

# Inquiry in the Child Protection System

## Practice and Systems

- There is a need for Northern Territory Families and Children to provide comprehensive training to foster carers based on national standards. The inquiry needs to examine the training of foster carers in the Northern Territory. Foster carers require comprehensive training before they are able to care for children who are in the 'care of the CEO'. This training needs to be provided to all carers (kin carers, specific carers) and carers who reside in remote towns and communities. Foster carers need to be provided with ongoing support and training while they are registered as foster carers.
  
- Workers with responsibility for case management employed by Northern Territory Families and Children require core training that will equip them with skills for working in child protection services. As well as professional development workers employed by Northern Territory Families and Children require regular professional supervision (different to case planning) by team leaders/managers who are qualified to provide supervision. Workers should also be offered supervision external to Northern Territory Families and Children External supervision provides workers with the opportunity to reflect on casework with someone who is not their direct line manager.
  
- There is a need for child protection workers to also have access/consultation to professionals i.e. clinical psychologists, infant health specialists, mental health experts. Workers employed by Northern Territory Families and Children require expert advice and support as they often grapple with complex cases. for example, children and teenagers with substance abuse (petrol sniffing) teenagers with difficult behavioural (self harm, conduct disorders) or infants diagnosed with failure to thrive.
  
- Northern Territory Families and Children needs to create a system that conducts ongoing evaluation of case work provided by child protection workers. Evaluation would include focused interviews of parents and children following a child protection investigation. Interviews will provide Northern Territory Families and Children with feedback from families as to "what worked" in an intervention.

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