The Youth Justice Amendment Act 2018 prohibited the use of restraints and limited the use of force for young people in detention, including spit hoods.</p>

Improving Youth Justice

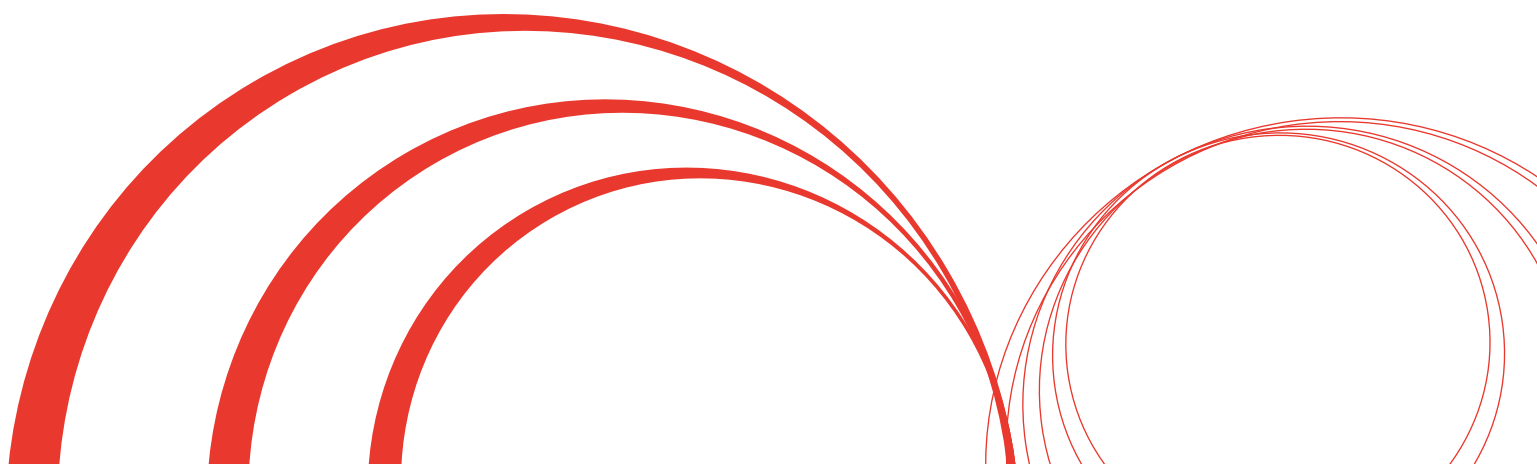
Improving Youth Justice portfolio recommendation completions (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
13.02	The restraint chair should continue to be prohibited.	Use of restraint chairs was prohibited by legal amendment in 2016. The <i>Youth Justice Amendment Act 2018</i> further prohibited the use of restraints and limited the use of force for young people in detention.
13.03	The use of CS gas in youth detention centres should be prohibited.	The operational use of CS gas in youth detention centres was ceased in 2016. This restriction does not apply to NT Police who may use CS gas when responding to dynamic situations in youth detention.
13.04	The <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i> and the Youth Justice Regulations (NT) be amended to the following effect: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> to prohibit expressly force or restraint being used for the purposes of maintaining the 'good order' of a youth detention centre or to 'discipline' a detainee, and to ensure that specific constraints on the circumstances and manner in which force, restraint, isolation and searches may be used under the <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i> cannot be avoided by section 152 of the <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i>. 	In March 2018 the <i>Youth Justice Act</i> was amended to remove the ability to use force for good order or discipline. The powers in the Youth Justice Act around the use of force and restraint have been amended to limit the superintendent's powers under 152. Consequently force, separation and restraint can only be used in prescribed situations.



Improving Youth Justice

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION
<p>13.05 <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i> and the Youth Justice Regulations (NT) be amended to have the following effect in relation to the use of force:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. use of force be permitted only in circumstances where all other measures have failed the use of force be permitted only to protect a detainee, another detainee, or another person from physical injury 2. the use of force be only applied by persons trained and holding a current qualification in physical intervention techniques on children and young people 3. the use of force be proportionate in the circumstances, and take into account the detainee's background, age, physical and mental circumstances 4. mandate that a verbal warning be given before force is used, and the detainee given a reasonable period of time to comply, except in emergency circumstances, and 5. the superintendent ensure any detainee injured by use of force is examined by a treating doctor or nurse and clinical notes be recorded. 	<p>In March 2018, legislation to limit the use of restraints, force and isolation was passed as part of the Northern Territory Government's youth justice system overhaul.</p> <p>In March 2018 the <i>Youth Justice Act</i> was amended to remove the ability to use force for good order or discipline.</p> <p>Consequently the use of force, separation and restraint can only be used in prescribed situations and in line with the recommendations.</p>



Improving Youth Justice

Improving Youth Justice portfolio recommendation completions (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
13.06	Section 152(1A) of the <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i> be repealed and section 153(4) be amended to have the effect that restraints only be used to protect a detainee from self-harm, to protect the safety of another person, or to protect serious damage to property and an emergency situation exists.	In March 2018, legislation to limit the use of restraints, force and isolation was passed in as part of the Northern Territory Government's youth justice system overhaul.
13.07	<p>The <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i> and Youth Justice Regulations (NT) be amended to regulate the use of strip searches to the following effect:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. provide that strip searches only be conducted where there is a reasonable belief that the search is necessary to prevent a risk of harm to detainees or staff of the youth detention centre 2. stipulate that any strip search be conducted by two members of staff of the same gender as the detainee 3. stipulate that a detainee must not be stripped of clothing and searched in the presence of another detainee, unless it cannot be avoided, and 4. stipulate that the strip search be conducted having the detainee remove the top half of his or her clothing for the inspection and then re-dress before removing the bottom half of his or her clothing, colloquially known as the as the 'half and half' 	<p>In March 2018 changes to the <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i>, Section 161, introduced a new scheme for the 'Search of Detainees'. Personal searches can only be conducted if the Superintendent believes on reasonable grounds that the search is necessary to prevent a risk of harm to the detainee or another person and the detainee has already submitted to a pat down search.</p> <p>In March 2019, further amendments were made to Section 161 to reflect that the Superintendent can direct a detainee to submit to a screening search or a pat down search:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when the detainee is admitted to the detention centre; • upon the detainee temporarily leaving and returning to the detention centre; and • upon the detainee being transferred from the detention centre to a custodial correctional facility or another detention centre.

Improving Youth Justice

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION
<p>13.09</p> <p>Territory Families investigate the use of pat down searches in conjunction with metal detector wands as an alternative to strip searches.</p>	<p>In March 2018 changes to the <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i>, Section 161, introduced a new scheme for the 'Search of Detainees'. Personal searches can only be conducted if the Superintendent believes on reasonable grounds that the search is necessary to prevent a risk of harm to the detainee or another person and the detainee has already submitted to a pat down search.</p> <p>When entering a detention centre on admission, or re-admission following a transfer from another centre or a leave of absence, a young person will be directed to undergo a screening or pat down search. A screening search is a search conducted using equipment that is designed to carry out the search without touching the person. Such equipment may include metal detector wands.</p> <p>The Superintendent may direct a young person to submit to a screening or pat down search within a detention centre if, again, they are of the belief, on reasonable grounds, that the search or screening is necessary to ensure the safety of any person within the detention centre, or, to ensure the security of the detention centre.</p>




Improving Youth Justice

Improving Youth Justice portfolio recommendation completions (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
14.01	<p>Section 153(5) of the <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i> be repealed and in its place a new provision be inserted to have the following effect:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The superintendent may separate a detainee from other detainees where: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> b. a detainee for good reason requests to be separated from other detainees; c. a detainee is ill and may be infectious; d. separation is reasonably necessary for the detainee's protection; e. separation is reasonably necessary either: to protect the safety of another person or property but only after all reasonable behavioural or therapeutic options have been attempted and have not alleviated any threat to safety; or f. to restore order at the detention facility but only after all reasonable behavioural or therapeutic options have been attempted and order has not been restored, and no other course is reasonably available or practical. 2. If the superintendent separates a detainee from other detainees under sub-paragraph (1)(d) above, it must be reported to the Chief Executive Officer of Territory Families and to the Children's Commissioner as soon as reasonably practical. 3. If the superintendent separates a detainee from other detainees under sub-paragraphs (1)(c) or (d) above, that separation must not continue for more than 24 hours without the approval of the Chief Executive Officer of Territory Families. 4. Prior to isolating a detainee, verbal and other de-escalation strategies must be attempted. 	<p>Territory Families addressed this recommendation through the Youth Justice Amendment Bill 2018, which passed in March 2018. Section 153, inserted into the <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i>, under the heading 'Prohibited actions' lists a number of actions that are to be expressly prohibited.</p>

Improving Youth Justice

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION
<p>14.01 (cont.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. The superintendent must regularly and at least every two hours review the decision to separate to ensure that the period of separation does not extend longer than is required. 6. The superintendent must record or cause to be recorded a decision to separate a detainee under subsection 1 in a register and include in that register information such as the date on which the period of separation commenced, the duration of the period of separation and the reasons for the decision. 7. Prior to separation, or within a reasonable period after separation, a detainee must be seen by a health professional. During the period in which the detainee is separated, the detainee: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. must have access to a case worker, counsellor or psychologist within a reasonable time, or when a staff member forms the view that they should be consulted must not be denied access to education including education material to enable private study; b. must not be denied access to lawyers, family members and appropriate peers; c. must be given access to outdoor exercise or recreation at least every three hours if the separation lasts for three hours or longer between 8am and 6pm for at least 15 minutes; and d. must have access to appropriate recreation material such as reading material. 8. Isolation for the purposes of behaviour management or punishment is prohibited. 9. Extendable periods in isolation beyond 24 hours are prohibited. 	

Improving Youth Justice

Improving Youth Justice portfolio recommendation completions (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
15.03	Best practice in youth suicide prevention be part of induction training for youth justice officers. If isolation is required a trained staff member sit in proximity to the detainee and engage appropriately as required	A revised training program for Youth Justice Officers has been implemented. The program includes best practice suicide prevention training and information on how to support a detainee at risk.
16.02	Children and young people receive schoolwork appropriate to their ability during any period of suspension, exclusion or other non-attendance at school. The Northern Territory Department of Education ensure its policies and guidelines regulating exclusion and suspension decision-making provide procedural fairness mechanisms appropriate to the position of children and young people in youth detention.	<p>By December 2018 students were receiving schoolwork appropriate to their ability during periods of non-attendance at school.</p> <p>By March 2019 procedures were in place to monitor student behaviour, using trauma informed practice principles, and support students to self-regulate and remain positively engaged in learning.</p> <p>Department of Education Guidelines on Suspensions and sections of the <i>Education Act (2015)</i> require procedural fairness and for principals to consider a range of factors before deciding on how to manage a student's behaviour.</p> <p>Non-attendance procedures have been updated at Tivendale and Owen Springs, with both detention centres having measures in place to provide school work to students during periods of nonattendance.</p> <p>Further, Owen Springs is implementing a Behaviour Management policy where staff use a flow chart to monitor the young person's behaviour. This was created using trauma informed practice principles. Tivendale uses a tiered system where young people are offered feedback about their behaviour to enhance their engagement in school. If young people opt out of class, they are encouraged to return at both Owen Springs and Tivendale education programs.</p>

Improving Youth Justice

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION
<p>16.04</p> <p>The Department of Education and superintendents of youth detention facilities base school classes within youth detention centres on ability level and age.</p>	<p>Since December 2018 Individual Education Plans have been developed for young people as soon as possible after the young person enters detention.</p> <p>Differentiated literacy and numeracy classes have been established and students are placed in instructional groups on the basis of assessments.</p> <p>Students are assessed for their English as a Second Language (ESL) levels in reading, writing, speaking and listening at Owen Springs, and grouped accordingly. Teaching and learning tasks are designed to scaffold the language of the curriculum as needed. Tivendale is working towards using the Northern Territory Curriculum Framework ESL levels.</p>
<p>16.07</p> <p>Staff members employed in education in youth detention receive training in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the rehabilitation purpose of youth detention; the function of education in the rehabilitation of children and young people; the case management principles that govern management of youth detention operations; the special education needs profile of children and young people in detention; the special support services available to children and young people in detention and how and when to make referrals to those services; and how to deliver education in youth detention by a trauma-informed approach. 	<p>By December 2018, education staff working with young people in detention accessed training in trauma informed practice and working in youth detention.</p> <p>Since then professional learning opportunities have expanded to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to Special Education Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder Understanding Dyslexia and Significant Reading Difficulties <p>Supporting Student Wellbeing and Mental Health will become available in Term 3 2019.</p> <p>In February 2019, Tivendale staff also received Records and Information Management training which focused on freedom of information, privacy and procedures around information sharing.</p> <p>Education staff at Owen Springs and Tivendale work with Territory Families to understand the supports that are available through the youth detention centre and the case management principles that govern the management of the young people.</p>

Improving Youth Justice

Improving Youth Justice portfolio recommendation completions (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION
<p>16.09</p> <p>The Northern Territory Government remove barriers to children and young people in youth detention accessing vocational education services due to their detainee status, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. developing programs suitable for delivery inside the detention centres; b. developing policies to permit children and young people (with appropriate risk assessments) to leave youth detention facilities temporarily to attend vocational education activities in the community; c. increasing the availability of online vocational education activities and access to those activities; and d. ensuring these programs are made available to young persons on remand. 	<p>Work is continuing between Department of Education and Territory Families to improve access to Vocational Education and Training (VET). Programs are delivered in ways which best engage the young people.</p> <p>Certificate I in Skills for Vocational Pathways commenced at Owen Springs in February 2019. A one day per week VET program is operating at Tivendale which includes a range of training options: Certificate II in Construction, Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management Skill Set (Landscaping), Certificate II in Horse Care Skill Set, Cert II in Conservation and Land Management Skill Set (Wildlife Care) and Certificate 1 in Hospitality Skill Set.</p> <p>Where possible, courses are structured to allow young people exiting detention to continue their VET study upon release. This has the benefit of ensuring students can continue and complete their training.</p> <p>Department of Education is working with Territory Families to provide opportunities for young people in detention, who have appropriate risk ratings, to leave the youth detention centre to attend VET activities or apply their VET learnings. This has resulted in post-release employment for a young person.</p>
<p>17.01</p> <p>Sufficient female youth justice officers be rostered on duty to supervise female detainees.</p>	<p>The number of female Youth Justice Officers has significantly increased since 2016-17. Workforce reporting and recruitment strategies include a focus on gender balance within the detention workforce to ensure there is a sufficient number of female youth justice officers at all times.</p>
<p>17.02</p> <p>Girls and young women in youth detention have equivalent access to education, training, recreation and personal care as boys and young men.</p>	<p>Access to education, training, recreation and personal care for young women in detention is consistent with the options available to the young men in detention.</p>
<p>17.04</p> <p>The Youth Justice Regulations (NT) be amended to include a regulation requiring physical contact with female detainees only be by female youth justice officers unless there are no female youth justice officers rostered in the youth detention centre or in an emergency.</p>	<p>Territory Families addressed this recommendation through amendments to the Youth Justice Act (NT) passed in December 2016.</p>

Improving Youth Justice

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
20.01	The selection criteria for a youth justice officer be amended to include demonstrated experience working with vulnerable young people including an understanding of child and adolescent development, issues with drug use, poverty, cultural identity, mental health and disability	The selection criteria for Youth Justice Officers was amended in line with the recommendation, and implemented in 2018.
20.02	Youth justice officers be required to obtain a Certificate IV in Youth Justice in the first 12 months of their employment.	<p>In April 2017, Territory Families introduced Certificate IV for Youth Justice Officers, however prior to this, staff were required to complete a Certificate III qualification. From July 2018, it has been a pre-requisite that staff upgrade to the higher qualification.</p> <p>The Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment has listed the Certificate IV in Youth Justice as a mandatory qualification for all Youth Justice Officers in the Northern Territory Public Sector, in accordance with Determination 3 of 1,999 (Qualifications Framework).</p>
20.03	<p>Youth justice officers participate in induction training before commencing work in youth detention centres which includes at least the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. report writing and the use of the Integrated Offender Management System 2. work place policies and procedures, including any Code of Conduct 3. the Youth Justice Act (NT) and the Youth Justice Regulations (NT) 4. responding to suicide and self-harm de-escalation and mediation 5. use of reasonable force 6. use of restraint devices 7. trauma informed practice 8. cultural awareness 9. drug and alcohol awareness 10. mental health issues, and 11. staff well-being. 	Youth Justice Officer induction training was refreshed in line with the recommendation during 2018.



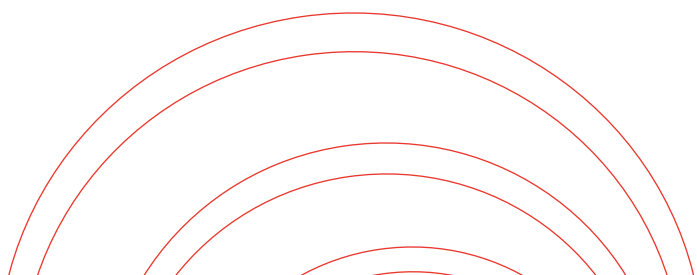
Improving Youth Justice

Improving Youth Justice portfolio recommendation completions (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
20.06	Superintendents participate in an induction training program before commencing work in youth detention centres on the Youth Justice Act (NT) and Youth Justice Regulations (NT).	Induction training, which includes the Youth Justice Act (NT) and the Youth Justice Regulations (NT), is provided to all Youth Justice Officers including Superintendents. Superintendents, Deputy Superintendents, Team Leaders and Senior Youth Justice Officers participate in the new Team Leader training course.
20.07	Territory Families continue to move towards a permanent staffing model for youth justice officers.	Territory Families has made a significant commitment to building the workforce in both detention centres, increasing the base line establishment figures, increasing the number and level of leadership positions, and moving away from casual employment towards a permanent staffing model.
21.01	Territory Families: 1. introduce video and sound recording, in the form of body-worn video cameras in youth detention centres, and 2. designate an individual, who is independent from youth justice officers, as the single point of contact for the provision of video and sound records to external agencies.	Territory Families has improved video capture capability throughout the two detention facilities and appointed a designated role for the provision of video and sound records to external agencies
21.03	A document retention policy, having regard to all relevant legal obligations, be developed and implemented	A document retention policy has been developed and implemented as part of the Records Management Toolkit.
21.04	The criteria for the assessment of the superintendent's work-place performance include compliance with record keeping obligations under the Youth Justice Act (NT) , the Information Act (NT), Youth Justice Regulations (NT) and any relevant Commissioner Directives.	A document retention policy has been developed and implemented as part of the Records Management Toolkit. The Superintendent's work place performance assessment includes adherence to this policy.
21.05	The criteria for the assessment of the Deputy Chief Executive Officer's work-place performance include the steps taken to facilitate and effect compliance with record keeping obligations under the Youth Justice Act (NT) , the Information Act (NT) , Youth Justice Regulations (NT) and any relevant Commissioner Directives	A document retention policy has been developed and implemented as part of the Records Management Toolkit. The Deputy Chief Executives Officer's work place performance assessment includes adherence to this policy.

Improving Youth Justice

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION
<p>22.01</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="312 504 813 853">1. Police Standing Orders include a directive that when police receive a report from any source of an alleged criminal offence against a young person in detention, police are required to attend the detention facility and have direct contact with the detainee. This should take place as promptly as operational matters permit, but in any case within 72 hours of receipt of the report.<li data-bbox="312 880 813 1288">2. Police Standing Orders include a directive that when interviewing a detainee who is potentially a complainant in a criminal matter, police ensure that communication with the detainee is conducted privately from detention centre staff members and other detainees and if the complaint is against a staff member, at times when the relevant officer is not on duty. If practicable, police should arrange for an independent person to be present to support the detainee.	<p>A protocol in response to allegations of assault in prisons and youth detention centres was developed and implemented in May 2017. The protocol was reviewed in June 2019 to fully reflect the recommendations from the Royal Commission.</p> <p>The revised protocol has been recirculated to all staff in Joint Emergency Services Coordination Centre, Watch Commanders and Territory Duty Officers.</p>



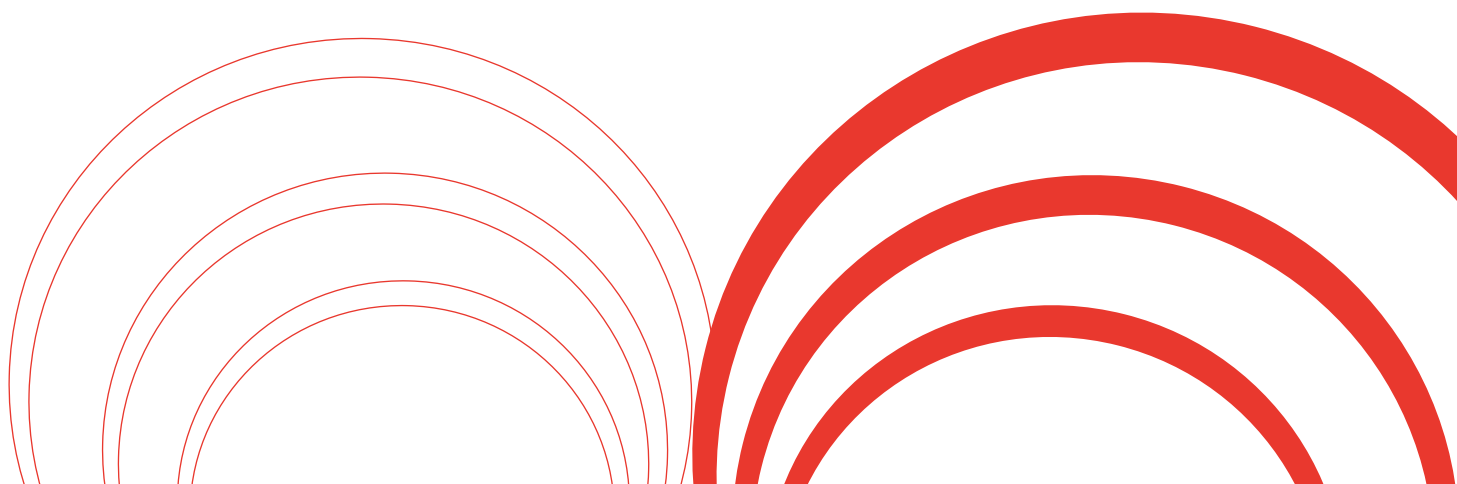
Improving Youth Justice

Improving Youth Justice portfolio recommendation completions (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION
<p>23.01</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer of Territory Families ensure that training programmes for all management and operational workers in youth detention centres meet the following minimum standards: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. that such training programmes ensure that the physical, psychological and emotional welfare of children and young people, as well as their rehabilitation, is a principal focus; b. that, in accordance with Regulation 64 of the Youth Justice Regulations (NT), workers are trained in ways to exercise understanding, restraint and patience in the care, control and supervision of children and young people and in the maintenance of discipline among children and young people, and to encourage positive behaviour among children and young people consistent with increasing their responsibility and independence; c. that workers comply with, and understand, the sections of the Youth Justice Act (NT) and the Youth Justice Regulations (NT) concerning the use of force, restraint, searches and isolation; d. that such training is consistent with Australia's human rights obligations with respect to children and young people held in detention; and e. that such training applies principles and standards of the Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators. 2. One of the criteria for the assessment of the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of Territory Families work-place performance be ensuring. 	<p>Common induction training that meets the standards outlined in the Recommendation has been introduced for Youth Justice Officers.</p>

Improving Youth Justice

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION
<p>25.04</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="312 504 813 660">1. A custody notification scheme be introduced requiring police to notify a lawyer from an appropriate legal service as soon as a child or young person is brought into custody.<li data-bbox="312 683 813 907">2. The Northern Territory Government commit to resource the custody notification scheme following the initial three-year funding from the Commonwealth Government, including funding the legal services to provide the custody notification scheme.	<p>The Northern Territory Custody Notification Scheme, operated by the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency, commenced on 11 June 2019.</p> <p>The recommendation was also addressed through the Youth Justice and Related Legislation Amendment Bill 2019.</p> <p>The Northern Territory Government is committed to providing ongoing funding after the initial three years, if the model is feasible for the Northern Territory.</p>



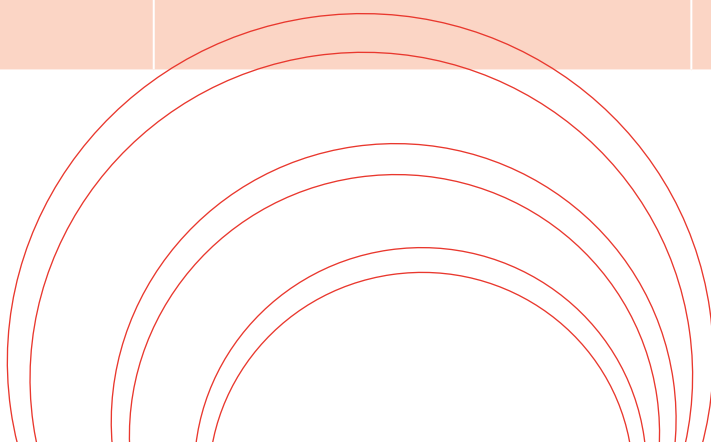
Improving Youth Justice

Improving Youth Justice portfolio recommendation completions (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION
<p>25.06</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to amend section 14 of the Youth Justice Act (NT) be amended to provide that a child or young person must not be interviewed by police: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. until they have sought and obtained legal advice and assistance; or b. after exercising their right to silence. 2. The Northern Territory Government take immediate steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. to ensure the register of support persons established under section 14 of the Youth Justice Act (NT) includes people from Aboriginal Law and Justice Groups and/or other Aboriginal community bodies for each area of the Northern Territory; b. Justice Act (NT) to require that a person may only be on the register of support persons if they have undertaken training by an approved provider on their role as a support person; c. to ensure police provide support people who are not lawyers with information in an easily understood form, including orally, with the use of an interpreter if necessary, or by providing a document or showing a video explaining the support role and outlining what the support person can or cannot do to assist the child during the interview; and d. to ensure all decisions by police to use a support person from the register of support people are reviewed by a senior officer, including the steps taken to locate a member of the young person's family or an alternative support person. 	<p>Territory Families addressed this recommendation through the Youth Justice and Related Legislation Amendment Bill 2019.</p>
<p>25.10</p> <p>The Youth Justice Act (NT) be amended to remove the restriction on police consideration of diversion in section 39(3)(c).</p>	<p>Territory Families addressed this recommendation in the Youth Justice and Related Legislation Amendment Bill 2019.</p>

Improving Youth Justice

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
25.11	The references to offences against Part (V) and Part (VI) of the <i>Traffic Act (NT)</i> be reviewed with a view to enabling children and young people charged with offences under these provisions to be eligible for diversion under section 39 of the Youth Justice Act (NT).	Territory Families addressed this recommendation through the Youth Justice and Related Legislation Amendment Bill 2019.
25.13	The <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i> be amended to require reports about a child or young person's participation in a diversion program be tendered in court and made available to the child or young person's legal representative.	Territory Families addressed this recommendation through the Youth Justice and Related Legislation Amendment Bill 2019.
25.15	Ensure that appropriate facilities are available in Alice Springs for girls or young women who need to be held on remand.	Standalone female accommodation was installed at Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre in 2018.
25.16	Territory Families investigate the development of electronic means of explaining bail and reminding young people of their bail obligations.	A suit of bail reforms announced on 8 February 2018 includes a Bail support line – 1800 BAILED. The line receives referrals from the Northern Territory Courts, Northern Territory Police, legal service providers and/or young people when conditional bail is being considered. Saltbush Social Enterprises operates the line 24/7, year round (including public holidays).
25.17	Electronic monitoring conditions should only be considered when there is no other alternative to remanding the child or young person in detention.	<p>Electronic monitoring is applied in circumstances when there is no other alternative to remanding a young person in detention. Territory Families Youth Justice Directives were updated and introduced following the Royal Commission, and cover the appropriate use of electronic monitoring.</p> <p>Territory Families is working with the courts and the police in relation to appropriate decision making on the use of bail, remand and electronic monitoring.</p>



Improving Youth Justice

Improving Youth Justice portfolio recommendation completions (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION
<p>25.19 The <i>Bail Act (NT)</i> be amended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. to provide that a youth should not be denied bail unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. charged with a serious offence and a sentence of detention is probable if convicted; ii. they present a serious risk to public safety; iii. there is a serious risk of the youth committing a serious offence while on bail; or iv. they have previously failed to appear without a reasonable excuse. b. to require that when imposing bail conditions the police and courts take into consideration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the age, maturity and circumstances of the young person, including their home environment; and ii. the capacity of the young person to comply with the conditions. c. to require that at the time bail is granted to a young person, each bail condition and the consequences of breach of that condition be explained to the young person, taking steps to ensure their understanding, using interpreters or modified means of communication if necessary; d. to exclude children and young people from the operation of section 37B (offence to breach bail); and e. to give police the power to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. issue an informal or formal written warning to a young person believed to have breached any bail condition; or ii. where a breach has occurred more than once, issue a summons to a young person who has breached bail requiring them to come before the court to determine the consequences of any breach. 	<p>Territory Families addressed this recommendation through the Youth Justice and Related Legislation Amendment Bill 2019.</p>

Improving Youth Justice

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION
<p>25.20</p> <p>The Commissioner of Police issue a Directive setting out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. guidelines for the police in relation to curfew checks, including the circumstances in which they should be used or avoided, and their frequency, and a. that police only arrest a child or young person for breach of bail where the breach occurs as a result of or in connection with further offending and after police have considered and rejected as inappropriate issuing a summons, or where the breaching conduct clearly indicates a materially increased risk of non-attendance at court or further offending. 	<p>A Directive was issued on 21 August 2018 outlining how police engage with young people. The content of this Directive will also inform the ongoing rewrite of youth general orders and related policies.</p> <p>The spirit and intent of this recommendation will be further reinforced by proposed amendments to the <i>Youth Justice Act (NT)</i>, in relation to the removal of breach of bail as a standalone offence.</p>
<p>25.22</p> <p>The Northern Territory Government, in the establishment and delivery of bail support services, give priority to working with Aboriginal community controlled organisations.</p>	<p>Youth Justice Bail Support Accommodation services have been established in Darwin and Alice Springs to support young people aged 10 -17 years to comply with their bail conditions.</p> <p>Territory Families contracts the Alice Springs Youth Accommodation and Support Services and the Saltbush Bail Support Accommodation Services in Darwin to provide a safe and secure, home-like environment and improve the ability of young people to maintain their bail conditions.</p> <p>The contracts for the outsourced Bail Support Accommodation include Territory Families standard conditions (introduced in 2017-18) that require Aboriginal employment targets, and co-design and collaboration with Aboriginal community organisations.</p>
<p>25.33</p> <p>The Commissioner of Police by Directive require police to take all reasonable steps to obtain the contact details of a responsible adult for a young person taken into police custody and provide those details to the young person's legal representative as soon as possible.</p>	<p>A police Directive has been issued requiring police to take all reasonable steps to contact a responsible adult as soon as possible and notify the young person's legal representative. This includes notifying the Custody Notification Service.</p>

Improving Youth Justice

Improving Youth Justice portfolio recommendation completions (cont.)

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION	
25.39	<p>Territory Families in consultation with Aboriginal health and legal assistance organisations and NTLAC undertake an immediate assessment of the diversion program requirements available to the Youth Justice Court pursuant to section 64 of the Youth Justice Act (NT) and make available the necessary resourcing to support their implementation and delivery.</p>	<p>Territory Families has progressed significant legislative amendments regarding the provisions covering youth diversion (including section 64) in consultation with the Northern Territory Legal Aid Commission and other legal assistance and health organisations (through the Legislative Amendment Advisory Committee). A Bill incorporating this work was introduced to Parliament in March 2019.</p> <p>Significant investment in new diversion services and new diversion pathways has occurred. This included the review of existing diversion programs and the creation of the Youth Outreach and Reengagement Program in 2017, the establishment of the Youth Services Directorate in 2018 and the launch of Back on Track in 2019.</p> <p>There has been a significant increase in investment in youth early intervention programs. The Department of the Chief Minister Regional Youth Network and the Police Youth Directorate have also reviewed and improved the use of outsourced youth services.</p>
28.02	<p>The Northern Territory:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and complete as soon as possible a program of works to further improve the physical environments and facilities at the current Don Dale Youth Detention Centre and Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre. 2. Involve detainees in the project as much as possible, including by consulting with them about the kinds of improvements they would like, taking their views into account in developing the program of works and giving them the opportunity to participate in the work where appropriate. 3. Review the current staff working at youth detention centres to ensure that only those who can work in a trauma-informed therapeutic model of youth detention continue to be employed in frontline roles 	<p>The NT has committed and implemented over \$10.48m to the <i>Fix and Make Safe</i> program in Don Dale and Alice Springs Youth Detention Centres.</p> <p>The program has involved detainees and has greatly improved the physical environments of the Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre and the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre, while the new Darwin facility is planned and constructed.</p> <p>Territory Families has updated the selection requirements for Youth Justice Officers and introduce an updated induction program that focusses on therapeutic approaches in youth detention.</p>

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

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

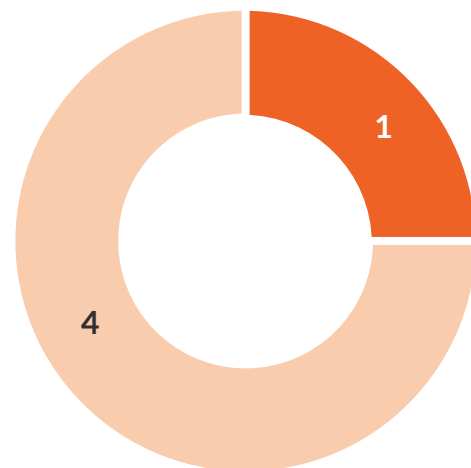
Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

Key achievements include:

- Endorsing the National Standards for Working with Children Check and continuing to work with the federal, state and territory governments.
- Amending the Teacher Registration Act to increase to the Teachers Registration Board's power to take disciplinary actions and increase transparency in decision making.
- Commenced participation in the National Redress Scheme to support eligible survivors of child sexual abuse.



Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



- Completed
- Work underway

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

Child Safe Organisations

The Northern Territory Government is committed to improving children's safety no matter which services or organisations they have contact with and are progressing implementation of the National Standards for Working with Children Check and Child Safe Standards and Principles in consultation with Commonwealth Government and key stakeholders.

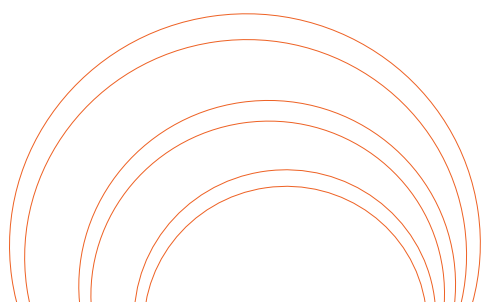
In January 2019, the Northern Territory Government endorsed the National Standards for Working with Children Check and is continuing to work with the federal, state and territory governments to develop National Standards for Working with Children Check and nationally consistent parameters for screening people wanting to engage in child-related work.

The Northern Territory Working with Children Check or Ochre Card, which has been in place since 2010, is being reviewed as part of the Northern Territory Government's legislative reform processes to create a Single Act for Children.

The Northern Territory Government endorsed the Child Safe Standards and Principles in June 2018 as part of its response to the Final Report from the Royal Commission into Institutional responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Child Safe Standards and Principles are central to the Generational Change Reform Agenda and the Northern Territory Government's legislative reform agenda, including development of a Single Act for Children to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children are central in decisions and policy development.

In May 2019 the Northern Territory Government passed legislative amendments to strengthen the Teacher Registration Act. This was the first time in over a decade where efforts were made to strengthen this legislation. The legislation was reviewed in light of the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the national review of Teacher Registration that was conducted by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership in 2018.

The legislative amendments are future focussed and flexible to accommodate a range of potential changes that may result from national initiatives. Among the key amendments are increases to the Teachers Registration Board's power to take disciplinary actions, when required, and increased openness, transparency and access to information regarding operation of the Board and the decisions that it makes.



Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

Redress and civil claims

The establishment of a National Redress Scheme (Scheme) was a recommendation by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Scheme enables government and non-government institutions to acknowledge and help people who experienced sexual abuse as a child. It is designed for institutions to take responsibility and make amends for abuse that happened to children for whom they provided care. The 10 year Scheme began on 1 July 2018.

The Redress Scheme provides eligible survivors with a monetary payment, access to counselling and psychological care; and a direct personal response (apology from the responsible institution). The Scheme allows for a trauma informed alternative to pursuing litigation through the courts. Payments are assessed on a case-by-case basis, reflecting the severity and impact of the abuse experienced, with a maximum payment of \$150,000.

On 16 November 2019 the Northern Territory Government became fully participating in the Scheme. The Department of the Attorney General and Justice established the NT Redress Coordination Team within the Crimes Victims Services Unit. The Team is responsible for:

- Providing one point of contact between the Commonwealth (Scheme Operator) and Northern Territory Government Departments;
- The provision of policy advice regarding all aspects of the scheme including through the Interjurisdictional Committee and supporting the Minister as a member of the Ministers Redress Scheme Governance Board;
- Coordinating requests for information and investigations regarding claims of institutional child sexual abuse;
- Brokerage of counselling and psychological care for all Northern Territory residents who accept redress;
- Coordination and facilitation of direct personal responses apologies from Northern Territory institutions to survivors;

- Education / training in reducing vicarious trauma and trauma informed care to key stakeholders;
- Financial coordination, including payments to the Scheme Operator of invoices for redress payments relating to Northern Territory Government institutions and counselling and psychological care; and
- All reporting to the Scheme Operator.

The NT Redress Coordination Team is working with local government to ensure all those who experienced sexual abuse in Northern Territory institutions have access to the scheme.

The NT Redress Coordination Team continues to work with relevant Northern Territory Government departments to investigate and process claims relating to NT institutions both pre and post self-government. As of 30 June 2019, the Northern Territory Government is yet to receive an invoice seeking redress.

Nationally, as of 21 June 2019:

- Over 4,100 applications for Redress have been made;
- 229 Redress payments have been made;
- 85 offers have been made (Applicants have six months to consider whether to accept an offer);
- The average Redress payment is around \$83,000.00; and
- The National Redress Scheme Operator has answered more than 40,000 phone calls.

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse portfolio recommendation completions

RECOMMENDATIONS	CLOSURE ACTION
<p>36.03 Territory Families review departmental policies and processes, identifying improvements to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. any history of allegations involving sexualised behaviour or sexually abusive behaviour by children and young people is taken into account in the level of supervision and support afforded to the child or young person, and b. any history of allegations involving sexual assault or indecent assault is taken into account when placing detainees in shared facilities. 	<p>Territory Families has reviewed the care and protection policies and procedures relating to sexualised behaviour or sexually abusive behaviour, including historical incidences of such behaviour exhibited by children in care and detention. Assessment of the level of supervision and support afforded to a child or young person, is taken into account in the placement of that young person, as detailed in the Care and Protection of Children Practice Manual.</p> <p>As per the Youth Justice Policy Determination 4.2, when available and appropriate, young people in detention will be provided with single room accommodation. However, if a young person in detention is identified as having a specific need, the staff member determining accommodation placement must consider whether the young person’s needs are best supported by being placed in single room accommodation or in accommodation with company. A young person must not be placed in shared accommodation if their behaviour or offending history is sexually problematic.</p>





Strengthening Governance and Systems

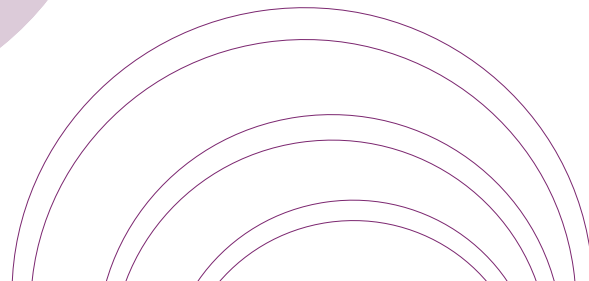
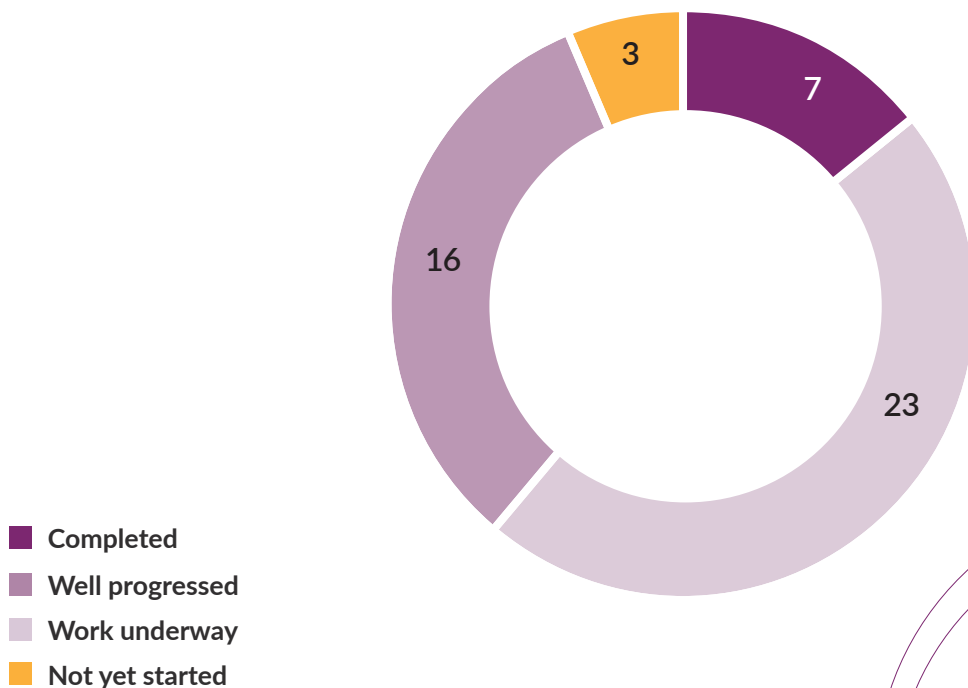
The Strengthening Governance and Systems reform portfolio includes programs and projects designed to increase scrutiny and accountability of services for children and families experiencing vulnerability and put in place strong systems and processes that ensure efficiency, coordination and efficacy.

Strengthening Governance and Systems

Key achievements include:

- Funding the establishment of the Youth Detention Monitoring team in the Office of the Children’s Commissioner.
- Monitoring activities and site visits to Don Dale and the Alice Springs Youth Detention Centres.
- Signing a further six local decision making agreements with Aboriginal organisations in Blue Mud Bay, Katherine, Groote Eylandt, Daly River Region and Gurindji.
- Signing the first regional deal in Australia; the Barkly Regional Deal between the Australian Government, the Northern Territory Government and Barkly Regional Council.
- Appointing Professor Mick Dodson as the first Northern Territory Treaty Commissioner.
- Awarding grants of up to \$50,000 to 14 remote Aboriginal community controlled organisations to strengthen the capacity and capability of Aboriginal organisations develop and implement community-led initiatives and programs.
- Commissioning research relating to child vulnerability in the Northern Territory and the operation of the existing and new Child and Family Centres.
- Partnering with Menzies School of Health Research to write of the Story of Our Children and Young People report.
- Establishing and supporting the Children and Families Tripartite Forum.
- Co-developing the Coordinated Funding Framework with the Children and Families Tripartite Forum.

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory

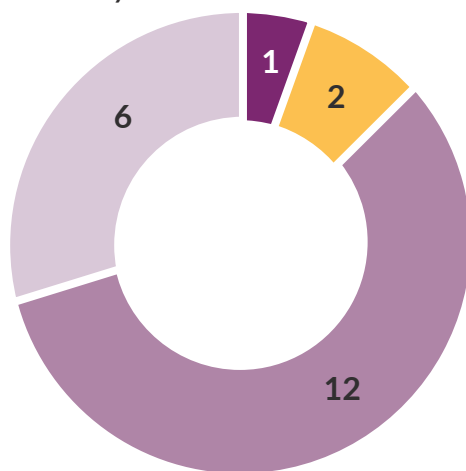


Strengthening Governance and Systems

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.

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



- Completed
- Well progressed
- Work underway
- Not yet started

Commission for Children and Young People

To strengthen independent oversight of the youth justice and child protection systems in 2018-19, the Northern Territory Government provided the Office of the Children's Commissioner with an extra \$580,000 per annum to expand the reach of its activities. The extra funding has enabled the Office of the Children's Commissioner to take a more proactive role in its work with a particular focus on youth justice facilities, residential care and bail support services.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner has developed a youth detention monitoring framework. The framework was designed after consultation with relevant stakeholders and is based on international best practice models. The Office of the Children's Commissioner

conducted monitoring activities and a formal site visit to Don Dale Youth Detention Centre in February 2019, and to the Alice Springs Youth Detention centre in April 2019. The Monitoring Reports for both facilities were tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 20 June 2019, and are publicly available on the Office of the Children's Commissioner's website.

Work to establish a framework for monitoring residential care facilities is continuing. Public consultations to inform the final design of the program commenced in August 2019. Importantly a series of consultations with the young people who are the recipients of these services will also occur during this period.

The Department of the Chief Minister, working with key stakeholders, is progressing a staged approach to the development of the new Commission for Children and Young People. Consideration is being given to how the new Commission for Children and Young People should be structured to ensure cultural considerations are prominent and how the Commission should function in order to meet the needs of Territory children and young people.

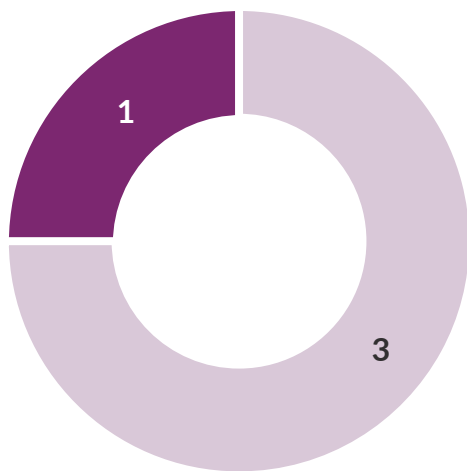
Territory Families has strengthened its complaints system to encourage more feedback particularly from children. Materials promoting the complaints system have been printed and distributed to children and young people in care and in detention. Children in care were also asked for their feedback about complaints processes and what steps can be taken to enhance the way concerns are listened and responded to. The CREATE Foundation surveys also provide a confidential mechanism for children and young people to raise concern about their care.

Strengthening Governance and Systems

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.

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



■ Completed
■ Work underway



Work is continuing on the development of the new Client Information Management System for child protection and youth justice. The new system, titled CARE aims to:

- replace the existing data system, Community Care Information System, that is reaching the end of its useful life with a contemporary and responsive case management system; and
- better manage the welfare and wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people in the youth justice and child protection systems by providing all Territory Families frontline operational areas, as well as non-government service providers, access to a contemporary case management system.

The new CARE system will enable Territory Families datasets on children and young people to be integrated with those from other key data sources across Government such as Student Administration Management System (SAMS) (education data), Integrated Justice Information System (IJIS) (courts data), Police Real Time Online Management System (PROMIS)/SerPro (youth diversion data) and relevant health systems.

Development of the new CARE system will provide a single source of information for frontline staff in child protection and youth justice and a 360 degree view of a child. It will also facilitate information sharing between agencies and act as a significant tool to enable joined up agency responses to children and families at risk.

Territory Families Aboriginal staff members contributed to the design of the new CARE system. The cultural meaning of the icon shows the family represented at the centre, alongside the child, supported by the community, reflecting the vision of the system.

Development of the specifications and finalisation of the functional requirements of CARE has involved workshops with key stakeholders. The results from these workshops informed the Phase 2 Tender process that was released on 13 June 2019.

Strengthening Governance and Systems

Northern Territory Government agencies are progressing measures to improve data and information sharing across government agencies. A Data Sharing Workshop to analyse the legislative and policy challenges regarding data and information sharing was held on 7 March 2019. The Department of Corporate and Information Services has created a dedicated project work stream to support and promote interagency data sharing.

Senior staff have been recruited to deliver the Territory Families' Data Warehouse project, which will serve as a central location for data relating to Territory Families clients and serve as a central portal for data extraction, enabling better decision making. Configuration of the Data Warehouse infrastructure into the NTG Data Centre has commenced and the Data Warehouse Implementation Plan is being developed.

In response to the concerns raised by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse that information that could have helped victims was not made available because it was not kept or stored correctly, the Northern Territory Government implemented a freeze on the disposal of records concerning youth justice and child protection matters until June 2020. This freeze ensures records that were or could be relevant to a claim of child sexual abuse are protected and available to assist in any legal action. The Northern Territory Government has now extended the disposal of records that relate to child abuse so that they are retained for 45 years.

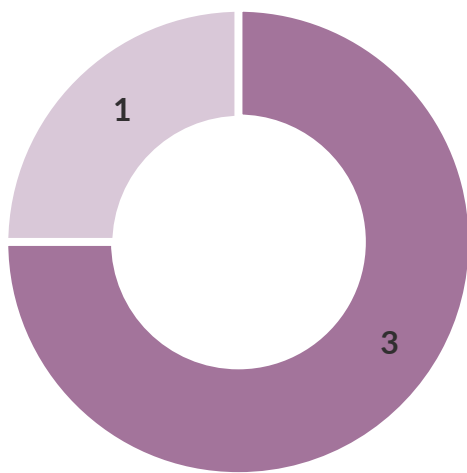


Strengthening Governance and Systems

Local Decision Making

Local communities and Aboriginal controlled organisations have a central role in designing and delivering services, particularly in remote communities.

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



■ Well progressed
■ Work underway

Aboriginal people are best placed to recognise the strengths of Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities and respond to problems and challenges that they face. Through Local Decision Making, Northern Territory Government agencies are working with Aboriginal communities to support Aboriginal empowerment and to assist in the transition of government services and programs to community control. Local Decision Making principles underpin the reforms being implemented to family support services, child protection system and the youth justice system.

The Northern Territory Government is continuing to engage and work with local communities to implement agreements that describe the communities aspiration and gives them greater control over the services and programs in their community. In May 2018 the first Local Decision Making Agreement with Yulgul Mangi Development Aboriginal Corporation was signed. During 2018-19 a further six agreements were negotiated and signed with local communities:

- Blue Mud Bay and homelands (Djalkiripuyngu) (signed July 2018);
- Jawoyn Association (signed November 2018);
- Gurindji Aboriginal Corporation (signed November 2018);
- Kardu/West Daly Alliance (signed November 2018);
- Anindilyakwa Land Council Groote Eylandt Archipelago (signed November 2018); and
- Yolngu Regional LDM Partnership (signed 30 May 2019).

Strengthening Governance and Systems

The Barkly Regional Deal, signed on 13 April 2019, is the first regional deal in Australia. The Deal, developed using Local Decision Making (LDM) Principles is a 10 year \$78.4 million commitment between the Australian Government, the Northern Territory Government and Barkly Regional Council. The Deal aims to improve the productivity and liveability of the Barkly region by stimulating economic growth, improving social outcomes and supporting local Aboriginal leadership. The deal recognises the future vision of the Barkly community to build a stronger, prosperous and inclusive region for current and future generations.

LDM principles represent a new approach to working with Aboriginal people, organisations communities, building on their strengths and aspirations. The LDM agreements that have been developed with Aboriginal people in 2018-19 include:

- Yolngu Regional LDM Partnership between Northern Territory Government, The Northern Land Council, Miwatj Health, Laynhapuy Homelands, ARDS Aboriginal Corporation and Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation was signed on 30 May 2019. This agreement aims to improve the way Yolgnu leadership and governance is engaged with and recognised;
- The Northern Territory Government and Anindilyakwa Land Council signed three Implementation Plans on 19 June 2019 at Groote Eylandt;
 - Housing Implementation Plan - an agreement between Anindilyakwa Land Council, the newly established Anindilyakwa Housing Aboriginal Corporation (AHAC) and Northern Territory Government.
 - The Economic Development Implementation Plan - an agreement between Anindilyakwa Land Council, and Northern Territory Government to create a viable, culturally rich and sustainable two-stream economy in the Groote Archipelago.
 - The Law, Justice and Rehabilitation Plan - to increase the involvement and leadership of the Anindilyakwa people in the justice system.

The negotiations of agreements with more communities and Aboriginal organisations are continuing, including with, Green River Aboriginal Corporation (Naiyu), Alawa Aboriginal Corporation and Mutitjulu Community Aboriginal Corporation. The Northern Territory Government is due to sign the Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation LDM Commitment Agreement with the 11 Alice Springs Town Camps and five Aboriginal Corporations in early July 2019. Once signed, this will be the first agreement with Northern Territory Town Camps.

The Charles Darwin University Ground Up team, within the College of Indigenous Futures Arts and Society, have been funded to develop a Local Decision Making Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.



Strengthening Governance and Systems

Treaty

On 18 February 2019 Professor Mick Dodson was appointed as the first Northern Territory Treaty Commissioner. Establishment of the Northern Territory Treaty Commission follows the signing of the Barunga Agreement between the Northern Territory Government and the Northern, Central, Tiwi and Anindilyakwa Land Councils on 8 June 2018.

To date the Treaty Commission has met with peak Aboriginal Organisations and communities across the Territory including in Darwin, Alice Springs, Groote Eylandt, Barunga, Katherine and Tennant Creek. Visits to other communities and events are being planned, including attending the Garma Festival in August 2019.



Supporting Aboriginal organisations

On 25 June 2019, grants of up to \$50,000 has been awarded to 14 remote Aboriginal community controlled organisations under the Remote Aboriginal Governance and Capacity Building Grants. These grants aim to strengthen the capacity and capability of Aboriginal organisations develop and implement community-led initiatives and programs. The organisations that were awarded the funding this year are:

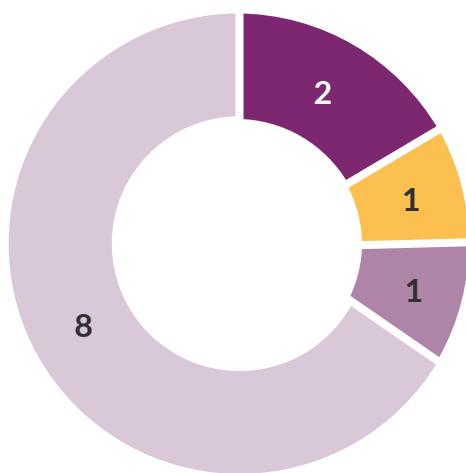
- Aputula Aboriginal Corporation;
- Yuendumu Women's Centre Aboriginal Corporation;
- Waltja Tjutangku Palyapayi Aboriginal Corporation;
- Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation;
- Mungoorbada Aboriginal Corporation (Robinson River);
- Gurindji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC;
- Ngukurr Arts Aboriginal Corporation;
- Wuyagiba Bush Hub Aboriginal Corporation;
- Gong-Dal Aboriginal Corporation;
- Baniyala Garrangali Aboriginal Corporation;
- Milingimbi Art & Culture Aboriginal Corporation;
- Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation;
- Mutchirr Corporation Limited Nganmariyanga (Palumpa); and
- DEMED Aboriginal Corporation (Gunbalanya).

Strengthening Governance and Systems

Evidence-Based Practice

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

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



- Completed
- Well progressed
- Work underway
- Not yet started

The Northern Territory Government is committed to a public health approach to addressing the social determinants of health and improving the safety and wellbeing of children and families. A public health approach is underpinned by good data and evidence to measure the impact of services and programs. Understanding the impact of the reform agenda on children, young people and families is critical to ensuring the reforms are making a difference.

In 2018-19 \$550,000 has been invested in commissioning research relating to child vulnerability in the Northern Territory and embedding evaluation in program delivery:

- Australian Institute of Family Studies: jointly funded with the Department of Education, the project will conduct a historical review of the original intentions of the Commonwealth and Northern Territory Governments and the operation of the six existing Child and Family Centres, and will explore the current operation of those six Centres and the establishment of new Child and Family Centres; and
- Menzies School of Health Research: As recommended by the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory Menzies will examine the number and characteristics of children who have been the subject of a substantiated case of child abuse or neglect or have recorded involvement with the youth justice system and examine the prevalence of trauma-related mental health issues in these groups of children and factors that are predictive of criminal behaviour.

The Reform Management Office is continuing to work in partnership with Northern Territory Government agencies and external research and evaluation providers to identify research and evaluation gaps and to identify future research and evaluation opportunities.

Strengthening Governance and Systems

Story of our children and young people

The Department of the Chief Minister in partnership with Menzies School of Health Research (Menzies) is progressing the development and writing of the Story of Our Children and Young People report, previously referred to as State of the Children Report. The Story will include baseline data on the status against key indicators of child wellbeing. It will lay the foundation for future planning and action to improve outcomes for children, young people and families. The Story of our Children and Young People will be a publicly available document for the whole community government, non-government, communities and families.

The Department of the Chief Minister has seconded a Senior Policy Officer to Menzies to support the completion of the report and has established an Editorial Committee to oversee development of the report and to ensure it is culturally relevant to all Territorians. The Committee comprises:

- Heather D'Antoine – Associate Director Aboriginal Programs and Division Leader for Education and Research Support, Menzies School of Health Research (Chair);
- Jen Lorains – Director, Research and Evaluation, Children's Ground;
- John Guenther – Research Leader, Education and Training, Bachelor Institute Indigenous Tertiary Education;
- Professor Sven Silburn – Professor, Menzies School of Health Research;
- Dr Christine Fejo King – Director, Child and Family Centres, Reform Management Office;
- Ashelle Coleman – Youth Worker, YMCA of the Northern Territory;
- Peter Pangquee – Community Member;
- Mick Adams – Senior Research Fellow, Australian Indigenous Health, Edith Cowan University;
- Tanja Hirvonen – Director, Strategic Policy and Research, Indigenous Allied Health Australia; and
- Craig Kelly – Executive Director, Regional Network, Department of Chief Minister.

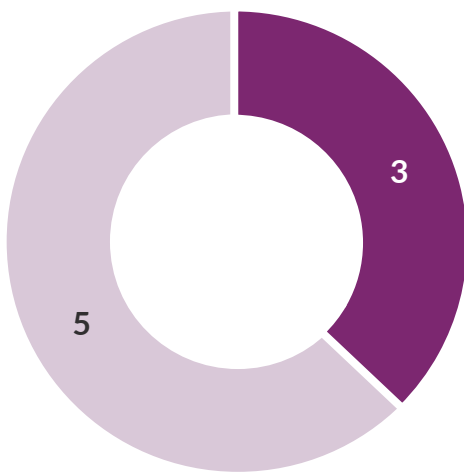


Strengthening Governance and Systems

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.

Status of recommendations from the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory



- Completed
- Work underway

Children and Families Tripartite Forum

The Children and Families Tripartite Forum is a key component of the reform program. The Forum's purpose is to address an identified need for structured and sustained high level engagement between the Northern Territory Government, Commonwealth Government and community sector regarding children experiencing vulnerability, young people and families, and child protection and youth justice issues.

The Children and Families Tripartite Forum membership includes the Northern Territory and Commonwealth governments and the community sector represented by Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory (APO NT), the Northern Territory Council of Social Service (NTCOSS); and the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA).

The role of the Forum is to provide advice to the Northern Territory and Commonwealth governments to guide and support the implementation of the agreed reform agenda arising from the Royal Commission report including:

- enable and facilitate cross-government, inter-agency and inter-sectoral cooperation, coordination and collaboration in delivering the reform agenda and services for children and young people experiencing vulnerability including those in the youth justice and child protection systems;
- work collaboratively with other relevant bodies as appropriate in light of the broad-based influence of social determinants across the life course of individuals including their potential interaction with child protection or youth justice services;
- provide strategic oversight and monitor the development and implementation of the ten year Generational Strategy and key reforms for children and families in the Northern Territory; and
- provide strategic advice and facilitate integrated efforts in relation to community engagement and supporting Local Decision Making to help ensure that local engagement is coordinated, purposeful and shaped as far as possible by the interests and preferences of local communities.

The Forum was established in July 2018 and has met six times in 2018 and 2019. The Forum is progressing a two year work plan, key achievements include:

- co-designing the service model and recommending sites for the new Child and Family Centres;
- progressing early work on: the Social Outcomes Framework to inform the 10 year Generational Strategy for Children and Families and engagement with the Productivity Commission on its Study into Children in the Northern Territory;
- contributing to the Youth Justice reforms; and
- developing the Co-ordinated Funding Framework Concept Paper.

Strengthening Governance and Systems

10 Year Generational Plan and Social Outcomes Framework

Northern Territory Government agencies are working with non-government organisations to develop a Social Outcomes Framework that will articulate how the Northern Territory Government and its partners will measure whether the services and programs implemented are making a lasting and positive difference in all Territorians' lives. The Framework will identify agreed priority outcomes as well as the high level indicators that will show what needs to be measured in order to progress toward the outcome.

The Framework is anticipated to be the overarching framework under which all new agency and reform specific outcomes frameworks are developed, ensuring they contribute to the over-arching whole-of-government outcomes and indicators.

The Social Outcomes Framework will inform development of the 10-year Generational Strategy. The Strategy will provide a mechanism to ensure progress against the key reforms can be measured and support a new way of working and reporting between Northern Territory Government agencies, the non-government organisation sector and other key stakeholders. The Children and Families Tripartite Forum will oversee development of the Strategy.

Coordinated Funding Framework

The Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory recommended the development of Coordinated Funding Framework to improve the impact of investments from the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments through increased coordination of planning and decision making and to develop more integrated services on the ground for children and families.

A key activity for the Children and Families Tripartite Forum is to provide advice to the Commonwealth and Northern Territory Government on the development of the Coordinated Funding Framework recommended by the Royal Commission and supported in principle by the two governments.

The need to develop the Framework recognises that funding to support children and families in the Northern Territory has not previously been used as efficiently or effectively as it could be, and there is scope to increase and improve the impact from existing resource investment through improved coordination of planning and decision-making. The Forum is currently developing a concept paper for the Framework that will outline the scope and approach to supporting the development of a more integrated service system and drive a greater return on investment.

The advice of the Forum will be considered alongside the outcomes of the Productivity Commission study.



Strengthening Governance and Systems

Productivity Commission Study into expenditure for children in the Northern Territory

In March 2019, the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments agreed to the terms of reference of the Productivity Commission Study. The study is considering both Northern Territory and Commonwealth governments' expenditure and will look at what children and family support services are funded and how those funding decisions were made.

Better coordination between the Northern Territory and Commonwealth will lead to improved outcomes for Territory children. The Northern Territory Government supports the Productivity Commission study with the hope that it provides a foundation for the development of the Coordinated Funding Framework recommended by the Royal Commission.

The Northern Territory Government is supporting the Productivity Commission study by providing detailed information about funded programs in the Northern Territory and related materials.

A draft report from the Productivity Commission is due in November 2019 with the final report anticipated in May 2020.

Developing Workforce Capacity

The quality and impact of services and programs that are being implemented in the *Generational Change Reform Program* is reliant on a capable and skilled workforce.

Having a skilled and competent early childhood workforce is central to delivering quality programs for young children and their families. The Northern Territory Government is working to increase the number of qualified early childhood professionals and to expand and support an integrated early childhood workforce through the Human Services Workforce Strategy being developed jointly by the Department of the Chief Minister and Department of Trade Business and Innovation.

The NT Human Services Industry Plan Discussion Paper was circulated in March 2019 and workshops were held in Darwin, Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Nhulunbuy and Katherine during May 2019. There were 127 attendees at the forums; 74 online surveys completed; 68 interviews (face to face meetings/consultations and over the phone for remote areas); and two submissions received. The information gathered from the consultations is being reviewed to identify issues and potential solutions to inform drafting of the Industry Plan.



Strengthening Governance and Systems

Strengthening Governance and Systems portfolio recommendation completions

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
16.01	<p>The Department of Education, in cooperation with other relevant departments ensure that those involved in the education of young people in detention have access to information about each child and young person, with appropriate safeguards to protect confidentiality, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. access to the child or young person’s medical history access to information about the child or young person’s education level, school attendance and assessment records in and out of the youth detention centres; and b. provide information to continue the child or young person’s learning program while in detention and to enable the child to move between schools 	<p>A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Department of Education and Territory Families about education in detention was signed on 16 January 2019. The MoU is targeted at increasing co-operation, coordination and integration at the administrative and program delivery levels to support the education of young people in detention.</p> <p>A Senior Officers Group monitors activity covered by the MoU and there are regular meetings between the principal and/or Head of Campus at Owen Springs and Tivendale.</p> <p>By June 2019, Tivendale and Owen Springs were sharing Individual Education Plans, student work samples, for students who transition between the two units to support the young people and improve their learning continuity.</p> <p>Education staff at Owen Springs have access to a dashboard through which they are able to access information relating to health assessments for young people in detention.</p>
33.25	<p>The Northern Territory Government continue working with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare to develop a dataset to report on outcomes for children transitioning from out-of-home care up to age 25. Indicators should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. connection to family and/or carers; iii. education and employment; iv. housing; and v. health, including mental health. 	<p>The technical requirements in the development of a NT dataset concerning outcomes for children in care are being considered through the development of the case management system and data warehouse service.</p> <p>At the AIHW’s request, the Northern Territory is leading the national discussion on the Data Improvement Plan. Territory Families is continuing to contribute to the national discussion on leaving care indicators via forums connected to the Community Services Ministers Council.</p>



Strengthening Governance and Systems

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
37.01	The internal oversight processes in Territory Families be responsive, transparent and timely and be staffed with highly skilled people who have the capacity to undertake investigative work of a high quality.	<p>Territory Families Practice Complaints and Investigations Unit includes staff trained in Certificate IV in Government Investigations and with professional experience conducting investigations. The Unit liaises with external statutory bodies regarding complaint management and coordination i.e. the Office of the Children's Commissioner, Health and Community Services Complaints Commission and the Northern Territory Information Commissioner.</p> <p>Territory Families has improved the promotion of its complaints and investigation service.</p>
41.01	The Northern Territory Government develop a plan, in consultation with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, to work progressively towards complying with the Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set requirements within a reasonable time but not more than two years from the date of this report	The Northern Territory provided data compliant with the Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set in 2018.
43.05	The Children and Families Standing Committee and Children's Sub-Committee of Cabinet remain permanent bodies with a dual mandate of implementing reform, and guiding policy and operational strategy.	The Children and Families Standing Committee and Children's Sub-Committee of Cabinet have been established as permanent bodies.
43.06	The Children and Families Standing Committee and the Reform Management Office be run out of the Department of the Chief Minister.	The Reform Management Office is a whole of Government office accountable to the Children and Families Standing Committee.

Strengthening Governance and Systems

Strengthening Governance and Systems portfolio recommendation completions

RECOMMENDATIONS		CLOSURE ACTION
43.07	<p>A tripartite forum be established with representatives from the Northern Territory Government, Commonwealth Government and community sector, to coordinate and oversee policy and programs for children and young people in the youth justice and child protection systems. In doing so, the tripartite forum is to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. meet at least quarterly, and 2. deliver an annual report to the relevant Northern Territory and Commonwealth government ministers and boards of the member community organisations. 	<p>The Forum was convened in June 2018. The Forum is comprised of representatives from the Commonwealth and Northern Territory Governments and the community sector represented by APONT, NAAJA and NTCOSS.</p> <p>The Forum meets quarterly and has prepared a 2018-19 Annual Report outlining the Forum activities and achievements.</p>



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