



To the inquiry into Child Protection in the NT

re young people / youth team

I would like to make a very brief submission to the inquiry. I work with an anti petrol sniffing team in Alice Springs / Central Australia. I have worked for over five years doing casework with this client group.

I would propose that the youth team be able to work with young people who are engaged in volatile substance abuse or other high risk activities, without NTFC first having to obtain legal guardianship over that young person.

This would be more productive than the current situation, where Child Protection workers investigate reports about young people at risk, and usually decide not to proceed to apply for guardianship, providing no support to the family, community or young person. Occasionally a guardianship order is sought and granted, but these young people are almost never subject to effective guardianship as envisaged by the Act.

The Youth Team would be able to work cooperatively with other involved or relevant agencies, without legal guardianship. Workload management should be decided by considering risk factors and what NTFC can offer, rather than a process that bears little relevance to the situation of these young people.

I would be willing to speak further to this brief submission, if the inquiry considered that would be helpful.

yours sincerely

Phil Hassall
CAYLUS caseworker