Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

2025 Tasmanian State Election Platform

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50 Market Street, Melbourne, VIC 3000
(03) 9614 1577
cfecfw.org.au

The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare (the Centre) is the peak body for child and family services in Tasmania and Victoria. For over 100 years, the Centre has advocated for the rights of children. In 2024, Tasmanian organisations working with children and families invited the Centre to represent them and champion every Tasmanian child's right to be heard, to be safe, to access education, and to remain connected to family, community and culture.

Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands across Lutruwita/Tasmania. We honour the unbroken connection that Tasmanian Aboriginal peoples maintain with land, waters, skies, and Country, a connection that continues to sustain the communities where our members, and the children and families we work with, live and grow.

Level 5, 50 Market Street, Melbourne, VIC 3000

03 9614 1577

admin@cfecfw.org.au

ARBN 673 965 707

ABN: 24 629 376 672

RTO: 3696

cfecfw.org.au

What's happening for Tasmanian children and families?



52.7%

of Tasmanian children were **developmentally on track** according to the **AEDC in 2021**, slightly below the **national rate of 54.8%**[1]



2 in 5

Tasmanian primary and secondary students **could not read proficiently** in the **2023 NAPLAN**[2]



78%

of students from prep to year 10 **met Progressive Achievement Testing literacy standards**[3]



945

Daily average of **children in out-of-home care** in March 2025[4]



25%

The percentage of people in Tasmania experiencing homelessness **who were aged 12-24 years**[5]

14%

The percentage **under 12 years**



For every **one foster carer recruited, two leave the system**[6]



17.3

The **daily average of young people in detention** in Tasmania, including **sentenced and unsentenced** detention[7]

218.5

The **daily average of young people** in **Community Youth Justice** in Tasmania[8]



A plan for Tasmania's children and families

Nine recommendations to make Tasmania the best place to be and raise a child

Across the state, we see outstanding community-based work supporting children, young people and families every day. Yet we face urgent challenges: the sobering findings of the Australian Child Maltreatment Study, a decline in foster carers, and the clear message from the Commission of Inquiry that we must do better to keep children safe.

As we approach the 2025 state election, the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare asks the next Tasmanian Government to support our nine recommendations to keep children safe, support families earlier, strengthen communities, and give every child the best chance to grow up safe and well.

1. Prioritise early support for families

Getting families the right support early can change the course of a child's life. It reduces the need for crisis responses, eases pressure on the child safety system, and helps more children remain safely with their families.

- Strengthen and grow family support services — from early support through to restoration.

2. Maintain momentum on the Commission of Inquiry

The Commission of Inquiry revealed that more needs to be done to keep Tasmanian children safe. Since then, important changes have started, and this progress must continue.

- Continue progressing the transfer of out-of-home care from government to community organisations, prioritising the best interests of children and carers.
- Support youth justice reforms grounded in children's rights and evidence.
- Build on efforts to strengthen children and young people's participation in decisions that affect their lives.

3. Make it possible for organisations to keep showing up for children and families

Children and families rely on the people and services supporting them. Organisations need certainty, including stable funding and a skilled workforce, to continue providing consistent, high-quality support.

In partnership with the Tasmanian Coalition of Community Services Peaks:

- Fast-track five-year funding contracts and begin renewal discussions early.
- Collaborate with the Centre and partners to develop a fair and transparent funding indexation model.
- Invest in recruiting, training, and supporting staff, especially in Tasmania's regional and remote communities.

4. Recognise and resource Aboriginal communities to care for their children and families

Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) need to be supported to care for children, young people, families, and carers.

- Drive the Nukara Strategy to transfer responsibility for keeping Aboriginal children safe to ACCOs, fully applying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle and moving at a pace set by Tasmania's Aboriginal communities.
- Support non-Indigenous organisations through the transition of care arrangements to

Aboriginal communities.

5. Show Tasmania's foster and kinship carers we value them

Foster and kinship carers provide safe, caring homes, yet many face significant pressures and are leaving their roles.

- Work with the Commonwealth to improve financial and therapeutic supports for carers, including introducing a Health Gold Card for children and young people in care to support priority access to health services.

6. Make everyone responsible for children

Children do better when all parts of government work together to support them.

- Promote adoption of a 'corporate parenting' approach, where every agency takes responsibility for children in care or at risk.
- Strengthen coordination and leadership across government to better support vulnerable children and families.

7. Bolster literacy rates across the state

Literacy is the foundation for lifelong learning, empowering children to understand their world, express themselves, and reach their full potential. Tasmania's child and youth literacy levels are among the lowest in the country.

- Commit to fully implementing and resourcing the *Lifting Literacy Implementation Plan 2024–2026.*
- Prioritise high-impact, evidence-based teaching practices, build educator capability, and provide all children with equitable access to educational supports, especially for rural and regional areas and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

8. Deliver safe and affordable housing for all children and families

Safe, secure and affordable housing is fundamental to the health, education, and wellbeing of children, young people, and families. However, many children and families across the state are experiencing housing instability or homelessness.

- Invest in proven models of housing to enable children and their families at greatest risk of housing insecurity and homelessness to live in safe and stable accommodation with ready access to family services.
- Recognise the link between harm to children and families and housing instability, and enable stronger, more creative collaboration between housing and child and family service systems.

9. Help organisations strengthen and share what works for children and families

Improving support means learning what works and making that learning visible and useful for organisations working with children and families across the state.

- Help the sector use data, research, and lived experience to guide better decisions and build local knowledge connected to global evidence.
- Create opportunities for organisations and government to collaborate on data sharing and evidence generation — building a shared understanding of what works best for children and families.

Infographic References

1 - Australian Early Development Census. (2021). Our state, our community, our families, our children: Australian Early Development Census 2021 Tasmanian report. https://www.aedc.gov.au/resources/detail/2021-tasmanian-report

2 - Jordan Hunter. (2024). Tasmania's Reading Challenge. Grattan Institute https://grattan.edu.au/news/tasmanias-reading-challenge/

3 - Department for Education, Children and Young People. (2025). Student Learning data. https://www.decyp.tas.gov.au/about-us/policies-legislation-data/data-and-statistics/student-learning-data/

4 - Department for Education, Children and Young People. (2025). Services for children, youth and families data. https://www.decyp.tas.gov.au/about-us/policies-legislation-data/data-and-statistics/data-for-services-for-children-youth-and-families/

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6 - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2025). Child Protection Australia 2022-23. https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/child-protection/child-protection-australia-2022-23/data

7 & 8 - Department for Education, Children and Young People. (2025). Services for children, youth and families data. https://www.decyp.tas.gov.au/about-us/policies-legislation-data/data-and-statistics/data-for-services-for-children-youth-and-families/