

STORY OF OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

GREATER DARWIN AND TOP END 2019





Acknowledgements

In the spirit of respect, the authors acknowledge the Traditional Owners of country and recognise their continuing connection to their land, waters and communities. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to elders past and present.

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Cover photos: Children and young people of the Northern Territory.

Introduction

This regional Story of Our Children and Young People (the Story) provides a summary of the wellbeing of the children and young people from Greater Darwin and Top End. It brings together 48 key indicators and eight case studies, and is an abridged version of the Northern Territory edition, launched in November 2019.

This Story is the first in what will be a series of biennial stories, intended to track progress and provide a vehicle for local stories to be told. Key indicators, mapped over six domains, measure wellbeing from the antenatal period to young adulthood. Comparative data for the Northern Territory is included.

The data and case studies within these pages highlight many stories. For many children and young people, their lives are flourishing, they are loved and healthy, and have opportunities to learn and participate. However, across many measures, the data also highlight a distressing story, as a disproportionate number of our children and young people face significant challenges from their early years. As they progress through life, they continue to fall behind.

AN AUSTRALIAN FRAMEWORK FOR THE WELLBEING OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This Story is underpinned by the national research of the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth and its development of The Nest outcomes framework with six key outcomes, or domains. The Nest is a theoretical framework and one practical application of this is ARACY's Common Approach (see figure below). It places the child at the centre, surrounded by circles of influence from family relationships to community.

The Nest refers to six outcome areas, or domains. Through the research, it was determined that for children and young people to be well, they need to be loved and safe, have material basics, be healthy, be learning, be participating and have a positive sense of identity and culture.



ARACY's Common Approach®
 Source: Copyright ARACY 2019. All Common Approach resources are to be used following Common Approach® training. Please visit www.aracy.org.au for training details. Reproduced with permission.

ABORIGINAL FRAMEWORK

While this Story is underpinned by the national research of ARACY, it acknowledges the ancient authority and traditions of Aboriginal people by using a locally developed framework which applies cultural metaphors. This framework was developed by a cultural reference group of the Editorial Committee, led by its Aboriginal members, and modified through conversations with Aboriginal people from across the Territory.

The Aboriginal framework also has the child or young person in the centre (see below). The baby rests in a traditional bed made from wood, known as a Coolamon in some areas, otherwise known as a bassinette or cot. Children and young people form the inner circle, surrounded by a second circle of parents, uncles, aunties and those within the family across that generation. This circle also includes local service providers such as schools and clinics, and other people working with families. The third circle represents grandparents, elders and those within the family across that generation. It also includes cultural authority groups, government, policy and decision makers. Around the circles of people, are four groups of people talking and working together.

Everything is connected by travel lines which illustrate movement and flow, as everything co-exists. The movement is in all directions as people have responsibilities to each other. Through the kinship system, everything and everyone is connected including to the sun, moon, stars and universe. It is important for everyone to be working together and communicating with each other. The dots around the outside hold the framework together, demonstrating a wholeness. The dots also allow for movement in and out of the framework.



Aboriginal Framework

Source: Developed by a cultural reference group of the Editorial Committee and modified through conversations with Aboriginal people from across the Northern Territory. Painted by Cian McCue.

In the Aboriginal framework, significant elements of Aboriginal culture are highlighted. These cultural stories or metaphors were chosen to represent some of the many stories from across the Territory. The metaphors used were selected to be readily interpreted using the six domains of The Nest. These six areas of wellbeing for children and young people are the pillars around which this Story is written.

Being loved and safe – *Coolamon* – The Coolamon is a large bowl like carrier made from the wood of a tree. It is a traditional cot and keeps babies safe, strong and healthy.

Having material basics – *Tree* – Trees are used for wood and bark for housing, to make tools for hunting and personal safety, and are a source of bush food and medicine.

Being healthy – *Hunting and gathering* – Connection to land and culture through hunting and gathering ensures a healthy lifestyle – physically, developmentally and mentally. Plants and animals provide important food sources to maintain a healthy diet.

Learning – *Oral tradition* – There is a strong oral tradition in Aboriginal culture, as well as other cultures present in the Territory. Elders and grandparents sit with children and young people to pass on knowledge.

Participating – *Spear, boomerang and dilly bag* – Spears, boomerangs and dilly bags represent active participation in Aboriginal community life – hunting, fishing, gathering seeds and fruit, as well as leisure, music and dance.

Positive sense of identity and culture – *Kinship system* – Everything in Aboriginal life is connected to and given its place in the kinship system. It is about the whole universe, the planets, stars, moon and sun - everything is connected.

Whilst we are separating elements of wellbeing, in life they are intrinsically linked and so there is crossover between domains. We have attributed indicators to the domains in which they are most commonly reported.

Further detail about the development of the Story and its indicators, with referencing, data sources and appendices, can be found in the [Northern Territory](#) edition of the Story.





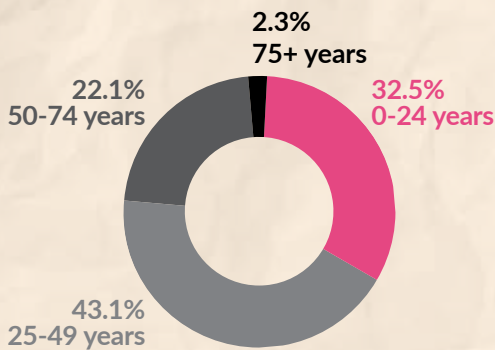
Greater Darwin

The Greater Darwin area comprises of the capital city Darwin, the city of Palmerston and the surrounding rural areas of Litchfield Council. The city of Palmerston and Litchfield Council are part of the Northern Territory Government's Top End region, but for the purposes of this Story, are being reported with the city of Darwin.



POPULATION

Greater Darwin contains 60.2% of the Northern Territory's population, with 148,884 residents. The population is older, on average, than the regions, with the highest proportion of the population aged 25-49 (43.1%). It is a multicultural centre with 1 in 3 people born overseas and 1 in 8 people are Aboriginal people. In 2016, 1 in 6 people had lived interstate five years earlier.



148,884

Population

11.9%

Aboriginal people

37.3%

Overseas born

16.2%

Population who lived interstate five years earlier

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Greater Darwin is a multicultural centre and cultural celebrations are numerous and diverse. They include the Harmony Day Soiree, World Music Festival, NAIDOC week, as well as Nepalese, Thai, Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Greek, Indonesian and Italian Festivals to name a few. The area also hosts popular sporting, arts and music, car and bike, rodeo and horse-racing events. There is the annual Royal Darwin and Freds Pass Rural shows, and regular community markets throughout Darwin and Palmerston, as well as Coolalinga and Berry Springs.

After English, the most common languages spoken at home are

3.1%
Tagalog/
Filipino

2.3%
Greek

2.3%
Chinese

<1%

Less than 1% of the population speak an Aboriginal language at home

67.9%

Almost 7 in 10 people speak only English

EDUCATION



47.9%

Almost 1 in 2 people (aged over 15) have a higher education qualification

14.3%

For 1 in 7 people (aged over 15), Year 12 is their highest level of education

14.1%

For 1 in 7 people (aged over 15), Year 10 or equivalent (including Year 11, Certificate I and II) is their highest year of education

EMPLOYMENT



70.4%

7 in 10 people of working age (15-64 years) participate in the workforce (employed or actively looking for work)

3.3%

3.3% of the working age population are unemployed

Major employment industries are public administration and safety, construction, and health care and social assistance.

FAMILIES



18.4%

Almost 1 in 5 families with children aged under 15, are single parent families

76.9%

About 4 in 5 single parent families have a female as the head of the family

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

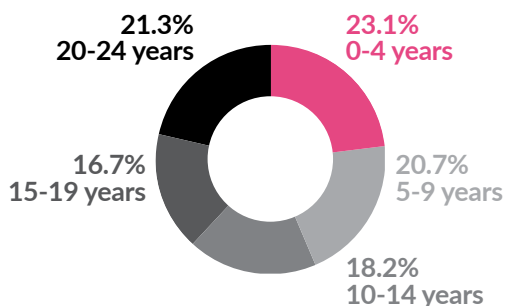


32.5%

1 in 3 people are aged 0-24

13.4%

1 in 7 children and young people, aged 0-24, are Aboriginal people



The highest proportion of children and young people (23.1%) are aged 0-4.

In 2016, over 450 young people contributed to the City of Darwin's Youth Strategy. They stated that they:

- valued employment and the opportunities it can bring
- aspired to have more activities for young people
- aspired to have a safer community.

In 2018, a survey of 150 young people from Palmerston revealed young people aspired to have:

- more activities
- opportunities for families to learn new skills
- a safer community overall that looks after vulnerable children and families.

Data source and year: ABS 3235.0 Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2017; ABS Housing and Population Census, 2016; ABS Housing and Population Census, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.



Top End

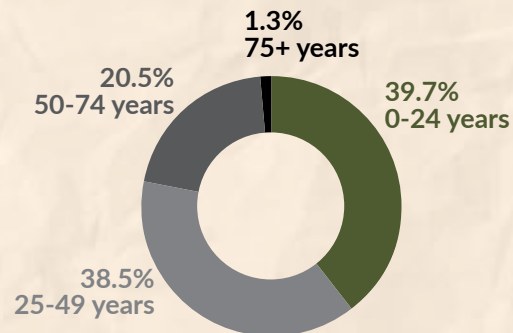
The Top End region incorporates the north/north-east section of the Territory including the Tiwi Islands. It encompasses six townships which include Batchelor, Jabiru and Adelaide River. The region also consists of 17 communities including Wadeye and Maningrida, four town camps and 138 outstations. For the purposes of this Story, the city of Palmerston and Litchfield Council, which are part of the Northern Territory Government's Top End region, are being reported with Greater Darwin.



POPULATION

Top End has a population of 17,190 people. The highest proportion of the population is aged 0-24 (39.7%) compared with the working and retired populations. 3 in 4 people are Aboriginal people and 1 in 7 people were born overseas. In 2016, 5.5% of people had lived interstate five years earlier.

17,190	Population
74.1%	Aboriginal people
13.7%	Overseas born
5.5%	Population who lived interstate five years earlier



LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

The Top End has a strong Aboriginal culture. From the salt water and seaside communities, to river, plain and escarpment country, local communities work with the uniqueness of their land. There is an array of small community events happening every week, as well as larger events which as well as being important for locals, also attract visitors. Such events include the Tiwi Islands Grand Final and Art Sale, a Taste of Kakadu Festival, the Mahbilil Festival Jabiru, Wadeye Festival, NAIDOC Day and International Women's Day. The region is home to numerous art and culture centres including Injalak Arts Centre in Gunbalanya, Bawinanga's Maningrida Arts and Culture, and Bábbarra Women's Centre, Marrawuddi Gallery, and Munupi, Tiwi Designs and Jilamara art centres of the Tiwi Islands.

27.7% Almost 3 in 10 people speak only English

62.2% About 6 in 10 people speak an Aboriginal language at home, with Murrinh Patha, Tiwi and Kunwinjku being the most common

EDUCATION



18.9%

Almost 2 in 10 people (aged over 15) have a higher education qualification

10.6%

For 1 in 10 people (aged over 15), Year 12 is their highest level of education

27.7%

For almost 3 in 10 people (aged over 15), Year 10 or equivalent (including Year 11, Certificate I and II) is their highest year of education

EMPLOYMENT



67.0%

2 in 3 people of working age (15-64 years) participate in the workforce (employed or actively looking for work)

6.0%

6% of the working age population are unemployed

Major employment industries are education and training, public administration and safety, and health care and social assistance.

FAMILIES



28.4%

About 3 in 10 families with children aged under 15, are single parent families

82.4%

About 8 in 10 single parent families have a female as the head of the family

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

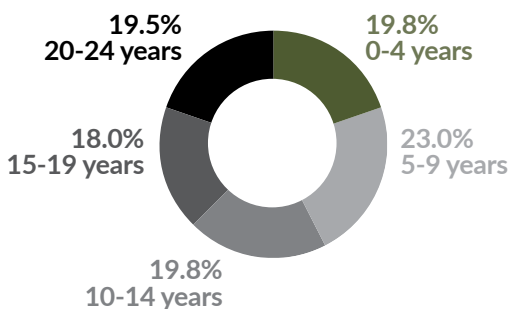


39.7%

4 in 10 people are aged 0-24

82.3%

About 8 in 10 children and young people, aged 0-24, are Aboriginal people



The highest proportion of children and young people (23.0%) are aged 5-9.

Across the Top End, parents desire for their children to:

- be connected to their communities and culture
- be safe and stay safe
- be healthy when they are born, as they grow and as they have children of their own
- have access to early learning opportunities and a good quality ongoing education.

Parents also desire:

- to have enough income to be able to buy food
- to keep food safe to ensure children stay healthy
- that all children have enough to eat.

Top End parents want to protect their children from community violence and stop it before it becomes generational violence or trauma. To do this, community members desire a safe shelter for their children so that they have a sense of security, feel supported and well connected to their peers, community adults and to their country.

Data source and year: ABS 3235.0 Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2017; ABS Housing and Population Census, 2016; ABS Housing and Population Census, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.



Domain 1

Being loved and safe

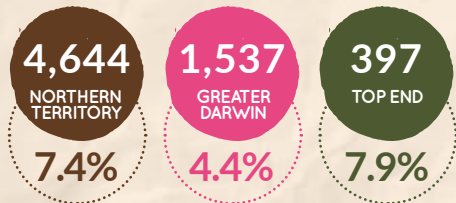
It is important for children and young people to grow up in a loving and safe environment. Children and young people need positive family relationships as well as positive connections with other people. They also need to be safe. The physical and emotional safety of a child are critical elements to their 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.

1.1 Safe families

1.1.1 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: NT data include 238 children who were interstate residents.

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: NT data include 44 children with an unknown address.

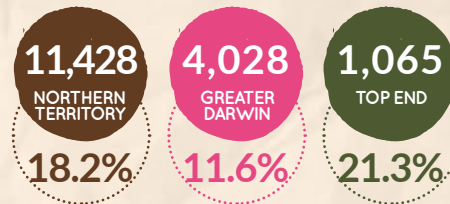
1.1.2 Child abuse or neglect

Number of notifications of child abuse or neglect



Data source and year: NT Department of Territory Families (special table), 2018-19. Note: NT data include 474 notifications for children who were interstate residents.

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: NT data include 283 children who were interstate residents.

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

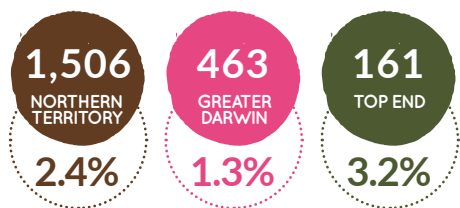
Number of substantiated investigations for children, aged 0-17



Data source and year: NT Department of Territory Families (special table), 2018-19. Note: NT data include 25 cases involving interstate residents.



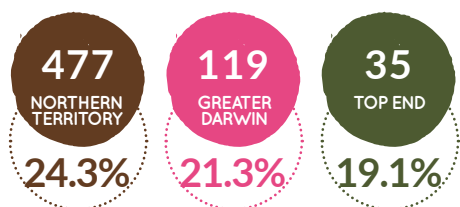
Number and proportion (%) of children, aged 0-17, who were the subject of a substantiated investigation



Data source and year: NT Department of Territory Families (special table), 2018-19; proportions estimated using ABS 3235.0 Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2017.
Note: NT data include 25 children who were interstate residents.

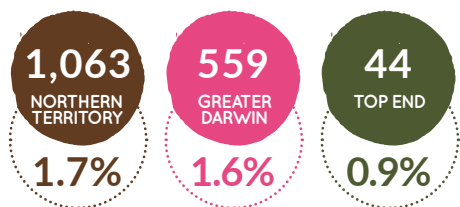
Resubstantiation refers to children who were the subject of a substantiated episode of child abuse and neglect who are then the subject of a further substantiation within three to 12 months.

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



Data source and year: NT Department of Territory Families (special table), 2018-19.
Note: NT data include 29 children who were interstate residents.

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



Data source and year: NT Department of Territory Families (special table), 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, NT data on 1 July 2019. 2. NT data include 61 children who were interstate residents.

1.2 Safe communities

1.2.1 House break-ins

Number of house break-in offences



Data source and year: NT Department of Attorney General and Justice (special table), 2018-19.
Note: 1. NT regional data are reported by standard ABS geography (SA3) which varies marginally from the geography used elsewhere in this Story. 2. NT data include 5 offences with an unknown address.



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



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'.

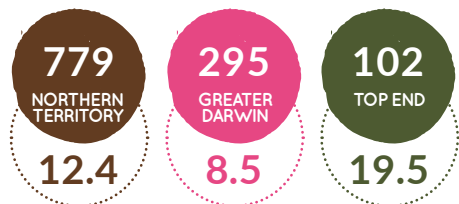
It is a student's choice to be involved, and some have attended before school in their own time to participate. 'The program has had a strong impact on student physical, social and intellectual development. Kris and Ben know young people and they have a toolbox of strategies to influence the positive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

Photo: Kris and Ben working with students from Taminmin College

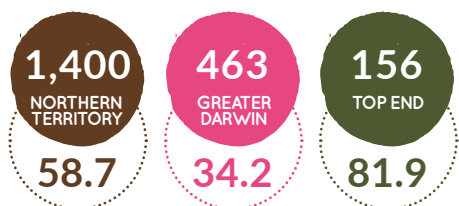
1.2.2 Children and young people as victims of crime

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.

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



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

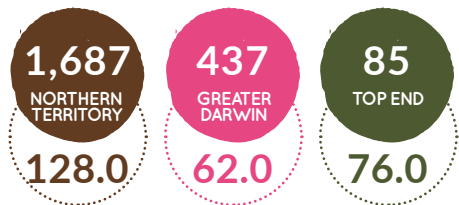


Data source and year: NT Department of Attorney General and Justice (special table), 2018-19; rates estimated using ABS 3235.0 – Regional Population by Age and Sex, Australia, 2018.

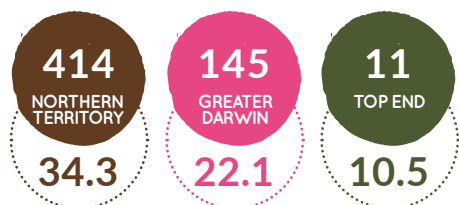
Note: 1. NT data include 3 children and 4 young adults with an unknown address. 2. Crimes are counted once for each incident. Victims may be counted more than once, for different incidents, in a year. 3. NT regional data are reported by standard ABS geography (SA3) which varies marginally from the geography used elsewhere in this Story.

1.2.3 Young people involved in crime

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



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. Apprehensions are calculated as one event for a person for one date. 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 include 1 male with an unknown address.

1.2.4 Youth diversion

Youth diversion programs include written or verbal warnings, family group conferences and victim-offender group conferences.

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

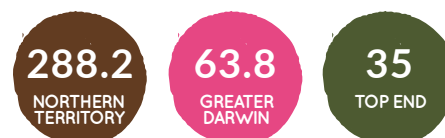


Data source and year: NT Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Services (special table), 2018-19.

Note: NT data include 33 events for young people with unknown address.

1.2.5 Young people in prison

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



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. NT data include 7.7 days for young men and 0.3 days for young women from interstate or with no known address. 2. NT regional data are reported by standard ABS geography (SA3) which varies marginally from the geography used elsewhere in this Story.





Domain 2

Having material basics

It is important for children and young people to have the material basics they need in life. Things like a house to live in, access to healthy food, clean water, clean sanitary systems, cooling and clothing. A family also needs the financial capacity to provide for these essentials. These are foundational elements to enable children and young people to flourish.

In this domain, four outcomes of financial stability, adequate housing, communication and technology, and access to transport, are explored through six indicators.

2.1 Financial stability

2.1.1 Socioeconomic disadvantage

The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD) is an index of relative disadvantage. IRSD gives Australia a base score of 1,000. Areas with scores below 1,000 indicate relative socioeconomic disadvantage and areas that score above 1,000 lack disadvantage.

Scores for relative socioeconomic disadvantage



Data source and year: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2016, prepared by PHIDU (special table).

2.1.2 Family income

Households with children aged 15 and under with an annual income under \$37,378 are considered low income households.

Proportion (%) of children, aged 15 and under, in low income households



Data source and year: Department of Social Services, June 2017; ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016. Note: Households are private dwellings only.

2.2 Adequate housing

2.2.1 Overcrowded households

The ABS defines severe overcrowding as when four or more extra bedrooms would be needed to accommodate the number of people usually living in a residence.

Number of people and rate (per 10,000 of the population) living in severely crowded dwellings



Data source and year: ABS Census of Population and Housing: Estimating Homelessness, 2016.

Note: 1. Rates are expressed of number per 10,000 population of usual residents. 2. NT regional data are reported by standard ABS geography (SA3) which varies marginally from the geography used elsewhere in this Story.

2.2.2 Children and young people who are homeless

Proportion (%) of children and young people, aged 0-24, who are homeless



Data source and year: ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.





HEALTHY HOMES HEALTHY FAMILIES

In 2017, Wadeye community leaders identified a need for good coordination between services related to health and housing to maximise the outcomes of efforts in the community.

The Healthy Homes Model was established by Thamarrurr Development Corporation, to coordinate relevant services and address the gaps in supporting local people to look after their homes and improve the health and wellbeing of families. Over the past 18 months, 20 families have been referred through the Wadeye Health Clinic when children are at risk of health problems. In addition, there have been five self-referrals, as well as 186 homes treated for pests and 96 animals desexed.

The program sees staff visit the family home and with the family, make a plan for an initial clean and then follow ups. 'The program has improved communication and coordination between a range of services in the community. This collaboration has facilitated positive outcomes in a range of areas and maximised the impact of the overall program in improving the health and wellbeing of families', said Robert Faughlin, Healthy Homes Coordinator.

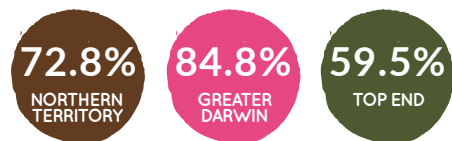
Although working collaboratively can take some time to perfect, local people and service providers together are seeing the benefits of the program. There are already improvements to home hygiene, the living conditions of families and animal health. 'We are helping people who need a hand to maintain their home, yard and even their animals - to keep people healthy', said Joseph Tipiloura, Healthy Homes Supervisor.

Photo: Julian from the Healthy Homes team removing rubbish

2.3 Communication and technology

2.3.1 Internet access

Proportion (%) of households where internet was accessed from dwelling



Data source and year: NT: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016. Greater Darwin and regions: ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

2.4 Access to transport

2.4.1 Household access to a vehicle

Proportion (%) of dwellings with no motor vehicle



Data source and year: NT: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016. Greater Darwin and regions: ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.



PARTICIPANT TO EMPLOYEE

Maggie Kerinauia is a young mother from Wurrumiyanga on the Tiwi Islands. In 2015 she participated in a parenting program called Let's Start, run by Menzies. 'I first was nervous, but I liked it, that program, it was good. I liked to meet other parents, talk about our kids, play with them. I felt better as a parent. My mum and my partner came sometimes, to have a look'.

On completion of the program, Maggie was approached by Menzies to work with them. 'I was not sure, felt nervous, I have never worked before. My mum and my partner said I should try it, they said it would be good. So I started'.

Maggie has been working for the program, now named Play to Connect, for over three years. 'I work with families, so they can become stronger parents, look after their kids. I explain things in Tiwi to them and they talk to me about their kids. I can see how this changes them, that they are having a good time with their children. I can see the difference on their faces after they come to the program'.

Employment has made a positive impact on Maggie and her family. 'Before I came to the program I was struggling, I went to the card games as I needed to make money for food and power. Working changed my life, it changed mostly everything. I feel stronger and better now'.

Photo: Maggie in her work uniform, about to go and speak with families



Domain 3

Being healthy

It is important for children and young people to be healthy, including physical, developmental, psychosocial and mental health. Until around the age of 25 years individuals continue to develop. This is not only physically but also by the maturing of neural connections in the brain. It is essential to take good care of the health and wellbeing of children and young people to ensure optimal health and opportunity in adulthood.

In this domain, two outcomes of healthy before birth and growing up healthy are explored through 11 indicators.

3.1 Healthy before birth

3.1.1 Early antenatal visits

Proportion (%) of mothers with first antenatal visit in first trimester (less than 14 weeks)



3.1.2 Regular antenatal visits

Proportion (%) of mothers who attended less than seven antenatal visits



3.1.3 Young mothers

Proportion (%) of births to women aged under 20



3.1.4 Smoking during pregnancy

Proportion (%) of women who reported smoking during pregnancy



3.1.5 Alcohol consumption during pregnancy

Proportion (%) of babies exposed to alcohol in first trimester of pregnancy



Proportion (%) of babies exposed to alcohol in third trimester of pregnancy



Data source and year: NT Perinatal Data Collection, prepared by NT Department of Health (special table), 2017.

Note: Data for NT regions are reported by NT Department of Health geography which varies marginally from the geography used elsewhere in this Story.





KEEPING THE NEW MOTHER AND BABY HEALTHY

'My name is Thevi and I am of Indian/Tamil heritage and these are the practices of my family after a child is born. My grandparents migrated to Singapore from Sri Lanka for work and I am second generation born in Singapore.

In our culture after a baby is born, the mother and infant stay at home for one month. This allows time for the baby's immune system to build up before vaccinations. It also allows time for the mother to adjust and to get used to breastfeeding. There are specific diet practices during this time. New mothers do not eat chilli, spices, dahl, cabbage and other foods that generate too much heat or wind. Also cooling foods like watermelon are avoided and fatty foods with a lot of oil. Foods like turmeric and coriander are encouraged as they provide nutrients for the mother and the baby through breast milk and are good for healing.

On the 31st day after the birth of the child, the family call the Hindu priest to the house to bless the child and the couple. Prior to the blessing, the head of the baby is shaved to cleanse the baby from any remnants from the womb (blood, fluids etc.) and to make the hair thicker. After the shaving, sandalwood is placed on the baby's head to cool the body.

Our traditions are passed on orally through the shared knowledge of aunties, uncles, mums and dads. Culture changes with time and things are different now. I can see my daughter passing on some of the traditions'.

Photo: Thevi with her daughter Venaska

3.2 Growing up healthy

3.2.1 Birthweight

Proportion (%) of babies with low birthweight (defined as less than 2,500g)



Data source and year: NT Perinatal Data Collection, prepared by NT Department of Health (special table), 2017.

Note: 1. Birthweights for live-born babies only. 2. NT regional data are reported by NT Department of Health geography which varies marginally from the geography used elsewhere in this Story.

3.2.2 Breastfeeding

Proportion (%) of children fully breastfed

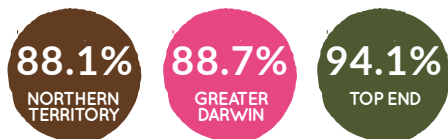


Data source and year: NT: ABS, National Health Survey, 2014-15. Greater Darwin: ABS National Health Survey, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2014-15.

Note: 1. (na) not available. 2. NT measures exclusive breastfeeding to around 4 months. 3. Greater Darwin measures to 3 months

3.2.3 Child immunisation rates

Proportion (%) of children, at age 2, who are fully immunised



Data source and year: Australian Immunisation Register, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2018.

3.2.4 Child obesity

Proportion (%) of children and young people, aged 2-17, who were overweight or obese

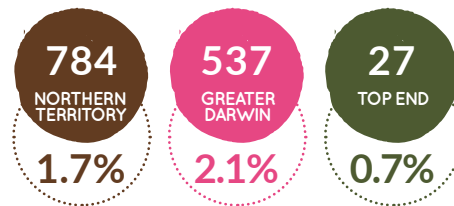


Data source and year: ABS, 4364.0.55.001 National Health Survey: First Results, 2017-18.

Note: (na) not available.

3.2.5 Children and young people with a disability

Number and proportion (%) of children and young people, aged 0-24, with a severe or profound disability



Data source and year: ABS Housing and Population Census, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

3.2.6 Death of children and young people

Infant mortality is the number of deaths of children in a population before their first birthday and is expressed as the number of deaths per 1,000 live births in a year.

Infant mortality (per 1,000 live births)



Data source and year: Australian Coordinating Registry, Cause of Death Unit Record Files, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2011-15.

Death rate (per 100,000 population) for children, aged 1-14



Death rate (per 100,000 population) for young people, aged 15-24



Data source and year: ABS 3303.0 Causes of Death, 2017.

Note: 1. (nr) not reportable because of small numbers. 2. ABS rates are based on preliminary death data and are subject to revision.





Domain 4

Learning

It is important for children and young people to be continually learning in both formal and informal ways. Children can learn at home with family, through interaction with the wider community and in formal settings, such as school.

Early education and participation, continual learning, emotional wellbeing and inclusion, and educational achievement are all important for successful progression through life. Active learning and school completion are important in supporting young people leaving school to achieve their goals and have a variety of future opportunities. While the indicators reported in this chapter are focused on formal learning, learning is not just about study at school, it is about all the experiences in the life of a child and young person.

In this domain, five outcomes of parent engagement in learning, early childhood learning, transitioning into school, school progress and school completion, are explored through 13 indicators.

4.1 Parent engagement in learning

4.1.1 Reading at home

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) is a nationwide data collection that shows how young children have developed as they commence their first year of full-time school. The results are derived from a teacher-completed instrument (or survey) for students, in each school, but are to be understood on a population level.

Proportion (%) of children who are regularly read to or encouraged to read at home



Data source and year: Australian Early Development Census (AEDC), prepared by Australian Department of Education and Training (special table), 2018.
Note: Results include teachers' responses of 'Somewhat true' or 'Very true.'

4.1.2 Participation in Families as First Teachers

The Families as First Teachers (FaFT) program is an early childhood and family support program, primarily for Aboriginal families in remote communities.

Participation in Families as First Teachers Program

	NORTHERN TERRITORY	GREATER DARWIN	TOP END
Number of communities	39	4	8
Number of children	2,633	601	407
Average days for children	19.0	11.9	25.4

Data source and year: Family as First Teachers (FaFT) program, prepared by NT Department of Education (special table), 2018.
Note: Average days calculated using the weighted average for schools.

4.1.3 Parent engagement with school

Proportion (%) of children whose parents or caregivers are actively engaged with the school in supporting their child's learning



Data source and year: Australian Early Development Census (AEDC), prepared by Australian Department of Education and Training (special table), 2018.
Note: Results include teachers' responses of 'Somewhat true' or 'Very true.'

4.2 Early childhood learning

4.2.1 Childcare attendance

Proportion (%) of children, aged 0-5, attending approved childcare services



Data source and year: Productivity Commission Report on Government Services 2019, 2018.
Note: (na) not available.



4.2.2 Preschool attendance

Proportion (%) of children, aged 4, attending a preschool program



Data source and year: ABS 4240.0 – Preschool Education 2018, Table 3, 2018; proportions estimated using ABS 3101.0 – Australian Demographic Statistics, June 2018.
Note: (na) not available.

Average hours of preschool attendance for children, aged 3 or 4, NT Government schools



Data source and year: NT Department of Education (special table) 2018.

4.3 Transitioning into school

4.3.1 Developmental vulnerability

The AEDC measures early development of children across five domains: physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills (school based), and communication skills and general knowledge. Children with a score in the lowest 10% of the national population in a domain are considered to be 'developmentally vulnerable' in that domain.

Proportion (%) of children assessed as developmentally vulnerable in one or more domains



Proportion (%) of children assessed as developmentally vulnerable in two or more domains



Data source and year: Australian Early Development Census (AEDC), prepared by Australian Department of Education and Training (special table), 2018.

4.3.2 Developmental strengths

The Multiple Strengths Indicator (MSI) is a summary indicator that measures developmental strengths in the social and emotional development of children, using the data collected from the AEDC. It measures developmental strengths such as self-control, pro-social skills, respectful behaviour towards peers, teachers and property, and curiosity about the world.

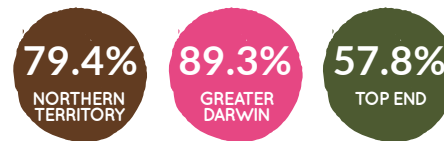
Proportion (%) of children assessed as having highly developed, well developed and emerging strengths using Multiple Strengths Indicator

	NORTHERN TERRITORY	GREATER DARWIN	TOP END
Highly developed strengths	43.8%	50.9%	15.1%
Well developed strengths	21.6%	22.8%	17.6%
Emerging strengths	34.6%	26.3%	67.3%

Data source and year: Australian Early Development Census (AEDC), prepared by Australian Department of Education and Training (special table), 2018.

4.3.3 Transition attendance

School attendance in Transition, NT Government schools



Data source and year: NT: NT Department of Education website, 2018. Greater Darwin and regions: NT Department of Education, Enrolment and Attendance data, prepared by NT Department of Education (special table), 2018.

4.4 School progress

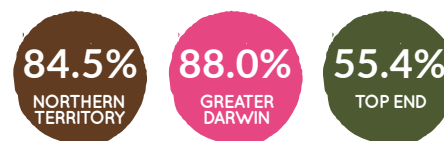
4.4.1 School attendance

The rate of school attendance presented here is the proportion of time students attend school as a proportion of the time they are expected to attend school.

School attendance, in Year 3, NT Government schools



School attendance, in Year 7, NT Government schools



Data source and year: NT: NT Department of Education website, Enrolment and Attendance, 2018. Greater Darwin and regions: NT Department of Education, Enrolment and Attendance data, prepared by the NT Department of Education (special table), 2018.





STUDENTS IMPRESS JUDGES IN COURT IMITATION

Three Year 11 and 12 students from Darwin High School were placed third in the National High School Mooting Competition hosted by Bond University this year. Mooting is a simulated court proceeding in which student teams vie to present a superior legal argument before lawyers who act as judges.

Tricia Ulep, Harvie Stiller-Wojkowski and Samuel Roussos met at lunchtimes, after school and on weekends to dissect the mooting problem, initially unaware if they were to be the respondent or appellant. They spent a lot of time reading and mastering the relevant legislation and the supporting authorities, such as examples of precedence. After learning the side they were required to argue, the students brainstormed strategies for weeks.

On the day of the competition, the students battled through the elimination rounds to become the only government school in Australia to win a spot in the final. Each speaker had 10 minutes to present an argument opposing that of the contesting counsel. The judges were entitled to interrupt the teams to ask questions and raise points for clarification. The mooting teams were scored on their presentations (35%) content (35%) and their proficiency in handling the judges' questions (30%). Samuel also won the Outstanding Advocate Award.

Photo: Tricia, Harvie and Samuel (from left to right) ready for action

A school attendance rate of 80% is regarded as a threshold below which children have difficulty with the continuity of classroom learning.

Proportion (%) of students with less than 80% school attendance, NT Government schools

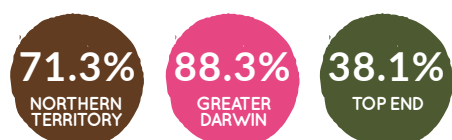


Data source and year: NT Department of Education, Enrolment and Attendance data, prepared by NT Department of Education (special table), 2018.

4.4.2 Literacy and numeracy skills

The National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is a nationwide annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. The test assesses skills considered essential to progress through school in the domains of reading and writing, language conventions and numeracy.

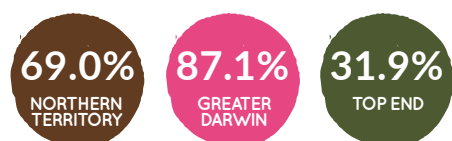
Proportion (%) of students in Year 3 reaching the minimum national standard in Literacy, NT Government schools



Proportion (%) of students in Year 3 reaching the minimum national standard in Numeracy, NT Government schools



Proportion (%) of students in Year 7 reaching the minimum national standard in Literacy, NT Government schools



Proportion (%) of students in Year 7 reaching the minimum national standard in Numeracy, NT Government schools

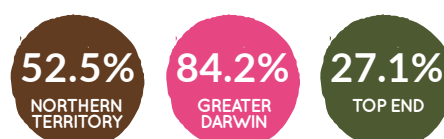


Data source and year: NT: ACARA NAPLAN - National Report for 2018, 2018. Greater Darwin and regions: NT Department of Education (special table), 2018.

4.4.3 Continuation to Year 12

The apparent retention rate is a measure of the proportion of young people who were enrolled in Year 7/8 and progressed through to Year 12 in 2018.

Apparent retention from Year 7/8 to Year 12



Data source and year: NT: ABS Schools Capped Apparent Retention Rate 2011-2018, 2018. Greater Darwin and regions: NT Department of Education (special table), 2018.

4.5 School completion

4.5.1 Year 12 or equivalent completion

Proportion (%) of all young people, aged 20-24, who have attained a Year 12 or equivalent qualification



Data source and year: ABS Housing and Population Census, 2016.

4.5.2 NTCET completion

The Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET) is the final school qualification for students in the Northern Territory.

Proportion (%) of enrolled students who completed NTCET



Data source and year: NT Department of Education (special table), 2018. Note: (nr) not reportable because of small numbers.





Domain 5

Participating

It is important for children and young people to be actively participating with their peers and within the community. Children can be involved by speaking up and sharing their views, being involved in sport or other recreational or social activities and by volunteering. Young people can participate in work, further study and can vote to have a say in our political leadership.

In this domain, two outcomes of participation in work or study and participation in the community, are explored through five indicators.

5.1 Participation in work or study

5.1.1 Young people earning or learning

Proportion (%) of young people, aged 15-24, who are engaged in school, work or further education and/or training



Data source and year: ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

5.1.2 Unemployment among young people

Proportion (%) of young people, aged 15-24, who are unemployed



Data source and year: ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

5.1.3 Community Development Program participation

The Community Development Program (CDP) is an employment program operated in remote areas by the Australian Government.

Proportion (%) of young people, aged 15-24, participating in the Community Development Program



Data source and year: NT: ABS Census of Population and Housing. Greater Darwin and regions: ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

5.2 Participation in the community

5.2.1 Young people volunteering

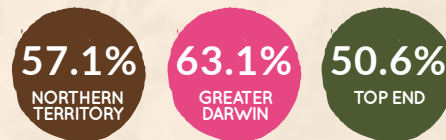
Proportion (%) of people, aged 15-24, who spent time doing voluntary work in the previous 12 months



Data source and year: ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016

5.2.2 Young people enrolled to vote

Proportion (%) of people, aged 18-24, enrolled to vote



Data source and year: NT Electoral Commission, 28 June 2019; proportions calculated using ABS 3235.0 Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2017. Note: Proportions are calculated using estimated resident populations, with no adjustment for residents not eligible to vote.





'This place is like my second home'

A SAFE PLACE TO GO

In Palmerston, teenagers had been asking to use the basketball courts at the Palmerston Recreation Centre after school. They wanted a place which was easy to get to, safe, and where they could be with their friends from other schools. Sport, particularly basketball, is a positive engagement tool and one that attracts a wide range of young people.

In April 2017, responding to the requests from the community, the Palmerston and Regional Basketball Association in partnership with the City of Palmerston, began the Youth Drop-In Sports program. The model of delivering the program is based on the Loughborough University 10 factors of effective sport-based projects. The program runs five days a week, 50 weeks a year. It is a place-based solution to the perceived issue of youth crime and anti-social behaviour. Young people are involved in nearly all aspects of the program, from the planning to evaluation.

The program is also about building relationships between teenagers, the staff and volunteers, and sports. It engages with an average of 85 young people each night, over 100 on Friday nights and on average 70% are Aboriginal young people.

Clinton says, 'Before coming here, I really didn't have anywhere to hang out so used to just hang out at the shops. Coming here keeps me motivated and happy with something to look forward to each day. It keeps my mind positive'. And Kaylum, 'I like it here because I get to hang out with people into the same hobbies as me. I come because I had to do something positive and keep me active, so I stay away from the streets. This place is like my second home'.

Photo: Youth Drop-In Sports mentors Campbell and Mikaela at the afternoon program.



Domain 6

Positive sense of identity and culture

Identity and culture underpins all other outcomes for children and young people’s wellbeing. ARACY’s review of research found a ‘positive sense of identity and culture’ is fundamental to a child or young person’s wellbeing.

Identity and culture are broad reaching themes and are challenging to define for any child or community, as they are very personal, are dependent on a child’s awareness of their own identity, and change as a child progresses through life. Identity is influenced by family, country, language, health, feeling loved and safe, involvement in the community and having access to other external influences. Each of these factors both define and are defined by identity and culture.

In this domain, three outcomes of connection to culture, spirituality and cultural diversity, are explored through six indicators.

6.1 Connection to culture

6.1.1 Language spoken at home

Proportion (%) of young people, aged 15-24, who speak English, Aboriginal languages and other languages at home

	NORTHERN TERRITORY	GREATER DARWIN	TOP END
English	54.0%	69.6%	16.3%
Aboriginal languages	21.7%	1.3%	75.2%
Other	Filipino/Tagalog	Filipino/Tagalog	
	2.2%	3.3%	
	Greek	Greek	
	1.2%	2.2%	
	Mandarin		
		1.2%	

Data source and year: ABS Housing and Population Census, 2016, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.
Note: Languages spoken at home by less than 1% of the population are not included in this table.

6.1.2 Aboriginal culture

Aboriginal spirituality and a connection to country help to guide a child’s development, as well as teaching a child moral values of caring for others, responsibility and resilience.

Connection to Aboriginal culture is intricate, often stemming from practices in the family, in ceremonies and on country and as such, there is not a measure to adequately represent this connection.

6.1.3 Community education

Number of organisations promoting culture and the arts



Data source and year: Register of Cultural Organisations - Australian Government, 2019.

Note: 1. Numbers reflect Registered Cultural Organisations (organisations that can receive tax deductible donations and which promote cultural arts and language diversity). 2. NT data includes one Territory wide organisation.



6.2 Spirituality

6.2.1 Aboriginal spirituality

Whilst this is an important indicator of wellbeing for Aboriginal children and young people, we do not have a quantitative measure of spirituality for young Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory. The learning and development in connection with the Dreaming occurs with family, elders and community, often during times of being on country.

6.2.2 Religions

Proportion (%) of population, aged 15-24, identifying with a religion



Data source and year: ABS Housing and Population Census, 2016.
Note: For the purposes of this Story, religion does not include secular or other spiritual beliefs.

6.3 Cultural Diversity

6.3.1 Overseas-born

Proportion (%) of population, aged 0-24, born overseas



Data source and year: ABS Housing and Population Census, 2016.

Proportion (%) of Australian born population, aged 0-24, who have both parents born overseas



Data source and year: ABS Housing and Population Census, 2016.



'We are all interconnected – paying respect to ancestors is very important for me'

PAYING RESPECT TO ANCESTORS

'My name is Leila and I am a Cantonese Toi Sun woman. There are different traditions in Chinese cultures; this is the story for me and my family.

We believe we are part of our ancestry. We carry to the next generation. It is important to pay respect. There is an obligation in this as we are the link from the ancestors to future generations.

After a child is born, we have a baby blessing at home. People who believe in ancestor worshipping do this. It is done at home because we don't want to take the baby to the temple in case of bad spirits.

There is a ceremony to bless the baby. We do this for two reasons. Firstly, to inform the ancestors of the birth of the child. And secondly, to ask the ancestors to bless the child with a peaceful and healthy life.

We are all interconnected - paying respect to ancestors is very important to me'

Photo: Leila with her daughter Melanie (holding Joseph, two years), granddaughters Tiffany (on the left, with Bruno, 18 months) and Jessica (on the right, with Xander, five months)

Where to from here

There are many stories within these pages. For many of our children and young people, their lives are flourishing, they are loved and healthy, and have opportunities to learn and participate. However, the data also highlight a distressing story, as a disproportionate number of our children and young people face significant challenges. These challenges commonly begin in their early years, and as they progress through life, they continue to fall behind.

It is critical that we address the many challenges influencing the wellbeing of our children and young people. We all have a role to play in improving the outcomes for our children and young people. It requires a collaborative effort across the whole community, not just a role for government. Working together is essential and there are positive examples of this in many communities.

This is the first in a series of publications. A commitment has been made by the Northern Territory Government, to ensure in 2021, we reflect on our journey and review our collective progress across the measures and case studies in this Story, in the spirit of continuous improvement and progress.



The process toward the next Story

