

22 May 2026

RE: Care and Protection of Children Legislation Amendment (Every Child Matters) Bill 2026

I am a community member of Mparntwe/Alice Springs, with many years experience as an educator, in the VET sector and in juvenile justice, working both in town and on country across Central Australia. I would like to register my responses to the proposed amendment to the above legislation.

I acknowledge the traditional owners of the regions where I live and work. First of all, I wish to state my strong belief that child protection legislation must be developed in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups, organisations, frontline workers, and families. Community-controlled, place-based services grow out of the conditions and needs of the families they work with. It is essential that the amendment process not be rushed. It needs to take account of community experience, in order to develop comprehensively effective guidelines.

High rates of domestic, family and sexual violence in the NT have a profound impact on child safety. Adequate supports and responses to DFSV are crucial to the protection of children. Reduction in funding to DFRV services, as we have seen recently, works against the protection of children. No less important is addressing the drivers of DFSV and the underlying conditions and challenges faced by families and communities.

Basic needs for food security, energy, housing and transport, and early childhood health services cannot be separated from issues around child safety. Please do not shift the blame for inadequate services and support, and the resultant harms to children, onto the families who experience stress as a result of basic needs not being met. Responsibility for ensuring families are well resourced to cover basic needs lies with NT Government.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle and other best practice principles which emphasise prevent prevention and early intervention must be the bottom line for any reform to child protection legislation.

Thank you for considering my submission.
Yours sincerely,
Jennifer Taylor


Mparntwe/Alice Springs