

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

2018 - 2023

FIRST PROGRESS REPORT
NOVEMBER 2018





“ The conduct of this inquiry and the presentation of this report should be the end of the beginning. The commissioning governments, the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory, have the opportunity to achieve lasting change to stop the abuses of the past and to help ensure that all children in the Northern Territory can flourish and reach their potential.”

**Final Report from Commissioners
Mick Gooda and Margaret White**



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The Reform Management Office has been established to coordinate a 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.

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On 17 November 2017, the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory (Royal Commission) delivered its final report. The Royal Commission found that in many cases the systems that were designed to keep children and the community safe, actually did the opposite.

It also highlighted the fact that Aboriginal children and young people make up far too high a proportion of those in government care and within the youth justice system, and emphasised the importance of supporting Aboriginal people, communities and organisations to take a leadership role in designing and delivering the services they need.

On 1 March 2018, the Northern Territory Government accepted the intent and direction of all 227 recommendations of the Royal Commission. The following month saw the release of its implementation plan *Safe, Thriving and Connected: Generational Change for Children and Families* in April 2018, accompanied by a budget allocation of over \$229 million in new funding to strengthen early, targeted support for vulnerable families while also fixing the child protection and youth justice systems.

One year on from the Royal Commission's final report and six months into the reform journey outlined under *Safe, Thriving and Connected: Generational Change for Children and Families*, the Northern Territory Government is making substantial progress on its ambitious plan to support families experiencing vulnerability and overhaul the child protection and youth justice systems.

This report is the first progress report on the Northern Territory Government's efforts to better support children and families experiencing vulnerability and reform the child protection and youth justice systems. It describes the reform progress during and in the first year following the Royal Commission. The next public report will be published in 2019 and describe the progress and challenges in the delivery of Phase 1, or the first full year, of the Northern Territory Government's reform program as outlined in *Safe, Thriving and Connected: Generational Change for Children and Families*.

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

What has been done?

A number of reform initiatives have already been completed or are well progressed, with relevant government agencies working in close partnership with the community sector.

Key achievements include:

- The *Youth Justice Amendment Act 2017* was passed on 30 October 2017 to provide that Territory Families is the primary responsible authority for youth justice.
- The *Youth Justice Amendment Act 2018* was passed on 23 May 2018. This Act prohibits the use of restraints, and limits the use of force, isolation and strip searches for young people in detention.
- Youth Engagement training has been developed and is now made available to all Northern Territory Police Officers.
- Expanding the resources of the Office of the Children's Commissioner by \$2.5 million over four years to increase the Children's Commissioners capacity to monitor and audit the youth justice and child protection systems.
- The Northern Territory Government allocated \$10.48 million to complete 'Fix and Make Safe' works at Don Dale Youth Detention Centre in Darwin and the Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre. This included new and separate education and female accommodation facilities in Alice Springs. Improvements have been made to the practices and staffing in youth justice and detention.
- The Children and Families Tripartite Forum, chaired by respected Aboriginal executive Ms Donna Ah Chee, has been established and has now met twice. It comprises senior representatives from the Commonwealth and Territory governments, Aboriginal peak organisations and peak non-government organisations, the Forum is already providing well-informed advice to governments on key reform initiatives under *Safe, Thriving and Connected*.
- The construction of the Tennant Creek Child and Family Centre is nearing completion. This will be the first of eleven new centres to be established in the Northern Territory over the next five years, adding to the existing six centres. Work is well underway on selecting the ten new sites and co-designing the core service characteristics that will be common to all the centres.



Who is responsible for implementing the reforms?

All Northern Territory Government agencies have a role to play in developing and implementing the reforms. As do community organisations, including Aboriginal organisations, along with communities themselves.

The Northern Territory Government is committed to supporting communities to lead the way in identifying their own aspirations and planning their own pathways forward. Local decision making is at the heart of the reforms, with local communities deciding what shape the services for their families should take.

The Reform Management Office (RMO) was established to lead the development of the Government's implementation plan *Safe, Thriving and Connected*, and to coordinate whole-of-government, cross-sectoral action on the reforms.

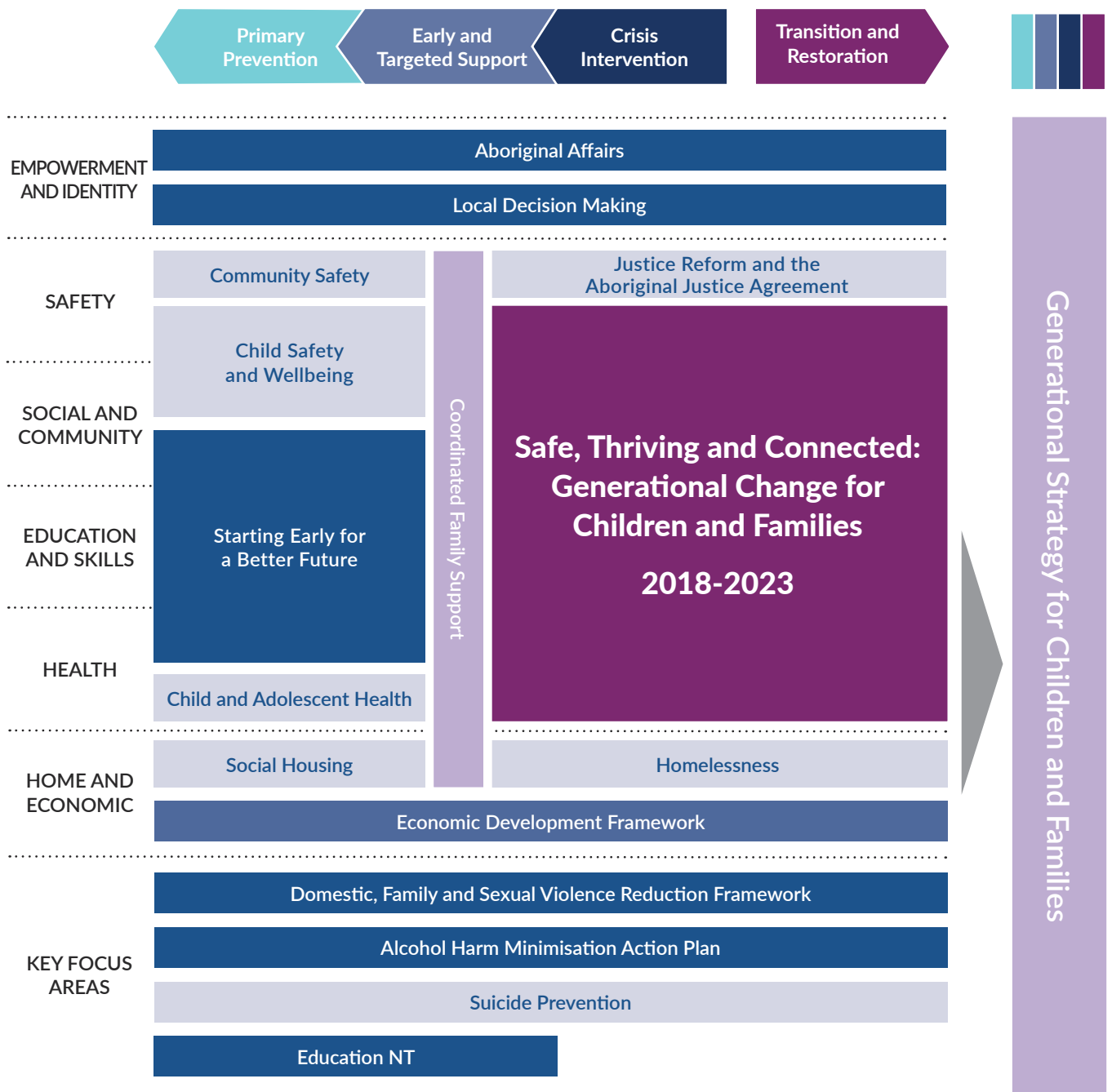
Recently the RMO's responsibilities were expanded to encompass monitoring and reporting on implementation of *Starting Early for a Better Future*, the Northern Territory Government's Early Childhood Development Plan. This arrangement will ensure that the focus remains not only on fixing the systems that respond to crisis, but also on the help and support families need to keep them out of the child protection and youth justice systems. These reforms are part of a single agenda which puts children at the centre.



Related reforms

As indicated in the graphic below, the reforms described in *Safe, Thriving and Connected* form a crucial part of the Northern Territory Government's broader agenda to improve social wellbeing in the Territory.

Figure 1 - Strategic approach to improving the wellbeing of children and families



LEGEND

■ Released

■ Under Development

Reform principles and work programs

WE ARE:

Putting the safety and wellbeing of children, families and communities first

Ensuring children have a voice and are respecting the needs and wishes of children and families

Ensuring the connection of children and young people to their cultures and communities

Recognising and building on the strengths of families and communities

PUTTING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AT THE CENTRE

SUPPORT FAMILIES EARLIER

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

SERVICES ARE TARGETED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN

Children and young people receive the services, care and support they need.

RESPECT CHILDREN'S VOICES

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

A LEGAL SYSTEM FOR FAMILIES

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

WORK WITH FAMILIES

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

SUPPORT TRANSITION AND RESTORATION

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

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.

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.

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

Enabling community-led decision making and embedding Aboriginal service delivery

Challenging systemic inequality and addressing barriers to empowerment

Providing trauma-aware and healing-informed support

IMPROVING YOUTH JUSTICE

POLICE AND YOUNG PEOPLE

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

KEEP CHILDREN OUT OF DETENTION

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.

YOUTH DETENTION THAT WORKS

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

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.

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.

COMMUNITY-LED RESPONSES

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

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

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

COORDINATED EFFORT TOWARDS BETTER OUTCOMES

We 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.

Investing in generational change

In response to the Royal Commission, the Northern Territory Government is investing in generational change to ensure children, families and communities are *Safe, Thriving and Connected*. This investment includes:

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

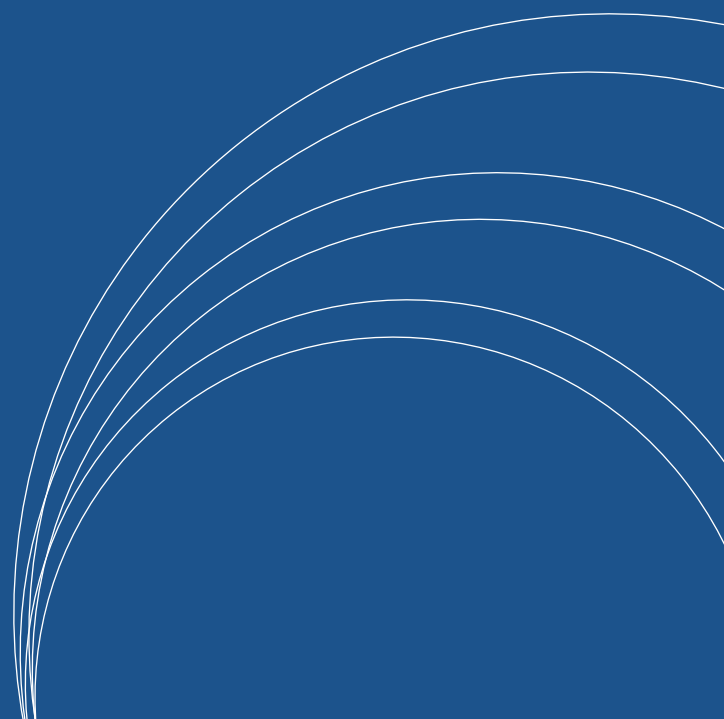


First progress report

In the period immediately following the release of the Royal Commission's report and recommendations, the Northern Territory Government and the community sector has been working to plan and implement the significant reforms in *Safe, Thriving and Connected*.

The *Safe, Thriving and Connected* reform programs are part of a complex, interconnected system of projects and service changes which are happening across all of government and extending into the community sector. The changes will take time, and will require a long-term commitment to change.

Now, six months into the implementation of the reform agenda agencies are making significant progress. The foundations are being laid for better outcomes for our children.



1. Putting children and families at the centre

Key achievements include:

- Passing legislation to restrict or limit the use of force and restraints, separation and searches for young people in youth detention
- Expanding educational assessments for young people in detention to tailor education to the students' skill levels
- 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

1.1 Support families earlier

On 30 April 2018, the Northern Territory Government announced a further \$35.6 million investment in the Territory's future under the early childhood development plan, *Starting Early for a Better Future*. The plan and investment focusses on supporting the development of children in the early years and preventing and addressing issues before they escalate. The plan complements *Safe, Thriving and Connected* and forms a large part of the Government's additional investment in early intervention and prevention. The plan is centred on four key themes:

- **Ready to Learn:** To ensure Northern Territory children are born ready to learn, and continue to learn in nurturing and stimulating relationships, and successfully transition to school
- **Strong Families:** To ensure Northern Territory children are safe, cared for and living in a healthy environment
- **Getting it Right for Life:** To ensure Northern Territory children are born healthy, remain healthy and thrive
- **Quality Early Childhood Development System:** To put the Northern Territory at the forefront of Australia in integrated and community-driven early childhood development.

Alternative services to families that divert children away from the child protection system are growing. The Northern Territory Government launched the Family and Children Enquiry and Support (FACES) in 18 May 2018. This has already resulted in more families accessing crucial supports before they hit crisis point.

The Northern Territory Government has launched and are now expanding the Northern Territory Social Services Directory in partnership with Northern Territory Council of Social Service. This online tool provides invaluable information to families about where they can access support and assistance.

Territory Families is also planning a community education campaign that will promote early support services, prompt families to ask for help before a crisis and remove the stigma associated with seeking help.

The Northern Territory Government recognises the role of Aboriginal organisations in providing services to Aboriginal families. Territory Families has provided funding of \$100,000 to AMSANT to co-design an early intervention service that can be delivered through Aboriginal medical services.

Territory Families is also merging the roles of the women's safe house and remote family support services to enable flexibility in responding to community needs and services based on different locations' needs. Changes include:

- Enabling mentoring and skilling up of remote based workers
- On-call responding when women need to access a women's safe house
- Expansion of place based service delivery sites with local remote teams
- A gradual phasing out of the fly-in-fly-out management as place based team leaders are established in the communities
- The management of the sites being devolved to regional service centres
- Place based team leader's assuming responsibility for the coordination and leadership of Territory Families programs within their communities
- Broadening the role of remote based staff within the community to include statutory case management family support, assisting in supporting and finding carers, assisting with youth justice, assisting community members with pensioner and carer concessions and a more connected working relationship with safe houses.

The Northern Territory Government is working to establish 11 additional Child and Family Centres across the Northern Territory. The first of these new centres will be developed in Tennant Creek and will be accommodated in facilities currently being built by the Department of Education on the campus of the primary school that are due for completion in early 2019. The Northern Territory Government is working with providers in Tennant Creek to plan the local implementation of the new service.

On 7 September 2018, the Children and Families Tripartite Forum held a workshop for key stakeholders to guide the design of the high level service model for Child and Family Centres. They also considered factors to assist in choosing the communities to work with to establish the remaining ten new centres. The Northern Territory Government is working to establish two more centres in 2019.

Also delivering on the Government's commitment to local solutions, Territory Families' re-invigorated Child Safety Coordination Groups provide important community input to child safety situations as well as advising Government on broader child safety reforms. The number of these collaborative, community-based child safety and coordination groups has recently been expanded, and they are now active in Batchelor, Borroloola, Daly River, Jabiru, Kalkarindji, Maningrida, Papunya, Wadeye, Wurrumiyanga, and Yuendumu.



1. Putting children and families at the centre

1.2 Services are targeted to meet the needs of children

Improvements have been made for young people accessing education while in detention. This has involved better recording and transfer of information for students entering and exiting the education units, as well as assessments for literacy and numeracy which enable educators to tailor programs to students' skill levels. Students have access to a broader range of education programs, including the Northern Territory Social and Emotional Learning Curriculum, the Northern Territory Indigenous Languages and Culture Curriculum, health, sport, music, art and improved access to vocational education and training. Education staff have increased opportunities for professional development, including in trauma informed practice and special education.

Education is not only essential in rehabilitating young people in youth detention, it is essential in ensuring every child has a good start in life and a bright future. The Northern Territory Government is investing \$10 million annually over four years on initiatives that include flexible learning programs in Darwin, Palmerston, Alice Springs; Katherine and Tennant Creek; Autism Spectrum programs in Darwin, Palmerston, Alice Springs and Katherine; Disability Teaching Scholarships; the Juno Centre at Tennant Creek and a framework for Students with Additional Needs.

A joint process is underway between the Northern Territory Government and Aboriginal organisations to co-design a culturally appropriate model of health care for young Aboriginal people in detention centres. Part of this work includes reviewing and revising health manuals and tools to ensure that they are culturally appropriate.

In March 2018, equipment was upgraded in the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre oral health clinic, and now oral health services are being offered to young people while they are in detention. Options are also being explored for partnering with other organisations to make sure that follow-up treatment is available after the young people are released.

The Northern Territory Government is currently in the early stages of implementing new Domestic and Family Violence Clinical Guidelines, starting with trials in both Top End and Central Australia health centre pilot sites. These trials will include the use of new tools and resources for health centre staff to enable them to better prevent and respond to domestic and family violence.

1.3 Respect children's voices

Children's views about the services and systems with which they interact, their experiences and their needs are central to our youth justice, family support and child protection reform work and also day to day casework. Territory Families has integrated Viewpoint in case management practice. Viewpoint is an online, interactive and graphic tool that gives children a voice in their care experience and allows case managers to involve children and young people in the way they are supported.

While work is underway to transition to a new youth justice facility, Territory Families has launched a Youth Advisory Group co-chaired by a young person in the Don Dale Detention Centre. This meaningful forum gives children in detention the opportunity to raise issues that affect them, give advice on what works and what doesn't, solve problems and propose new ideas, activities and initiatives to improve the Centre.

Territory Families has also asked children in care what they think about complaints processes and what steps can be taken to enhance the way we listen to and respond to their concerns about how they are cared for. The intention is to improve their care experience by knowing more about and having a better understanding of their expressed needs.

1. Putting children and families at the centre

1.4 A legal system for families

The Northern Territory Government acted quickly to introduce new legislation and is working to address some of the systemic issues identified by the Royal Commission.

This includes the Youth Justice Legislation Amendment (Machinery of Government) Bill 2017 which was passed on 10 October 2017. The amendments gave the CEO of Territory Families legal responsibility for youth justice operations and provided the Territory Families workforce with the powers and responsibility for youth community corrections. The legislation took effect on 5 January 2018.

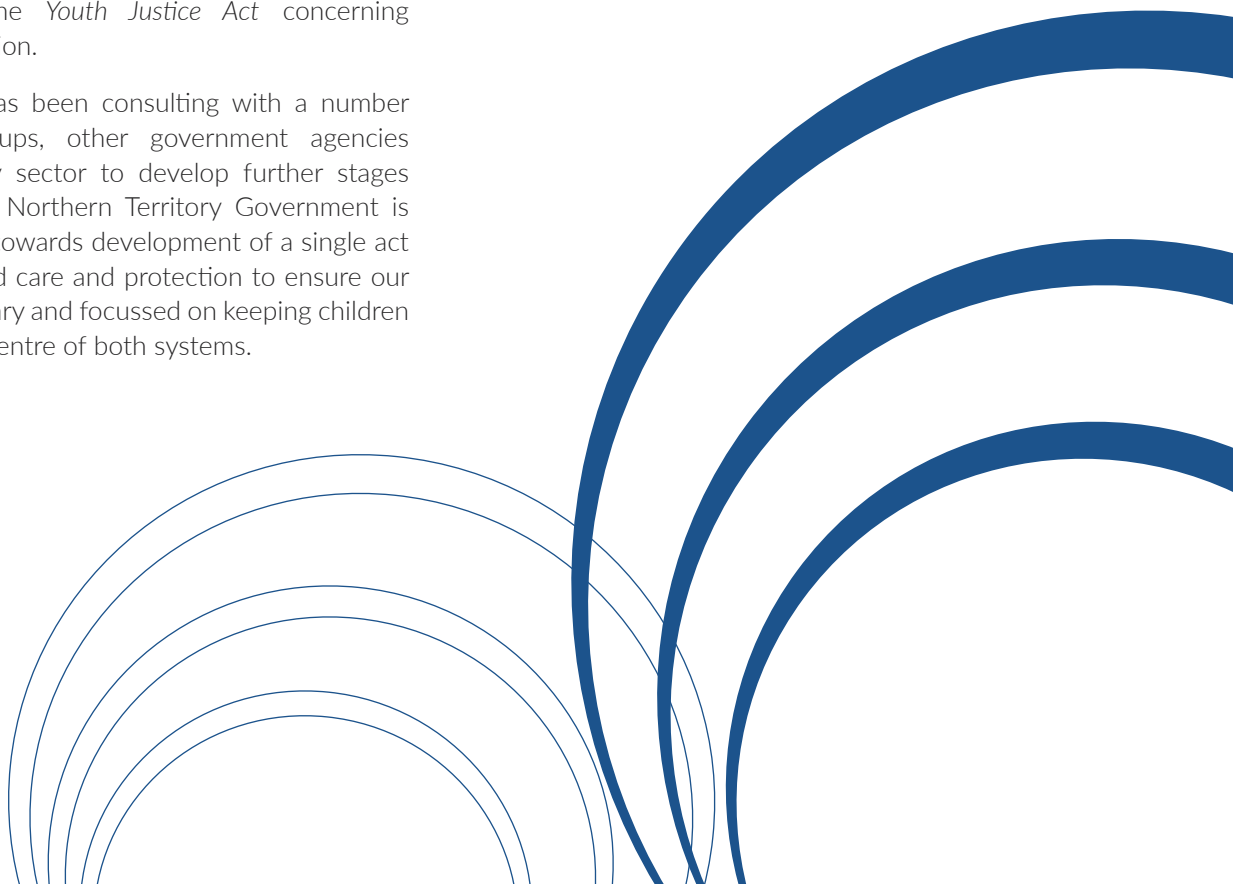
The Youth Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 was passed on 10 May 2018. The amendments implement seven Royal Commission Recommendations relating to the use of force and restraints, separation and searches for young people in youth detention. The legislation became effective on 24 May 2018.

The Northern Territory Government knows that if our new legal system is going to truly make a difference for families, then its design must be informed by the community, families and children it services. In April 2018, Territory Families ran information sessions with young people in detention in Alice Springs about amendments to the *Youth Justice Act* concerning conditions in detention.

Territory Families has been consulting with a number of community groups, other government agencies and the community sector to develop further stages of law reform. The Northern Territory Government is continuing to work towards development of a single act for youth justice and care and protection to ensure our laws are contemporary and focussed on keeping children and families at the centre of both systems.

A major reform to which the Northern Territory Government is committed is the establishment of a children's court in Alice Springs. While this will take some time to implement in full, and more consultation will take place on how the court will operate, significant progress has already been made. Renovation of the Local Court building has started and is due to be completed in the first half of 2019. The renovation work will provide, on an interim basis, a new multi-purpose court room for use in proceedings under the *Youth Justice Act* and the *Care and Protection of Children Act*.

Training is currently being developed to increase legal practitioners' understanding of children and young people's development and behaviour. A draft training resource manual has been compiled which includes content on child and adolescent development, trauma, adolescent mental health, cognitive and communication development and Aboriginal cultural competence. Discussions are continuing with major stakeholders both across government and in the community sector, to finalise this training and identify further training opportunities.



1. Putting children and families at the centre

1.5 Work with families

The Royal Commission emphasised the importance of working with Aboriginal families to achieve the best outcomes for their children, and the Northern Territory Government is changing the way we work with families and communities.

Territory Families is continuing to work with the Mikan Reference Group in East Arnhem to effectively identify and support kinship carers. Mikan is a partnership between Territory Families and Yolngu community representatives in East Arnhem Land. Mikan provides advice to Territory Families on the care and protection of Yolngu children and works with Territory Families to help reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect in the local community.

Territory Families place based staff are working closely with community elders, local authorities and relevant boards to increase local decision making in relation to remote community concerns and increasing the safety of children and communities. Having larger place-based teams on the ground will increase engagement with families and their communities in supporting and empowering local decision making in a timely manner.

The Northern Territory Government is making progress on the introduction of Family Group Conferencing in child protection matters. Territory Families is engaging with Aboriginal organisations and has sought a suitably qualified provider to develop a model for the Northern Territory. Tenders closed on 25 October 2018. The program is on track for commencement in 2019.

The Northern Territory Government has also begun implementation of Signs of Safety in the Northern Territory. The Signs of Safety approach focusses on how child protection workers can build partnerships with parents and children in situations of suspected or substantiated child abuse while also dealing rigorously with maltreatment issues. Implementation of Signs of Safety is scheduled through the remainder of 2018 and 2019.

In January 2018, Territory Families commenced development of an Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework to shape a whole of agency approach to building culturally proficient services, systems, and governance. The Framework identifies how Territory Families will change the way it works by strengthening its partnerships with Aboriginal people and communities and promoting a workforce who encourage understanding and respect for cultural difference and diversity.

Over 550 people have contributed to the development of the framework through departmental and external partner and community consultation. Territory Families' senior leaders, middle management and staff have been engaged in a series of information sessions and workshops, and a number of external consultations have been undertaken with Aboriginal people, Aboriginal organisations and non-government organisations. The workshops have helped Territory Families to identify a vision, and a set of cultural standards and activities for implementation, performance measurement, and accountability.

The Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework will be released in December 2018. Successful implementation of the Framework will be underpinned and supported by a dedicated Action Plan for change with commitments from all levels of the agency from senior leadership to front line staff.

The Framework will further support our growing partnerships with Aboriginal organisations and help guide how we work towards a system where Aboriginal people are empowered to make decisions about Aboriginal families.



1. Putting children and families at the centre

1.6 Support transition and restoration

The responsibility to support children and families does not end at the boundaries of the statutory child protection and youth justice systems. The Northern Territory Government is committed to support young people to transition from out-of-home care and from the youth justice system and assist them to find and stick to the right track.

In mid-2017, Territory Families introduced new Youth Outreach and Re-Engagement Officers. The officers work with young people on statutory orders to create tailor-made case plans suited to the young person's needs and goals, including the most appropriate supports for that young person. A core responsibility of the Youth Outreach and Re-Engagement Officers is supporting young people through the youth justice system and assisting them to find a new pathway. The initiative is described in more detail under section 3.2 of this progress report.

Changes have also been made to meet the needs of young people transitioning from care to adulthood. In 2018, Territory Families engaged three Transition from Care Officers to ensure young people transitioning from care to adulthood are connected to the services and support they need.

Territory Families have also established a five year agreement with CREATE. CREATE represents the voices of children and young people with an out-of-home care experience and have a network of care leavers that children in care and leaving care can call upon for advice, support and connection to those that have shared experiences.

Further, the Northern Territory Government is finalising early stakeholder engagement on the design and implementation of a supported accommodation service for care leavers. The service will support young people leaving care to access and maintain housing. The project is managed by a project reference group comprising the Department of Housing and Community Development, Territory Families, Aboriginal organisations and non-government organisations.

A pilot of the new service is scheduled to commence in early 2019 following a grant application process.



2. Improving care and protection

Key achievements include:

- Commencing the implementation of Signs of Safety in the Northern Territory
- Establishing a Clinical and Professional Practice Directorate and external Clinical and Professional Practice Committee to ensure staff are supported with best practice tools and guidance that meets the unique needs of Northern Territory families
- Introducing improvements to the Central Intake processes and record keeping to improve response times and reduce duplication
- Deploying additional child protection workers to the Barkly region
- Partnering with Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory (APONT) and Secretariat for National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) to develop an Aboriginal Out-of-Home Care Strategy
- Commencing a pilot of an Aboriginal foster and kinship program with an Aboriginal organisation in Central Australia
- Implementing Therapeutic Residential Care in Darwin

2.1 Care and protection practice

The Royal Commission identified significant issues and opportunities for improving child protection practice.

To continually enhance practice, Territory Families established the Clinical and Professional Practice Directorate to ensure frontline staff are supported with best practice tools and guidance that meets the unique needs of Northern Territory families. They will work with staff to develop our overall clinical approach and consider avenues for ongoing practice improvement. This work is guided by the Clinical Governance and Professional Practice Committee, local Territory experts with experience in research, best-practice and training. They represent a range of professions from youth justice, trauma and rehabilitation to academia, social work and public health.

Territory Families has released its Workforce Development Plan 2018-2020 which signals its determination to develop a strong, capable and sustainable workforce that delivers quality, tailored services to children, families and communities.

To streamline and speed up administrative processes for on-the-ground staff, a trial of portable electronic devices was conducted in July and August 2018 across all Territory Families regions. Following the success of the trial, devices are currently being distributed to staff around the Territory. The portable devices enable

Territory Families staff to access and update critical information while in the field and improve the focus on working with families.

To ensure more timely and relevant responses to increasing notifications to Territory Families' Central Intake Team, a reform project has been initiated to re-design the intake service. This has led to some key changes already in how Territory Families manages intakes:

- New notifications where children are assessed at high risk are prioritised and receive a timely response by extending the completion of intake assessments timeframe from 24 hours to 2 business days for all intakes not assessed as an urgent priority.
- Implementation of the One Child, One Case policy to streamline internal processes and better respond to families already involved with Territory Families.
- Commenced development of an online guide to support professional notifiers making mandatory reports.

In 2018, the Northern Territory Government expanded the regional child protection workforce and deployed an additional six permanent positions to the Barkly region. The additional officers are able to better respond to child protection concerns, as well as identify opportunities for community capacity building in the Barkly.

2. Improving care and protection

2.2 Children in the child protection and youth justice systems

The multi-agency crossover family working groups were established in February 2018 to work collaboratively across the many facets of the Territory child protection and youth justice system. Crossover groups are leading enhanced information sharing and collaboration in the planning of service response for those young people and their families involved in both child protection and youth justice systems. The meetings are attended by representatives from the Departments of Education, Health, Housing and Community Development, Attorney General and Justice (NT Correctional Services), Territory Families, Northern Territory Police and Department of the Chief Minister. The groups develop a single shared family plan across all involved agencies.

Additionally, Northern Territory Police, Education, Youth Outreach and Child Protection representatives meet weekly to discuss and problem solve emerging issues with young offenders and identify solutions for helping them live successfully in community.

Following the establishment of Territory Families and alignment of the child protection and youth justice systems, Territory Families has introduced common induction training for staff that includes information across child protection and youth justice. The common training ensures that all staff have an appreciation of the challenges and requirements of both systems.



2. Improving care and protection

2.3 Transforming out-of-home care

In 2016, the Northern Territory Government committed to transform out-of-home care by working with Aboriginal organisations and families in recognition that they are best placed to care for Aboriginal children.

Readily acknowledging the need for a strong Aboriginal influence in transforming the out-of-home care system, in July 2017 Territory Families established a partnership with APONT and the SNAICC. The partnership is currently leading the development of a strategy to create and build Aboriginal-led and managed out-of-home care services in the Northern Territory.

A primary focus of this work is on co-designing a strategy and implementation roadmap in partnership with Aboriginal organisations, aimed at enabling greater Aboriginal participation and control in decisions across the system. This is in recognition that the cultural needs of a child, family or community must be considered and embedded at the centre of all policy, system and service design decisions, and frontline interactions and practices.

Territory Families has also provided both APONT and SNAICC with operational funding of \$151,060 in total, and a seconded staff member, to facilitate consultations with the community and develop a Northern Territory strategy.

In early 2018, Territory Families funded Tangentyere Council in Alice Springs to pilot a new program to identify Aboriginal foster and kinship carers for Aboriginal children in care in the Central Australia and Barkly Regions. The program includes an out-posted Territory Families officers and utilises Tangentyere Council's connection to the Alice Springs community to find, connect and support Aboriginal families to become kinship carers.

Building on this service and the work on the Aboriginal Out-of-Home Care Strategy, in August 2018, the Northern Territory Government introduced two additional funding programs for Aboriginal organisations in the Northern Territory. These programs are specifically designed to increase the number and proportion of Aboriginal children in care who are placed in safe, suitable and culturally connected homes with Aboriginal kinship or foster carers.

The first stream of funding has been offered through a single one-off grant of up to \$200,000 to develop a comprehensive, technically sound and evidence-based service model focused on enabling more Aboriginal children in care to be placed with Aboriginal foster and kinship carers. It will outline a service model that can be progressively rolled-out across the Territory, adapted as required, and implemented over the next five years.

The second stream of funding has been offered through two service delivery pilot grants of up to \$150,000 each in the Top End and Central Australia. The aim of the pilot grants is to improve the outcomes for Aboriginal children already in care while the comprehensive service design is being developed.

The Northern Territory Government has also introduced significant improvements in residential care. In partnership with the Australian Childhood Foundation, a therapeutic residential care model has now been implemented in Territory Families operated residential care homes in Darwin. The design and implementation of the model has involved a review of standard operating procedures, refurbishment of facilities and staff training.

The model supports young people to recover from the impact of trauma. It is focussed on allowing young people to build trust and positive relationships with consistent, caring adults. Staff training commenced in May 2018. The training was provided in Darwin and Alice Springs and involved staff from Territory Families and non-government residential care providers. The first young people entered the program in June 2018.

The Northern Territory Government is moving towards accreditation of its out-of-home care services. The first step was the implementation of a robust quality assurance program requiring all service providers to demonstrate that they are delivering quality care in line with agreed standards and principles. Territory Families has revised the assessment tools and process in partnership with service providers. The quality assurance program is based on the National Standards for Children in out-of-home care services, and providers are required to tender comprehensive evidence of how they deliver services that uphold these standards. The assessment and review process is providing Territory Families with assurance of the standard of care currently provided by out-of-home care service providers.

3. Improving youth justice

Key achievements include:

- Hosting a visit from the New Zealand Police to learn from their reforms
- Expanding youth diversion options and services
- Expanding support for victims of crimes where the alleged perpetrator is a young person
- Introducing youth engagement training for Northern Territory Police with a focus on child development
- Establishing Youth Outreach and Re-engagement Teams to work with Northern Territory Police, service providers and young people to reduce the risk of future offending
- Implementing a \$10.48 million Fix and Make Safe program in Don Dale and Alice Springs Youth Detention Centres to improve the amenity of the facilities while the new centres are built
- Delivering the \$4.1 million regional youth program that provides after-hours services and funds activities for young people
- Establishing bail support services to provide courts an alternative option to remanding young people in detention

3.1 Police and young people

One of the fundamental reforms being undertaken in youth justice, and a focal point for the Royal Commission, is the establishment of a Youth and Families Division within the Northern Territory Police.

Following the advice of the Royal Commission, a key first step in establishing this major reform was looking to the reforms implemented in New Zealand. In September 2018, Inspector Ross Lienert, who was instrumental in leading the youth justice reforms in New Zealand, visited the Northern Territory at the invitation of Northern Territory Police. During his visit, Inspector Lienert reflected on the reform journey in New Zealand with staff from Northern Territory Police, Territory Families and the Department of the Attorney General and Justice.

Northern Territory Police are now planning the design and implementation of the Youth and Families division. With this division in place, police will be better equipped to effectively engage with young people and their families, deal appropriately with young people who are already offending and be better equipped to divert young people from offending and entering the justice system. The proposed structure for the division will be formally considered before the end of 2018.

In addition, youth engagement training is now being offered to all Northern Territory Police members. This training includes learning about childhood and adolescent brain development, the impact of cognitive and intellectual disabilities, Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and issues relating to domestic and family violence. The training also has a focus on being trauma-informed, and includes the impacts of intergenerational trauma.

3. Improving youth justice

3.2 Keeping children out of detention

The Northern Territory Government is implementing a multi-faceted approach to reducing crime committed by young people, improving accountability for young people and keeping children out of detention. One aspect of this approach is to invest in regional youth programs delivered by non-government organisations.

The Northern Territory Government has allocated an additional \$2.357 million in 2018-19, bringing the total to \$4.1 million invested in the Regional Youth Services Program. This funding supports delivery of core after-hours services which offer young people a safe place to go, activities to participate in and support links (including appropriate referral pathways). School holiday programs are included with both day and evening activities open to all young people, with a focus on linking those who are most vulnerable to relevant support services. Regional Youth program coordinators have been appointed in Alice Springs, Palmerston, Tennant Creek, Katherine, East Arnhem and Darwin.

Court diversion, restorative justice conferencing & youth diversion

In addition to the regional youth programs, the Northern Territory Government has committed over \$7.3 million in 2018-19 for a Community Youth Support Grants Program that will provide a coordinated system of intervention strategies aimed at reducing the risk of young people offending, promoting reintegration back into culture and encouraging family connections, and delivering pro-social outcomes to reduce crime and keep communities safe.

Positioning of the program within a broader framework of early intervention and prevention acknowledges that young people need to be viewed in the context of their family, their culture and their community and need to be supported by them to 'right the wrongs' and move forward with their lives. The delivery streams, soon to go out to tender for 2019-2023, are youth diversion case management and reintegration support, early intervention programs and activities, youth camp intervention programs, youth justice conferencing and crisis intervention support.

Better developed restorative justice conferencing is being undertaken including with the Jesuit Social Services commencing a court referred youth conferencing service in Palmerston and Katherine. Jesuit Social Services delivered 46 court-referred victim offender conferences between 1 July 2017 and 30 June 2018. A further 115 youth at risk who were referred to victim offender conferences through police diversion or pre-court were supported by other services, including Anglicare NT, CatholicCare NT, East Arnhem Regional Council, Groote Eylandt and Milyakburra Youth Development Unit, MacDonnell Regional Council, Malabam Health Board Maningrida, Relationships Australia NT, Tiwi Islands Regional Council, Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation and YWCA Darwin.

In September 2018, the Northern Territory Government announced an investment of \$455,000 for a facilities upgrade at the Mt Theo Outstation, which is operated by the Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation. The funds will allow the corporation to upgrade their Mt Theo Outstation infrastructure so that they can continue their youth diversion program for at-risk young Warlpiri people, on country.

Since 1993 Mt Theo Outstation has taken in over 500 young Aboriginal people from over 14 different communities, including Alice Springs. The program is run by Warlpiri elders and takes young people at risk to the remote Mt Theo Outstation to provide professional case management in a stable, supportive and positive environment to re-engage them with culture, health, education and family relationships.

In 2017-18, Territory Families funded Operation Flinders to run eight day wilderness camps, with up to 10 young people at each camp. Five camps have occurred. The program aims to reduce offending, substance use and at-risk behaviour, increase educational and vocational engagement, improve cultural connectedness and identity, and enhance health and wellbeing. During 2017-18, Territory Families' Youth Outreach and Re-Engagement Officers attended the Operation Flinders camps and provided pre-camp activities and at least three months' post-camp case management.

Youth Outreach and Re-engagement Teams

The Youth Outreach and Re-engagement Teams (YORETs) were established across the Territory in May 2017, with 53 staff now based across the regions. The community-based Youth Outreach and Re-engagement Officers are a vital part of the prevention and early intervention components of Territory Families' Youth Justice reform strategy to support families and strengthen communities.

The teams provide and coordinate early intervention services, undertaking activities such as building relationships and collaborating with stakeholders to improve the quality of services provided to young people, including during school holiday periods, Youth Week and NAIDOC week.

Reflecting a commitment to place based services, there are differences in the Youth Outreach and Re-engagement Teams' roles in Palmerston, Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Nhulunbuy and Groote Eylandt. They meet regularly with police and other key stakeholders to discuss how to best manage young offenders in the community, provide outreach services to schools and provide case management support to young people enrolled in the flexible learning centres.

The Youth Outreach and Re-engagement Teams also have a youth diversion function, working directly with at-risk youth and those already involved in the youth justice system, applying a clearly articulated referral, screening, assessment and service prioritisation process. They focus on building strong relationships and identifying gaps across services that support young people and their families to navigate the youth justice system.

The officers develop and implement individually tailored case plans to address the young person's needs, the agreed actions and responsibilities of the young person, their family, others services and programs, to coordinate effective interventions. Case management is designed to:

- Be strengths-based and trauma informed
- Be a collaboration between Youth Outreach and other government agencies and community sector providers
- Engage with the young person and their family to encourage shared decision making and responsibility
- Be responsive to the cultural background of the young person, and their relationships with family and the community to which they belong
- Incorporate clinically assessed needs and programs, and
- Match a young person's assessed needs and risk assessments with appropriate interventions and intensity of service.



Bail support

All too common reasons for young people being remanded in custody include a lack of suitable accommodation for bail purposes, difficulties locating responsible adults to support young people on bail, and a lack of access to support services and programs.

The Northern Territory Government has invested in bail support for young people aged 10-17 years. This includes bail support accommodation, bail supervision, and a bail support and referral line. Youth bail support services provide an alternative to pre-court remand in police watch houses or youth detention centres, and will be used as a through-care support system for young people leaving detention, where they are subject to bail conditions.

A youth bail support line has been established to ensure referral enquiries can be received 24/7, 365 days per year from Northern Territory Police, courts and legal service providers. Territory Families has now established 24 hour, 7 day per week Bail Support Programs in Alice Springs and Darwin.

Territory Families established a Youth Bail Support Accommodation Service for up to four young females in Alice Springs on 21 August 2017, in partnership with the Alice Springs Youth Accommodation and Support Services (ASYASS). The service will also accept referrals for males on bail, generally when they are already ASYASS clients.

Saltbush Social Enterprises commenced bail support operations in Darwin and Alice Springs on 5 January 2018. Saltbush Enterprises is delivering youth bail support accommodation and supervision services for up to 12 young males each in Alice Springs and Darwin, with some capacity to also accept young females in Darwin where it is safe to do so. During their time at Saltbush Centres, young people are case managed by a Senior Youth Outreach and Re-engagement Officer, attend school and/or programs and are encouraged to engage in pro-social activities as a group and individually.

Territory Families has appointed two senior bail support clinicians, in Darwin and Alice Springs, as part of the Youth Justice Clinical Services Team. They work in partnership in a multi-agency and multi-disciplinary team to provide clinical oversight and to plan, deliver and support young people engaged in bail support services. The clinicians guide case management and provide trauma-informed, therapeutic interventions. They play an important role in connecting young people to through-care assistance and support designed to keep young people out of the youth justice system. Regular family visits are encouraged and welcomed.

Support for victims

The Northern Territory Government has also expanded the support to victims of crimes committed by young people. In 2017, Victims of Crime Northern Territory was engaged in a pilot to provide support to victims in the victim-offender conferencing process and other youth justice programs. This program was fully funded from the start of the 2018-19 financial year.

The new dedicated victim support service provided by Victims of Crime Northern Territory is now established in Darwin and Alice Springs (also servicing Katherine and Tennant Creek) to increase the support available to victims of youth crime.

This service is part of the increase in restorative justice resources for victims and young people involved in offences.

The service is guided by the Northern Territory Victim Support Services Working Group which is made up of Government and non-government organisations. In June 2018, Simone Klagnan from Victims Support Agency Victoria visited Darwin and Alice Springs to share key outcomes and best practice support service models with Victims of Crime Northern Territory, Territory Families, Northern Territory Police and other youth justice service providers. The aim of this work is to better support victims through the youth justice conferencing process.

3. Improving youth justice

3.3 Youth detention that works

The Northern Territory Government is working to improve youth detention to refocus the system on rehabilitating young people. To support this, Territory Families has established a new Clinical Services unit in youth detention that provides specialist needs and responsivity assessments and interventions to young people in detention. This service collaborates with internal and external stakeholders to ensure young people's safety and wellbeing is our priority and addresses their individual rehabilitation requirements.

Youth Justice Clinical Services has started developing a Model of Care Framework that:

- Provides a safe and stable custodial environment encouraging pro-social behaviour
- Is supportive of participation in education and training
- Fosters personal growth and provides rehabilitative services for sentenced and remanded children and young people
- Involves both the family and community in the rehabilitation and transition of young people from the facility to the community, and considers the needs and cultural backgrounds of children and young people, their families and communities
- Provides consistent access to Aboriginal cultural and wellbeing programs and structured, culturally-responsive learning programs.

Recruitment to the Clinical Services unit is in progress.

A number of new positions were funded for Youth Justice Operations under the *Safe, Thriving and Connected* Plan. It has been challenging to find and train suitably qualified staff and the second round of recruitment was recently concluded to fill new roles and increase staff numbers at both Don Dale Youth Detention Centre and Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre.

In the new organisation structure, there are senior youth workers instead of shift supervisors, and more senior youth justice officers. The selection criteria for youth justice officers has been 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. Territory Families has also recruited additional female staff to support girls in detention. These positions are now required to have or obtain a Certificate IV in Youth Justice.

Training has commenced under the youth worker induction course, with topics including conflict management, cross-cultural awareness, restorative practice, youth mental health first aid, trauma informed practice training, problem sexualised behaviours, suicide awareness and intervention skills, drug and alcohol awareness and the Three Pillars of Transforming Care by Dr Howard Bath. The senior director Youth justice operations and superintendents are completing a Graduate Certificate in Developmental Trauma with the Australian Childhood Foundation.

Territory Families is working with Australian Juvenile Justice Administrators to review the youth justice officers 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.

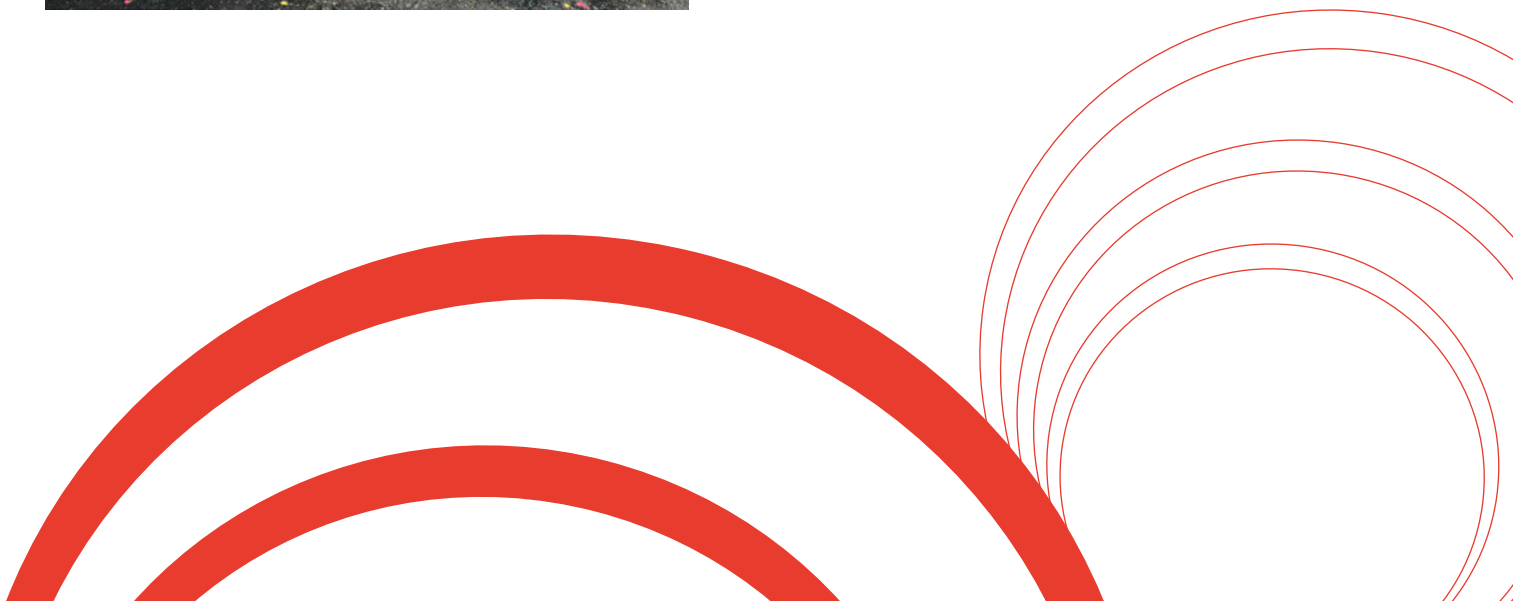




Youth detention infrastructure

Government has committed \$71.4 million to the replacement of Don Dale and Alice Springs youth detention centres. Design and construction of new centres will be based on a restorative approach, and consultation with community sector and Aboriginal leaders. Visioning workshops have been held with stakeholders in Darwin and Alice Springs to inform the design brief for the new Darwin centre. Stakeholders considered best practice approaches and identified the specific needs of young people. Construction of the new Youth Justice Centre in Darwin is expected to commence mid-2019, in Pinelands, conveniently located near public transport, enabling easy access for visitation from family and friends. Before construction commences, public comment will be invited through the rezoning and development consent processes.

In the interim, the Northern Territory Government allocated \$10.48 million to complete Fix and Make Safe works at Don Dale Youth Detention Centre in Darwin and Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre. At the Alice Springs facility, new and separate education and female accommodation facilities have been established. Further work will occur to improve the amenity of the facility and its capacity to manage peaks in accommodation demand. Safety and security will be enhanced by increasing the height of the external perimeter fences, introducing an infra-red motion detection system on the perimeter fence and strengthening the internal room ceilings in the male accommodation areas. Current works at Don Dale include improvements to the fire systems and the amenity of the facility and improved capacity to manage peaks in accommodation demand.



4. Strengthening governance and systems

Key achievements include:

- Allocating an additional \$2.5 million over four years to the Office of the Children's Commissioner to increase the Office's capacity to monitor and audit the youth justice and child protection systems
- Commencing the design work of the new Client Information Management System
- Signing two local decision making agreements with Aboriginal organisations in Ngukurr and Blue Mud Bay
- Committing to a Treaty with Aboriginal Territorians and signed a Memorandum of Understanding to progress the Treaty with the Land Councils
- Engaging the Menzies School of Health Research to conduct early intervention research and deliver a family support system monitoring and evaluation framework
- Establishing the Children and Families Tripartite Forum with key partners including the Commonwealth Government, Aboriginal organisations, and non-government organisations

4.1 Advocacy, accountability and quality improvement

The Northern Territory Government has committed to establish the Commission for Children and Young People recommended by the Royal Commission.

Alongside planning and consultation about the new Commission, the Northern Territory Government has provided an additional \$2.5 million over four years to the Office of the Children's Commissioner to increase the Office's capacity to monitor and audit the youth justice and child protection systems.

This additional funding has also enabled the Office of the Children's Commissioner to carry out inspections of detention centres and out-of-home care facilities.

4.2 Managing and sharing information

The Northern Territory Government has commenced the design work for the new Client Information Management System for child protection and youth justice, including a commitment of \$66.9 million over five years. The new system will enable greater coordination and sharing of information across family support, care and protection and youth justice and additional data collection and reporting mechanisms.

The new information system will be deployed alongside a data warehouse and brokerage service that will allow on-the-ground workers to access relevant information when they need it. The significant resource investment in this initiative will provide the platform for consistently better quality assessment and decision-making by those working directly with children, young people and families experiencing vulnerability who are at risk of a formal statutory response.

4. Strengthening governance and systems

4.3 Community-led responses

As the Royal Commission recognised, Aboriginal people are best placed to develop local solutions to local issues and to make a lasting difference across social, cultural, economic and environmental dimensions of their lives.

Local decision making is a Northern Territory Government commitment to provide opportunities to transfer government service delivery to Aboriginal people and Aboriginal organisations based on their community aspirations. This means that government and Aboriginal communities can work together on developing policies and practices for service delivery areas such as housing; local government; education, training and jobs; health; children and families; and law and justice.

Consultation with Aboriginal peak bodies has been fruitful in co-designing the Local Decision Making Operational Guidelines, which will assist government and communities to transition services and decision-making back into the hands of local Aboriginal communities.

In the 2018-19 Budget, \$1 million was allocated to governance activities to support local communities to make local decisions in a sustainable way. This has enabled a range of activities, including the development of an Aboriginal Grant Funding Framework, the recruitment of two senior governance support staff to the Barkly Region, funding of APONT to conduct the Aboriginal Governance and Management Program, and the Local Decision Making Governance and Capacity Building Grant Program which supports service transition and community capacity-building initiatives.

The Northern Territory Government has already signed two early Local Decision Making Agreements – with Yugul Mangi Development Aboriginal Corporation in Ngukurr and with Baniyala Aboriginal Corporation and the Djalkiripuyngu Leaders of the Blue Mud Bay Region – and is working to finalise two more in 2018.

These Local Decision Making Agreements will ensure that Aboriginal people can identify their own needs and fulfil their own community aspirations in ways that are meaningful, appropriate and effective for them.

The Northern Territory Government is also committed to progressing a Treaty between Aboriginal Territorians and the Northern Territory Government. A Treaty will be a new way forward and an important step towards empowering Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory.

On 8 June 2018, the Northern Territory's four Land Councils and the Northern Territory Government signed an historic agreement (the Barunga Agreement) paving the way for consultations to begin with Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory about a Treaty.

The Northern Territory Government will appoint an independent Treaty Commissioner to lead the consultations with Aboriginal people and organisations across the Territory, and develop a framework for Treaty negotiations. The Commissioner will be an Aboriginal person with strong connections to the Territory.



4. Strengthening governance and systems

4.4 Evidence-based practice

In 2017-18, Territory Families entered into a four year funding agreement with the Menzies School of Health Research to identify and conduct early intervention research and deliver a family support system monitoring and evaluation framework. This is the first time that Territory Families has invested in early intervention and family support and research.

This funding builds on the Child and Youth Development Research Partnership between the Northern Territory Government and Menzies School of Health Research. The partnership supports the development and utilisation of research infrastructure capable of exploring important determinants of health and social outcomes for children and young people in the Northern Territory. Linked administrative data across many agencies allows a longitudinal analysis of key events through a child's life along with the influence of these events on later outcomes.

Through the partnership, Menzies has been researching factors influencing contact with the child protection system for children from birth to five and early pathways impacting on school learning.

The research findings indicate both the scale of the issue and the potential long-term costs for individuals, families, community and society. The findings also demonstrate the extent to which sociocultural and economic circumstances influence all children's early health, development and learning.

The Menzies research has been instrumental in the deliberations of the Children and Families Tripartite Forum on the service model for the Child and Family Centres and the selection of sites for the additional centres.

4.5 Coordinated effort towards better outcomes

The Northern Territory Government is working with Aboriginal organisations, non-government organisations and the Commonwealth Government to plan and implement the required reforms identified in *Safe, Thriving and Connected*.

The Royal Commission recommended the establishment of a forum for strategic engagement between governments and the community sector.

The Children and Families Tripartite Forum was established in July 2018 and has met twice, first in Alice Springs on 23 July 2018 and then in Darwin on 15 October 2018. The forum is made up of representatives from the community sector (including Aboriginal organisations and non-government organisations), the Commonwealth Government and Northern Territory Government.

The forum is chaired by Ms Donna Ah Chee as an independent Aboriginal chair and the majority of representatives on the Tripartite Forum are Aboriginal people, ensuring that Aboriginal people have a strong voice in shaping implementation of the Royal Commission reforms.

The Tripartite Forum has developed a two year work plan which spans the full scope of reforms under *Safe, Thriving and Connected* and other relevant reforms.

At a local level, the Northern Territory Government is supporting the Palmerston Grow Well Live Well collective impact initiative. The initiative is a collaboration between local service providers and community members along with representatives Commonwealth, NT and local government. Grow Well Live Well provides the community with a voice about the needs of families and children in Palmerston and works to ensure services are targeted and coordinated.

What is next?

The changes included in this report represent the work during and following the Royal Commission and just over six months of a five year reform journey focusing on generational change for children and families. There is more to do, and the experiences to date underscore the complexity and challenges of introducing the important changes that children and families deserve. Some reforms will take longer than others, however promising progress is evident.

Significantly, the platform for change is now demonstrably more robust, with stronger, more effective collaboration evident between Northern Territory Government agencies, and also the Commonwealth Government, Aboriginal organisations and other non-government organisations. There are also encouraging signs of more reliable processes being established to ensure that local community voices are heard and are influential in shaping local action.

Major reforms which are next on the timetable include:

- Establishment of the 11 new Child and Family Centres over five years to connect families to early help and support when they need it and stop families ending up in the child protection system.
- Assisting young people who have been in out-of-home care to access and maintain safe and secure housing when they leave care.
- Involving families in decision-making by introducing Family Group Conferencing into child protection practice.
- Transforming out-of-home care by working with Aboriginal organisations to find and support Aboriginal carers to look after Aboriginal children.
- Strengthening youth justice approaches that work to stop future offending.
- Replacing Don Dale and Alice Springs Youth Detention Centres with new secure youth justice training centres that are focussed on breaking the cycle of reoffending.
- Establishing a youth policing division that will take a proactive approach to engagement with young people to stop offending behaviour earlier.

The evidence is clear. Early support for struggling families and options which divert vulnerable young people away from crime, help to reduce the risk of involvement with child protection and youth justice services. These are the reforms that the Government is putting in place to benefit not just children, young people and families, but the entire community.



