

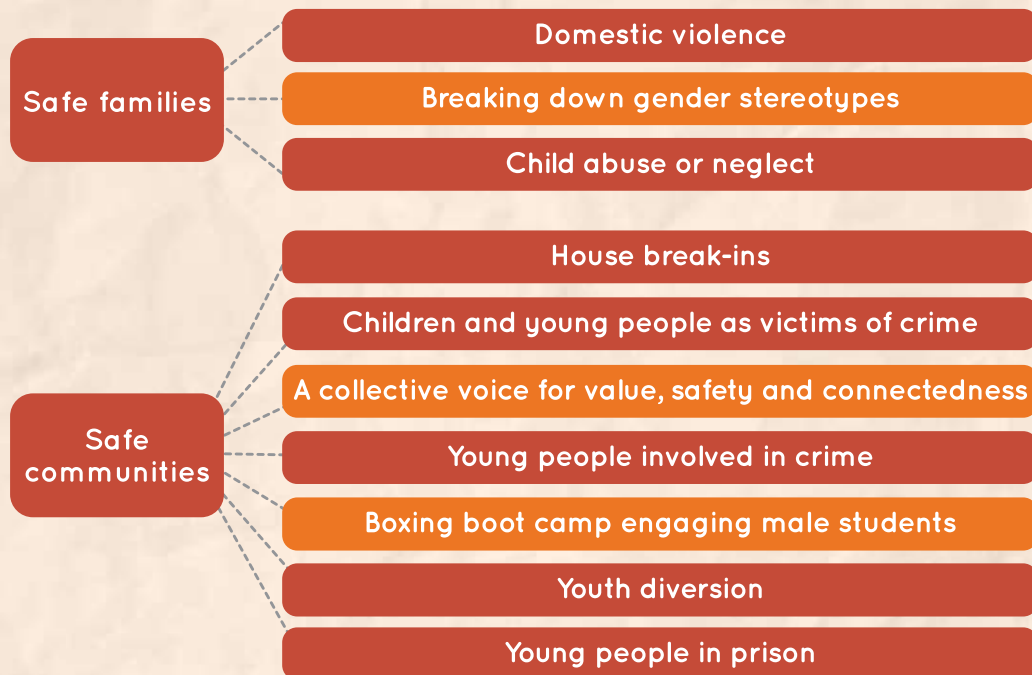


## Domain 1

# Being loved and safe

It is important for children and young people to grow up in a loving and safe environment. Children and young people need positive family relationships as well as positive connections with other people. They also need to be safe. The physical and emotional safety of a child are critical elements to their healthy early development, their ability to socialise, to understand society and determine their own future.

In this domain, two outcomes of safe families and safe communities, are explored through seven indicators and three case studies:



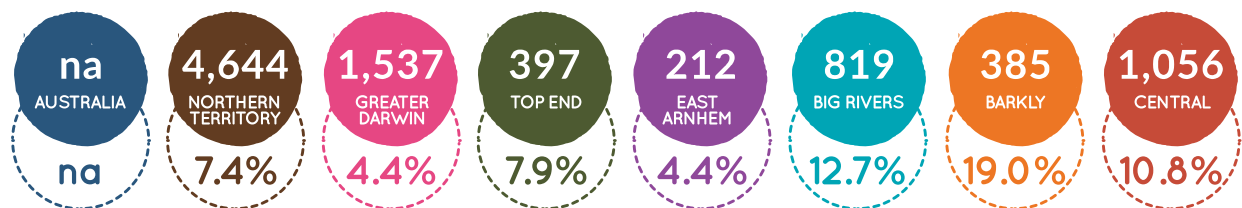
## 1.1 Safe families

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child identifies that a happy, loving and understanding family environment leads to harmonious development of a child's personality.<sup>(10)</sup> In the Northern Territory this right is reflected through legislative protection of children and families, from child abuse and neglect and from domestic violence.<sup>(11, 12)</sup>

### 1.1.1 Domestic violence

One attribute of a safe family environment is that it is free from violence. Witnessing or being the victim of violence can lead to physical, psychological and social impacts on individuals and their families.<sup>(13)</sup> These impacts include injury, disability, mental health issues, absenteeism and loss of employment. In the Northern Territory, children who are exposed to domestic violence are reported to child protection services as being harmed or at risk of harm, including from emotional abuse associated with witnessing domestic violence.

**Number and proportion (%) of children, aged 0-17, in notifications with domestic violence recorded as a contributing factor**



Data source and year: NT Department of Territory Families (special tables), 2018-19; proportions estimated using ABS 3235.0 Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2017.

Note: 1. (na) not available. 2. NT data includes 238 children who were interstate residents.

In 2018-19 about 7 in 100 NT children, a total 4,644 children were reported in child protection notifications for which domestic violence was recorded as a contributing factor. The proportion of children reported to be exposed to domestic violence varied from about 4 in 100 children in Greater Darwin (4.4%) and East Arnhem (4.4%) to 19 in 100 children in Barkly (19.0%).

**Number of domestic violence incidents where children, aged 0-17, were the subject of violence or heard/saw the incident**



Data source and year: NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services (special table), 2018-19.

Note: 1. (na) not available. 2. NT data includes 44 children with an unknown address.

In 2018-19 there were 1,227 incidents in the NT in which children aged 0-17 were either subjected to violence or heard/saw domestic violence. The number of reported incidents varied across the NT from 45 in East Arnhem to 381 in Greater Darwin.



## BREAKING DOWN GENDER STEREOTYPES

The Mums Can, Dads Can project is a family, domestic and sexual violence primary prevention pilot project developed by Town Camp community members in Alice Springs. The project aims to challenge rigid gender stereotypes about the roles of men and women in regard to parenting and builds on the work currently done by the Tangentyere Family Violence Prevention Program.

National and international evidence demonstrates gender inequality and rigid gender stereotypes are a significant predictor of violence. Parents have a large influence on gender role socialisation of their children and it is hoped the Mums Can, Dads Can project will influence parents in their modelling of the next generation of parents.

This project is working with community members to identify unhelpful stereotypes and is developing and promoting key alternative messages which are culturally appropriate and resonate with the Alice Springs Town Camp communities. It is community strength based, fun and enjoyable. The project sends a powerful message to community members about gender stereotypes particularly in the context of mothers and fathers.

Posters show images of residents engaging in activities that are 'typically' seen as men's or women's roles and they are flipping those gender stereotypes.





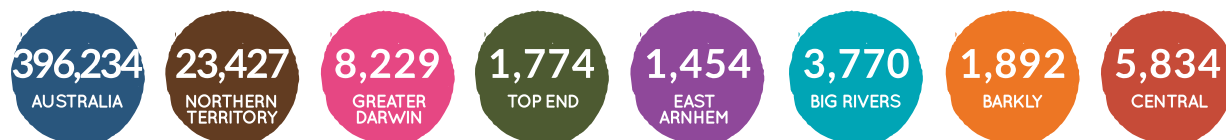
## 1.1.2 Child abuse or neglect

Child abuse and neglect refers to behaviours or treatment that either harms or is likely to harm a child or young person. The actions may be intentional (abuse) or unintentional (neglect).<sup>(14)</sup>

In the Northern Territory, all adults, aged 18 and over, are required to report (notify) to child protection services if they reasonably believe a child or young person has been harmed or is likely to be harmed.<sup>(11)</sup>

Notifications are reviewed by the intake team within the Northern Territory Government and where appropriate, are referred for investigation or support.

### Number of notifications of child abuse or neglect

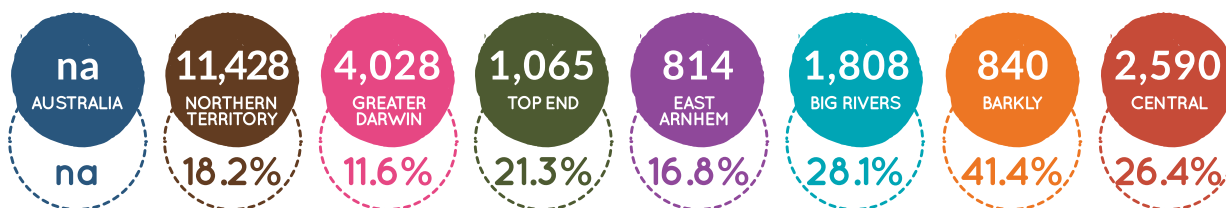


Data source and year: Australia: AIHW Child Protection Collection, 2017-18. NT, Greater Darwin and regions: NT Department of Territory Families (special table), 2018-19.

Note: NT data include 474 notifications for children who were interstate residents.

In the NT in 2018-19, there were 23,427 notifications of child abuse or neglect, which is a reduction from 24,743 notifications in 2017-18.<sup>(15)</sup> The number of notifications in the NT, is substantially more than expected if based on approximately 1% of the Australian population, for which there was a total of 396,234 notifications in 2017-18.<sup>(15)</sup>

### Number and proportion (%) of children, aged 0-17, with notifications of child abuse or neglect

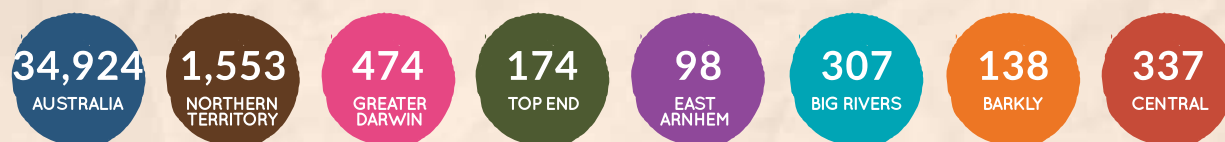


Data source and year: NT Department of Territory Families (special tables), 2018-19; proportions estimated using ABS 3235.0 Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2017.

Note: 1. (na) not available. 2. NT data include 283 children who were interstate residents.

Some children are reported on more than one occasion in a year. In the NT, in 2018-19, there were 11,428 children who were reported a total of 23,427 times. In 2018-19, about 2 in 10 NT children (18.2%) were notified to the intake team for child protection services. The proportion of children with notifications varied across regions from about 1 in 10 children in Greater Darwin (11.6%) to about 4 in 10 children in Barkly (41.4%).

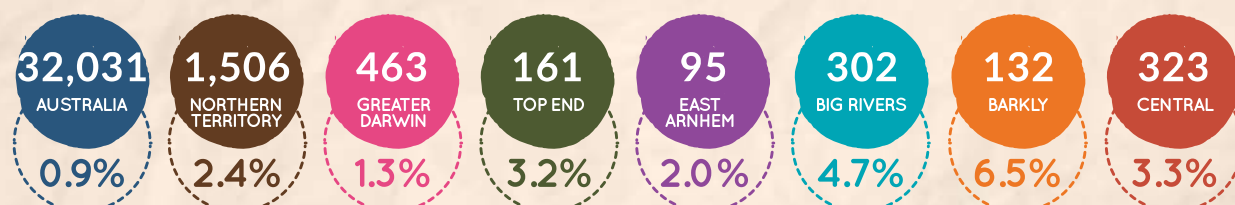
## Number of substantiated investigations for children, aged 0-17



Data source and year: Australia: AIHW Child Protection Collection, 2017-18. NT, Greater Darwin and regions: NT Department of Territory Families (special table), 2018-19.

Note: 1. Australian data exclude NSW due to a change in the data system. 2. NT data include 25 cases involving interstate residents.

## Number and proportion (%) of children, aged 0-17, who were the subject of a substantiated investigation



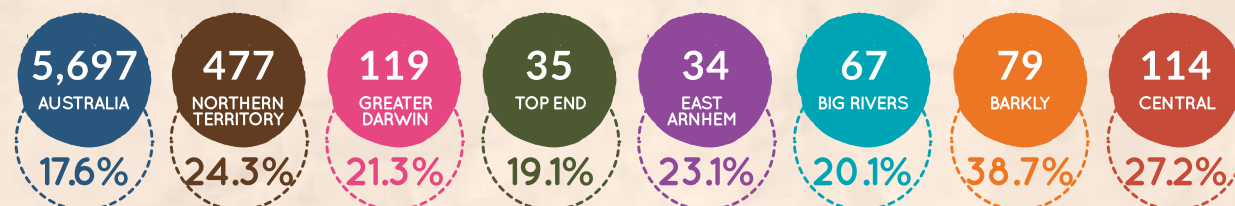
Data source and year: Australia: Child Protection Australia Data tables 2017-18. NT, Greater Darwin and regions: NT Department of Territory Families (special tables), 2018-19; proportions estimated using ABS 3235.0 Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2017.

Note: 1. Australian data exclude NSW due to a change in the data system. 2. NT data include 25 children who were interstate residents.

Substantiated cases of child abuse or neglect are those notifications confirmed by investigation.

In the NT, in 2018-19, there were 5,808 completed child protection investigations in relation to 4,117 children. From these investigations there were 1,553 substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect involving 1,506 children. In the NT, more than 2 in 100 children (2.4%) experienced a substantiated episode of abuse or neglect, in 2018-19, which was greater than about 1 in 100 children across Australia (0.9%) for the latest available year. The proportion of children with a substantiated episode of abuse or neglect varied across the NT from about 1 in 100 children in Greater Darwin (1.3%) to more than 6 in 100 children in Barkly (6.5%).

## Number and proportion (%) of children, aged 0-17, who were the subject of resubstantiation, within 12 months



Data source and year: Australia: AIHW National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children (2019), 2016-17. NT, Greater Darwin and regions: NT Department of Territory Families (special table), 2018-19.

Note: 1. Australian data exclude NSW due to a change in the data system. 2. NT data include 29 children who were interstate residents.

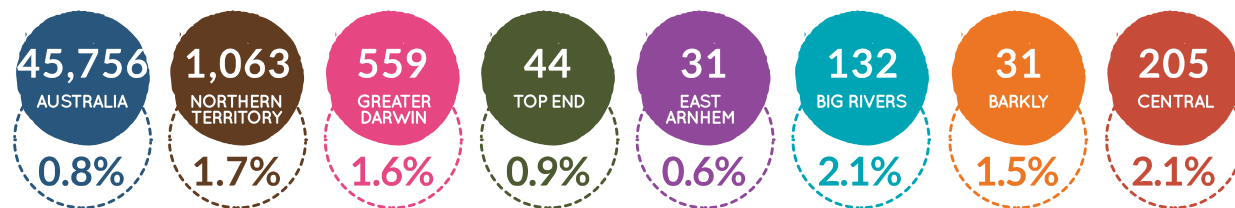
Resubstantiation refers to children who were the subject of a substantiated episode of child abuse and neglect who are then the subject of a further substantiation within three to 12 months.<sup>(16)</sup>

The resubstantiation rate is used as a measure of the effectiveness of child protection services.

In the NT about 1 in 4 children (24.3%) involved in a substantiated episode of child abuse or neglect were the subject of at least one subsequent substantiated episode within the following 12 months. In the latest available data, the resubstantiation rate varied across the NT from about 1 in 5 children with an initial substantiation in Greater Darwin (21.3%) to almost 2 in 5 children in Barkly (38.7%).

Provision of care to children out of their usual family residence is referred to as 'out-of-home care'. A child can be placed with an alternative caregiver on a short or long-term basis. Children in out-of-home care are highly vulnerable and may come from a background of abuse, neglect or economic disadvantage.<sup>(17)</sup>

#### Number and proportion (%) of children, aged 0-17, in out-of-home care



Data source and year: Australia: AIHW, Child protection Australia (2019), 2017-18. NT, Greater Darwin and regions: NT Department of Territory Families (special tables), 2018-19; proportions estimated using ABS 3235.0 Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2017.

Note: 1. Numbers are estimated at a point in time, Australian data are based on 30 June 2018 and NT data on 1 July 2019. 2. NT data include 61 children who were interstate residents.

In July 2019, there were 1,063 children in out-of-home care in the NT, which was almost 2 in 100 NT children (1.7%). This is greater than 1 in 100 children reported for all children across Australia (0.8%). The location of placement varies not only with need but also with the availability of carers, which is reflected in the varying distribution of children in care across NT regions. The proportion of children in care in different regions varied from about 1 in 200 children in East Arnhem (0.6%) to 1 in 50 children in Central (2.1%).

## 1.2 Safe communities

We want our children to live in safe communities. While the immediate environment around a child is critical for wellbeing, the safety of the broader community can impact on a child's sense of security and development of trusting relationships with other adults.

### 1.2.1 House break-ins

The number of reported house break-in offences for houses with children is not available, however there is data on all house break-in offences. This was chosen as one measure of community safety as it relates to a child's sense of safety in their neighbourhood and at home. Having a break-in take place in an individual's home, whether they are present or not, can be a frightening experience and can influence a child's emotional wellbeing and trust.

#### Number of house break-in offences



Data source and year: Australia: ABS, 4510.0 Recorded Crime – Victims, Australia (2019), 2018. NT, Greater Darwin and regions: NT Department of Attorney General and Justice (special table), 2018-19.

Note: 1. There is a marginal difference in counting rules, Australian data are counts of victims and NT data are counts of offences.

2. NT regional data are reported by standard ABS geography (SA3) which varies marginally from the geography used elsewhere in this Story.

3. NT data includes 5 offences with an unknown address.

A total of 2,472 house break-ins were reported in the NT in 2018-19. The number of house break-ins throughout the NT ranged from 68 in East Arnhem to 1,068 house break-ins in Greater Darwin.

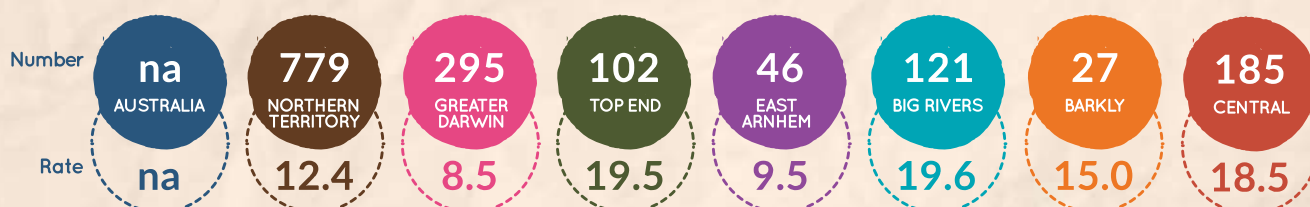


## 1.2.2 Children and young people as victims of crime

Seeing or being subject to violent crime can be a traumatising experience for a child or young person, and can shape their view of the community, their peers or other adults, and themselves. It can influence a young person's ability to develop strong, positive relationships which is an important aspect to living a healthy and happy life.

Crimes against the person are those that are performed against the will of another individual. These typically result in bodily harm, such as physical assault or battery. Children are one of the most vulnerable groups of people to such crimes.

### Number and annual rate (per 1,000 population) of victims, aged 0-17, of an offence against a person

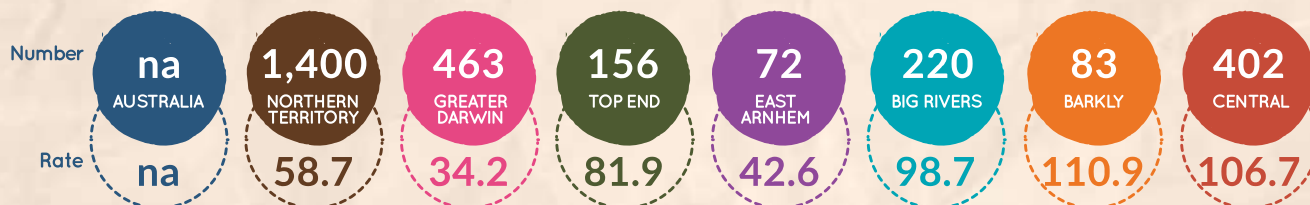


Data source and year: NT Department of Attorney General and Justice (special table), 2018-19; rates estimated using ABS 3235.0 – Regional Population by Age and Sex, Australia, 2018.

Note: 1. (na) not available. 2. NT data includes 3 children with an unknown address. 3. Crimes are counted once for each incident. Victims may be counted more than once, for different incidents, in a year. 4. NT regional data are reported by standard ABS geography (SA3) which varies marginally from the geography used elsewhere in this Story.

Across the NT, during the period 2018-19, there were 779 victims of an offence against the person, who were children aged 0-17. This is an annual rate of 12 victims per 1,000 children. The rate varied across the NT from 8 per 1,000 children in Greater Darwin to 19 per 1,000 children in the Top End and Big Rivers.

### Number and annual rate (per 1,000 population) of victims, aged 18-24, of an offence against a person



Data source and year: NT Department of Attorney General and Justice (special table), 2018-19; rates estimated using ABS 3235.0 – Regional Population by Age and Sex, Australia, 2018.

Note: 1. (na) not available. 2. NT data includes 4 young adults with an unknown address. 3. Crimes are counted once for each incident. Victims may be counted more than once, for different incidents, in a year. 4. NT regional data are reported by standard ABS geography (SA3) which varies marginally from the geography used elsewhere in this Story.

Young adults aged 18-24, were more likely to be victims of crime than children. Across the NT, in 2018-19, there were 1,400 crimes in which young adults were victims, which was an annual rate of 59 per 1,000 young adults. The rate varied across the NT, from 34 crimes per 1,000 young adults in Greater Darwin to 111 per 1,000 young adults in Barkly.





## A COLLECTIVE VOICE FOR VALUE, SAFETY AND CONNECTEDNESS

A coalition of nine Palmerston city schools recently established Student Voice Positive Choice. It is dedicated to generating a culture of optimism in schools and the wider Palmerston community. Intended to change the narrative, it comes with an uplifting sentiment to support students to feel safe, connected and valued. 'It's about spreading positivity and giving people another perspective about our youth', said Palmerston College Year 12 student Jack Hogarth.

Practically, a Student Voice Positive Choice 'hub' is formed in each school with 10 students across the year levels. These hubs lead various creative initiatives in the schools and wider community; such as morning student welcomers at the school gates and inclusive group sports at lunch times. Each school term a student-led summit is held with hub members from across the member schools to assess what is working well, changes needed and new ideas.

The positive message has been spreading around the local community with buses now branded with the message. Bakewell Primary School Acting Principal Cindy McLaren said, 'Student Voice Positive Choice helps students make positive choices, have a strong voice in the community, and work together to stand up for what is right, supporting students' safety, sense of connectedness and value'.

Embodying the mantra of Let's Be Awesome, Let's Be Respectful, Let's Be Brave and Let's Be Positive, the group of schools aim to inspire ongoing changes by building positive student identities, celebrating their successes, building leadership capacity and instilling confidence to empower others.

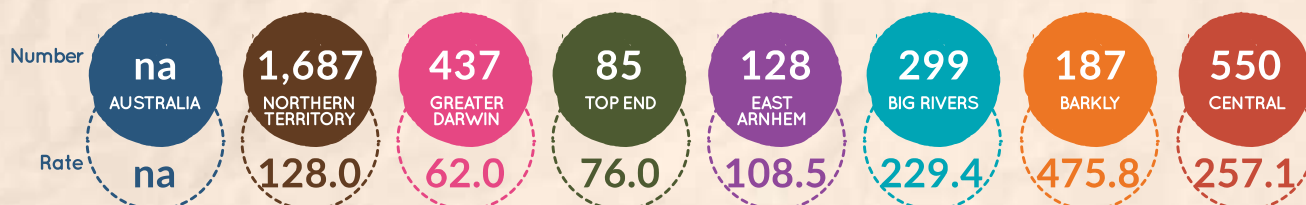
Photo: Students from the nine Palmerston schools with their positive message for the community



### 1.2.3 Young people involved in crime

There are separate justice systems for young people and adults. Young people under the age of 18 are subject to the Youth Justice Act 2005 (Northern Territory).<sup>(18)</sup> At present, the age of criminal responsibility is 10 years, in the Northern Territory. There are different reasons why a child or young person might commit a crime, and there are varying degrees of severity of crime. Crimes committed by young people can influence the sense of community that other young people feel with their peers, and can heavily impact the opportunities for future employment for young offenders.

Number and annual rate (per 1,000 population) of apprehensions of males, aged 10-17



Data source and year: NT Department of Attorney General and Justice (special table), 2018-19; rates estimated using ABS 3235.0 – Regional Population by Age and Sex, Australia, 2018.

Note: 1. (na) not available. 2. Apprehensions are calculated as one event for a person for one date. 3. NT regional data are reported by standard ABS geography (SA3) which varies marginally from the geography used elsewhere in this Story. 4. NT data includes 1 male with an unknown address.

Number and annual rate (per 1,000 population) of apprehensions of females, aged 10-17



Data source and year: NT Department of Attorney General and Justice (special table), 2018-19; rates estimated using ABS 3235.0 – Regional Population by Age and Sex, Australia, 2018.

Note: 1. (na) not available. 2. (nr) not reportable because of small numbers. 3. Apprehensions are calculated as one event for a person for one date. 4. NT regional data are reported by standard ABS geography (SA3) which varies marginally from the geography used elsewhere in this Story.

Of all apprehensions of young people in 2018-19, 1,687 involved male young people and 414 involved female young people. Across the NT, the rate of males aged 10-17 apprehended ranged from 62 to 476 apprehensions per 1,000 males in the age group. The rate for females apprehended is much lower, ranging from 10 to 84 apprehensions per 1,000 females.



## BOXING BOOT CAMP ENGAGING MALE STUDENTS

After spending some time at Taminmin College as school-based Senior Constables, Kris Jockers and Ben Streeter saw there was a need to run something unique for some of the male students. The aim was to give them an outlet for energy and exercise and to help them focus and engage in the school learning environment.

Both fathers, they were keen to work with the boys in a physical, challenging and positive environment. Together with the school, they developed the Boxing Boot Camp, a four-week program engaging Years 7-9 male students for hourly sessions of physical training to exercise both their mind and body. 'We work with them in a safe and fun environment teaching teamwork, motivation, body movement, discipline and communication. Each session starts with active sharing about the issues of the previous week, with officers offering advice, support and life skills to help the students try to understand and manage their emotions'.

It is a student's choice to be involved, and some have attended before school in their own time to participate. 'The program has had a strong impact on student physical, social and intellectual development. Kris and Ben know young people and they have a toolbox of strategies to influence the positive behaviour of our students', said lead wellbeing teacher, Carmel Le Lay.

Photo: Kris and Ben working with students from Taminmin College

## 1.2.4 Youth diversion

Young people who come into contact with police may be diverted from the youth justice system. Youth diversion data captures a range of measures including verbal and written warnings, family group conferences, victim-offender group conferences and drug diversions. Youth diversion programs such as victim-offender group conferences are designed to support the young person to learn about the implications of their crime, to make amends for the harm caused and to change their behaviour.

A young person can be referred to more than one type of diversion when they come in contact with police. The same young person may come into contact with police more than once in a single year.

### Number of youth diversions for young people, aged 10-17



Data source and year: NT Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Services (special table), 2018-19.  
Note: 1. (na) not available. 2. NT data include 33 events for young people with unknown address.

During 2018-19, young people aged 10-17 were provided with 712 diversions. The majority of these 712 diversions were written or verbal warnings (59.6%), followed by family group conferences (32.6%) and victim-offender group conferences (5.8%). The number of diversions varied across the NT, with the largest number in Big Rivers (191).

## 1.2.5 Young people in prison

In the Northern Territory, when a young person aged 18 and over is charged or proven guilty of a criminal offence they are subjected to the law as an adult. The measure below is based on an average of the number of people in prison on the last day of each month in 2018-19. It includes prisons and work camps, but excludes any young people aged 18 in youth detention.

### Daily average number of young men, aged 18-24, in NT prisons



Data source and year: NT Department of Attorney General and Justice (special table), 2018-19.  
Note: 1. (na) not available. 2. NT data include 7.7 days for young men from interstate or with no known address. 3. NT regional data are reported by standard ABS geography (SA3) which varies marginally from the geography used elsewhere in this Story.

### Daily average number of young women, aged 18-24, in NT prisons



Data source and year: NT Department of Attorney General and Justice (special table), 2018-19.  
Note: 1. (na) not available. 2. NT data include 0.3 days for young women with no known address. 3. NT regional data are reported by standard ABS geography (SA3) which varies marginally from the geography used elsewhere in this Story.

In the NT, on an average day, there were 288.2 young men and 15.1 young women, aged 18-24 in NT adult prisons during the 2018-19 period. Most young men, on any day, had a residential address in Central (95.6) or Greater Darwin (63.8). More than half of the young women in prison were from either Greater Darwin (5.5) or Central (3.3).



