

# Northern Territory Youth Detention Centres Model of Care

Territory Families, Housing and Communities

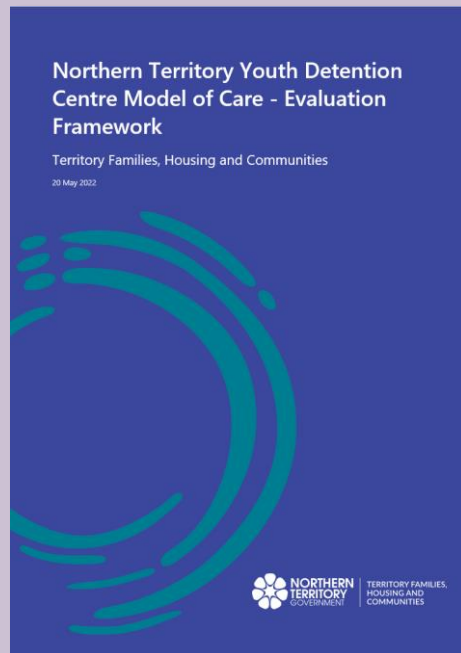
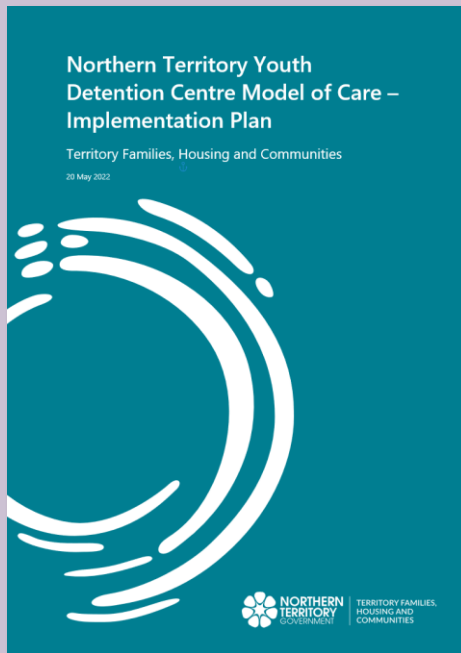
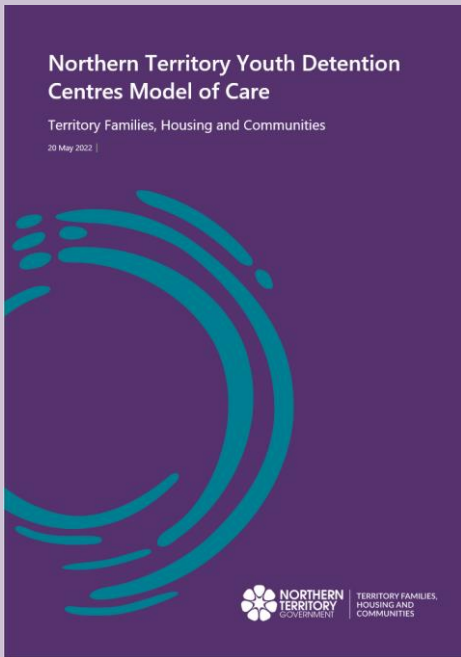
20 May 2022



**NORTHERN  
TERRITORY**  
GOVERNMENT

TERRITORY FAMILIES,  
HOUSING AND  
COMMUNITIES

TFHC has developed a Model of Care for Youth Justice Centres in the NT as well as an accompanying Implementation Plan and Evaluation Framework.



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## Version history

Version	Date	Changes made from previous version
1	21 January 2022	N/A
2	22 February 2022	Incorporation of feedback from Project Control Group and Project Team
3	20 May 2022	Incorporation of feedback from TFHC and other stakeholders

# 1 Background

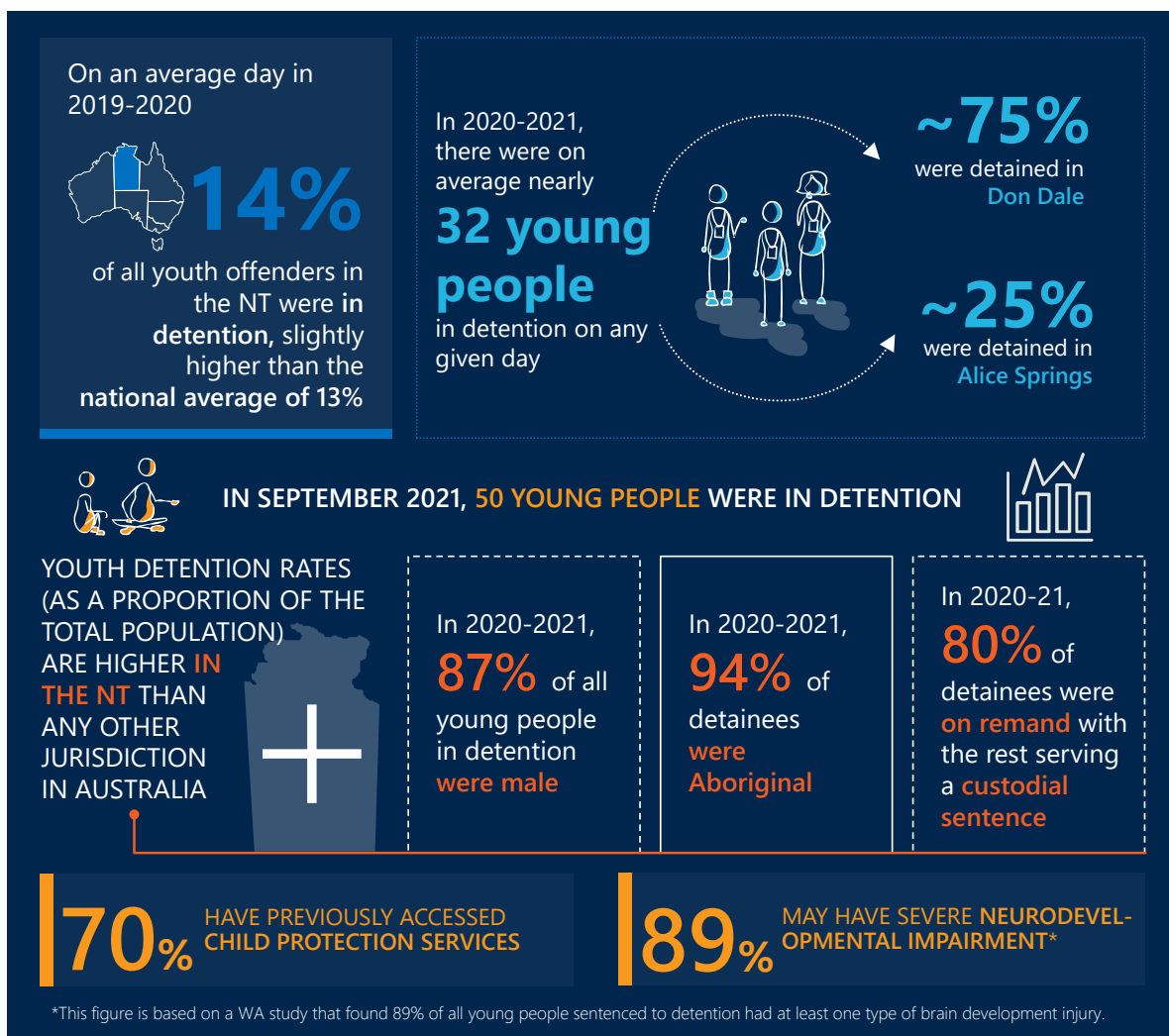
This section provides the background for the model of care for youth detention centres in the NT (henceforth referred to as youth justice centres), including overviews of:

- The population of young people in the youth justice centres
- The youth justice system of which youth justice centres are part
- The Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the NT (Royal Commission) and subsequent progress in reforming the NT's two youth justice centres
- The process and evidence base to develop the model of care.

## 1.1 Most people in the NT's youth justice centres are male Aboriginal young people on remand

The model of care is designed to meet the needs of the diverse group of young people in youth justice centres in the NT, a snapshot of which is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1 | Snapshot of the youth justice centre population



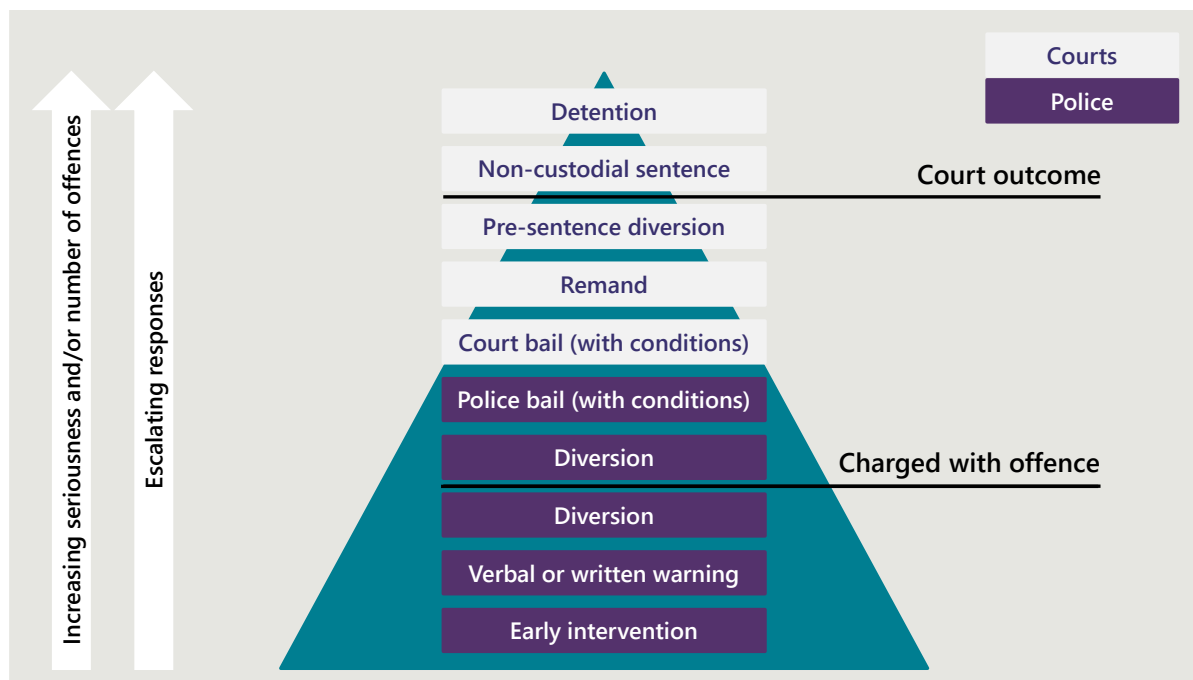
This highlights that the model of care must meet the needs of male Aboriginal young people on remand, who make up most of the population of the youth justice centres, while also meeting the needs of others (such as those who are female or serving custodial sentences). The service model described in Section 4 identifies where the implementation of service standards will be different to accommodate the varying needs of different cohorts.

## 1.2 The youth justice centres in Darwin and Alice Springs are part of the NT’s youth justice system

Territory Families, Housing and Communities (TFHC) operates two youth justice centres located in Darwin and Alice Springs. Youth justice centres are youth detention centres established under the *Youth Justice Act 2005* to protect the safety of the community, provide consequences for offending, rehabilitate young people and prepare them to reintegrate into the community. The youth justice centres are for young people who have been remanded in custody or sentenced for serious criminal offences.

Youth justice centres are one part of the NT’s youth justice system (as shown in Figure 2). The purpose of this system is to promote community safety by preventing and addressing offending behaviour. From a legal perspective, the system is built around a set of escalating responses to increasing seriousness and/or number of offences. These statutory parts of the system focus on the institutions young people come into contact with after they commit an offence, such as police, courts and youth detention centres.

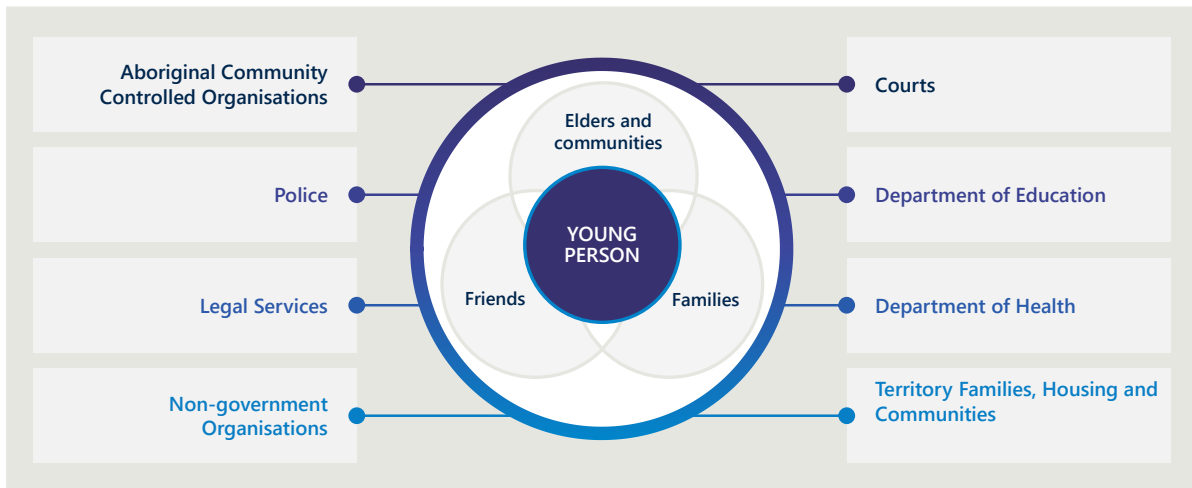
Figure 2 | Conceptual overview of the NT’s youth justice system



The youth justice system is broader than these legal pathways. It works with communities across the Territory to intervene early and divert young people away from crime. The system takes a holistic account of offending, seeking to address causes of offending, such as homelessness, poor health and disrupted education; respond to each young person’s needs, cultural identity and developmental stage; and stop intergenerational patterns of offending.

As shown in Figure 3, young people are at the centre of this broader system, surrounded by their families, friends, Elders and communities. Also part of the system are government agencies (including, but not limited to, TFHC), Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) and non-government organisations (NGOs). Young people will remain connected to this network of support while in detention.

Figure 3 | The network of support for young people in contact with the youth justice system



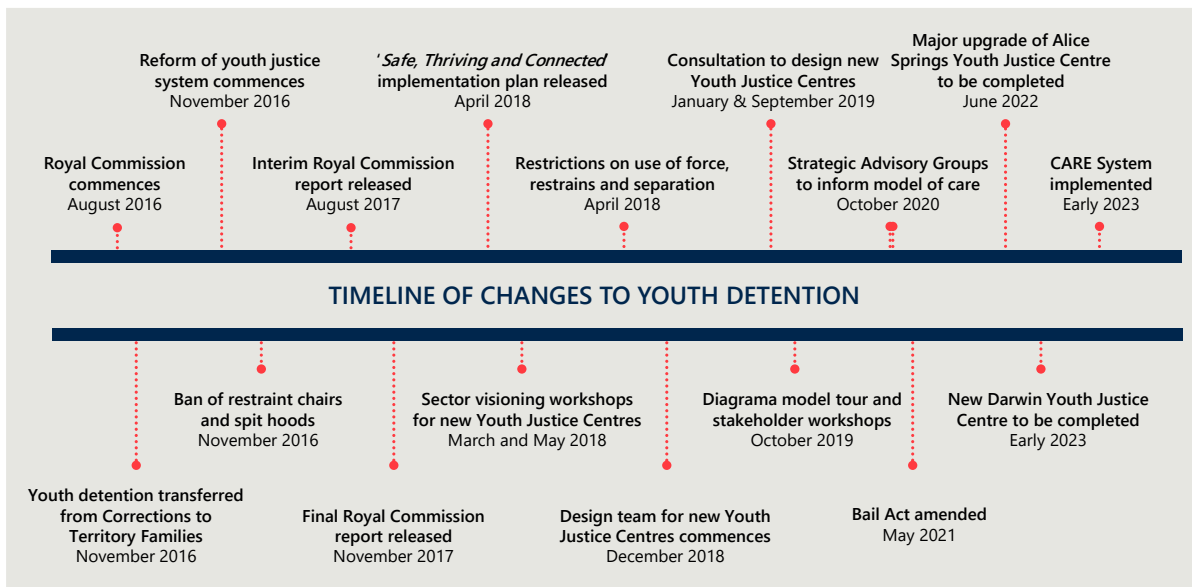
An updated youth justice strategy will be developed to guide the ongoing reform of the whole system, along with other policies and strategies that set the direction for specific parts of the system (e.g. integrated prevention and early intervention effort). This model of care is focused on youth detention in the youth justice centres.

### 1.3 Progress has been made since the Royal Commission but with some setbacks and ongoing challenges

In 2017, the Royal Commission found the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre and Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre were “not fit for accommodating, let alone rehabilitating, children and young people”.<sup>1</sup> It recommended numerous changes to centre operations and facilities, including the replacement of Don Dale Youth Detention Centre with a new, purpose-built facility.

Since the Royal Commission, there has been significant progress in reforming the NT’s youth justice system. Key activities, including to develop a model of care, are summarised in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4 | Timeline of Key Youth Detention Policy and Operational Changes



Major changes have included:

- A shift in the governance of youth justice from Corrections to TFHC, to ensure youth justice focuses on the needs of young people without being overshadowed by the adult corrections system.
- Policy changes in response to the Royal Commission including the Safe, Thriving and Connected reforms and a \$94.3 million commitment towards improving youth detention facilities.
- Legislative amendments to the *Youth Justice Act 2005*, including to ban the use of force and limit the use of separation in detention, and to the *Bail Act 1982*.
- The development of a 10-Year Generational Strategy for Children and Families.

There have been shifts in youth justice centre operations, including, but not limited to improvements to youth justice centre facilities (ahead of the transition to the new youth justice centres); a new youth justice workforce with increased capacity to meet the needs of young people; and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services providing culturally secure health services. A new integrated case management system ("CARE"), currently under development, will result in enhanced information sharing to support the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

However, there have also been setbacks and adjustments along the way, and challenges remain. Particularly challenges relating to the need for recruitment and retention of the right staff, engagement of families and communities, management of community expectations, and improvement in throughcare.

The model of care will complement the efforts already underway to improve the youth justice centres and address remaining challenges, embedding good practice in day-to-day operations and ensuring effective outcomes are delivered from youth justice.

## 1.4 This model of care applies the best practices and ideas for youth justice centres in the NT context

This model of care has been developed based on:

- Consultation with young people, families, communities, youth justice centre staff and other stakeholders across the NT's youth justice system.
- Review of Australian and international good practice in the operation of youth detention centres and models of care.
- Information about the current context of youth justice centres in the NT including legislation and policy.
- Existing frameworks applicable to youth justice centre operations including
  - the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child
  - the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT)
  - the United Nations (UN) Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty
  - the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
  - the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
  - the Charter of Rights for Children in Care in the NT
  - Signs of Success.

The model of care has also been informed by work already completed to design the new centres in Darwin and Alice Springs.

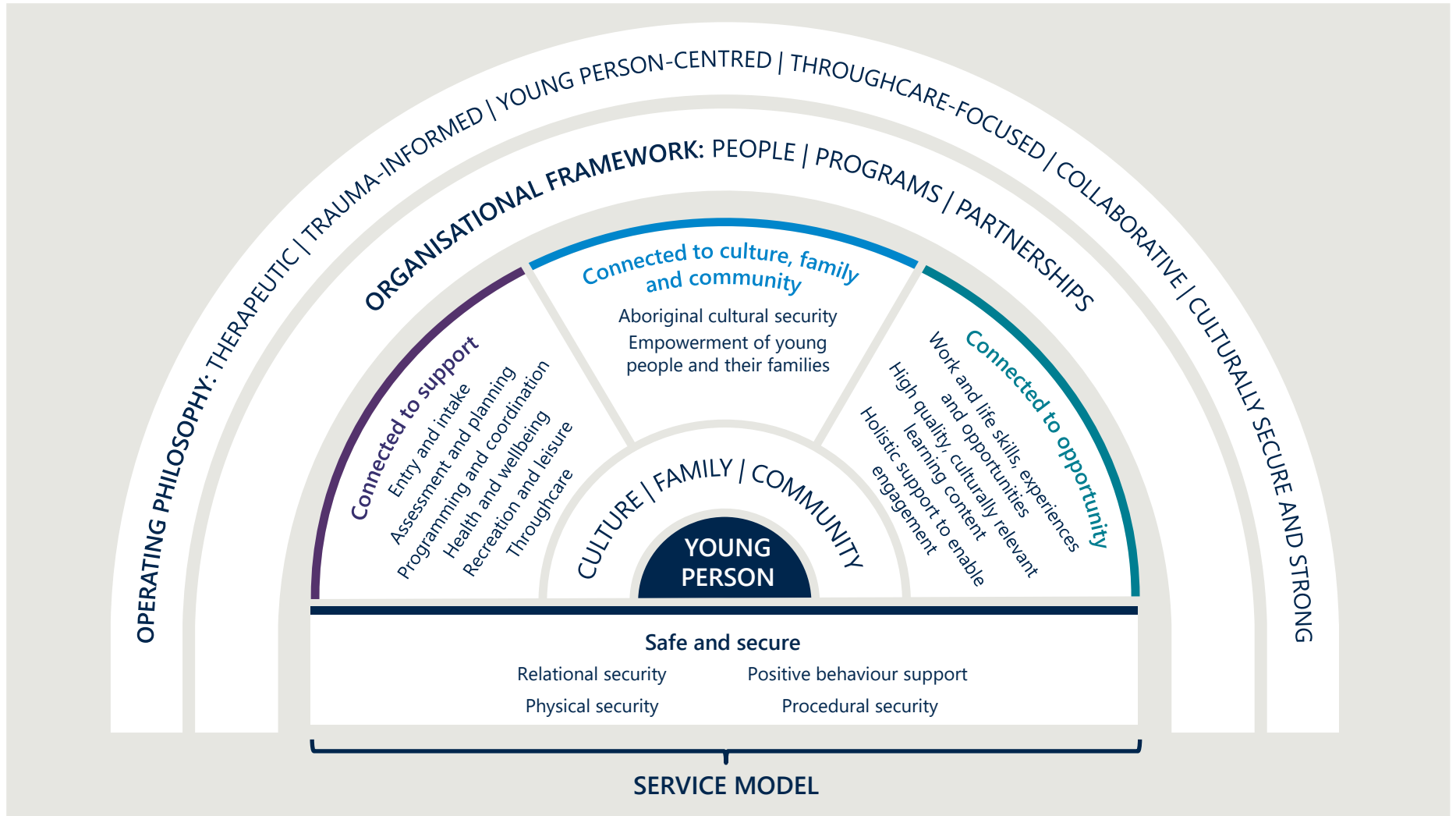


## 1.5 The model of care is centred on the needs of young people

The model of care is built around the needs of young people. It consists of three parts:

- An **operating philosophy** based on six core principles (described in Section 2).
- An **organisational framework** that articulates the resources that will be employed to bring the model of care to life, translating the operating philosophy into the service model (described in Section 3).
- A **service model** that defines service standards for each element: connected to culture, family and community, connected to support, connected to opportunity and safe and secure (described in Section 4).

Figure 5 | Model of care overview



## 2 Operating philosophy

The operating philosophy provides the vision for youth justice centres, including the two inter-related objectives they will pursue and the foundational principles that will inform all aspects of their operations.

### 2.1 The model of care has two primary and inter-related objectives

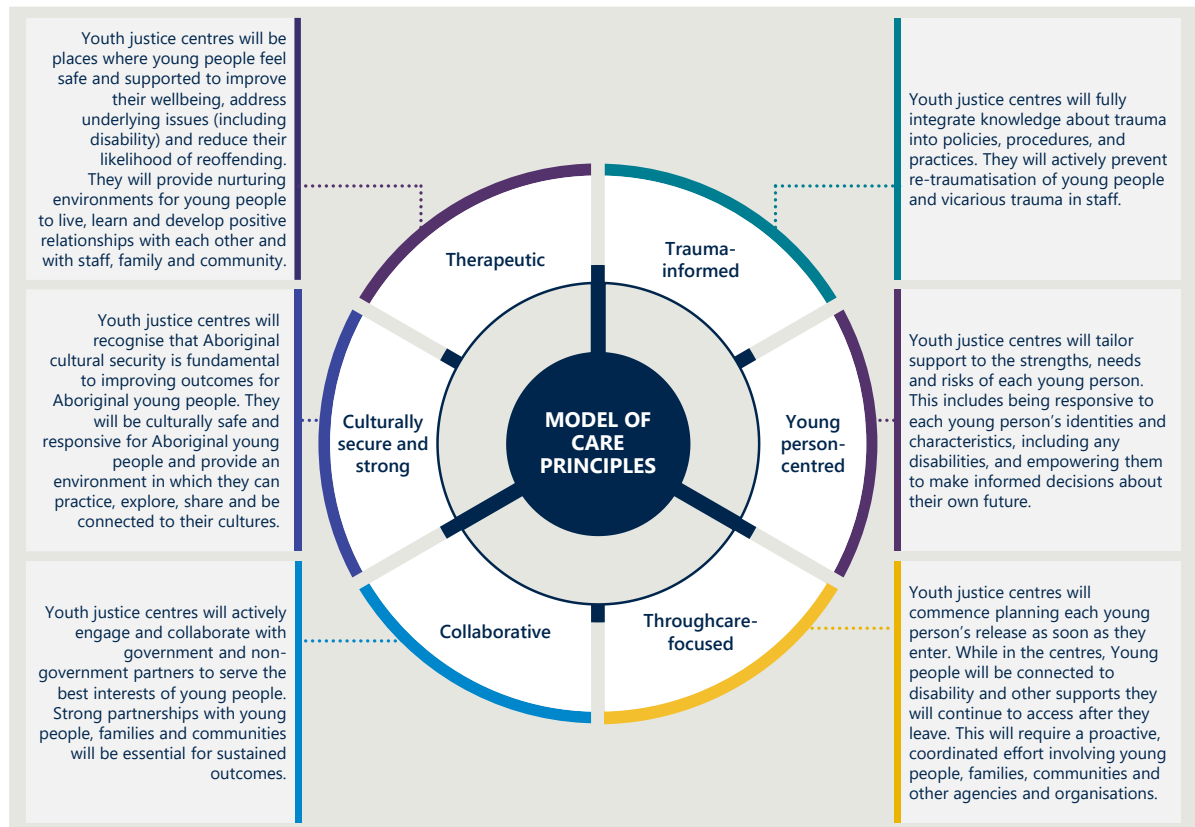
The objectives of the model of care are to:

1. Enable an environment for young people, staff and visitors that is safe and secure and in which the community has confidence; and
2. Facilitate therapeutic, trauma-informed, culturally secure service delivery to improve the wellbeing of young people and reduce their likelihood of reoffending.

### 2.2 The model of care reflects six foundational principles

The operating philosophy of the model of care is grounded in six principles, summarised in Figure 6 below. These principles inform the design of the service model described in Section 4.

Figure 6 | Foundation principles for the model of care



Each principle is described in further detail overleaf, including its definition, its evidence base, and what it looks like in practice.

## 2.2.1 Therapeutic

### What is it?

A therapeutic approach in youth justice settings frames young people as vulnerable and in need of support and healing, as opposed to punishment or fear. It recognises that most young people who offend have complex needs arising from their background, environment, and experiences of past trauma.<sup>2</sup> The focus of a therapeutic approach is on supporting behavioural change and personal development for young people so they can sustain meaningful growth beyond their time in the youth justice centre.

### Why does it matter?

Australian studies have reported an increased prevalence of a broad range of health problems amongst detained young people, including chronic diseases, substance misuse and sexually transmitted disease, as well as oral health problems and undiagnosed learning, hearing, vision, or speech impairments and deficits.<sup>3</sup>

The prevalence of mental health and cognitive impairments is also high. Young people in youth justice experience high rates of self-harm, suicidal ideation, substance abuse, depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorders. Up to 75 per cent of young people in the youth justice system are reported to have one or more psychiatric disorder.<sup>4</sup> Developmental and intellectual disorders such as foetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD), autism spectrum disorders, attention-deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), oppositional defiant disorder and other behavioural disorders are widespread, with most young people expected to have at least one neurodevelopmental impairment.<sup>5,6</sup>

Trauma-informed care and therapeutic philosophies are aligned in the goal of creating a care environment that provides a foundation of safety, empowerment, collaboration, trust, and respect.<sup>7</sup> Together, these provide a foundation for young people to begin a journey of healing and recovery.

### What does it look like in practice?

Examples of service standards in the model of care that demonstrate how this principle is implemented in practice include the following:

- Young people and their families will be supported to address underlying issues that contributed to behaviours of concern – see Section 4.1.2.
- A strengths-based approach and culture of high expectations will inform all aspects of learning in the centres – see Section 4.2.1.
- A comprehensive assessment will be performed within four weeks of a young person's arrival at the centre (even if this means it is completed after they have left) – see Section 4.3.2.

## 2.2.2 Trauma-informed

### What is it?

Trauma-informed care reflects the understanding that many young people in detention have experienced trauma in their lives, impacting their behaviour and responses to interventions. The primary goal of a trauma-informed model in youth justice is to recognise, conceptualise and respond to symptoms of trauma and disadvantage, such as behavioural and emotional dysregulation.<sup>8</sup> Trauma-informed care is centred on the principle of 'four R's':<sup>9</sup>

1. Realise the widespread impact of trauma and understand potential paths for recovery.
2. Recognise the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved.
3. Respond by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices.

#### 4. Resist re-traumatisation.

##### **Why does it matter?**

Approximately 80 per cent of young people in the youth justice system in Australia have experienced multiple traumatic stressors.<sup>10</sup> Aboriginal children are at higher risk of having experienced childhood trauma, as are young women, who report higher rates of abuse and trauma compared to their male counterparts.<sup>11,12</sup> Trauma manifests in young people in a range of ways – depending on the age and developmental stage, personality, life circumstances, and nature of trauma experienced – impacting emotions, behaviour, relationships, and memory.<sup>13</sup> Given the prevalence of trauma in youth justice centres and the impact of trauma on emotional, psychological and social wellbeing, it is critical that any approach, including therapeutic approaches, are trauma-informed.<sup>14</sup>

Trauma-informed care and therapeutic philosophies together support rehabilitation and reintegration.<sup>15</sup>

##### **What does it look like in practice?**

Examples of service standards in the model of care that demonstrate how this principle is implemented in practice include the following:

- Teaching and learning content will be grounded in trauma-informed practice – see Section 4.2.3.
- Young people will have access to comprehensive health and wellbeing services (including primary healthcare, disability support, AOD support, and mental health and social and emotional wellbeing support) – see Section 4.3.4.
- Youth justice centres will promote continuity and consistency in young people's relationships with peers, staff and other service providers – see Section 4.4.1.
- Staff will provide consistent, predictable responses to young people's positive and problematic behaviours – see Section 4.4.2.

### 2.2.3 Culturally secure and strong

#### **What is it?**

As stated in TFHC's Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework:

Aboriginal Cultural Security commits an organisation to design and deliver services that honour the legitimate cultural rights, values, and expectations of Aboriginal people. It provides a safe environment where Aboriginal people are empowered to make decisions that affect their lives without fear of judgement or discrimination...Aboriginal Cultural Security goes beyond attitude and behaviour changes by individuals and encapsulates organisational change through addressing structural inequalities. Aboriginal Cultural Security embeds Aboriginal cultural values and rights at critical points of intervention in service design, policy and practice.<sup>16</sup>

A culturally secure and strong youth justice centre maintains and strengthens a young person's connection to culture in all its forms, whilst providing equitable therapeutic support regardless of cultural background.<sup>17</sup> This is delivered through a respectful and safe-feeling environment that empowers young people to practice, explore, share, and remain connected to their culture. From a therapeutic lens, it includes tailored delivery of clinical practices that recognise the role of culture in treatment.<sup>18,19</sup>

#### **Why does it matter?**

Young Aboriginal people are overrepresented in youth detention in Australia.<sup>20</sup> Detaining young people removes them from their family, community, and country; all of which play an integral role in a young person's cultural development. For young Aboriginal people, incarceration risks perpetuating the loss of

self and cultural identity. It is imperative that detention is culturally secure and strong to prevent further erosion of cultural connection and support young people's rehabilitation.

The elements of culture are multidimensional. They relate to social and emotional wellbeing, identity, language, family, spirituality, and ancestry.<sup>21</sup> This highlights the importance of ensuring culturally secure practices are integrated across all aspects of a young person's care and support.

Not only are opportunities to exercise cultural practices a right of all young people<sup>22</sup>, the benefits of providing a culturally secure and strong experience for young people are clear. A strong sense of cultural connection is fundamental to the wellbeing of Aboriginal people and has been shown to reduce stress and improve resilience.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, a strong cultural identity and a connection with culture are protective factors against reoffending.<sup>24</sup>

### **What does it look like in practice?**

Examples of service standards in the model of care that demonstrate how this principle is implemented in practice include the following:

- Youth justice centres will recruit and retain Aboriginal staff, provide cross-cultural training and development for all staff, and continually reinforce to all staff that cultural security is central to their work – see Section 4.1.1.
- Youth justice centres will facilitate contact between young people and their family, friends and support organisations – see Section 4.1.2.
- Teaching and learning content will be responsive to young people's context, culture, history, interests and lived experience – see Section 4.2.2.

## **2.2.4 Young person-centred**

### **What is it?**

Young person-centred youth justice is a holistic and restorative approach which places the young person and their needs, strengths, interests, and wishes at the centre of planning and care.<sup>25,26</sup> A young person-centred approach empowers young people to work with youth justice staff to identify and address drivers of criminal behaviour, and to discover and nurture strengths and skills which will act as protective factors to support their reintegration into society. It acknowledges that young people are different to adults and need approaches that are age and developmentally appropriate. It is responsive to each young person's identities and characteristics including any disabilities or intersectionalities.

### **Why does it matter?**

Research demonstrates the relationship between the quality of treatment of young people in detention and recidivism.<sup>27</sup> In addition, studies show that incarceration of young Aboriginal people can increase the risk of reoffending.<sup>28</sup> Providing quality treatment that empowers young people to participate in their care, while simultaneously providing a multi-faceted support system that meets their unique and complex needs and maintains strong connection to family, community, and culture is critical to position young people to benefit from their period of detention. Strength-based approaches and opportunities for young people to have a say in their care have been shown to lead to safer custodial environments and reduce recidivism.<sup>29,30</sup>

### **What does it look like in practice?**

Examples of service standards in the model of care that demonstrate how this principle is implemented in practice include the following:

- Youth justice centres will implement targeted, individualised interventions for young people with severe and/or recurring behavioural issues – see Section 4.4.2.
- Young people will be supported to acquire practical skills, qualifications and documentation relevant to their chosen pathways – see Section 4.2.1.
- Each young person will have a support plan including goals, behaviour management and throughcare and other sections — see Section 4.3.2

## 2.2.5 Collaborative

### What is it?

As noted in Section 1.2, young people in the NT's youth justice centres are surrounded by a network of support including families, friends, Elders and community; along with a wide range of government agencies, NGOs and ACCOs. Achievement of the objectives of the model of care requires collaboration between all these stakeholders (including young people) from a young person's entry into a centre through to and beyond their re-entry into community.

### Why does it matter?

A restorative approach to youth justice that successfully rehabilitates and reintegrates young people cannot happen in isolation. Young people have complex needs related to, for example, their development, social and emotional wellbeing, and cultural connection. Addressing these needs requires collaboration. Support programs are most effective where they consider the young person in their broader familial, social and cultural context, rather than taking a narrow focus on individual risk factors.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, there is a range of underlying and interrelated factors which contribute to criminal behaviour that must be addressed to prevent reoffending, many of which fall outside the remit of youth justice. Disabilities, including, but not limited, to neurodevelopmental impairments such as FASD are just one example of such factors. Approaches that involve youth justice centres collaborating with government and non-government organisations to address systemic determinants of offending behaviour are more likely to reduce recidivism.<sup>32</sup>

### What does it look like in practice?

Examples of service standards in the model of care that demonstrate how this principle is implemented in practice include the following:

- Youth justice centres will seek guidance from and encourage the involvement of Aboriginal Elders and cultural leaders – see Section 4.1.2.
- Young people will have access to careers advice and hands-on learning and experience including through partnerships with local business and service providers – see Section 4.2.1
- Staff and service providers will coordinate to deliver the structured day – see Section 4.3.3.

## 2.2.6 Through-care focused

### What is it?

Throughcare is the continuous, co-ordinated, and integrated management of offenders from their first point of contact with justice services to their successful reintegration into the community. It involves careful planning and continuity of support before, during and after detention.<sup>33</sup> Being throughcare-focused frames detention as a point of intensive intervention along a continuum of support aimed to rehabilitate and reintegrate a young person into society.

### **Why does it matter?**

The period of intensive intervention provided in youth detention offers an opportunity to address acute needs and begin to promote and strengthen pro-social behaviours. Additionally, the drivers of criminal behaviour are systemic, requiring whole-of-government approaches to realise long term changes.<sup>34, 35</sup> Young people require extensive ongoing support in their post-release life, including for ongoing rehabilitation, accommodation, employment, education, training, healthcare, disability support, and connection with community. Ongoing supports and continuity of relationships help to prevent young people returning to unhealthy patterns of behaviour or offending.

### **What does it look like in practice?**

Examples of service standards in the model of care that demonstrate how this principle is implemented in practice include the following:

- Young people will be connected to opportunities they will pursue outside the centres (e.g. schooling, training, apprenticeships) – see Section 4.2.1.
- Throughcare planning and decision-making will begin as early as possible – see Section 4.3.6.
- Case management will be integrated and collaborative with external partners – see Section 4.3.6.



## 3 Organisational framework

The organisational framework describes the resources (including people, programs and partnerships) that will be employed to deliver the model of care, translating the operating philosophy into the service model (as summarised in Figure 7).

Figure 7 | Organisational framework



### 3.1 People

People are the foundation element of the organisational framework. Through application of the six guiding principles and delivery of the service standards, youth justice centre staff will enable an environment that is safe to both young people and staff and supports young people on their journey to rehabilitation.

To do this effectively, youth justice centres need a stable, skilled, and cohesive workforce. Regardless of their role, all staff should be youth specialists, prepared to deal with challenges presented by young people and tailor responses to maintain therapeutic and trauma-informed practice that are young person-centred. Staff must feel supported and adequately prepared to do this. Various training, professional development and wellbeing mechanisms are required to maintain a professionalised workforce.

This section outlines the people elements required to deliver the model of care, including:

- A common set of values and personal qualities
- Rostering that enables the model of care
- Cross-disciplinary teams with clear staff roles and target attributes
- Ongoing training and professional development.
- A safe working environment that supports staff wellbeing.

#### 3.1.1 A common set of values and personal qualities

The operating philosophy requires a workforce with the propensity to work constructively with young people. Staff with undesirable qualities will likely diminish the operating philosophy by contributing to an unstable environment and are unlikely to form the quality of relationships with staff and young people

necessary to implement the operating philosophy. Experience and qualification alone do not guarantee a workforce that is suited to working with young people.

Personal values and attributes are generally harder to instil than skills, which can be attained through training and supervised experience. A common set of values and personal attributes aligns staff towards a common goal and provides a foundation to train staff with the required skills to work with young people in detention.

TFHC will recruit and retain staff who are aligned to the vision of youth justice centres and display personal qualities that enable them to implement the model of care. These attributes are outlined below.

**Figure 8 | Personal attributes of youth justice centre staff**

Genuine care and compassion for young people in detention	Ability to model and uphold pro-social behaviour	Resilient to stressful work environment
The belief that young people are in detention to be rehabilitated, not punished	Capacity to build and maintain positive relationships with young people, whilst maintaining professional boundaries	Able and willing to support the wellbeing and development of other staff
Willing to take a strength-based approach and actively engage and participate with all aspects of a young person's rehabilitation	Reflect the demographics of young people in detention, including shared cultural backgrounds and/or lived experience	Ability to manage troubling behaviours of young people in a professional manner, including de-escalating and resolving conflict between young people

### 3.1.2 Appropriate rostering and staff ratios

The model of care requires a rostering system and staffing that allows all aspects of the model of care to be implemented consistently to a high standard. Staffing and rostering are central to a safe environment that is responsive to the needs of young people.<sup>36</sup>

TFHC will adopt appropriate rostering and staffing to enable the model of care, including:

- Ensuring that young people receive a minimum 13 hours of unlock time per day.
- Rostering staff with appropriate experience and training to support different cohorts and needs of young people at any given time.
- Providing overlaps of staff rostering to allow ample time for case management, debriefs on critical incidents, and handovers.
- Implementing a roster system that maintains continuity of relationships with the same young people to support relational security and provide a young person-centred approach (including by forming stronger team bonds amongst staff in units).
- Supporting the ongoing professional development and supervision of staff.
- Enabling a degree of flexibility for staff to have periods of rest and development in alternative work settings to promote staff wellbeing.

### 3.1.3 Cross-disciplinary teams with clear staff roles and target attributes

The complexity of the needs of young people in youth detention necessitates a cross-disciplinary workforce that can respond to the dynamic needs of young people and carry out all aspects of the operating philosophy and service model. This includes roles that are tailored to working with specific cohorts, such as young women, Aboriginal young people, and young people with complex behaviours, disabilities and/or psychiatric conditions.

TFHC will implement a workforce model that is underpinned by well-defined roles and responsibilities, including role-specific attributes that enable staff to carry out their roles in a highly professional manner. All staff will have a clear understanding of their role and how job positions relate to the broader purpose of care and rehabilitation of young people. To this end, all staff will understand how their role intersects with other staff to facilitate collaborative relationships. The requirements of cross-disciplinary workforce, including staff roles and key attributes are outlined in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 | Target qualifications, experience and attributes by staff role**

Staff roles	Qualifications, Experience, Attributes
<b>Youth Justice Officer and above</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required to complete the Certificate IV in Youth Justice as part of their minimum training requirements</li> <li>• Diverse experience</li> <li>• Attributes in Figure 8</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Youth Justice Officers and Team Leaders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraged or (for Team Leaders) required to complete the Diploma in Youth Justice and the Graduate Certificate in Developmental Trauma or equivalent qualifications</li> <li>• Demonstrated experience in youth justice settings</li> <li>• Ability to lead and supervise teams, maintain effective working relationships, and build skills in colleagues.</li> </ul>
<b>Superintendents and Deputy Superintendents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required to hold an Advanced Diploma of Correctional Administration and (for Superintendents) a Diploma or higher of Management or equivalent qualifications</li> <li>• Required to complete the Graduate Certificate in Developmental Trauma or equivalent qualification</li> <li>• Ability to identify resourcing gaps, operational risks, and improvement opportunities</li> <li>• Demonstrated effective leadership of large teams</li> <li>• Strategic thinking</li> </ul>
<b>Specialist Assessment and Treatment Service (SATS) (including Therapeutic Specialists)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range of Allied Health Professionals required to meet cohort needs</li> <li>• Professional competency and experience working with young people</li> </ul>

### 3.1.4 Ongoing training and professional development

All staff will be adequately equipped to work with different cohorts of young people in a manner that is safe to both staff and young people in detention, that facilitates young people's care and rehabilitation, and that ensures operations carried out in a consistent manner. Staff will be supported to continually develop and advance their careers within youth justice centres and community justice.

TFHC will ensure all staff will be provided ongoing training and professional development, which includes induction and core training, supervision and reflective practice, and continuous professional development and opportunities for advancement. These are summarised below.

#### **Induction and core training**

Staff should have appropriate training and qualifications to work with young offenders and support their rehabilitation.<sup>37</sup> Staff will undertake induction training prior to their interaction with young people and routinely participate in core training to advance and reinforce skills. Induction and core training will include a mix of role-specific training modules and general modules, which together will provide staff with the necessary knowledge and abilities to undertake their roles effectively and in collaboration with others.

TFHC will ensure cross-disciplinary teams of staff trained in:

- job skills (security procedures, supervision of young people, provision of individualised, young-person centre support, and report writing key control)
- Aboriginal cultural security, including TFHC's Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework (see Section 4.1.1)
- emergency procedures (fire procedures, use of force regulations and tactics), operational safety and situational awareness
- conflict de-escalation and positive behaviour support
- relationship building (counselling techniques, communication skills, interpersonal relations)
- child development, child welfare and international human rights standards, particularly with respect to the rights of the child
- trauma-informed practice, and dealing with sexual harassment and sexual abuse
- health and wellbeing, including dealing with mental health issues, substance abuse and suicide intervention / prevention
- adolescent growth, development, disability and criminogenic factors
- emotional intelligence
- disability awareness
- cultural competency.

#### **Supervision and reflective practice**

Supervision and reflective practice are of great importance when working with vulnerable young people with complex needs and behavioural challenges.<sup>38</sup> Working under the supervision of experienced staff enables new staff to gain familiarity and skill in working with young people in different contexts. Reflective practice ensures that all staff continuously recalibrate and refine their skills in agreement with the operating philosophy. Together supervision and reflective practice will support realisation of the foundation principles described in Section 2.2.

TFHC will implement a workforce model that facilitates routine supervision and reflective practice, including through debriefs after critical incidents. This will be part of ongoing professional development and advancement.

### **Continuous professional development and advancement**

Professional development and advancement are important to maintain a professionalised workforce and retain quality staff. TFHC will provide opportunities for career advancement, in parallel to progressing staff theoretical and practical knowledge. This will be achieved through:

- Mechanisms for staff to identify opportunities for advancement based on their strengths and interests.
- Support for staff to routinely identify areas of improvement, set development goals and work with supervisors to achieve them.
- Providing opportunities for staff to attain additional qualifications to support their ongoing development, including external training.

### **3.1.5 A safe working environment that supports staff wellbeing**

Staff safety is paramount to operating the youth justice centres. Not only should staff be free from fear and feel safe in their workplace, staff perceptions of their own safety and wellbeing directly influence their attitudes and behaviour towards young people. Consequently, staff who feel unsafe are unable to uphold the guiding principles to create an environment that is rehabilitative for young people.

This model of care has been designed to provide a safe and supportive working environment for all staff. Staff safety will be supported by staffing levels, rostering and ongoing training that maintains relational security and equips staff to manage and de-escalate crisis situations in non-confrontational ways.

Furthermore, TFHC will undertake a proactive and preventative approach for all staff to further promote and support their overall wellbeing. These include:

- robust occupational health and safety practices, including good health promotion in the workplace and leaders who advocate for a positive, wellbeing-focused work culture
- dedicated staff tasked with implementation of strategies supporting staff wellbeing
- wellbeing services including physical health, mental health, and wellness checks
- education and training programs that focus on teaching resilience, wellness, self-care, mental health literacy, stress management skills, effective communication skills, and emotional self-regulation techniques for use during stressful situations
- established supervision policies that include both formal managerial / supervisory reporting lines, and group and peer supervision
- consistent teams with consistent and professional leadership and team members.

## **3.2 Programs**

Programs are structured interventions with articulated outcomes of learning and behavioural change in young people. Programs aim to reduce likelihood of reoffending by targeting underlying drivers of criminal behaviours. Programs differ from services and activities in that they are designed to target specific areas of needs.

Programs must achieve one or more of the following aims:

- Support social and emotional and wellbeing (substance misuse, mental health, trauma, respectful relationships).
- Develop education, vocational and life skills (literacy and numeracy, work/vocational experience, life skills, meal preparation and personal care).
- Strengthen connection to culture, family, and community.
- Address offending behaviour (although all programs support prosocial behaviours, some programs may directly be targeted for sentenced young people).

See Section 4 for more information about specific program aims and outcomes to be delivered as part of the service model.

### 3.2.1 Program governance

TFHC will convene a Program Governance Board that includes representatives from Youth Justice Operations along with expertise in clinical services, Aboriginal culture, flexible education and disability. The Program Governance Board will establish mechanisms to incorporate the perspectives of young people.

The Program Governance Board will be responsible for ensuring that a range of programs are offered at each youth justice centre to meet the needs of young people. The Program Governance Board may respond to program proposals from individuals or organisations, or may issue a request for program proposals targeted at specific areas of need.

### 3.2.2 Program design criteria

Programs will be selected based on pre-determined criteria to be set by the Program Governance Board. These may include:

- alignment to the centres' operating philosophy
- cultural security (including approaches to ensuring the cultural proficiency of staff and/or employment of Aboriginal staff)
- theory and evidence of effectiveness (including, where relevant, mechanisms to ensure program fidelity)
- responsiveness to developmental and intellectual disabilities
- risk assessment and mitigation
- value for money.

### 3.2.3 Program delivery

Young people will be referred to programs that will support their individual rehabilitation.

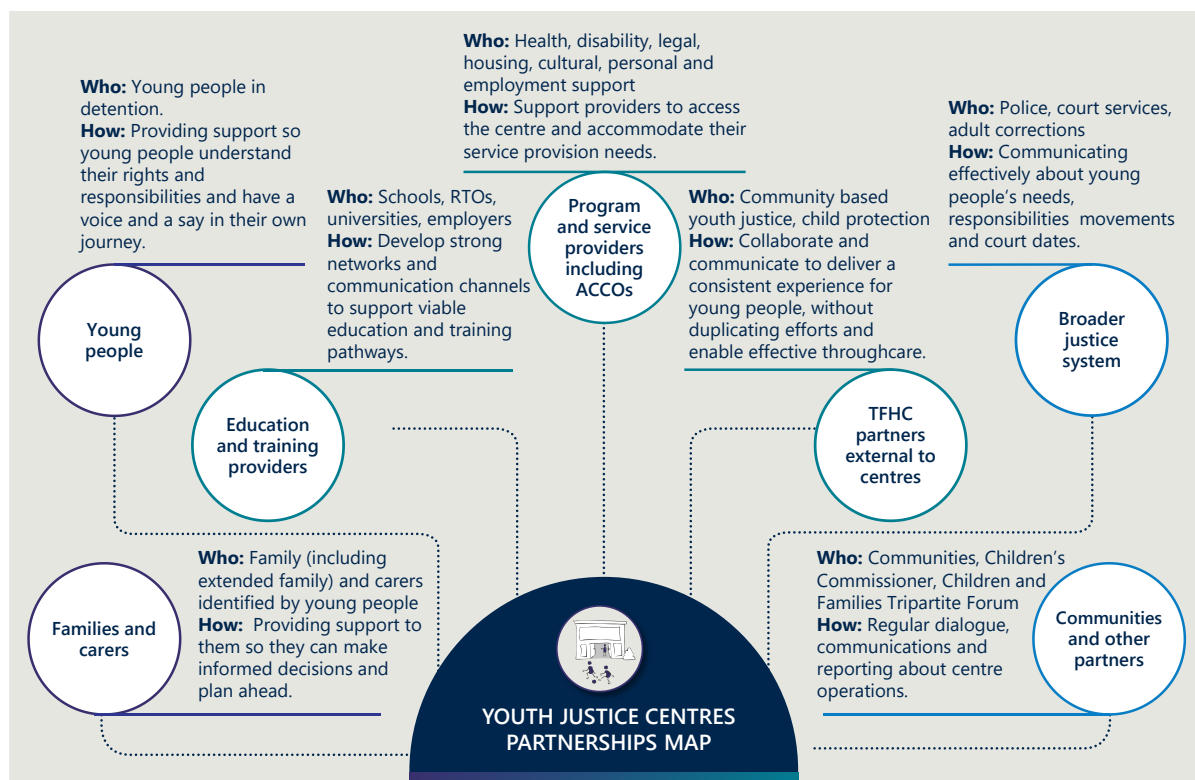
Programs will be periodically reviewed to determine effectiveness and relevance to cohort of young people. This review will include analysis of output and outcome data collected by program providers, feedback from young people and Youth Justice Officers (YJOs) to ascertain whether the program still meets the needs of the young people in the centre.

### 3.3 Partnerships

Young people in youth justice centres have varied and often complex needs, requiring several government, non-government and community actors to support their care and rehabilitation. For TFHC, effective partnerships will be critical in implementing this model of care. This model of care will assist TFHC and its partners to understand how responsibilities are distributed and ways to work together. Below is a map of key partners for delivering the model of care and a brief summary of how youth justice centres partner with them.

#### 3.3.1 Key partnerships

Figure 9 | Youth justice centres partnerships map



#### 3.3.2 Approach to partnerships

This map illustrates the diversity of stakeholders involved in youth justice centre operations. This creates a coordination challenge. Youth justice centres will aim to work effectively with partners by:

- **Arranging visits for young people with ease and comfort** – Families, carers and service providers will easily be able to book visits with young people. Staff will be able to assist families with the logistics of arriving at the centre and arranging accommodation nearby if required. Visitation areas will be welcoming, family friendly and where required, private and soundproof.
- **Commissioning services within the centre** – TFHC will commission programs and services to be delivered within youth justice centres. The centres will work with these providers to schedule service delivery and intermittently bring together service providers to discuss what is working and how service delivery can be improved. TFHC will also commission some community-based services so young people can stay connected or start building connections to community. Where possible,

commissioning of services will be streamlined and will always be vetted for cultural security, trauma informed practices and clear goals and program outcomes.

- **Integrating case management** – Youth justice centre staff will coordinate care with a young person’s family, carers, Youth Outreach and Re-Engagement Officers (YOREOs), TFHC case managers and other case workers (e.g. for accommodation support, alcohol and other drugs, out-of-home-care and throughcare services). Regular case management meetings will be held to discuss the young person’s progress and challenges, and to plan their throughcare pathway. These meetings should be informed by the views and preferences of the young person wherever possible.
- **Sharing information, engaging with stakeholders and being open to feedback** – Each of these will be critical to developing and sustaining relationships with youth justice centre partners. The CARE system will enable better information sharing. Engagement with partners, including young people and their families, will be an important means for receiving feedback about centre operations.

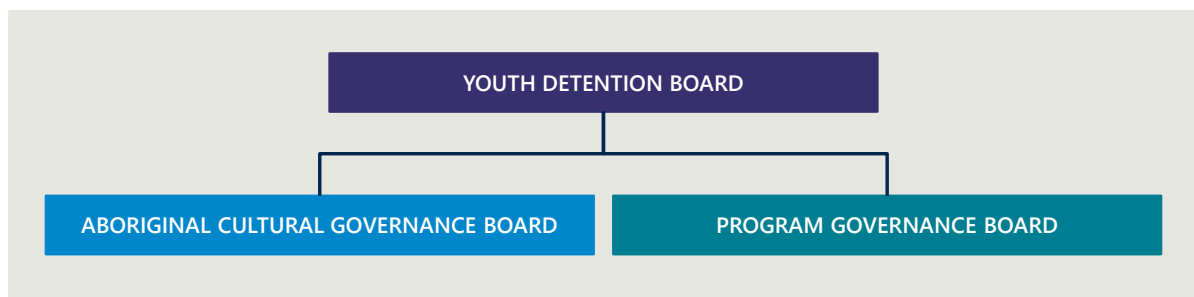
### 3.4 Performance

The governance arrangements for the youth justice centres will support accountability, effectiveness and continuous improvement. As shown in Figure 10, the governance of the centres will include:

- **An Aboriginal Cultural Governance Board** – this would include members drawn from TFHC’s Aboriginal Cultural Advisory Committee. It will oversee and guide efforts to ensure Aboriginal cultural security within youth justice centres in the NT.
- **A Program Governance Board** – as stated in Section 3.2.1, this will include representatives from Youth Justice Operations along with expertise in clinical services, Aboriginal culture, flexible education and disability. It will ensure that a range of programs are offered at each youth justice centre to meet the needs of young people.
- **A Youth Detention Board** – This will include senior leaders from across TFHC, along with the chairs of the Aboriginal Cultural Governance Board and the Program Governance Board. It will oversee the governance, management and strategic direction of youth justice centres in the NT.

The centres will also be overseen by the Office of the Children’s Commissioner and the Office of the Ombudsman NT.

Figure 10 | Boards overseeing the youth justice centres





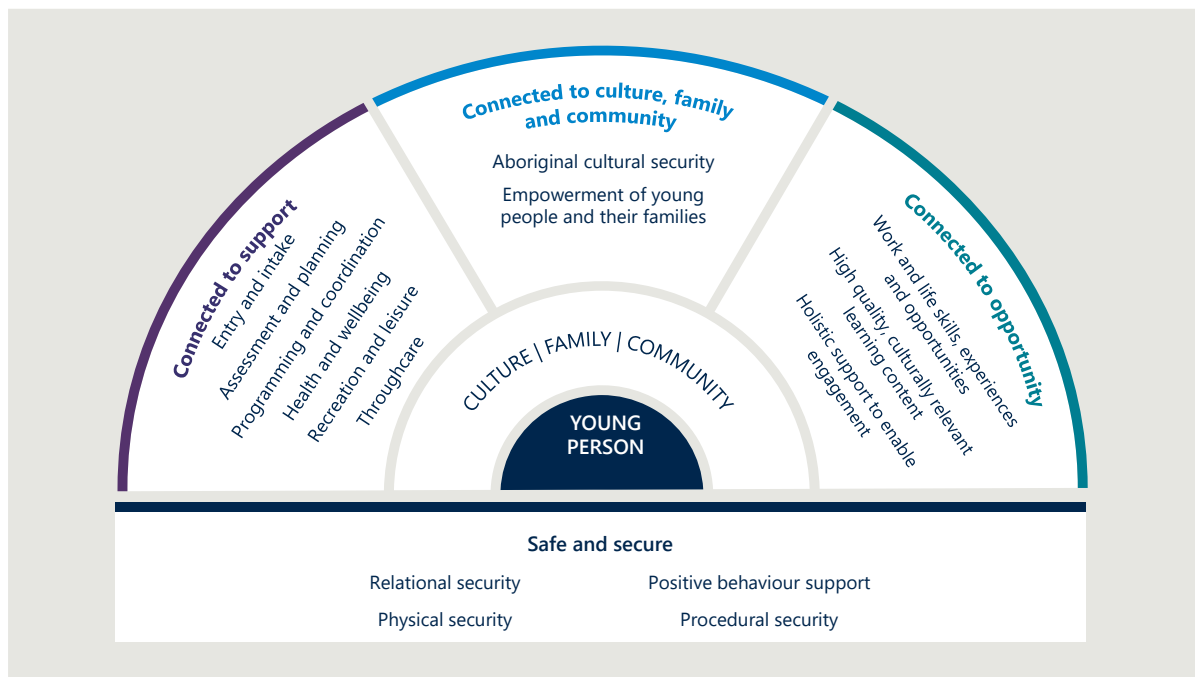
## 4 Service model

Youth justice centres will provide services and programs that keep young people:

- Connected to culture, family and community
- Connected to opportunity
- Connected to support
- Safe and secure.

This service model is summarised in Figure 11.

Figure 11 | Service model for youth justice centres in the NT



Each element of the service model is discussed in further detail below. For each element, the service model provides a summary of TFHC's aspiration and evidence base, together with a description of a set of service standards.

## 4.1 Connected to culture, family and community

Youth justice centres will reflect the vision and cultural protocols outlined in TFHC's Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework (as shown in Figure 12). Specifically, the centres will provide:

- **Aboriginal cultural security**
- **Empowerment of young people and their families.**

TFHC's commitments in each of these areas and how they will be delivered are presented below.

Figure 12 | TFHC's Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework

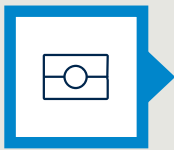


## 4.1.1 Aboriginal cultural security

Youth justice centres will be culturally secure and responsive for Aboriginal people, including young people, families and communities, staff and service providers. The centres will provide environments in which each young person can maintain and strengthen their connection to culture, language, family, community and country. This will be reflected in all aspects of the centre's operations, including staffing, services, programs, facilities, policies, procedures and processes.

This aspiration aligns with:

- TFHC's Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework.
- The foundational principles that youth justice centres will be culturally safe and strong, and young person-centred.
- Evidence that shows strong cultural identity and connection with culture help protect Aboriginal young people against engaging in offending.<sup>39</sup>



This aspiration will be delivered through three service standards:

- Youth justice centres will recruit and retain Aboriginal staff, provide cross-cultural training and development for all staff, and continually reinforce to all staff that cultural security is central to their work.
- Young people will have access to culturally secure programs, services and facilities.
- Policies, procedures and processes will support continuous improvement in Aboriginal cultural security.

It will also be achieved through empowerment of young people and their families, which is discussed in Section 4.1.2.

### Service standards for Aboriginal cultural security

**Youth justice centres will recruit and retain Aboriginal staff, provide cross-cultural training and development for all staff, and continually reinforce to all staff that cultural security is central to their work.**

- Aboriginal staff will be recruited and retained, including in leadership positions, and be supported to flourish (in accordance with TFHC's Aboriginal Workforce Development Plan). This will include the application of special measures (under Employment Instruction Number 15 issued by the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment) for all positions.
- All staff will receive ongoing cross-cultural training and professional development that supports them to undertake their duties in a culturally secure and responsive way.
- Orientation of new staff will provide the clear message that Aboriginal cultural security is central to being a skilled and competent professional in a youth justice centre, that respect for Aboriginal people and cultures is an expectation of their workplace, and that they have a responsibility to learn about young people's cultures and work with them in a culturally secure way.

**Young people will have access to culturally secure programs, services and facilities.**

- Young people will have access to culturally relevant programs delivered by or in partnership with Aboriginal people and organisations – these

## Service standards for Aboriginal cultural security

programs will be experiential (e.g. art, music, storytelling, ceremonies, use of language and cultural concepts).

- All service providers and their contributions to the youth justice centres will be culturally secure and responsive (e.g. TFHC will require they have appropriate policies to ensure cultural security).
- The youth justice centres will support and participate in cultural events that are significant to Aboriginal people and communities as outlined in the calendar of Aboriginal events.
- Aboriginal organisations will be preferred in the procurement of programs, services and events.
- Staff will use the design features of the new centres as intended to accommodate the programs, services and events described above and enable young people to connect and communicate with their families.

### Policies, procedures and processes will support continuous improvement in Aboriginal cultural security.

- TFHC will ensure there are policies, procedures and processes in place to support Aboriginal cultural security.
- Strategic and operational planning processes will consider the needs and feedback of Aboriginal young people, families and communities.
- Staff training and professional development will promote the sharing of experiences and lessons in the provisions of culturally secure practice.
- The Aboriginal Cultural Governance Board, Aboriginal Practice Leaders, Cultural Advisors and the Elder in Residence will be key in the policy and practice decision making.

## 4.1.2 Empowerment of young people and their families

Youth justice centres will engage young people and their families as lead decision-makers for their future. The centres will forge and maintain meaningful partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, community representatives, and cultural authorities. Relationships with Aboriginal people, including, but not limited to young people, will be based on respect for cultural difference.



This aspiration aligns with:

- TFHC's Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework.
- The foundational principles that youth justice centres will be culturally secure and strong, young person-centred, and collaborative.
- Evidence that a young person's cultural, familial and social context must be considered to achieve long-term rehabilitation and reductions in reoffending.<sup>40</sup>
- Evidence that behavioural change is less likely to be sustained when a young person leaves detention if broader contextual challenges are not addressed, because they will be faced with the same peer, family, financial, lifestyle and cultural influences that contributed to the offending behaviours in the first place.<sup>41</sup>

- Evidence that justice interventions with young people from over-represented cultural groups “are most effective when delivered in the context of family, social and cultural settings and in active partnership with community.”<sup>42</sup>

This aspiration will be delivered through five service standards:

- Young people and their families will be meaningfully involved in planning and decision-making.
- Young people and their families will be supported to address underlying issues that contributed to the young person’s behaviours of concern.
- Young people and families with limited English proficiency will receive additional support to participate in planning, decision-making and other activities.
- Youth justice centres will facilitate contact between young people and their family, friends and support organisations.
- Youth justice centres will seek guidance from and encourage the involvement of Aboriginal Elders and community leaders.

### Service standards for empowerment of young people and their families

#### **Young people and their families will be meaningfully involved in planning and decision-making.**

- The young person and their family will participate in planning and decision-making for their time in detention and their return to community; other friends, community members and support organisations may also be involved, thereby fostering a support network that will continue after the young person’s time in detention. Specific points at which these individuals will be included are addressed in Section 4.3.
- The young person and their family will have input into the development and delivery of, and any adjustments to, the young person’s support plan. This support plan will be tailored to the young person’s needs, and adjusted over time if necessary, to foster their engagement, empowerment and self-determination. Support plans are further addressed in Section 4.3.2.
- In working with young people and their families, staff and service providers will recognise and respect cultural differences in family structures and kinship systems (e.g. that the family-members involved may not be part of a “nuclear family”). Where no family member of a young person can be located, staff will work with the young person and other relevant organisations such as NT Police to locate the family member(s) or identify a suitable alternative support person.
- Young people will have mechanisms to provide feedback and see evidence of its influence. Such mechanisms will be both formal (e.g. surveys, listening exercises, representative councils, complaints processes) and informal (e.g. feeling comfortable to approach staff with questions, ideas and concerns).
- The multi-disciplinary team involved in assessment and planning will help families understand the young person’s needs (e.g. in relation to health, disability, education and training) so they can continue to support these needs upon release.
- Youth justice services will provide continued support to the family following a young person’s release to assist with the implementation of

## Service standards for empowerment of young people and their families

support and throughcare plans (e.g. by a Youth Outreach and Re-Engagement Officer, family support services or throughcare services).

**Young people and their families will be supported to address underlying issues that contributed to behaviours of concern.**

- Young people will be connected to tailored services to develop their work and life skills, experiences and opportunities. Such services are further addressed in Section 4.2.
- Young people will be connected to services to support their health and wellbeing (e.g. primary health care, dental care alcohol and other drug services, social and emotional wellbeing). Such services are further addressed in Section 4.3.4.
- Young people and their families will be supported to address challenging family dynamics and circumstances (e.g. through access to relevant programs, connection to a Family Support Service or development of a Family Responsibility Agreement).

**Young people and families with limited English proficiency will receive additional support to participate in planning, decision-making and other activities.**

- Young people and families with limited English proficiency will have access to interpreters to support their involvement in planning and decision-making.
- Regularly used materials such as rules, menus and program resources will be interpreted into common Aboriginal languages such as Kriol, Warlpiri and Yolngu Matha.
- Young people with limited English proficiency who speak less common Aboriginal languages will have key resources translated especially for them (and future detainees who speak the same language).
- Relevant materials will be written in plain English and available in visual formats and as digital resources for greater accessibility.

**Youth justice centres will facilitate contact between young people and their family, friends and support organisations.**

- Youth justice centre staff will actively facilitate regular visits and contact from young people's family members, including siblings and extended family members, and friends (e.g. communicating with them, arranging phone or video calls, and providing financial or other support to access transport and accommodation).
- All staff will ensure youth justice centres provide a welcoming environment for families and other visitors (e.g. through their communication, body language and use of facilities).
- Where appropriate, young people may be permitted to visit family and/or community on day release.
- Each young person's support plan will specify how the youth justice centres will facilitate contact between young people and their family, friends and support organisations (see Section 4.3.2).

**Youth justice centres will seek guidance from and encourage the involvement of Aboriginal Elders and cultural leaders.**

- Youth justice centres will seek guidance from Aboriginal Elders and cultural leaders about ways to improve how young people are cared for and how families and communities are engaged.
- Youth justice centres will engage Elders and cultural leaders to arrange customs and ceremonies.
- Youth justice centres will work with Elders and cultural leaders to deliver a mentoring program through which young people can be guided and supported by senior figures from their own communities and see themselves represented in figures of authority.

- All efforts will be made to ensure young people can attend funerals and attend significant cultural ceremonies (including initiations).

## 4.2 Connected to opportunity

Youth justice centres will provide high quality learning experiences that build young people's capabilities and equip them to succeed outside the centres. Incarcerated young people typically have a history of learning and behavioural difficulties and poor school outcomes;<sup>43</sup> as a result, they predominantly perform at a lower level academically and have fewer qualifications than their peers.<sup>44</sup> A period in a youth justice centre provides an opportunity to provide a young person with intensive support to improve their educational outcomes and catch them up to their peers (or, where the period in the centre is brief, connect them to such support). In providing this support, teachers and other staff and service providers in the centres will collaborate to address the range of additional challenges that limit the extent to which the young people can engage with education. The mix of learning, experiences and support provided to each young person will be tailored to their needs, attributes, strengths and requirements (within the requirements of the NT *Education Act 2015*).

Specifically, the centres will provide:

- **Work and life skills, tools, experiences and opportunities**
- **High quality, culturally relevant learning content**
- **Holistic support to enable engagement.**

TFHC's commitments in each of these areas and how they will be delivered are presented below.

### 4.2.1 Work and life skills, tools, experiences and opportunities

Youth justice centres will facilitate young people's pathways to life and work outside the centres. The centres will support young people to acquire practical skills, tools and experience and pursue relevant opportunities. This will be enabled through pathways to further opportunities outside the centres and a culture of high expectations.



This aspiration aligns with:

- The foundational principles that youth justice centres will be therapeutic, young-person centred, and throughcare-focused.
- Evidence that shows educational and vocational difficulties are risk factors for offending behaviour and making a smooth educational transition from detention is critical to ensure young people do not revert to criminal activity.<sup>45</sup>
- Evidence that a teacher's estimate of a student's prospects and achievements is one of the strongest influences on their learning ability.<sup>46</sup>

This aspiration will be delivered through four service standards:

- Young people will be supported to acquire practical skills, qualifications and documentation relevant to their chosen pathways.

- Young people will have access to careers advice and hands-on learning and experience including through partnerships with local business and service providers.
- Young people will be connected to opportunities they will pursue outside the centres (e.g. schooling, training, apprenticeships).
- A strengths-based approach and culture of high expectations will inform all aspects of learning in the centres.

It will also be achieved through the range of supports discussed in Section 4.2.2.

### Service standards for work and life skills, tools, experiences and opportunities

**Young people will be supported to acquire practical skills, qualifications and documentation relevant to their chosen pathways.**

- Young people will leave the youth justice centres with practical skills and, where possible, recognised qualifications (e.g. a first aid certificate, white card, driver's licence, banks accounts) and know how to apply them.
- Young people will leave the youth justice centres with a folio of all the documentation they require to access education and employment (e.g. a birth certificate) and know how to update it themselves.
- Where a young person is not in a youth justice centre long enough to obtain such skills, qualifications and documentation, the Youth Outreach and Re-Engagement Team (YORET) and other throughcare service providers will support them to access them outside the centre.
- Young people will leave the youth justice centres better prepared to achieve in their future life, study and work environments (e.g. with more experience sticking to a structured routine). This will be achieved in part through training to promote positive behaviour (e.g. in social skills, problem solving, anger management and respectful relationships). Behaviour management is further addressed in Section 4.4.2.

**Young people will have access to careers advice and hands-on learning and experience including through partnerships with local business and service providers.**

- Young people will have access to careers advice targeted to their strengths, requirements and circumstances (e.g. intergenerational unemployment and poverty).
- Young people will have access to hands-on learning and experience relevant to their interests and chosen pathways inside and/or outside the centres.
- Youth justice centres will facilitate young people's access to opportunities through partnerships with local businesses and service providers.
- Where a young person is not in a youth justice centre long enough to access such advice and opportunities, the YORET and other throughcare service providers will support them to access them outside the centre.

**Young people will be connected to opportunities they will pursue outside the centres (e.g. schooling, training, apprenticeships, sports).**

- Youth justice centres will have institutional relationships with partner organisations such as schools, employers and sporting groups. These will be formalised through memoranda of understanding.
- Educators will work with young people, families and other youth justice centre staff to develop robust throughcare arrangements that support transitions to community-based education and/or training settings.
- The wider education system will provide greater support to young people as they navigate this critical period of transition.
- Throughcare is discussed further in Section 4.3.6.



## Service standards for work and life skills, tools, experiences and opportunities

**A strengths-based approach and culture of high expectations will inform all aspects of learning in the centres.**

- Teachers, staff and service providers will actively recognise and build on young people's strengths, achievements and resilience. Behaviour management is further addressed in Section 4.4.
- Teachers, staff and service providers will actively communicate high expectations for young people's futures outside the centres.

### 4.2.2 High quality, culturally relevant learning content

Youth justice centres will provide rich learning experiences tailored to each young person's strengths, needs and goals. Young people in the centres will build functional skills that provide the foundation for them to thrive in and beyond school. Learning content and resources will reflect and value their cultures, histories and lived experiences. Schooling, training and teaching of life skills will be a part of everyday learning for young people and will not be constrained to traditional pedagogical methods or school terms. Teachers will be supported to apply evidence-based pedagogies and techniques.

This aspiration aligns with:



- The foundational principles that youth justice centres will be young-person centred, and culturally secure and strong.
- Evidence that stronger literacy and numeracy is associated with higher completion rates for secondary school, tertiary study and training.<sup>47</sup>
- Evidence that students are more likely to engage with learning content that is responsive to their cultural context.<sup>48</sup>
- The NT *Education Act 2015*.

This aspiration will be delivered through three service standards:

- Teaching and learning content will be tailored to each young person through an individualised learning plan.
- Teaching and learning content will support young people to build their functional literacy and numeracy.
- Teaching and learning content will be responsive to young people's culture, history, identity, interests and lived experience.

## Service standards for high quality, culturally relevant learning content

**Teaching and learning content will be tailored to each young person through an individualised learning plan.**

- Teachers will work with young people to collaboratively develop individualised learning plans.
- Individualised learning plans will be holistic and strengths-based, incorporating young people's goals, needs, interests and strategies.

## Service standards for high quality, culturally relevant learning content

- Individualised learning plans will draw on data and information about the young person, including from assessments, to ensure alignment with other goals and plans. Assessments are further addressed in Section 4.3.2.
- The Department of Education will provide support for enrolment and transition to school after release.
- Individualised learning plans and progress against them will be communicated to the school which young people enrol after their release.

### Teaching and learning content will align with the Australian curriculum and include appropriate and tailored literacy and numeracy programs.

- Young people will be supported to develop functional literacy and numeracy skills that enable them to pursue their work and study aspirations, including through age-appropriate literacy and numeracy programs targeted to their needs.
- Teaching and learning content will be aligned to the Australian Curriculum. The Australian Curriculum sets out a rich and rigorous learning program which offers a range of balance of content that sets students up for a range of future pathways, as well as providing the core functional and literacy skills which are a critical foundation for thriving both in and beyond school.
- Teachers will model and communicate high expectations of young people's abilities to achieve the learning outcomes set out in the Australian Curriculum.
- Teachers have access to resources and supports that enable them to consistently use evidence-based pedagogies and teaching techniques.

### Teaching and learning content will be responsive to young people's context, culture, history, interests and lived experience.

- Teaching and learning will engage and scaffold young people's learning by highlighting connections to their context, culture, history, interests and lived experience.
- Cultural educational content will be woven through the day to create a richer cultural experience for young people rather than being reserved for specific programs.
- Youth justice centres will work with local communities to ensure teaching and learning content sufficiently recognises and incorporates Aboriginal cultures, histories and languages.

### 4.2.3 Holistic support to enable engagement



Youth justice centres will provide holistic support to address the range of challenges that limit the extent to which young people can engage with learning. This will be tailored to each young person.

This aspiration aligns with:

- The foundational principles that therapeutic, trauma-informed, young-person centred, and collaborative.
- Evidence that young people in detention experience higher rates of barriers to participation in education (such as neurodevelopmental impairment, as discussed

in Section 1.1, and experiences of trauma that make it difficult for them to focus and self-regulate, as discussed in Section 2.2).

This aspiration will be delivered through four service standards:

- Teaching and learning content will be grounded in trauma-informed practice.
- Young people will be supported to form positive and respectful relationships with peers and mentors.
- The learning environment will be safe, culturally secure and accessible for the target cohorts.
- Teachers, staff and service providers will collaborate to address barriers to young people's engagement with learning.

It will also be achieved through the suite of supports described in Section 4.3.4.

### Service standards for holistic support to enable engagement

**Teaching and learning content will be grounded in trauma-informed practice.**

- Teachers and other relevant staff will receive regular, ongoing training to apply trauma-informed practices.
- Teachers will help young people to address their biological and developmental responses to trauma as the foundation for building relationships and engaging them through learning. They will create environments in which young people can learn self-regulation, identify their emotions, manage their behaviour, communicate with others, de-escalate situations, and return to a comfortable state after agitation. As part of this, classroom activities and teaching approaches will have both physical and emotional aspects.<sup>49</sup>

**Young people will be supported to form positive and respectful relationships with peers and mentors.**

- Young people will be supported to develop positive and respectful relationships with their peers (e.g. through relationship activities), drawing on principles to guide positive relationships; those with social functioning difficulties that make it more difficult to build or recognise friendships (e.g., ADHD or FASD) will receive additional such support.
- Young people will have regular opportunities to engage with positive role models from inside and outside the centres (e.g. inspirational staff or community members).

**The learning environment will be safe, culturally secure and accessible for the target cohorts.**

- Learning environments will be subject to ongoing maintenance to address Workplace Health and Safety issues, prevent foreseeable problems or accidents and maximise longevity.
- Learning environments will be culturally secure (e.g. including outdoor communal spaces).
- Learning environments will be physically accessible for the targeted cohorts (such as students with disabilities or sensory issues caused by FASD).

**Teachers, staff and service providers will collaborate to address barriers to young people's engagement with learning.**

- Teachers, staff and service providers will collaborate in assessment and planning processes and at other points as required to address pre-existing and emerging barriers to young people's engagement with learning, including, but not limited to disability.

## Service standards for holistic support to enable engagement

- Youth justice officers will engage with young people's learning in and outside of classrooms and programs. This may include providing guidance to young people with homework or other tasks outside of learning or program hours.
- When a young person transfers between youth justice centres, the teachers will share relevant information about them (e.g. their strengths, progress or strategies that have proven effective in supporting them).

## 4.3 Connected to support

Youth justice centres will provide young people with support, rehabilitation, and an environment in which they can heal, and their emotional and development needs can be met. To enable this, the centres will ensure continuous, co-ordinated and integrated management of young people from their first point of contact with the centre to their reintegration into the community.

Specifically, youth justice centres will provide:

- **Entry and intake**
- **Assessment and planning**
- **Programming and coordination**
- **Health and wellbeing services**
- **Recreation and leisure opportunities**
- **Throughcare.**

TFHC's commitments in each of these areas and how they will be delivered are presented below.

### 4.3.1 Entry and intake

Youth justice centres will prepare for each young person's entry in advance and upon their arrival will undertake an intake process to set them up for their time in detention. The initial hours and days of a young person's time in the centre is likely to be distressing for them and therefore increases the risk of emotional dysregulation and behavioural outbursts. Youth justice centres will undertake these intake processes with compassion, prioritising the safety and comfort of the young person.

This aspiration aligns with the foundational principles that youth justice centres will be therapeutic, trauma-informed and young person-centred.

This aspiration will be delivered through four service standards:

- Available information about the young person will be reviewed prior to their arrival at a youth justice centre.
- The young person will undergo a thorough induction to the centre.
- Family will be informed of the young person's arrival.
- Any immediate health and wellbeing needs will be met.



## Service standards for entry and intake

<b>Available information about the young person will be reviewed prior to their arrival at a youth justice centre.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To prepare for the young person's arrival, a YJO will review relevant information about the young person on the CARE case management system. Relevant information should include contact details for the young person's family and/or case manager and details of any special needs (e.g. disability supports or use of an interpreter) so these can be met upon their arrival.</li></ul>
<b>The young person will undergo a thorough induction to the centre.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A YJO will greet the young person at reception.</li><li>• At the earliest practicable opportunity, the young person will be informed of their rights and responsibilities, the rules of the centre and how they can access support or advice. This information must be in a language and manner the young person is likely to understand (based on their age, health, maturity, cultural background and English language proficiency). A plain English Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for young people in the centre will be explained at intake and will be widely available and visible throughout the centre as a reminder to young people and staff.</li><li>• Where possible and appropriate, the young person will be assigned another young person as a "buddy", selected based on cultural and family appropriateness and positive behaviour, who will help them navigate the centre and its rules.</li></ul>
<b>Family will be informed of the young person's arrival.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A YJO will contact the young person's family members or carers as soon as the young person comes into custody. At this time, they will notify the family members or carers of the young person's safe arrival at the centre, assist in arranging a time to call or visit, and encourage them to engage with the support process (including by providing contacts for case coordination).</li><li>• The young person should be consulted about which of their family members or carers to contact. This should include those who will be responsible for the care of the young person upon their return to the community (and may include extended family under the kinship system).</li></ul>
<b>Any immediate health, wellbeing or other needs will be met.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Any pressing health, wellbeing or other needs will be met without delay. For example, this could include medication, disability support, alcohol or other drug withdrawal support, support to prevent self-harm or suicide, or support to address needs arising from the young person's sex, gender, culture, religion, sexuality or other aspect of their identity. Health and wellbeing support is further addressed in Section 4.3.4.</li></ul>

### 4.3.2 Assessment and planning



Youth justice centres will develop individualised plans to support young people. The plan will be based on multidisciplinary assessments of the young person's needs and strengths. It will also be informed by the input of the young person themselves and their family and carer. The plan will then be shared with staff and others who need to be aware of its contents for its successful execution.

This aspiration aligns with the foundational principles that youth justice centres will be therapeutic, trauma-informed and young person-centred.

This aspiration will be delivered through four service standards:

- An initial assessment will be performed within 24 hours of a young person's arrival at the youth justice centre.
- A comprehensive assessment will be performed within four weeks of a young person's arrival at the centre (even if this means it is completed after they have left).
- Each young person will have a support plan including goals, behaviour management and throughcare.
- Young people and their families will be engaged as primary partners in assessment and planning.

### Service standards for assessment and planning

**An initial assessment will be performed within 24 hours of a young person's arrival at the youth justice centre.**

- The initial assessment will be conducted by a YJO in a private and secure space where the young person can feel comfortable.
- The initial assessment will be conducted using the Signs of Success framework and consider:
  - What are we worried about (e.g. worrying behaviours, complicating factors and risks. Evidence-based tools such as the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory–Screening Version should be used)?
  - What's working well (e.g. the young person's strengths and successes)?
  - What needs to happen (e.g. the young person's hopes and dreams, the court's goals for them, next steps)?
- YJOs will receive appropriate training in the Signs of Success framework.
- The output from the initial assessment, in the Signs of Success template, will be communicated to all staff and service providers who will work closely with the young person. This communication will occur in writing (and be readily available in systems accessible to staff) and in a meeting facilitated by a clinical specialist or team leader to discuss the approach to supporting the young person.

**A comprehensive assessment will be performed within four weeks of a young person's arrival at the centre (even if this means it is completed after they have left).**

- This comprehensive assessment will be conducted by a multidisciplinary team using evidence-based tools applied in a culturally secure way.
- It may include assessment of needs regarding:
  - physical health (e.g. hearing, dental, vision, injuries, AOD)
  - mental health and/or social and emotional wellbeing
  - education, training and/or employment
  - criminogenic factors
  - disability
  - other issues as required.
- The assessment may be informed by past assessments conducted in youth justice, child protection, health, education or another setting. As noted in Section 4.3.1 above, a YJO will be responsible for reviewing available information about the young person. Where a young person has recently been assessed in any of the relevant fields, no additional

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## Service standards for assessment and planning

assessment should be performed to avoid fatiguing or re-traumatising the young person.

- If a young person has been in one of the centres before, their previous assessment and support plan will serve as the starting point for their new assessment and support. It must be validated and updated to ensure currency, but may remain similar, particularly if it was created recently.
- Where a young person's time in a centre is less than four weeks, and the comprehensive assessment has not been completed when they leave, it will instead be completed while they are outside the centre (whether by the multidisciplinary team or other professionals as appropriate).

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### Each young person will have a support plan including goals, behaviour management and throughcare and other sections.

- The output from the initial assessment will serve as the preliminary support plan.
- The comprehensive assessment will inform a detailed support plan including:
  - **Relevant contextual information about the young person** – this could include their age, cultural background, remand vs sentenced status, or other factors.
  - **Goals for the young person's time in detention and re-entry to community** – these goals would be driven by the young person and their family or carer and informed by other input (e.g. from the court). Where appropriate, these goals could include youth justice conferencing through which young people "face the victims of their crime and agree to undertake actions to provide restitution to the victim and the community."<sup>50</sup>
  - **A behaviour management plan** – this will guide how YJOs, other staff and service providers respond to the young person's positive or problematic behaviours. Positive behaviour support is further addressed in Section 4.4.2.
  - **A case management plan** – this would inform other aspects of the support to be delivered to the young person while in the centre (e.g. medical, dental, AOD, disability, social and emotional wellbeing). Health and wellbeing are further addressed in Section 4.3.4.
  - **A learning plan** – this would outline the young people's learning goals, needs, interests and strategies. Learning is further addressed in Section 4.2.
  - **A throughcare plan** – this would outline how the centre will work with other agencies and organisations to continue to support the young person upon their re-entry into the community. It would also outline how the young person and their family will be supported to engage with relevant services (e.g. attending appointments) and activities (e.g. registering with a sporting club). Where relevant, the throughcare plan will align with the child protection and out-of-home-care case plan and goals. Throughcare is further addressed in Section 4.3.6.
- The support plan will address how youth justice centres will facilitate contact between young people and their family, friends and support organisations. Should it become necessary to transfer a young person to another youth justice centre, the support plan will be updated to specify what additional supports will be put in place to reflect this.

## Service standards for assessment and planning

- Where a young person's time in a centre is too brief to develop a detailed support plan (i.e. less than four weeks), a throughcare plan will nonetheless be developed.

### Young people and their families will be engaged as primary partners in assessment and planning.

- The young people and their family or carer will be encouraged and empowered to participate in assessment and planning, including attending key meetings (face-to-face or virtually) and making decisions. Interpreters, where available, will provide support where a young person or their family or carer prefer to speak in a language other than English.
- Where possible the young person's family or carer will undergo an induction to the centre, similar to that for the young person (see Section 4.3.1), in which they are informed of their rights and responsibilities, the rules of the centre and how they can access support or advice. This information must be in a language and manner they are likely to understand (based on their cultural background and English language proficiency). This induction may occur over the phone.
- The assessment and planning process will include relevant staff of the centre, TFHC, NT Government agencies, NGOs and other service providers. A key consideration in this regard will be promoting relational security through continuity and consistency in young people's relationships with staff and service providers. To this end, the young person's TFHC Care and Protection Case Manager should be included (where relevant) as well as the Youth Outreach and Re-Engagement Officer (YOREO). Relational security is further addressed in Section 4.4.1
- Staff from the relevant Out-of-Home Care (OOHC) service will be included in assessment and planning where a young person is not expected to be released to their family or carer. Coordination with the OOHC service will begin as soon as possible and will include a focus on facilitating a step-down approach to transition a young person from the youth justice centre setting to the OOHC setting.

### 4.3.3 Programming and coordination

Youth justice centres will structure each day with engaging and constructive activities. This structure will reflect a meaningful, productive day outside of detention so young people are prepared to re-engage with schooling and employment when they leave. It will also ensure the various supports young people receive while in the centres are integrated and not siloed. Young people will understand what is expected of them, when and by whom.



This aspiration aligns with:

- The foundational principles that youth justice centres will be young person-centred, collaborative, therapeutic and trauma-informed.
- Evidence that, without such structure, young people may become bored or frustrated, which can lead to antisocial behaviours.<sup>51</sup>



- Evidence that, for some young people, time in detention is the first period of stability in their lives with consistent support through educational and therapeutic programs.<sup>52</sup>

This aspiration will be delivered through two service standards:

- Youth justice centres will structure each day with a full set of engaging and constructive activities for every young person.
- Staff and service providers will coordinate to deliver the structured day.

Service standards for many of the activities that would make up a structured day are covered in other sections of the model of care; for example, cultural activities (Section 4.1.1), visits (Section 4.1.2), learning (Section 4.2), assessments and planning (Section 4.3.2), health and wellbeing support (Section 4.3.4), recreation and leisure (4.3.5). The focus of this section is on the structured day overall.

### Service standards for programming and coordination

**Youth justice centres will structure each day with a full set of engaging and constructive activities for every young person.**

- Each day for a young person in a youth justice centre will include:
  - 13 hours or more of unlock time
  - six hours of learning (five days per week), including vocational education and training
  - supported access to education, health and rehabilitation services
  - time to pursue recreational and leisure activities of interest in a safe environment
  - time for young people to interact and build rapport with peers and staff
  - time to see or speak to family and other support networks
  - time to enjoy fresh air
  - activities that are structured into clear sessions (e.g. morning versus evening).
- All young people will be expected to participate except where:
  - they are physically or mentally unwell
  - they are newly arrived at the facility and need to participate in intake, assessment and/or planning activities
  - they are required to participate in legal processes (e.g. attend court, consult with lawyers)
  - they have medical procedures or appointments.
- Community-based activities (consistent with the relevant legislative provisions) will be arranged for young people who are behaving appropriately and responding well to programs. For example, this could include sports, training, education or work experiences.
- The structured day program will be planned and scheduled and focused on outcomes aligned with the model of care.

**Staff and service providers will coordinate to deliver the structured day.**

- Staff and service providers will work within the organisational framework presented in Section 4 to deliver the structured day. This means that:

## Service standards for programming and coordination

- staff will coordinate with each other and with service providers to ensure activities for each young person are integrated, tailored and timely
- the youth justice centres will establish program and partnership arrangements to enable this.

### 4.3.4 Health and wellbeing

Youth justice centres will support young people's health and wellbeing. The centres will meet young people's physiological needs while ensuring their access to comprehensive, high-quality health and wellbeing services, including primary healthcare, disability support, AOD support, and mental health and social and emotional wellbeing support.

This aspiration aligns with:

- The foundational principles that youth justice centres will be therapeutic, trauma-informed, and culturally secure and strong.
- Young people in the centres saying that physiological factors such as food, clothing and bedding are important to them.
- Evidence that many young people present to the centres with complex health and wellbeing challenges. For example, close to 90 per cent may have neurodevelopmental impairment (see Section 1.1).
- Understanding that, for Aboriginal people, health is not singularly defined by the physical or mental health of an individual, but rather encompasses the social, emotional, and cultural wellbeing of the whole community.<sup>53</sup>

This aspiration will be delivered through three service standards:

- Young people's physiological needs will be met.
- Young people will have access to comprehensive health and wellbeing services.
- All health and wellbeing services will be holistic, culturally secure, and individualised to the young person.



## Service standards for health and wellbeing

**Young people's physiological needs will be met.**

- Youth justice centres will provide young people with tasty and nutritious food, clean drinking-water, sufficient clothing, comfortable bedding and adequate air conditioning.

**Young people will have access to comprehensive health and wellbeing services.**

- The centres will ensure young people have access to high quality primary healthcare services:
  - across the full spectrum of prevention, screening, early intervention and treatment

## Service standards for health and wellbeing

- delivered in partnership with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations
- covering general practice, nursing and allied health (e.g. dentistry, dietetics, pharmacy, psychology, audiology, speech pathology, occupational therapy and Aboriginal health).
- Where a young people's case management plan identifies a need, the centres will ensure young people have access to high quality disability, AOD rehabilitation, mental health and social and emotional wellbeing support (in addition to meeting disability needs through other aspects of care such as education and behaviour management). Where appropriate, the centres will support a young people to obtain or update an existing National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) plan.
- The centres and its partners will promote relational security through continuity and consistency in young people's relationships with staff and service providers; including for example, young people with ongoing needs will see the same health professionals and have a key worker continue to see them post-release where possible.
- These services will be delivered onsite at the centres wherever possible to minimise disruption to young people.

**All health and wellbeing support will be holistic, culturally secure, and tailored to the young person.**

- Health and wellbeing services will be delivered in accordance with young people's support plans in a way that aligns with and minimises disruption to other services they receive at the centres.
- Health and wellbeing services will be culturally secure and responsive and delivered in partnership with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.
- Health and wellbeing services will be tailored to and provided in a way that is cognisant of the young person's attributes and identities (e.g. age, sex, gender, sexuality, developmental level, cultural background, English language proficiency).
- The young person's family will be informed of any changes in their health and wellbeing (or risk thereof).

### 4.3.5 Recreation and leisure



Youth justice centres will support young people's development by engaging them in leisure and recreational activities. These activities will provide a safe environment for young people to participate, discover new abilities, release emotional and physical tension, keep busy and engaged, develop healthy habits and new skills, and build self-esteem.

This aspiration aligns with the foundational principles that youth justice centres will be therapeutic and young person-centred.

This aspiration will be delivered through three service standards:

- Centres will facilitate a range of purposeful recreation activities including sport, exercise, creative outlets and cultural programs.

- Staff will supervise structured and unstructured leisure activities.
- Community based programs will support re-entry to community.

#### Service standards for recreation and leisure

**Centres will facilitate a range of recreation activities including sport, exercise, creative outlets and cultural programs.**

- Young people will be supported to exercise and spend time outdoors every day. These activities will take a therapeutic approach through a focus on developing new skills, raising self-esteem, developing interpersonal relationships, and teaching about the link between mental and physical health. The activities will accommodate different preferences and circumstances through a wide range of options (e.g. team-based sports such as Australian football and basketball to build communication and teamwork skills, individual activities such as running and yoga to provide non-threatening opportunities to participate, water-based activities to help young people cool down during hot weather).
- Young people will have access to creative outlets such as art, music, drama, poetry, cooking, gardening and dance. These activities will provide opportunities for self-expression and help to process emotions and reduce stress.
- Young people will have access to cultural programs such as Aboriginal art, music, storytelling, ceremonies, and use of Aboriginal languages and concepts. These activities may be delivered on their own or be incorporated into others (e.g. education or health promotion).

**Staff will supervise structured and unstructured leisure activities.**

- Leisure time will be scheduled for specific times in the day and will include a mix of structured and unstructured activities. Activities could include watching television, listening to music, reading, playing video games, boardgames and card games (though no gambling games will be permitted). During these times, staff will continue to supervise and interact with young people.

**Community based programs will support re-entry to community.**

- Community-based activities and programs will be made available to young people who have displayed consistently positive behaviour. This will provide opportunities for young people to build skills, knowledge and positive relationships that may support their re-entry to community.

### 4.3.6 Throughcare



Youth justice centres will help prepare young people to reintegrate successfully into the community. This will be achieved through early assessment, planning and decision-making for throughcare, integrated and collaborative throughcare, and empowerment of the young person and their family. Working closely with the young person's support people and organisations will reduce duplication of effort and create a less burdensome, more consistent experience for young people and their family.

This aspiration aligns with:

- The foundational principles that youth justice centres will be throughcare-focused, young person-centred and collaborative.

- Evidence that progress made in youth detention will be short-lived, unless it is followed-up, reinforced, and monitored in the community.<sup>54</sup>

This aspiration will be delivered through three service standards:

- Planning for a young person's transition back to community will begin from the intake and assessment stage.
- Young people will have access to legal services.
- Case management will be integrated and collaborative with partners outside the centre.
- The young person and their family will be involved and empowered in throughcare planning and decision-making.

### Service standards for throughcare

**Throughcare planning and decision-making will begin as early as possible.**

- In recognition that young people's length of stay in youth justice centres is often unknown at the outset and/or brief, planning and decision-making for a young person's transition out of a centre will commence at the assessment and planning stage (as noted in Section 4.3.2).

**Young people will have access to legal services.**

- Youth justice centres will facilitate legal professional's access to the centres to enable them to provide so they can obtain instructions from and provide advice to their clients with the aim of resolving their charges expeditiously.

**Case management will be integrated and collaborative with partners outside the centre.**

- Throughcare plans will address all aspects of post-release life including ongoing rehabilitation, accommodation, employment, education, training, health and wellbeing support and connection with community. Where relevant, throughcare plans will address how the young person will be prepared to transition into an adult correctional centre.
- Youth justice centres will communicate and collaborate to ensure a smooth transition if a young person moves from one centre to another. Assessments and support plans will be shared and case coordinators and educators will have a case conference to ensure strong continuity of care.

**The young person and their family will be involved and empowered in throughcare planning and decision-making.**

- As noted in Section 4.1.2, the young person and their family will participate in planning and decision-making for their return to community; friends, community members and support organisations may also be involved, thereby fostering a support network that will continue after the young person's time in detention.
- The details of the throughcare plan will be agreed with the relevant YOREOs, out-of-home care providers and other care team members or relevant service providers.

## 4.4 Safe and secure

Youth justice centres will prioritise the safety of young people, staff and others. This will provide the foundation on which all other aspects of care within the centres is built. Without a positive environment where young people and staff feel physically and psychologically safe, therapeutic programs cannot have their intended effect.<sup>55</sup> Additionally, young people who feel unsafe or disrespected are likely to act out against others or become a danger for self-harm.<sup>56</sup>

A threefold approach to preventative security consists of relational, physical, and procedural measures.<sup>57</sup> It is essential that all three types of security are implemented at all times as one cannot compensate for the absence or ineffectiveness of another.<sup>58</sup> An emotionally safe and therapeutic environment should not be seen as compromising the requirements for physical security within a detention centre; rather it augments the highly secure environment by improving relationships and behaviour and reducing the likelihood of violent outbursts.<sup>59</sup>

Relational security measures will be complemented by a preventative and proactive approach to behaviour management including universal interventions to prevent behavioural issues from emerging and targeted interventions for young people with recurring behavioural issues.

Specifically, the centres will provide:

- **Relational security**
- **Positive behaviour support**
- **Physical security**
- **Procedural security.**

TFHC's commitments in each of these areas and how they will be delivered are presented below.

### 4.4.1 Relational security

Youth justice centres will promote relational security through the development of relationships and understanding between young people and staff. Engaging young people in robust, safe relationships will be treated as a primary task of youth justice officers and other staff and service providers. This will provide the foundation for safety and security for young people and others, positive behaviour, and management and de-escalation of security incidents.



This aspiration aligns with:

- The foundational principles that youth justice centres will be therapeutic, collaborative, and culturally secure and strong.
- Evidence that shows the best performing youth justice systems achieve safety and security primarily through relationships rather than physical barriers, restraints and isolation.<sup>60</sup>

This aspiration will be delivered through two service standards:

- Youth justice centres will invest in and support staff and service providers to establish strong relationships with young people.
- Youth justice centre will promote continuity and consistency in young people's relationships with peers, staff and other service providers.

It will also be achieved through the positive behaviour scheme discussed in 4.4.2.

### Service standards for relational security

**Youth justice centres will support staff and service providers to establish strong relationships with young people.**

- Youth justice centres will provide staff with ongoing training and professional development in evidence-based strategies for engaging with young people (e.g. pro-social modelling, reflective listening, collaborative problem solving).<sup>61</sup>
- Youth Justice Centres will have a Therapeutic Specialist, a senior position that works with staff to facilitate behaviour support plans and develop relational security. This position will be an active participant in all aspects of the day-to-day operations of the youth justice centres and 'walk alongside' staff through the provision of real-time coaching and mentoring as well as staff development, support and reflective practice.
- Youth justice centres will seek to maintain operational enablers for relational security, including recruitment and retention of appropriate staff, adequate staff ratios, and low staff turnover.<sup>62</sup>

**Youth justice centres will promote continuity and consistency in young people's relationships with peers, staff and other service providers.**

- Young people serving custodial sentences will be grouped together (e.g. for accommodation, activities and meals); where possible, young people on long-term remand will be, too. Grouping of young people for the purposes of providing care best suited to their needs is further addressed in the context of physical security in Section 4.4.3 below.
- Staff rosters will be designed to provide continuity and consistency in the staff with whom young people have routine contact. Each young person will be engaged by staff several times per day about how they are feeling physically and emotionally.
- Youth justice centres and other stakeholders will collaborate to maximise continuity and consistency in the key workers from whom young people receive support. This will be a major focus when young people are transitioning into and out of the centres. This will require collaboration at all levels of the organisations involved, from senior leaders (to formulate appropriate arrangements) to frontline staff (to implement these arrangements).

## 4.4.2 Positive behaviour support



Youth justice centres will provide consistent responses to young people's positive and problematic behaviours. The centres will employ a preventative and proactive approach to behaviour management, including universal interventions to prevent behavioural issues from emerging and targeted interventions for young people with recurring behavioural issues. Behaviour management practices will be evidence-based, tailored to each young person and applied across all aspects of their experiences (e.g. individual activities and whole-of-centre). Their primary aim will be to manage and change young people's behaviour in the future. Behaviour management is not to be punitive. Staff will be responsive to the complex factors that may affect young people's behaviour, understanding and impulse control (e.g. trauma histories and cognitive impairments).

This aspiration aligns with:

- The foundational principles that youth justice centres will be therapeutic, trauma-informed and young-person centred.
- Evidence that effective behaviour management schemes in youth justice and other settings take a preventative and proactive approach including both universal and targeted interventions.<sup>63</sup>
- Evidence that young people “perceive time more slowly than adults and see the future as less relevant” and as a result “are less likely...to sacrifice a smaller, short term reward to get a larger, long term reward.”<sup>64</sup>

This aspiration will be delivered through four service standards:

- Young people will be treated with respect and dignity at all times.
- Staff will provide consistent, predictable responses to young people’s positive and problematic behaviours.
- Youth justice centres will implement universal interventions to prevent behavioural issues from emerging.
- Youth justice centres will implement targeted, individualised interventions for young people with recurring behavioural issues.

It will also be achieved through the relational security discussed in 4.4.1.

### Service standards for positive behaviour support

**Young people will be treated with respect and dignity at all times.**

- Staff and service providers will treat young people with respect and dignity at all times and encouraged them to treat others the same way.
- Young people’s basic rights to entitlements will not be taken away as a form of punishment.

**Staff will provide consistent, predictable responses to young people’s positive and problematic behaviours.**

- Youth justice centres will support staff to consistently respond to young people’s behaviours through ongoing therapeutic supervision, training and professional development, and appropriate resources and documentation (e.g. policies, guidelines and manuals).
- Expectations of young people will be actively and repeatedly communicated to them in language they can understand (e.g. through visual aids, induction activities and conversations with staff).
- The positive behaviour scheme used in the centres will be consistent across the centres.

**Youth justice centres will implement universal interventions to prevent behavioural issues from emerging.**

- All young people’s support plans will include a section on behaviour management.
- Staff will model prosocial values (e.g. care, respect, fairness, altruism, dependability) in their interactions with young people.
- Staff will provide immediate verbal recognition of young people’s positive behaviours, which will be supported through a rewards scheme.
- When a young person engages in problematic behaviours, this will not result in a loss of earned rewards. Instead, staff will hold a timely debrief with the young person to discuss the incident and reinforce behavioural expectations (one-to-one or in a group setting depending on the context). These debriefs will create a safe environment for young people



## Service standards for positive behaviour support

to process their behaviours, thereby assisting them to learn self-regulation, identify their emotions, communicate with others, de-escalate situations and return to a calm state after agitation.

- Learning activities for young people will include training to promote positive behaviours (e.g. in social skills, problem solving and anger management).

**Youth justice centres will implement targeted, individualised interventions for young people with severe and/or recurring behavioural issues.**

- Young people who engage in severe and/or recurring problematic behaviours will receive intensive support to improve. This could include one or a combination of the following: a meeting to discuss the behaviour, identify underlying issues or triggers, and agree how they will be managed; an appropriate therapeutic or behavioural intervention; or a change to the behaviour management section of their support plan. Staff will take these steps in accordance with relevant training, policies, guidelines and manuals and, wherever possible, in collaboration with SATS staff and the Therapeutic Specialist.

### 4.4.3 Physical security

Youth justice centres will ensure robust physical security that keeps young, people, staff, visitors and other people safe. At the same time, they will maintain a normalised environment that support rehabilitation, promote healthy activities and mirror what young people should experience in the community.

This aspiration aligns with:

- The foundational principles that youth justice centres will be therapeutic, trauma-informed and throughcare focused.
- Evidence that the physical environment influences the behaviour of young people in detention through their perceptions of identity, safety, and connection to staff and other young people.<sup>1</sup>

This aspiration will be delivered through three service standards:

- Youth justice centres will maintain physical security while enabling a normalised routine through the use of infrastructure, technology and equipment.
- Young people will be grouped based on their needs and risks (within infrastructural and operational constraints).
- Young people's physical autonomy and privacy will be respected.

It will also be achieved through procedural security, which is discussed in Section 4.4.4.



<sup>1</sup> For example, see Lamble, I. (2016) *Youth Justice Secure Residences: A report on the international evidence to guide best practice and service delivery*. Ministry of Social Development, New Zealand.

## Service standards for physical security

**Youth justice centres will maintain physical security while enabling a normalised routine through the use of infrastructure, technology and equipment.**

- Youth justice centres will employ effective and minimally invasive search methods (e.g. technologies such as body scanners and metal detectors).
- Youth justice centres will have appropriate infrastructure, technology and equipment to ensure a secure perimeter and prevent harm, injury or damage (e.g. alarm systems, closed circuit television, portable security equipment such as radios).
- Youth justice centres will maintain normalised environments wherever possible (e.g. through low visibility security infrastructure and technology; interior and exterior finishes and furnishings; natural light).

**Young people will be grouped based on their needs and risks (within infrastructural and operational constraints).**

- Young people will be grouped together (e.g. for accommodation, activities and meals) to facilitate the delivery of appropriate care and mitigate risks. For example, young people may be grouped based on their age, gender, relationships, cultural requirements (e.g. whether they have been through an initiation ceremony), and expected length of time in detention.
- In addition to the needs and risks of the young people in the centre, groupings will be informed by infrastructural and operational considerations. For example, it will be feasible to maintain more groupings in a larger facility or when the number of young people in detention is lower.

**Young people's physical autonomy and privacy will be respected.**

- Young people will not be locked down in their rooms for more than 11 hours at night. They will not be locked in their rooms during the structured day, except in the event of emergencies or exceptional operational requirements.
- Young people's privacy will be respected when they are alone or in the company of others (e.g. when speaking in person or on the phone to their family, lawyer or other support person).
- Closed circuit television cameras will be positioned to provide privacy to young people while using bathroom or toilet facilities.

### 4.4.4 Procedural security



Youth justice centres will ensure procedural security through the correct and consistent application of operational policies and processes in line with legislation, regulation and other requirements. There will be a comprehensive range of procedures that define practice across the centres' operations; promote consistency across staff, teams and locations; and support accurate documentation of activity. In the event of crises, staff will respond with non-violent methods wherever possible, resorting to the use of force or restraint only to prevent imminent harm to any person or serious damage to property.

This aspiration aligns with:

- All foundational principles for youth justice centres as it influences how they will be operationalised in practice.

- Evidence that use of force and physical restraints demoralises, frightens, angers, traumatises and re-traumatise young people;<sup>65</sup> damages the therapeutic relationship between young people and staff,<sup>66</sup> and when implemented incorrectly creates a risk of injury to both young people and staff.<sup>67</sup>

This aspiration will be delivered through three service standards:

- Robust policies, processes and guidelines aligning to this model of care will be maintained.
- Staff will be supported to access and apply these policies, processes and guidelines, including through reflective practice.
- Responses to crises will be trauma-informed, prioritising non-violent methods over use of force or restraints.

### Service standards for procedural security

**Youth justice centres will maintain policies, processes and guidelines aligning to this model of care.**

- Youth justice centres will maintain comprehensive policies, processes and guidelines aligning to this model of care, including, but not limited to:
  - communications
  - information management
  - workplace health and safety
  - personal and professional visits
  - personal and environmental searches
  - use of force, restraints and separations
  - emergency and incident management
  - other aspects of operations as outlined in this model of care.
- Youth justice centres will participate in internal and multi-agency planning for emergencies and incidents; for example:
  - unauthorised departure
  - failure to return from day release
  - riot, barricade, roof top occupancy and other disorder
  - infrastructure failure (e.g. power or water outage, communications system failure)
  - adverse weather events
  - pandemics.

**Staff will be supported to access and apply these policies, processes and guidelines, including through reflective practice.**

- Staff and service providers will have access to all policies, processes and guidelines they may require to perform their roles in relation to the youth justice centres.
- Uptake of critical policies, processes and guidelines will be facilitated through ongoing training, visual aids, easy-to-read summaries, debriefs and/or other communications as required.
- Staff will regularly participate in reflective practice to embed the model of care and other relevant policies, processes and guidelines. The reflective practice process will include (but not be constrained to) fortnightly small group meetings led by an experienced staff member or other facilitator. At these meetings, staff will discuss successes and challenges from the

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## Service standards for procedural security

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last two weeks and reflect on the application of practice, training and other supports (e.g. in response to an incident).

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**Responses to crises will be trauma-informed, prioritising non-violent methods over use of force or restraints.**

- Staff will receive ongoing training and professional development to recognise early signs of crises, understand how they escalate and take action to prevent and de-escalate them.
  - Staff will actively develop and sustain a high level of situational awareness to maintain safety and order in the centres and prevent adverse or critical incidents.
  - In the event of a crisis, staff will prioritise non-violent methods (e.g. active listening, verbal intervention, management of the environment). In line with the *Youth Justice Act 2005*, staff may use force or physical restraints when necessary to prevent harm to a person or serious damage to property. Other than in an emergency situation, all reasonable behavioural or therapeutic measures to resolve the situation must be attempted and those measures must have failed to resolve the situation before force or restraints can be used.
  - The success of a response will be primarily determined by the extent to which the use of force is avoided or minimised.
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## 5 Glossary

PHRASE	DEFINITION
<b>Cultural security</b>	Cultural security requires that all staff and service providers will have an understanding of their own personal culture and recognise how their values and understanding of social norms may differ from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. This understanding must inform the delivery of care and supervision to young people in a way that is not only culturally appropriate, but wherever possible, culturally enriching too.
<b>Model of care</b>	This model of care provides a comprehensive overview of how youth justice centres will operate. It is comprised of an operating philosophy and service model. Its purpose is to define how young people are cared for in youth justice centres, drive consistent practice across different centres and among staff, enable effective collaboration and promote accountability.
<b>Operating philosophy</b>	The operating philosophy provides guidance to staff and stakeholders about the vision for the youth justice centre and, through this, drives a cohesive approach and consistent practice. It provides a high level layer of guidance in translating relevant legislation into a service delivery model, that in turn informs youth justice centre policy and other enablers.
<b>Physical security</b>	Physical security is established through to the aspects of facility design that create a secure and secure-feeling environment, such as the centre's infrastructure, physical barriers, equipment and technologies.
<b>Policy determinations</b>	Policy determinations which define practice within youth justice centres in the NT may be issued by various authorities including the Superintendent, CEO or Minister under the <i>Youth Justice Act 2005 (NT)</i> or the <i>Youth Justice Regulations 2006 (NT)</i> .
<b>Procedural security</b>	Procedural security is established through robust, consistently applied operational processes and policies. These define the practice and boundaries across youth justice centre operations, as well as the structures and routines that support their proper implementation.
<b>Program</b>	Structured interventions with the outcome of learning and behavioural change in young people. Programs aim to reduce likelihood of reoffending by targeting underlying drivers of criminal behaviours. Programs differ from services and activities in that they are designed to target specific areas of criminogenic and rehabilitative needs.
<b>Reflective practice</b>	Reflective practice will involve Youth Justice Officers and other staff getting together to think about and share learnings from their experiences at work including success and challenges in the application of training and policies.
<b>Relational security</b>	Relational security is established through the development of relationships and understanding between staff and young people, as this informs the assessment

and management of behavioural risks. Relational security is pivotal to creating a therapeutic and safe environment as a heavy reliance on physical or procedural security can feel punitive or overly restrictive to a young person.

<b>Self-regulation</b>	Self-regulation is the ability to manage emotions and behaviours in accordance with the demands of a given situation. It includes being able to resist highly emotional reactions to upsetting stimuli, to calm down when upset or to handle frustration without an outburst. Self-regulation is an important skill for young people as it enables them to direct their own behaviour towards a goal, despite the unpredictability of the world and their own feelings.
<b>Separation</b>	‘Separation’ refers to when a young person is separated from other young people, except when they are in their room overnight, during a reasonable lockdown period or during an emergency situation. The <i>Youth Justice Act 2005 (NT)</i> and the <i>Youth Justice Regulations 2006 (NT)</i> strictly regulate the circumstances under which a young person can be separated and contain various safeguards for its use.
<b>Service model</b>	The service model (or service delivery model) contains the framework and key practice guidelines for operations within youth justice centres.
<b>Therapeutic approach</b>	A therapeutic approach in youth justice settings frames young people as vulnerable and in need of support and healing, as opposed to punishment or fear. It recognises that a majority of young people who offend have complex needs arising from their background, environment, and experiences of past trauma. They require support through education, social and emotional wellbeing and community connection. <sup>68</sup> The focus of a therapeutic approach is on supporting behavioural change and personal development for young people so they can sustain meaningful growth beyond their time in the youth justice centre
<b>Use of force</b>	The use of force in youth justice centres is regulated by The <i>Youth Justice Act 2005 (NT)</i> and the <i>Youth Justice Regulations 2006 (NT)</i> . It can only be used to prevent a young person from harming themselves or others, seriously damaging property or seriously threatening the security of the youth justice centre.
<b>Use of restraint devices</b>	The use of restraint devices in youth justice centres is regulated by The <i>Youth Justice Act 2005 (NT)</i> and the <i>Youth Justice Regulations 2006 (NT)</i> . It can only be used to prevent a young person from harming themselves or others, seriously damaging property or seriously threatening the security of the youth justice centre.
<b>Youth justice centre</b>	Youth justice centres are a secure place where young people under the age of 18 are detained if they have been sentenced by a court or are on remand awaiting a judicial decision about an alleged offence.

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