

# TERRITORY FAMILIES STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2020

Half year report -  
1 July to 31 December 2019



## KEY ACTIONS 2019 - 2020

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Strategic Plan Half-Year Report provides a summary of the progress and achievements delivered by Territory Families in the first half of the 2019-20 financial year.

Territory Families has made significant progress in implementing improvements that benefit children, families and communities. Some of the fundamental building blocks of a new system are in place, including legislation, improved case management tools and processes, practice and policy, and strengthened partnerships.

In 2019, we continued to advance a range of reforms for children and young people, families, communities and seniors. We have a bigger presence in remote areas and we are delivering options that engage and empower individuals to make positive changes in their lives. Significant amendments to the Care and Protection of Children Act and the Youth Justice Act were passed by the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly. Our voluntary family support line, FACES, has received significant uptake and is increasingly being used to provide help and support to empower families and children before problems escalate. Aboriginal Controlled Organisations are now responsible for family-finding and kinship carer recruitment and support.

There has been significant investment in youth justice programs to ensure young people are held accountable for their actions in ways that change their behaviour and ensure that there are consequences for offending. This has included introducing new youth justice responses through the Back on Track and the Breaking the Cycle of Crime programs. In addition, our Youth Outreach and Re-engagement Program has continued to expand, as have the Bail Accommodation and Bail Support services.

In this period national reporting shows that demand for child protection is decreasing, more Aboriginal children in care are living with relatives and our care planning has improved significantly. More families are asking us for support and assistance, and we are working with more young people in a tailored and targeted youth justice approach.

None of this important work could happen without our people. In 2019, we invested in our workforce in improving the Child Protection Market Allowance and offering new learning opportunities through our partnership with Charles Darwin University. Two of our staff received recognition at the Chief Minister's Awards where the Northern Territory Public Service celebrated the outstanding and commendable service of Dorrelle Anderson, who was awarded the Aboriginal Leadership Medal, and Punata Stockman, who was awarded the Chief Minister's Medal.

Territory Families also won the Improving Inclusion and Diversity Employment Outcomes Award for our Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework and the Excellence in Customer Service Award for our reforms to our child protection hotline and central intake service.

In a challenging fiscal environment, we are making good progress and are focussed on achieving sustainable change.

## 38 KEY ACTIONS

-  **14** Completed
-  **16** Implemented & Ongoing
-  **8** In Progress

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TERRITORY FAMILIES  
WE CARE

# INTRODUCTION

Territory Families takes a whole-of-life approach to supporting and empowering children, young people and families.

Through our portfolios we are committed to supporting families; protecting children and young people; addressing youth offending; reducing domestic, family and sexual violence; supporting, retaining and attracting seniors and multicultural groups; and supporting the Territory's culturally diverse communities.

This Strategic Plan Half-Year Report provides a summary of the progress and achievements delivered by Territory Families in the first half of the 2019-20 financial year. In 2019, we continued to advance a range of reforms for children and young people, families, communities and seniors. Our 2019-20 Strategic Plan identified 38 key actions and we are well progressed with 14 completed, 16 implemented and ongoing and 8 in progress.

Our commitment to transparent reporting on the work we are doing remains. As the Strategic Plan 2017-2020 approaches the end of its four year cycle, we will commence our new strategic planning process to ensure Territory Families has a contemporary plan that reflects our vision to empower children and families for a safe and better future.



# GOAL 1: PROVIDE EARLY SUPPORT TO CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES



NTCOSS SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORY

**3000**

SITE VISITS per month



REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT  
FACES CALLS

**344**

For all Territory children to thrive, our families need to be supported, especially when experiencing tough times. We are committed to providing support earlier and working with children, families and communities to keep children safe. We work with young people with offending behaviours to support and divert them away from future offending and to positively re-engage them with their community. We have listened to the evidence, heard the voices of our children, young people and families, and partnered with community services and organisations. Our focus is clear and we are seeing significant positive outcomes from the changes we have made to principles, policy and practice.

The key elements of our family support reform are stabilised and embedded. The FACES Family Support team, co-located with Central Intake, is now well established as a referral and information phone service that can help with a range of family and parenting needs - including everyday parenting challenges, rebuilding family relationships, home support, managing money or crisis accommodation. FACES provides an alternative pathway for families to receive family support outside of the child protection system and can also assist providers and other professionals working with the family to identify resources. Territory Families continues to work with the Aboriginal Translation and Interpreter Service who are translating FACES community education campaign materials. In recognition

of their hard work, the Central Intake and FACES team won the Excellence in Customer Service Award at the 2019 Chief Minister's Awards for Excellence in the Public Sector.

In 2019, we extended the existing Intensive Family Preservation Service (IFPS) contracts until 30 June 2021. This extension is consistent with the extension of the Australian Government Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS) contracts and will enable our current reforms and studies into funding arrangements to be embedded and completed, and provides us with an opportunity to move further into the design of a coordinated and integrated family support system that is aligned with the Australian Government.

Territory Families continues to engage with stakeholders regarding future investment into family support funding in the NT.

In December 2019, the Northern Territory Government submitted its response to the Productivity Commission's Draft Report on the Expenditure of Children in the Northern Territory. The findings of the Productivity Commission's Study will impact on the approach to Family Support investment by the Northern Territory and Australian Governments.

The Reform Management Office (RMO) is engaging with priority communities and secondary locations in relation to Child and Family Centres:

- The Katherine site began providing services in December 2019 and officially opened in February 2020.
- The selection of a provider for the Tennant Creek Child and Family Centre is now complete.
- Implementation in Wadeye is subject to further community action and decisions.
- The preferred location for the East Arnhem Child and Family Centre is now the Gapuwiyak, Milingimbi and Ramingining sub-region. The Department of the Chief Minister and the East Arnhem Children and Families Coordination Group, which includes

local Aboriginal Controlled Organisations, are progressing the establishment of the Centre.

- Planning for a Centre in Kalkarindji has commenced with meetings with the Gurindji Corporation and the Katherine West Health Board held in July and October 2019. The meetings discussed the service model for the proposed Centre, the establishment of a Local Advisory Group and a possible partnership between Gurindji and Sunrise West Health Board to deliver the service.
- Finally, a grant round to determine a provider of the Northern Suburbs Child and Family Centre opened on 29 November 2019 with applications due in early 2020. A site for the Centre will be determined once a provider is selected.

Territory Families continues to consider the most appropriate model to implement family led decision making models across our portfolios. The agency's implementation of the Signs of Safety tools and resources has impacted on the original identified need for a Family Group Conferencing Model and the Department is reassessing where the model can be targeted to have the most impact.

Territory Families is implementing evidence based interventions to curb youth offending through the Back on Track Program, community youth diversion programs and support from Youth Outreach and Re-Engagement Teams. This is complemented by the Regional Youth Services Program which supports delivery of core after-hours services including school holiday programs with both day and evening activities, with a focus on linking those who are most vulnerable to relevant support services. \$3.16 million in funding for Community Youth Diversion Program Grants was committed in 2019-20. This is the first year of a recurring five year commitment. Young people can be referred to Community Youth Diversion programs by NT Police. Where capacity exists in the Program, referrals also come from Northern Territory Government agencies and other community groups. Service providers in the Greater Darwin region were invited to apply through a competitive grants round which closed on 8 November 2019. Assessments are currently underway.

Kalano Community Association and Yugul Mangi Development Aboriginal Corporation have recently been identified through Local Decision Making processes as the ongoing youth diversion service providers in the Katherine region and Ngukurr respectively. Providers have also been selected in Darwin, Yuendumu, Wadeye, Gunbalanya, Groote Eylandt and MacDonnell Regional Council regions.

As part of the Northern Territory Government's Breaking the Cycle of Crime Plan, Territory Families is implementing the Crossover Families Unit, a new youth drop-in centre in Palmerston and expanding the youth outreach service in Alice Springs to 3am seven nights a week, 365 days a year. A new YORET hub has been established in the Palmerston CBD. The hub gives the Palmerston YORET the option to have designated areas for activities with young people. The facility is a large enough that other relevant service providers will be able to use the space to deliver their services. Youth Action Plans have now been launched in Palmerston, Katherine and Alice Springs and the Darwin Youth Action Plan will be launched in early 2020.



In the last six months, Territory Families' commitment to preventing domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) culminated in the release of the third round of the Safe, Respected and Free from Violence Prevention Grants.

The total grant funding available is \$1 million each year. Grants of up to \$150,000 are available to contribute towards the development and implementation of good practice evidence-based domestic and family violence primary prevention and early intervention projects and activities in the Northern Territory.



Provide early support to children, young people and families	Status
Renew our investment in Family Support services and in doing so continue to improve the early intervention system so that it works holistically with vulnerable families to address concern	Complete
Deliver purpose built Child and Family Centres in partnership with communities in Katherine, Tennant Creek, Wadeye, the Northern Suburbs and Galiwinku/ Milingimbi.	Ongoing
Continue the use of targeted and culturally appropriate messaging and education campaigns to encourage families and service providers to seek support and ask for help if they need it – particularly through the ongoing growth of the Family and Children’s Enquiry Service (FACES)	Ongoing
Implement youth justice programs in alignment with Government commitments to deliver evidence-based interventions that stop youth offending.	Complete
Commence the use of a formal Family Group Conferencing model within the child protection system.	Ongoing
Strengthen our partnership with Charles Darwin University to improve staff capability and provide employment options to local graduates.	Complete

# GOAL 2: SAFEGUARD THE WELLBEING OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY

## BACK ON TRACK



# 55

**YOUNG PEOPLE** are actively participating in the Back on Track program

## OUT OF HOME CARE



# 1013

**CHILDREN** are in care in the Northern Territory

Territory Families is building on improvements to service delivery for children and families through a new child protection practice model, including an overhauled out-of-home care system. We are diverting young people from the criminal justice system and supporting the community in giving victims a voice. When young people interact with the youth justice system, they receive support to meet their bail conditions and are provided with post release options that support positive re-engagement. In continuing our commitment to respond to and prevent domestic, family and sexual violence, we have developed a Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Framework and are working to reform the service model for women experiencing violence in remote communities.

The Back on Track Program commenced operation in September 2019. Contracts were awarded to seven providers across the Northern Territory: Anglicare NT, Australian Childhood Foundation, First Step, Jesuit Social Services, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Corporation, Saltbush Social Enterprises Limited and Save the Children Australia.

Every young person referred to Back on Track will have a comprehensive assessment and a treatment plan. They will undertake skills development, family responsibility and cultural connection programs aimed at changing behaviour; and will be supported to re-engage

in education or to take part in employment and training programs, which lead to a job. Back on Track will for the first time provide an intensive program for 8 to 13 year olds, who are engaging in anti-social behaviour and are at risk of future offending. Back on Track builds partnerships with Aboriginal businesses and other employers, such as the First Step program, where employers provide mentoring, training and employment opportunities that lead to an actual job on the ground.

The location for the new \$60 million Darwin Youth Justice Centre was announced as being a greenfield site in Holtze. A \$13 million refurbishment to the Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre to improve the amenity for young people, staff and visitors is in progress. Designs continue to be informed through a co-design process focused on meeting functional requirements of all facility users and visitors, as well as ensuring design principles deliver a program and environment that will result in positive outcomes for young people. Specialist Advisory Groups have and will continue to meet to ensure that stakeholders including government and non-government agencies, Aboriginal Controlled Organisations, service providers, staff and young people in youth detention are able to provide input into the designs.

The Tennant Creek Youth Action Plan is in development and will connect and consolidate key components of the youth focused components of the Barkly Regional Deal. The Deal also provided funding for a Youth Justice Training Camp in Tennant Creek. The Facility will provide stable, safe and supervised accommodation for young people who have been sentenced to supervision, a diversion program, are on bail, or who are participating in the Back on Track program. The Facility is not a detention centre but is a site where young people can be supported to engage in training and rehabilitation.

Following broad community consultation activity undertaken through the Barkly Region



Youth Justice Facility Working Group, a preferred site was identified and recommended to Territory Families. Territory Families is now preparing an Indigenous Land Use Agreement proposal and entering negotiations to confirm the site. In parallel, draft concept designs for the Facility have progressed, aligned to the budget allocation of \$3.5 million.

Territory Families is implementing a new out-of-home care model that will transform the way the system currently operates. As at 31 December 2019, there were 1013 children in care in the Northern Territory. This is down by 73 at the same time in 2018. Throughout 2019, Territory Families continued to work towards providing a system and services that are focused on and responsive to the needs of children and young people in care, their families and their carers.

In August 2019, a new Aboriginal Foster and Kinship Care Model was released. The Model was produced by Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation in partnership with Territory Families through a \$200,000 Aboriginal Carers Growing Up Aboriginal Children grant. The new model is based on four phases which represent the life cycle of children in care from beginning to end and provides the basis for the agency's partnership with Aboriginal organisations to increase the number of children in care being supported by kin. Following the success of the original Aboriginal Carers Growing Up Aboriginal Children Grant Round, a second grant round was released. The new Aboriginal carer model, implementation guide and resources were provided to Aboriginal organisations interested in these grants. In addition to two existing providers, the following four new organisations will be operating the new model: Yalu Aboriginal Corporation, Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council, NT Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation and Kalano Community Association Incorporated. So far, nearly \$3 million has been invested in this foundational reform program.

Territory Families' Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework aligns and integrates Aboriginal cultural rights, views and experiences with our services, systems and governance. It celebrates the strength of Aboriginal culture

and history and helps Territory Families partner with Aboriginal organisations to build relationships with Aboriginal children, families and communities. Territory Families was awarded the Improving Inclusion and Diversity Employment Outcomes Award for the Framework at the 2019 Chief Minister's Awards for Excellence in the Public Sector.



Territory Families is working to provide therapeutic services that are designed to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people in care. In December 2019, a two-stage procurement process was finalised for new Intensive Therapeutic Residential Care Providers. The successful providers will deliver care environments that support positive, safe and healing experiences and address individual and complex needs and trauma. The Intensive Therapeutic Residential Care Model replaces the current General Residential Care and individual placement arrangements.

A Welcome to Our Home booklet template and procedures have been developed to assist Territory Families staff and foster and kinship carers create an informative and welcoming introduction for a child transitioning to a new placement. The idea behind the booklet

stemmed from feedback from young people in care through the Youth Round Table with the CREATE Foundation. Young people wanted to be provided information and photos about the carer, their home and family. This innovative, child-led reform has been promoted internationally.

Territory Families completed consultations on the NT's first Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Framework. Consultations for the Framework included meetings with over 50 specialist domestic and family violence services and networks, specialist sexual violence service providers and representatives from Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations in Darwin, Nhulunbuy, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs. A discussion paper and survey was also released for public consultation, feedback and suggestions to inform the development of the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Framework.

Territory Families continues to progress delivery of work to improve domestic, family and sexual violence services in the Northern Territory, as committed to under Action Plan 1: Changing Attitudes, Intervening Earlier and Responding Better (2018-2021) of the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018-2028 Safe, Respected and Free from Violence.

Building on service reviews of Nhulunbuy, Tennant Creek and Katherine women's shelters, the Barkly and Big Rivers Service Review was finalised in 2019. The Review completes Stage 1 of Government's commitment to establish a specialist DFSV hub in the Barkly Region. In 2019-20, \$2 million was allocated to existing Territory Families funded Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence services to provide outreach services, counselling and clinical and professional practice supervision.

Safeguard the wellbeing of children, young people, families and the community	Status
Provide new sentencing options for the courts to hold young accountable through the Back on Track program.	Complete
Progress the program and infrastructure design for the new youth justice facility in Darwin and refurbishment in Alice Springs in consultation with young people and stakeholders.	Complete
Respond to and prevent sexual violence, including through developing a Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Framework and contributing to the multiagency taskforce to oversee prevention and responses to child sexual exploitation.	Complete
Implement the improved services for children, young people and families committed to through the Barkly Regional Deal.	Ongoing
Integrate a therapeutic service and approach across all elements of the out-of-home care system.	In progress
Develop a defined and robust kinship and family care system where more children and young people are placed with relative carers who are empowered and supported by Aboriginal led organisations.	Ongoing
Improve our foster care model so carer recruitment is faster and carers are better supported to provide the care and support children need.	In progress
Reform the service model for women experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence in remote communities.	Ongoing

# GOAL 3: ENCOURAGE AND CELEBRATE INCLUSIVE, DIVERSE AND CONNECTED COMMUNITIES



## SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAMS

**1545+**

**SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES** were delivered across 2019 to engage & entertain children, young people & their families across the NT



## MULTICULTURAL GRANTS PROGRAM

**\$1,138,593**

**PAID FOR COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS, EMPLOYMENT & WELFARE INITIATIVES & LANGUAGE CLASSES IN 2019**

**In the same period a total of \$1,186,493 was awarded to community organisations for 78 projects**

Territory Families is committed to supporting the Northern Territory's diverse community through attracting and retaining seniors and multicultural groups by providing funding and coordination of related strategic policy and support.

As a part of consultations on the Northern Territory Gender Equality Framework, targeted men's health and gender forums were held in November. This coincided with International Men's Day. A Statement of Commitment and Framework is being developed which includes actions to encourage positive male role models and father figures and to increase the involvement of boys and men in anti-violence initiatives. Territory Families is developing a community awareness strategy to encourage positive male role models.

A three year project agreement to address Elder Abuse has been negotiated with Darwin Community Legal Service. The agreement includes the development of an NT specific

community awareness campaign, case management and advocacy for individual clients affected by abuse and building the capacity in community services and other providers regarding elder abuse.

Through the Regional Youth Services Program, \$1.8 million per annum is allocated to Regional Youth Activities funding. The objective of the funding is to provide after-hours, weekend and school holiday youth activities for vulnerable young people aged 10 to 17 in the Northern Territory's urban centres. An additional \$2.6 million per annum is invested in dedicated after-hours services in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek. The Program also provides funding for school holiday programs across the regions. More than 1,545 school holiday activities were delivered across 2019 to engage and entertain children, young people and their families across the Northern Territory.

The Office of Multicultural Affairs provides funding to non-government organisations and multicultural community associations and supports projects to encourage multiculturalism in the Northern Territory. The Draft Multicultural Policy for the Northern Territory 2020-2025 was released in November 2019 and outlines the Government's vision for a strong and diverse multicultural Territory. The policy is underpinned by the principles of valuing our diversity, supporting accessibility, ensuring participation and inclusion as well as strengthening mutual respect and social cohesion. Consultation sessions were held in Darwin and Katherine.

## Encourage and celebrate inclusive, diverse and connected communities

### Status

Develop a Northern Territory Gender Equality Framework that engages the community in a genuine conversation.

**In progress**

Continue to embed and improve support for the prevention and response to elder abuse.

**Complete**

Build on the Multicultural Grants Program to engage with culturally diverse communities and refresh the Northern Territory Multicultural Participation Framework.

**Complete**

Develop and continue to enhance Regional Youth Programs that promote the inclusion of young people and provide spaces and programs that engage them.

**Complete**

Encourage positive male role models through the development of a Fathering and Grandfathering Strategy.

**In progress**



# GOAL 4: VALUE AND INVEST IN OUR PEOPLE

## PEOPLE MATTER SURVEY RESULTS



# 839

**FULL TIME STAFF** in Territory Families as at 31 Dec 2019

Territory Families continues to invest in our workforce. In 2019, the Commissioner for Public Employment approved a proposal from Territory Families to improve the Child Protection Market Allowance model. Eligible staff working in frontline child protection roles at Territory Families now receive an additional allowance in recognition of the important contribution made to protecting and supporting children and families across the Northern Territory. For the first time, the allowance is also provided to staff undertaking roles in remote communities including Senior/Aboriginal Community Workers and Remote Family Support Workers and managers.

Strategic recruitment has commenced through the development of an Employee Value Proposition that presents the value of working for Territory Families. We are also working to build a talent pool through targeted advertising and strengthened links with Charles Darwin University, including graduate and scholarship programs. Territory Families is also supporting staff to develop through obtaining new qualifications through Graduate Certificates.

Through a Collaborative Agreement with Charles Darwin University, Territory Families has offered five Work Integrated Learning Scholarships (WILS) each year to eligible students, three of which are prioritised for Aboriginal students.

In 2019 this consisted of two students of Psychological Science (one Honours), one

studying their Master of Psychology (Clinical) and two students of Social Work.

Under these scholarship arrangements, students connect regularly with Territory Families including through field placements to develop greater work readiness for potential employment as a professional frontline child protection practitioner.

Territory Families has been developing a new roster model for youth detention that recognises the complexity of work and supports staff. The new model aims to ensure appropriate and safe levels of staffing are allocated on each shift and there is strengthened team work and training opportunities.

Work has continued with Territory Families staff and Executives to finalise the Aboriginal Workforce Development Plan. The Plan will be released in the first half of 2020.

The Aboriginal Cultural Advisory Group has been established to monitor implementation of the Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework. The Group is comprised of Aboriginal leaders from across Territory Families. The Group is reviewing divisional Cultural Security Action Plans, which are required to be developed by all business areas and describe the ways each area will embed good practice in their work. A suite of planning tools have been developed to assist Territory Families staff to assess their cultural competency as part of career planning processes.

In November 2019, two of our staff were recognised for their outstanding and commendable service at the Chief Minister's Awards for Excellence in the Public Sector.

Dorrelle Anderson was presented the Aboriginal Leadership Medal which is the second time a Territory Families staff member has won this Award. Known for her strong work ethic and

commitment to the people of the Northern Territory, Dorrelle is strongly committed to Aboriginal advancement and the safety of Aboriginal children, young people, their families and communities. Under her leadership, the Southern Region has achieved key reforms, including the highest rate of children in care placed in kinship and family care and the establishment of offices in remote communities to deliver the full suite of services to families.

Punata Stockman was presented the Chief Minister’s Medal for her work with the

communities of Papunya, Mt. Liebig, Haasts Bluff and Kintore to help strengthen parental capacity in these communities.

Punata has been instrumental in using her deep local knowledge of culture and community whilst aligning this within legislative and procedural frameworks so that Territory Families provides culturally safe and sustainable support for children and their families.



Value and invest in our people	Status
Develop and implement an Aboriginal Workforce Plan to grow our Aboriginal workforce in operations, organisational services and leadership teams.	In progress
Implement a new rostering model in youth justice facilities that recognises the complexity of the work and supports staff.	In progress
Empower our staff to embed Aboriginal Cultural Security in their work.	Ongoing
Improve strategic recruitment strategy using the employee value proposition to attract new recruits.	Ongoing
Ensure remote areas are resourced and remote staff are empowered and retained through improved support services and conditions.	Ongoing

# GOAL 5: ENSURE THE STRUCTURES, SYSTEMS AND LEGISLATION SUPPORTS OUR VISION

Territory Families continues to build a data warehouse and business intelligence function to support tracking, monitoring and evaluation of investment to improve outcomes for children, families and communities. In 2019, we continued to make improvements to existing data in the warehouse, identified data collection solutions for service providers and planned for additional datasets to be added.

Work continues to progress the Client Management Systems Alignment project. In 2019, staff from across the agency engaged in processes to define the business requirements for the new system which will transform the way Case Managers in youth justice and child protection record, access and connect data to support families. The agency is also leading cross-agency work to understand the non-technical environment that will assist with providing a full view of the circumstances of children and families we work with.

Territory Families is embedding Signs of Safety as our new practice model. In July, Practice Leaders began working alongside Case Managers to help families complete the Signs of Safety Parent survey. The survey asked questions to capture the extent to which Signs of Safety principles are reflected in practice and sought feedback about the relationship parents have with their Case Manager. 175 parents responded, with 58 per cent reporting that workers do what they will say they do, 61 per cent of parents agreeing that workers listened to them and 74 per cent reporting they think workers care about solving their problems.

Procurement is underway to engage an accredited service provider to facilitate the Safe and Together core training (DFSV

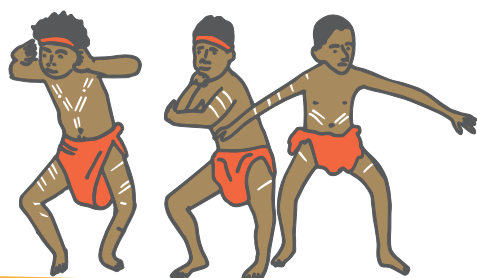
practice model). Staff from the Clinical Practice Directorate have developed and facilitated practice sessions to enhance domestic violence informed practice. Directorate staff continue to provide mentoring to new staff and facilitate case mappings, facilitate group supervision and provide other supports as requested.

The commitment to develop a single Act for children and families by 2021 remains. In the second half of 2019, significant amendments to the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* and the *Youth Justice Act 2005* were passed by the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly. The amendments include important changes such as improving care planning, strengthening the principle of family connection, introducing new limits to the length of time young people are held in Police custody, removing barriers to diversion and decriminalising the breach of bail conditions as an offence. Implementation actions occurred across government in preparation for the commencement of both Acts on 2 March 2020.

Territory Families continues to reform how we respond to DFSV. An important part of this reform is the development of the Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Information Sharing Scheme. This scheme aims to remove barriers between services so they can work together to improve safety for victims of DFV; facilitate timely action from services, and referrals and collaboration between services; and prevent victims having to tell their stories over and over.

The development of a DFV Risk Assessment and Management Framework is a critical element of this scheme and is close to being finalised. The specialist DFV sector across the NT has been consulted on the development of the framework.

In 2019, Territory Families formed a Working Group with the Department of Education and SAFE NT to address gaps in Working with Children Clearance (WWCC) application, renewal and exemption processes. This included work



to review and update reminders to renew a clearance notice, provide renewal reminders via email and develop an automated exemptions form. The Northern Territory has now endorsed the National Standards for Working with Children Checks and agreed to support cross-border information sharing through a centralised WWCC database. This will require legislative amendments and will be progressed by Territory Families in close consultation with SAFE NT as part of work to develop a single Act.

In December 2019, a Seniors Recognition Scheme Debit Card was introduced. The card makes it easier for seniors to access their \$500 payment which can be used towards travel (including online travel bookings), electricity, and water. The card enables seniors more flexibility in the use of their \$500, and allows immediate access to the payment, removing the need for reimbursement. For the very first time, the payment can now also be used towards the cost of fuel. The debit card will be provided to all NT Seniors Recognition Scheme members from July 2020. The debit card will look and operate like a regular card and is PIN protected.

Territory Families has improved our complaints system to encourage more feedback, particularly from children. Children in care are also asked for their feedback about complaints processes and what steps can be taken to enhance the way we listen to and respond to their concerns. The intention is to improve their care experience by having a better understanding of their needs. To action this, Territory Families has created and distributed young people specific materials to promote awareness of the Complaints team as a point of contact if they are unhappy with the services they are receiving.

Ensure the structures, systems and legislation supports our vision	Status
Develop a rigorous research and evaluation agenda that will inform our future family service system and project design and delivery.	In progress
Progress a case management solution that supports child protection, youth justice and adoptions activity across the Northern Territory.	Ongoing
Finalise the draft framework for a single Act for children and families in collaboration with stakeholders.	In progress
Embed the Signs of Safety Practice Model across our work and through regional networks.	Ongoing
Address administrative inefficiencies and work with the Northern Territory Police Fire and Emergency Service to improve the Working with Children Clearance Scheme.	Complete
Enhance the receipt and analysis of feedback on our performance through ongoing improvements to our complaint management, governance and audit programs.	Ongoing
Implement a debit card system for Seniors Recognition Scheme travel and utility payments.	Complete



## GOAL 6: PARTNER TO EMPOWER CHANGE

Territory Families recognises that partnerships with families, the community, government and non-government organisations are key to our shared vision for a safe and better future. Over 50 per cent of the agency's budget is provided to fund outsourced services. Positive relationships are critical to our service system.

Territory Families is working to support communities to design and deliver community led services through a stronger focus on local decision making and our contribution to the whole-of-government Regional Network.

Territory Families continues to expand its remote service delivery footprint to facilitate stronger connections, understanding and ability to respond to the place based needs of communities.

Territory Families continues to expand an adapted management structure for remote locations, with place based teams who assume responsibility for the coordination and leadership of all Territory Families programs within their communities. This has broadened the role of remote based staff within the community to include family support, child protection, women's safe house, pensioner and carer concessions and youth justice services. Remote staff have also been empowered and supported to develop a more connected working relationship with other government agencies and non-government providers in the community. Remote staff support the Department of the Chief Minister's Regional Network at the local level by providing liaison with community elders, local authorities and relevant boards to respond to community concerns and increase the safety of children and communities.

The Mikan Child Protection Reference Group (Mikan) continued to operate in 2019. Mikan was formed from the "ground up" via locally developed relationships and is designed to enable Territory Families to work collaboratively with the local Yolngu communities on the Gove Peninsula. In agreement with members of Mikan, Territory Families has now engaged Charles Darwin University to review Mikan's operation to

inform possible future pathways for Mikan and consider the applicability of the Mikan model across the Northern Territory regions.

It is planned that Community Youth Diversion (CYD) Grant providers servicing 55 locations across the Northern Territory will have entered into five year grant agreements with Territory Families prior to 1 April 2020. In partnership with the RMO and DCM's Regional Networks, the Territory Families Youth Services Directorate has utilised a place-based approach to identify providers to deliver community youth programs. As at December 2019 new providers have been selected in Katherine, Yuendumu, Wadeye, Gunbalanya, Groote Eylandt, MacDonnell Regional Council and Ngukurr Regions. All have utilised Local Decision Making processes to identify long term service providers.

Round 2 of the Aboriginal Carers Growing up Aboriginal Children Grant Round has now been finalised. From 1 January 2020 to 30 June 2021, \$2.2 million will be split between Yalu Aboriginal Corporation in Galiwin'ku; Northern Territory Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation (located in Darwin, servicing the Top End); Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council in the Central Desert and Tri-border region; Kalano Aboriginal Corporation in Katherine and Larrakia Nation and Tangentyere Council. As a result of these services more Aboriginal children are being placed with family.

Development of a new Women's Safe House in Galiwin'ku has progressed in partnership with the Galiwin'ku Women's Space Incorporated (GWSI) in line with LDM principles. Concept design has now been finalised and the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics is now leading the final plans, approvals and build of the safe house.

In its final report, the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory recommended the development of a Coordinated Funding Framework between the Northern Territory and the Australian Government to improve outcomes for Territory children. The Tripartite Forum is leading the work to produce the

Coordinated Funding Framework, and discussion papers have been circulated to NT Agencies and NGO members for comment. The funding framework will be informed by the pending final report from the Productivity Commission's Study of Expenditure on Children in the Northern Territory.

Territory Families is committed to prioritising the voice of the children and young people in our care. 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 and serve as an opportunity for the young people to raise any issues, including accommodation, food, program or education concerns. These concerns are 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 through the CREATE Roundtable. The Roundtable was established in partnership with the CREATE Foundation so Territory Families could better listen to the voices of children and young people and ask them to design solutions that can be adopted to improve the out-of-home-care system in the Northern Territory. The

latest roundtable meeting, held in August 2019, focused on information sharing and how to improve the way children and young people are provided with information about their carer and foster family.

In 2019, Territory Families redesigned the tool used to seek the views of children in care, the Viewpoint questionnaire. The new questionnaire is shorter, more child-centred, uses simpler text and has new avatars that reflect the NT. Using Viewpoint is a requirement of the care planning process. The Viewpoint questions now align to the My Care Plan life domains, which will assist practitioners to identify the young person's needs and wants, and specific actions to inform a child or young person's My Care Plan.

The Council on the Ageing Northern Territory (COTA NT) remain key partners in operationalising the Seniors Recognition Scheme and administer the Seniors Card in the Northern Territory. Member Assist Kiosks, which help seniors access the scheme, are also established at COTA shopfronts.

Partner to empower change	Status
Empower regional networks to apply local decision making through investment in new services and ways of working that support Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and Aboriginal Non-Government Organisation.	Ongoing
Work with the Tripartite Forum, the Department of Social Services and the Reform Management Office in collaborating with Regional Children and Families Committees to review and redesign family support investment at a regional level.	Ongoing
Collaborate with community based organisations to expand youth justice victim offender conferencing and support victims across the Northern Territory.	Complete
Recognise Aboriginal communities, cultural authorities and service providers as central to the out-of-home care system, including through supporting non-Aboriginal organisations to partner with Aboriginal organisations to deliver services and build capacity and capability.	Complete
Strengthen partnerships with the Commonwealth government, in the context of the development of a co-funding framework for families.	Ongoing
Improve how we engage with children and carers, including through increased surveys and planning for their needs.	Complete
Support stakeholders to grow their capacity in working in partnership to operationalise Family Group Conferencing, the NT Seniors and Concession Recognition Schemes and domestic, family and sexual violence reforms.	Ongoing

## Half Year Budget Key Performance Indicators

Actual as at  
31 December 2019

### CHILDREN & FAMILIES

#### Family Support

Number of Family Support cases commenced to support families with identified needs 308

#### Child Protection

Child protection notifications received 12,617

Child protection investigations finalised 2,459

Child protection investigations substantiated 544

#### Out of Home Care

Children in out-of-home care 1,013

Children admitted to out-of-home care 110

Children exiting out-of-home care 157

Foster places of care 295

Kinship places of care 295

Proportion of Aboriginal children placed with an Aboriginal carer 35%

#### Youth Justice

Proportion of youths successfully completing community based orders 68%

Number of receptions into a youth detention facility 165

Daily average number of young people in detention 25

Proportion of daily average detention population who are Aboriginal 97%

Proportion of daily average detention population who were on remand 77%

#### Domestic Violence

Number of child protection notifications associated with domestic and family violence 3,818

#### Reform Management Office

Number of new Children and Families Centres opened 2

#### Seniors, Pensioner and Carers

Number of concession recipients 12,468

Proportion of NT senior population registered for benefits 78%

Number of community events for Senior Territorians supported 52

#### Community Engagement and Programs

Number of community events for young Territorians supported 37

Number of multicultural community events supported 52

Number of initiatives to enhance gender equity and diversity supported 31

This is an annual indicator and YTD reporting will fluctuate over the course of the reporting period.

- [1] The 2017-18 Budget was developed from early take-up rates following the commencement of this case type in 2019, however new case creation has not met this rate in the second year.
- [2] The total number of child protection notifications have reduced in line with reforms in the intake process that have better directed requests for assistance and support to the Family and Children's Enquiry Service.
- [3] In 2018-19 a one-child one-case policy was implemented to ensure that concerns reported in a new notification could be assessed within a current open case. Case work service delivery has not changed however it is now recorded through the pre-existing open case. This has resulted in a net overall reduction in total cases finalised and substantiated.



**TERRITORY FAMILIES**  
Strategic Plan Refresh  
2017 - 2020