



Issues Paper – Child Protection

Released 30 April 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

The Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory has been tasked as part of its inquiry to investigate the failings in the child protection system in the Northern Territory and identify improvements that could be made. The Commission has been examining evidence about the child protection system obtained through submissions, public reports, community engagement meetings, statements from people affected by the system, and public hearings.

Purpose

The purpose of this Issues Paper is to invite submissions on:

- the operation of the child protection system and any key failings in the child protection system
- options as to how any failings in the child protection system might be addressed
- improvements or changes to the child protection system, and
- any other issues raised in this paper.

The Commission seeks submissions from any interested person or organisation, including children, parents and other family members, community members, service providers and experts in the field. The Commission will use the submissions to develop recommendations to government.

2. SUBMISSIONS

The Commission is interested in hearing views and receiving further information on the issues listed below. A submission does not need to address every issue listed, and could cover any aspect of the child protection system in the Northern Territory.

If all or part of a submission is intended to be confidential, you need to advise the Commission when you provide it. Submissions that are not marked as confidential may be made public or published.

The submission can be provided to the Commission by:

- emailing it to: ChildDetentionNT@royalcommission.gov.au, or
- sending it to the Royal Commission at **GPO Box 3656 Darwin NT 0801**

Sending submissions by email is preferred. If you have any questions about the submission process, you can contact the Commission via telephone on **1800 604 604**.

The closing date for submissions is 2 June 2017.



3. KEY ISSUES

Below are a number of questions related to topics the Commission is specifically interested in hearing about. These questions have been arranged into five broad topic areas covering the child protection and out-of-home care (OOHC) systems and their interaction with the youth justice system.

TOPIC 1: APPROACHES TO CHILD PROTECTION

Best interests of the child

Article 3 of the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, which Australia has ratified, states that:

*In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.*¹

This principle is embedded in Northern Territory legislation, under section 10 of the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* (NT), which provides that when a decision involving a child is made, the best interests of the child are the paramount concern.

Questions

1. ***Does the current child protection system in the Northern Territory fully realise the best interests of the child principle?***
2. ***How does this operate in practice in the Northern Territory? Should there be further mechanisms/structures in place to ensure the best interests of the child remain a key consideration within the child protection system?***

Incident-driven vs public health approach to child protection

The current child protection system in the Northern Territory, like other jurisdictions in Australia and many overseas, operates under an incident driven model, focused primarily on protecting children from identified harm and ensuring the child's ongoing safety. This system is generally based on three components: intake, investigation and case management. In the Northern Territory, this comprises:

- Mandatory reporting of suspected maltreatment through Central Intake.
- Assessment of the report to determine whether it needs to be investigated, and in what timeframe.

¹ *The Convention on the Rights of the Child*, at <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>.



- Investigation of reports that meet the threshold to determine the safety of the child and the appropriate action (which ranges from referral to support services through to removal of the child).
- Where a child has been removed, ongoing contact between the child and their family and the statutory system, through case planning, case management, reassessment and review.

In the last five years, the number of notifications received by Territory Families has more than doubled, increasing from 7,979 in 2011-12 to 20,465 in 2015-16. With this increasing demand placed on the child protection system, it can be argued that the current approach to child protection is outdated and unsustainable.²

The *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020* (National Framework), which was endorsed by COAG, uses a public health approach to place children's interests at the centre of all policy and legislative development. A public health model aims to prevent problems from occurring in the first place by targeting key risk factors or social determinants and addressing these at a whole of population level. Of particular relevance to the Northern Territory is the question of which approach will provide the best outcomes for Aboriginal children and families.

Questions

- 1. Is the current incident driven approach to child protection the most appropriate model for the Northern Territory? What changes could, and should, be made?**
- 2. Considering the National Framework uses a public health approach, what priority should be placed on adopting a public health model in the Northern Territory? What would this look like in the Northern Territory context?**
- 3. Would a public health model support better outcomes for Aboriginal children and families? Why or why not?**

Family services/early prevention approaches

In many European countries, the child protection system is based upon a 'family service' orientation. This approach is being increasingly adopted by jurisdictions in response to rising demand, and is also the philosophy that underpins the National Framework. A family service approach is based on the notion that the maltreatment of children is a result of family dysfunction, stemming from social and economic difficulties. On that basis, government intervention is focused on providing supportive responses that are aimed at addressing the needs of children and families.

²See, for example, the discussion of different orientations to child protection and responding to growing pressures on the statutory system in Price-Robertson, Bromfield and Lamont, "International approaches to child protection - what can Australia learn?"; CFCA Paper No. 23 — July 2014



Under a family service child protection system, the aim is to provide support to families at an earlier stage, and in some cases to ensure that support services and programs reach more families, not just those deemed to be at risk.

Submissions to the Commission have called for a greater investment in early prevention and family support services and tools, to support families to fulfil their parental responsibilities and target the factors that contribute to children becoming engaged with the child protection system. This includes services and programs targeting issues such as poverty, family violence, alcohol and substance misuse and mental health. Child protection organisations and Aboriginal communities have supported those calls.

Questions

- 1. What type of family support and early intervention services are needed in the Northern Territory to provide support to children and their families in order to prevent them from coming into contact with the child protection system? What changes to services, and service delivery, are needed to ensure they are culturally appropriate and reach those that need it most?**
- 2. Where are the gaps in the delivery of family support services and early prevention services operating in the Northern Territory?**

Therapeutic approach

Previous inquiries and reports have highlighted the importance of applying therapeutic practices within the child protection system. A therapeutic approach recognises that children and young people engaging in the child protection system are likely to have experienced trauma, and therefore practices are in place to accommodate this history of trauma and respond to the individual needs of the child arising from their history.

The *Growing Them Strong, Together*³ (GTST) report into the Northern Territory child protection system outlined that children and young people who experience stable, high-quality therapeutic care are less likely to become involved in the juvenile justice system and will experience a range of better outcomes generally.

Questions

- 1. Considering children within the child protection system are particularly vulnerable, is there enough emphasis on therapeutic service approaches within the current system?**
- 2. Are there particular therapeutic services that are needed in the Northern Territory, taking into consideration demographic and geographical characteristics?**

³ Northern Territory Government 2010, *Growing them Strong, Together: Promoting the safety and wellbeing of the Northern Territory's children*, Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Child Protection System in the Northern Territory 2010, M. Bamblett, H. Bath and R. Roseby, Northern Territory Government, Darwin.



TOPIC 2: ABORIGINAL EMPOWERMENT

It's patently unfair to continually say to Aboriginal people to take responsibility for their problems while at the same time always interfering and overriding their decisions and authority.⁴

Aboriginal empowerment is a concept that has underpinned many of the past inquiries that have examined Aboriginal affairs in the Northern Territory. The concept encompasses active, ongoing and equal involvement by Aboriginal people and communities in decision-making processes that underpin policies, programs and services that directly impact upon the Aboriginal community. Aboriginal empowerment is built upon community-based and community-owned initiatives.

The *Little Children are Sacred* report⁵ took the view that well-resourced programs owned and run by the community are more successful than generic programs imposed on communities. The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody also highlighted the importance of empowerment and self-determination in reducing the incarceration rates of Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal children are significantly over-represented in the child protection system, and the Commission has heard concerns from Aboriginal communities across the Northern Territory about the lack of involvement they have with the child protection system, as well as the importance of developing local and culturally-appropriate initiatives that protect Aboriginal children.

The Commission is interested in submissions which address the broad issues of empowerment and capacity building, particularly ways in which to improve the decision-making capacity of Aboriginal communities and support their participation in the design and delivery of services and policy. The Commission is interested in the ways in which the Aboriginal community could become more involved in the child protection system, its operation, its improvement, and its reform.

Questions

- 1. In what ways can, and should, the Aboriginal community become more involved in the child protection system? In particular, how can Aboriginal families and communities become more involved in the making of decisions about their children and families, so they become partners in the design and delivery of policy, programs and services? What kind of structures or arrangements are needed to make this effective?***
- 2. GTST advocated for Aboriginal people and communities having a greater role and voice in the child protection system. GTST proposed achieving this through the establishment of an Aboriginal Child Care Agency (ACCA) or agencies in the Northern Territory. How would the establishment of an ACCA contribute to achieving Aboriginal participation in the child protection system? Are there***

⁴ P. Anderson and R. Wild OC, *Ampe Akelyernemane Meke Mekarle 'Little Children are Sacred': Report of the Northern Territory Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse*, Darwin, Northern Territory Government, 2007, p. 53.

⁵ *Ampe Akelyernemane Meke Mekarle 'Little Children are Sacred': Report of the Northern Territory Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse*, Darwin, Northern Territory Government, 2007



additional or alternative approaches which could be adopted in the Northern Territory, that build on existing structures and capacity?

- 3. What could the Northern Territory or Commonwealth governments do to support building capacity within Aboriginal communities and organisations?**

TOPIC 3: THE OUT-OF-HOME CARE PROCESS

The rate of children in out of home care (OOHC) in the Northern Territory is double the national average.⁶ Through responses to this Issues Paper, the Commission seeks to gain a better understanding of issues that contribute to children being in OOHC (which includes foster care, kinship care and residential care), the factors that influence the experience of children in OOHC and ways to improve OOHC.

The Commission is interested to hear views about the operation of all aspects of the child protection system, in relation to removing children into care. This includes the processes to support decisions to remove children and place them in care, through to the planning for children to leave care with the necessary supports they require to be healthy and safe. The Commission is also concerned about the way the OOHC system works to support Aboriginal children and families, which continue to be dramatically overrepresented.

Improving assessment and decision-making

Every stage of the statutory child protection system is built around critical assessments and decision making processes, which draw upon the professional judgment of workers in the system and the completion of formal assessment to weigh up various risk factors and indicators of immediate safety and potential risk, as well as inform the selection of an OOHC placement, or referral to support services and the development and review of the plans that support children throughout the OOHC system.

The Northern Territory Government introduced Structured Decision Making (SDM) tools from 2010, which are empirically based tools which are used at various points in the statutory system to provide clear, step by step decision making. Any approach to making decisions, informed by critical assessments of issues such as the safety of the child, the capacity of a family to ensure the welfare of a child, and the ongoing needs of a child, is underpinned by mandated timeframes and established policy and procedures. The Commission is interested in comments on the implementation of the system.

Questions

- 1. How effective and appropriate are current assessment tools, processes and timeframes used by Territory Families to identify and respond to children at risk of harm in the Northern Territory?**

⁶ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Submission to Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory*, November 2016, p. 6.



- 2. Do current assessment and decision making processes allow for early intervention where a child or family is at risk of becoming involved in the child protection system? What changes need to be made to allow this to happen more effectively and consistently?**
- 3. Do you know of any incidents where failures to respond to appropriate timeframes in relation to notifications of risk of harm or assessed risks have resulted in further harm to a child?**
- 4. In your experience, how effectively are a child's needs assessed and reassessed (including health and cultural needs, and for children with disabilities) and responded to when a child enters OOHC, or while they are in care?**
- 5. How adequate are current procedures for identifying OOHC placements for children? What, if any, limitations are there to identifying appropriate OOHC placements for children? How are children and families consulted about OOHC placement decisions? Is there adequate consultation with children and their families about OOHC placement decisions?**

Children in Care

The placement of a child in the care of someone other than their parents, whether that is with a foster or kinship carer, or in a residential care setting, creates a need for a range of additional services and supports for both children in care and their families.

An issue for consideration is whether case management and service co-ordination could be improved and enhanced for both children and their families, with effective case management provided more consistently. The level of case management which should be provided for complex cases is also an issue.

Questions

- 1. How could children in care – and their families – be better supported while the child is in care?**
- 2. From your experience, are families provided adequate information about their children in care? Do you have any suggestions on how information provided to families about their children in care can be improved, to make it more relevant, meaningful or timely?**
- 3. How can children and young people be better supported to maintain contact with culture while they are in care?**
- 4. What would be the advantages or benefits, if any, in adopting a more intensive and integrated case management approach, with a single case worker for both the child in protection and their parents/family, including during any involvement of the child in the youth justice system? What would be the barriers to implementing such an approach?**
- 5. Should there be enhanced case management services for families with children with complex needs? If so, how should this be implemented?**
- 6. How might greater community involvement and empowerment improve the position for children in care and their families?**



The Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

Aboriginal children account for the vast majority of children in out-of-home care in the Northern Territory.⁷ The Aboriginal Child Placement Principle exists in legislation and policy in Australia and aims to maintain, and strengthen, an Aboriginal child's connection to their family, community and sense of identity and culture whilst they are in care.

An underlying principle of the *Care and Protection Act 2007* (NT)⁸ provides for a descending order of out-of-home care placements for Aboriginal children that seeks to preserve Aboriginal children's connection to family, community and culture. The Commission is interested in hearing about barriers that exist to implementing the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle in the Northern Territory.

Questions

- 1. From your experience, what barriers exist to have child protection authorities make all necessary efforts to comply with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle, which aims to find a placement for an Aboriginal child in need of care that maintains the child's connection to family, community and culture?**
- 2. What barriers exist to applying the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle? Do you have suggestions as to how any barriers may be overcome?**

Foster and kinship care

Foster and kinship carers play a fundamental role in providing a secure and caring environment for children in need of care. The effective recruitment and retention of carers is crucial in providing stability to the lives of children in care.

The Commission is interested in hearing how effective processes are in recruiting, retaining and supporting carers in the Northern Territory.

Questions

- 1. How effective are current processes for the recruitment of foster carers and the identification of potential kinship carers? Do you have suggestions for improvements to these processes?**
- 2. Is the current approach to the assessment and accreditation of foster and kinship carers sufficient or appropriate? How could it be improved?**
- 3. The Commission has heard concerns about the identification of possible kinship carers and the kinship carer assessment process, including whether people who might have become carers were**

⁷ Office of the Children's Commissioner Northern Territory, *Annual Report 2015-2016*, Northern Territory Government, Darwin, 2016, p. 64.

⁸ *Care and Protection Act 2007* (NT) s 12(2).



approached and assessed. Does the current process work effectively? Are there barriers to having Aboriginal carers taking on the role?

- 4. If you are a foster or kinship carer, what type of training and support were you provided? Do you have suggestions as to how to improve training and support?*
- 5. From your experience, is there adequate understanding and support of kinship care by child protection authorities in the Northern Territory?*

Supporting young people and leaving care

Leaving care and returning to one's family or to live as an independent adult can be a significant change for young people. The Commission is interested in how the needs of young people leaving care are being met, and how children and families can be best supported in this transition process.

Questions

- 1. What support services are available, and accessible, to children leaving care? Is adequate information provided to children, families and support services? What are the barriers to accessing services? Do you have suggestions for further services to support children leaving care?*
- 2. How effective is the leaving care planning process in supporting children to exit care? What could be done to improve leaving care plans and ensure children are properly supported when they leave care and do not exit into homelessness, poverty or isolation?*
- 3. Are the particular needs of Aboriginal children, children living in remote areas, or of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds being met when they leave care? What changes need to be made to ensure this happens?*

Reunification

Child protection service providers work towards reunifying a child in out-of-home care with their family of origin where it is appropriate and in the best interests of the child. The Commission is interested in hearing what support is provided to children and their families to assist with successful reunification and whether additional services and support is required.

Questions

- 1. To what extent is reunification considered when making decisions regarding the best interests of a child? How is this put into practice when working with the child and their family?*
- 2. What information is given to parents as to what would be required to have their children returned from care? What support is provided to children, their families and communities for reunification (where appropriate)? How do aspects of the current system, where children may be placed in temporary placements in locations away from their parents, affect the prospect of reunification?*
- 3. Should there be a greater emphasis on reunification? Do you have suggestions for services to support reunification?*



Improving OOHC

In some out-of-home care placements, there is a breakdown in a placement or children 'self-place' and leave their placement. The Commission is interested in understanding why placements breakdown and children decide to 'self-place' and what needs to be done to ensure placements are successful.

Questions

- 1. In your experience, what causes placement breakdowns in the Northern Territory? What changes could be made to reduce placement breakdowns?**
- 2. The Commission has heard that a number of children in the Northern Territory leave a placement and self-place with family or other individuals. What are the reasons for this? How can we avoid children self-placing, or at least manage it to ensure that children remain safe and accounted for? How have, and how should, the relevant authorities respond?**
- 3. Is there a need for a greater focus and more data on outcomes? How should that be framed?**

Permanent Care Orders

In 2015, Permanent Care Orders (PCO) were introduced in the Northern Territory which allowed the Court to grant a person parental responsibility for a child until that child turns 18 years of age.

Questions

- 1. To what extent do you think PCOs have been used to ensure a placement is in the best interests of a child? In your experience, what factors are considered when opting to seek an PCO versus other available options (including working intensively with a family)?**
- 2. Do PCOs have a disproportionate impact on Aboriginal children? Are there appropriate safeguards in place to ensure Aboriginal children are not negatively impacted by the use of PCOs?**
- 3. Are there alternative models to the current model of permanent care which should be considered?**

Community Information

Information provided to the Commission shows that families and communities need to have a better understanding of how the child protection system works, including the reasons underlying removal of children from their families.

Questions

- 1. Is there adequate, accessible information for people and communities about where to get advice or help with a child protection problem?**
- 2. What would improve community understanding of child protection as an issue and a system?**



TOPIC 4: THE PATHWAY FROM PROTECTION TO DETENTION

Australian statistics show that a large number of young people in detention have a history of involvement with the child protection system.⁹ Furthermore, research shows that simply having a care experience or placement instability are strong indicators of a potential youth justice involvement.¹⁰

The Commission seeks to gain a better understanding of the operation of the child protection system to stop children and young people following a pathway from protection to detention. However where a child within the child protection system becomes involved with the youth justice system, both systems should work together to provide co-ordinated support and services to that child and his or her family.

Questions

- 1. In your experience, how do the following affect a child or young person's behaviour and social relationships?**
 - a. Removal from their family and community (because of an OOHC placement).**
 - b. Removal from their school (because of an OOHC placement).**
 - c. Early involvement with the child protection system.**
 - d. Experience of trauma or abuse, both prior to OOHC placements and while in OOHC.**
 - e. Experience of instability with OOHC placements (including multiple placements and placement breakdowns).**
- 2. In your experience, have children and young people been exposed to positive or negative influences in OOHC? Has OOHC influenced them to improve behaviour or engage in offending behaviour? If so, outline your experience.**
- 3. Are there adequate and effective intervention strategies in place to prevent children and young people in OOHC from engaging in offending behaviour and coming into contact with the youth justice system?**
- 4. What improvements or reform would you suggest to help children in care or leaving care avoid coming into contact with the youth justice system?**
- 5. In your experience, is there sufficient information sharing between child protection authorities and youth justice authorities to provide adequate information, support and services to children and their families? What are the barriers to information sharing and how could it be improved?**

⁹ AIHW 2016. *Young people in child protection and under youth justice supervision 2013–14*. Data linkage series no. 21. Cat. no. CSI 22. Canberra: AIHW.

¹⁰ CREATE Foundation, 2017, *Submission to the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory*, p. 10.



TOPIC 5: SYSTEM-WIDE ISSUES

The child protection system in the Northern Territory encompasses many different organisations, components and functions that are collectively responsible for the care and protection of children and influence the life outcomes of those children. The Commission wishes to explore issues that affect the entire system and influence the overall provision of care and protection to Northern Territory children. This includes how services can be better co-ordinated and delivered and how oversight of, and accountability within, the child protection system can be promoted.

Service co-ordination and integration

The needs of children and their families can be multiple and complex. Consequently, it is essential that government agencies and service providers co-operate and co-ordinate their support and services to clients and promote information sharing between each other.

Questions

- 1. To what extent do government agencies and service providers work together to provide co-ordinated support and services to children and their families with multiple or complex needs?***
- 2. What improvements or changes need to be made to the way information is shared between government agencies about the needs and circumstances of children and their families to ensure effective delivery of appropriate services and support the best possible outcomes for children?***
- 3. What improvements or changes need to be made to the way information is shared between government and community service providers about the needs and circumstances of children and their families to ensure effective delivery of appropriate services and support the best possible outcomes for children?***

Workforce considerations

The capacity of a child protection system to keep vulnerable children in our communities safe from harm is clearly linked to the presence of a professional and dedicated workforce. This workforce can only be effective with access to sufficient and appropriate training and proper support.

Questions

- 1. Are the caseworkers in the child protection system in the Northern Territory doing their job effectively? Are there factors that may prevent caseworkers doing their job effectively?***
- 2. Is there adequate training of caseworkers in Territory Families? What type of training should be given to caseworkers in the Northern Territory? What training should police receive in handling child protection cases?***
- 3. Are the caseworker staffing levels adequate in Territory Families? Are there enough Aboriginal employees in Territory Families?***



4. *The Commission has heard that there is high staff turnover in Territory Families. What are the reasons for high staff turnover? What measures could be put into place to support a more stable workforce, including recruiting and retaining Aboriginal employees?*
5. *Given the important role police play in child protection, what improvement could be made to the interaction between caseworkers and the police, to support better outcomes for children and families? What training could be provided to police to improve the way they engage with children at risk of removal and their families?*
6. *The child protection workforce also includes the non-governmental organisation (NGO) sector. What is your experience of NGOs working in child protection? Is there currently enough support and resources within the NGO workforce sector? If not, what additional development or capacity is needed in the NGO sector?*

Remoteness of communities

There are more than 1,000 communities in the Northern Territory, many of them geographically dispersed, isolated and hard to access.¹¹ The Commission is interested in hearing how the remoteness of communities affects service delivery and what could be done to ensure delivery of effective services to these communities.

Questions

1. *What challenges do early intervention and family support service providers face in trying to respond to the needs of children and their families living in regional, rural or remote areas?*
2. *What would help children and their families in regional, rural or remote areas? Are there innovative ways to address geographical barriers to providing and receiving support services?*

Oversight and accountability

The child protection system needs effective mechanisms for oversight and monitoring. The Children's Commissioner of the Northern Territory's Annual Report 2015-16 stated that 70 children in OOHC had been subjected to harm and exploitation.

It is important for individuals who are affected by the child protection system to be able to lodge complaints, and for government agencies to be held accountable for their decisions and actions. It is equally important for the community, and the families of children in the child protection system, to have effective avenues of recourse when they feel that bad or wrong decisions are being made.

¹¹ Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory, Interim Report, Darwin, 2017, pg. 33.



Questions

- 1. Are the current oversight mechanisms, including the Northern Territory Children's Commissioner, sufficient? If not, what additional mechanisms or structures are needed?**
- 2. Submissions to the Commission have suggested the establishment of a Northern Territory Aboriginal Children's Commissioner. Would you support such a proposal?**
- 3. We have heard from former Territory Families' staff about the lack of appropriate responses to complaints by staff. If you are a current or former employee of Territory Families, or a child, parent or family member who has engaged with Territory Families, what are your experiences of the complaints processes within Territory Families?**

Information and Data Collection

Collection and use of data not only supports the effectiveness of the statutory child protection system, but is essential to improving outcomes for children, families and carers through better service design and delivery, targeted support and implementation of evidence based policy. The Commission is interested to hear how data collection can be improved to better understand how the child protection system operates and what changes to the system might need to be made.

Questions

- 1. What improvements are needed to the collection, management and maintenance of child protection data.**
- 2. To what extent would further data collection within the child protection system support oversight of the system and inform responses to child protection issues?**
- 3. Do you have suggestions for the type of data that could be collected, and how it could be used to improve policies and processes, or more effectively measure outcomes for children and families at all stages of the system?**
- 4. What barriers exist to the collection, analysis and use of data to improve outcomes for children, families, carers and communities? How can they be overcome?**

Options for fundamental reform

The Commission has heard from a number of stakeholders that significant and fundamental reform is the only way to achieve lasting, generational improvements to the lives of children, families and communities caught up in the child protection system in the Northern Territory.

- 1. In your view, does the current Northern Territory child protection system work effectively, and provide adequate safeguards for children and families in the Northern Territory, or are significant changes needed?**
- 2. What do you see as the priority areas for reform in child protection?**



3. *What specific reforms do you think should be considered or would you propose?*
4. *What changes would be necessary to make fundamental reform a reality?*
5. *If you had the opportunity to design a child protection system which was tailored for the specific circumstances, demographics and characteristics of the Northern Territory, what would it look like and how would it work?*