

Central Australia Child Protection Office

Southern Region



Our Priorities

Optimise
Outcomes for
Children in
Care

Partner with
Families,
Communities,
and Agencies

Protect
Children From
Harm

Continuous
Improvement to
Enable
Contemporary
Practice

Values and
Invests in
Employees

Investigation and Assessment Teams

Child Protection Manager

<p>Child Abuse Taskforce Team Leader Senior Child Protection Practitioners Aboriginal Community Worker</p>	<p>Investigation and Assessment Team Leader Senior/ Child Protection Practitioners Aboriginal Community Worker Youth Worker Case Support Worker</p>	<p>Investigation and Assessment Team Leader Senior/ Child Protection Practitioners Aboriginal Community Workers</p>	<p>Strengthening Families Team Leader Senior/ Child Protection Practitioners Aboriginal Community Worker</p>
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Substitute Care Teams

Child Protection Manager

Reunification Team Leader Senior/ Child Protection Practitioners Senior/ Aboriginal Community Workers Youth Worker Case Support Worker	Long Term Care North Team Leader Senior/ Child Protection Practitioners Aboriginal Community Workers Case Support Worker	Long Term Care South Team Leader Senior/ Child Protection Practitioners Aboriginal Community Workers Case Support Worker	Regional Response and Support Team Leader Senior/ Child Protection Practitioners
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Functions

- Child Protection Investigations
- Strengthening Families Case Management
- Collaborative partnerships to ensure consistent service delivery, service integration, and appropriate service responses.
- Partner with the non-government sector to strengthen delivery of services and support the building of stronger children, families, and communities.

Functions

- Reunification – Safely returning a child home to their parents, or other primary caregiver in a planned and timely manner.
- Develop and implement care plans which promote and support sustained changes for children and their families.
- Facilitate meaningful contact between children and families.
- Permanency planning.
- Identify long term stable and nurturing care arrangements for children who can't return to their parents care or that of their primary caregiver.

Achievements

- Stability of staffing – recruitment, retention, and professional development
- Working with the frontline enabling teams including the Professional Practice Team and Business Support Team to strengthen practice and lift practice reform
- Strengthening of local and community relationships to ensure collaborative service delivery
- The development and delivery of mandatory reporting and information sharing training package
- Collaborative practice with foster and kinship carers and residential carers to achieve better outcomes for children in care.

Challenges

- Community perception of the role and functions of the Department
- The high number of notifications which proceed to investigation however ultimately harm is not substantiated
- Strengthening referrals and support to families post child protection involvement, prioritising the needs of the child and recognising that strong parents are best placed to meet children's needs
- Finding the right match of carers and care arrangements for children that best suits children's needs and assist them reach their full potential.
- Limited post care options.

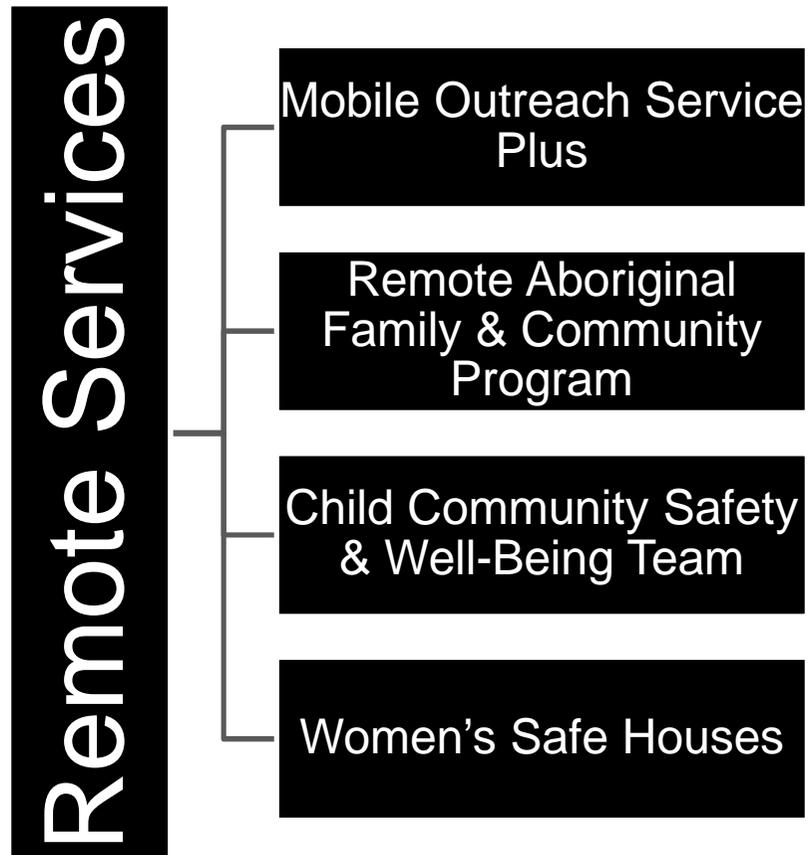
Remote Services



- Remote Services is a Division of the Department of Children and Families that provides a variety of services to young people and their families that live in remote communities
- Remote Services works from a voluntary perspective with regards to clients however, it also provides support for other DCF division.
- Our focus is on placed based service delivery. We have 24 offices located across the NT and we work closely with families, local agencies and visiting CP workers

Current Service Model

- Remote Services currently consists of 4 Programs:
 - **Mobile Outreach Service Plus** (Therapy for young people and their families in Remote Communities)
 - **Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Program** (comprises of Aboriginal staff that live in remote communities & Town Camps throughout the NT who undertake a number of tasks for the Department)
 - **Child Community Safety & Well-being Team** (practitioners that promote the safety of children that live in Aboriginal families within remote communities).
 - **Women's Safe House** (the provision of a place for women who are experiencing Domestic to seek refuge and safety)
 - All four programs are child and family focused.



Mobile Outreach Service Plus (MOS Plus)

- MOS Plus is a service that provides counselling to young people and their families in Remote communities who are experiencing difficulties as a result of trauma due to neglect or abuse
- The service has two teams that sit in Darwin and Alice Springs servicing their respect communities. In Central Australia MOS Plus currently services the following communities:
 - Ntaria
 - Ti Tree
 - Atitjere
 - Utopia
 - Ali Curung
 - Elliott;
 - Yuendumu;
 - Papunya
- The team consists of counsellors and ATRO who work together to achieve the best outcome for the young person;
- Referrals to the program can come from a number of different sources including DCF CP, Community agencies, clinics, schools, and the community

Remote Aboriginal Family & Community Program (RAFCP)

- The Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Program (RAFCP) works alongside other teams from the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and Northern Territory (NT) Government programs
- The program employs local Aboriginal people (Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Workers – RAFCWs)
- RAFCWs work closely with all DCF services to provide local cultural knowledge and guidance and to ensure that engagement with communities and families is culturally safe.
- They also provide a culturally appropriate liaison point between the NT child protection system and Aboriginal families living in remote communities.
- Referrals come directly from CP

- Community Child Safety and Wellbeing Teams (CCSWTs) operate in a number of remote communities in the Northern Territory.
- Develop, convene and chair a local, multi-agency Safety Coordination Group .
- CCSWT practitioners work closely with DCF's Remote Aboriginal Family and Community Workers (RAFCWs), who provide local cultural knowledge and guidance and ensure that engagement with communities and their members is culturally safe and appropriate.
- At present, we only have one CCSWT in CA who is located in Yuendumu
- Referrals can come from
 - The individual;
 - the community (e.g. service provider, DCF, community/family member); or
 - Be identified as needing support by a CCSWT worker through meetings between agencies.

Women's Safe House (WSH)

- There are 12 Women's Safe Houses in remote communities across the NT.
- In CA, Ntaria and Ti Tree co-located (RAFCP).
- WSH's staff
- The WSH Workers assist women to develop safety plans
- Support is daily by phone
- Women are referred to the WSH by the Police, family or community members, Night Patrol, Health Centre or they self refer to the WSH Workers.

Where are Remote Service Staff in CA Located?

Service	Location	Staffing numbers
WSH	Ntaria	4
	Ti Tree	3
CCSWT	Yuendumu	1
MOS +	Alice Springs but travels to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yuendumu • Papunya • Ti Tree • Ali Curung • Elliott • Ntaria • Atitjere • Utopia 	4
RAFCP	Town Camps	3
	Ntaria	1
	Ti Tree	1
	Papunya	2
	Yuendumu	1
	Elliott	1
	Tennant Creek	2

Strengths

- The majority of workers live and work in community;
- A large number of workers have language;
- A number of workers have been working for the Department since the inception of Remote Services in 2008
- Remote Services can access a number of resources, individuals and groups that operate in communities to provide clients with greater support;
- Remote Service staff have developed positive relationships with clients, families, organisations and other groups in community;

- For further Information contact:

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Out of Home Care Division

Placement Unit

In-Care Support

Carer Assessment and Support (CAST)

Residential Care

Adoptions

Interstate Liaison

Our purpose

The Out of Home Care Division provides a safe, stable and nurturing environment that promotes access to opportunities, enabling children to contribute effectively and participate in the community in a meaningful way.

The Out of Home Care Division aims to build a platform of continuous improvement to enable contemporary practice that supports children, young people and their carers with the goal of optimizing the outcomes for children in care.

Our structure

Residential Care – Provides a predictable care environment that responds to the emerging needs of children and young people that optimises the outcomes for children in care.

Southern Region has three Department of Children and Families operated facilities. Two residential houses and the ‘Mums and Bubs Program’ supporting mothers to care for their young children.

Carer Assessment and Support (CAST) – Recruitment, assessment and authorisation of quality carers for children in the care of the Chief Executive Officer. Enable the retention of carers and promote stability in placements through the training and support of carers alongside proactive collaboration with case management to resolve emerging concerns.

Southern Region has two teams, one based in Alice Springs that covers the Central and Tenant Creek Offices and one in Katherine.

Our Structure

Placements – Provide children suitable placement options that enhance safety, stability and nurturing opportunities.

The Placement Unit is based in Darwin and identifies placements for children in the care of the Chief Executive Officer.

In-Care Support – Provides a holistic service for children and young people who are in the care of the Chief Executive Officer to overcome the effects of complex trauma.

There are two In-Care Support Teams, one based in Alice Springs for Central and Tennant Creek Child Protection Offices and one in Darwin covering the Big Rivers Office (Katherine) and the Darwin based Offices.

Our Structure

- **Adoptions** – Coordinating the promotion and assessment of local and Inter-Country adoptions as a Territory wide service. Adoption Unit incorporates a Family Information Service providing information and counselling to adopted people, birth parents, adoptive parents, and adults formerly in the care of the Territory/State.
- **Interstate Liaison** – Coordinates the processing of all inter-jurisdictional requests for the Department of Children and Families as a Territory wide service.

Legislation - placement of children

Care and Protection of Children (Placement Arrangement) Regulations

Measures for an individual to become an authorised Carer, in particular:

- The powers of the CEO to approve a nominee as an authorised Carer; and
- Enter into a placement arrangement to safeguard the wellbeing of the child.

‘Authorised Carer’ - Assessment

Part 2 *Care and Protection of Children (Placement Arrangement) Regulations* defines who may be a ‘fit and proper person to care for a child’ through the following;

- a) Positive notice Working with Children Care
- b) Criminal history check (National) Child protection history check (all jurisdictions where proposed carer has lived)
- c) Health assessment
- d) Household safety study
- e) Character references
- f) Interviews exploring motivation, experience caring for children, ability to act accordance with the principles in Part 1.3 of the Care and Protection of Children Act 2007.
- g) The CEO is able to seek information from any person and considerer this information in deciding if the nominee should be authorised as a carer.

‘Authorised Carer’ - Assessment

A ‘Full Assessment’ takes up to twelve weeks. Timeframe reflects both the interview process, the return of Ochre Cards and criminal histories and the analysis of information gathered regarding the nominated carers and their household.

ALL household members in a nominee's home, over 16 years, must undergo

- Working with Children (Ochre card) Check and must be issued an Ochre Card
- Criminal History check
- Child Protection History check

Authorised carer – Responsibilities

Part 4 *Care and Protection of Children (Placement Arrangement) Regulations* lists the responsibilities of a carer including (not limited to);

- a) have interest in, and respect for, the child
- b) provide appropriate accommodation for the child
- c) ensure the child attends school
- d) assist the child to maintain or recover his or her personal, familial and cultural identity
- e) Assist with the implementation of, the care plan for the child
- f) attend training or information sessions as directed by the CEO

Carer Assessment and Support Team (CAST)

Referrals for foster/kinship assessment come through;

- a) Case Management
- b) Foster Care Line 1800 814 599
- c) Carer Community <http://www.carercommunity.nt.gov.au>
- d) Foster Carer NT/CREATE
- e) Member of the public calling Child Protection Offices seeking information and similar

Referrals and inquiries are allocated to the CAST team local to the carer nominee with contact to occur with nominee within two weeks to progress to a formal application.