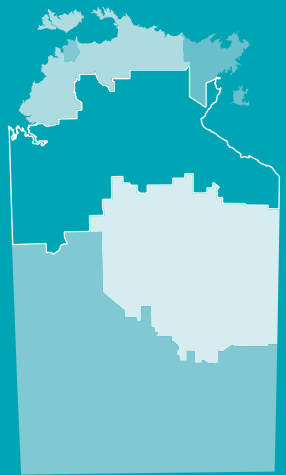


STORY OF OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

BIG RIVERS 2021



Acknowledgements

In the spirit of respect, the authors acknowledge the Traditional Owners of country and recognise their continuing connection to their lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to elders past and present.

We wish to thank the many individuals who have contributed to the development of the featured stories. We also thank the data custodians who have assisted with preparation and release of the datasets, John Glover and Sarah McDonald at the Population Health Information Development Unit (PHIDU) at Torrens University and Fiona Shalley at the Northern Institute at Charles Darwin University who prepared some of the data tables.

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Disclaimer

This Story is for information purposes only. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the information is accurate, the Northern Territory Government and Menzies School of Health Research will not accept any liability for any loss or damage which may be incurred by any person acting in reliance upon the information.

Cover photos: The cover celebrates the rich cultural make-up of the children and young people of Big Rivers.



Printed on 100% recycled paper.



Introduction


The Story of Our Children and Young People (the Story) addresses the demand for information about the wellbeing of children and young people. This Big Rivers Story is an abridged version of the Northern Territory 2021 edition. It is a resource for people working for and with children and young people in Big Rivers. It provides an evidence-base to support actions to improve outcomes.

This 2021 Story builds on the 2019 edition with updated data for many of the measures, the addition of sub-regional data and data by Aboriginal status. A number of measures have been added to address the identified data gaps from 2019. Updates are also provided for many of the case studies presented in the 2019 Story.

There have been changes to the policy environment since the 2019 Story including revision of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and the development of a Northern Territory Social Outcomes Framework. There has also been the disruption created by the COVID-19 pandemic including its implications to service delivery. The data measures and case studies in this Story have been considered in the context of this changing policy environment, with links to Closing the Gap and the Social Outcomes Framework highlighted alongside data measures using these icons:  

Much of the available data is service-based and commonly reports deficits rather than positive outcomes. The Editorial Committee investigated strength-based measures in the development of the Story and there will be continued effort in the preparation of the 2023 Story. A number of case studies highlight the positive work happening throughout the region.

DATA PLATFORM

The most significant addition to the Story is an interactive data platform to complement the data available in this Story. It allows users to explore measures in comparison with Australia, Northern Territory and its other regions. Trend data for select measures is also included to consider changes over time. Use the platform at cmc.nt.gov.au/children. Measures for which trend data is available on the platform have this icon: 

The data presented in this Big Rivers Story is drawn from the data platform and may vary slightly from the data presented in the Northern Territory 2021 edition of the Story. Technical commentary on the data is detailed on page 28 and also in Appendix I on page 128 of the Northern Territory 2021 edition.

CHANGE FROM 2019 TO 2021

When comparing data from this 2021 Story with the 2019 Story for the region as a whole, a number of indicators suggest change. For example, the proportion of babies exposed to alcohol in third trimester of pregnancy has decreased slightly and the number of apprehensions of males and females has also decreased. In the community, the number of house break-ins has decreased. For children, the proportion of children with notifications of child abuse has increased and school attendance in Year 3 has decreased. Caution is required when making comparison using only two data points and over a short period. Trend data using multiple data points provides a more reliable assessment of change.

THE NEST FRAMEWORK

The Story is underpinned by the national research of the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) and the Nest outcomes framework. Through ARACY's research it was determined that for children and young people to thrive, they need to be valued, loved and safe; have material basics; be healthy; learning; participating and have a positive sense of identity and culture.

HOW TO USE THIS STORY

You can use this Story in many ways, including:

- For community planning and local conversations
- As a tool to better understand indicators of wellbeing
- In service and organisational planning
- To support understanding of an outcomes-based approach
- As a reference when developing communication tools for community members and/or children and young people
- For the induction and training of staff
- To track progress against key indicators of wellbeing
- In the writing of grant applications
- When advocating for children and young people

Tell us how you are using the Story by visiting cmc.nt.gov.au/children.

ABORIGINAL FRAMEWORK

While the Story is underpinned by the national research of ARACY, it acknowledges the ancient authority and traditions of Aboriginal people by using a local framework, developed in 2019, which applies cultural metaphors. The Aboriginal Framework was updated in 2021 with blue dots around the upper half of the framework to depict the waters of the northern parts of the Territory, with the ochre dots around the lower half of the framework depicting the deserts of the southern regions.



Aboriginal Framework. Source: Developed by a cultural reference group of the Editorial Committee and modified through conversations with Aboriginal people from across the Northern Territory. Painted by Cian McCue.

- a** Child or young person in the centre, with their family
- b** Children and young people form the inner circle
- c** They are surrounded by a second circle of parents, uncles, aunties and those within the family across that generation. This circle also includes local service providers such as schools and clinics, and other people working with families
- d** The third circle represents grandparents, elders and those within the family across that generation. It also includes cultural authority groups, government, policy makers and decision makers
- e** Around the circles of people, are four groups of people talking and working together
- f** Everything is connected by travel lines which illustrate movement and flow, as everything co-exists. The movement is in all directions as people have responsibilities to each other. Through the kinship system, everything and everyone is connected including to the sun, moon, stars and universe. It is important for everyone to be working together and communicating with each other
- g** The dots around the outside hold the framework together, demonstrating a wholeness. The dots also allow for movement in and out of the framework.

METAPHORS AND THE NEST DOMAINS

The metaphors used for the Aboriginal Framework were selected to be readily interpreted using the six domains of the Nest. These six areas of wellbeing for children and young people are the pillars around which this Story is written.

The stories of the children and young people from Big Rivers are told through these six domains.

Being valued, loved and safe – Coolamon – The coolamon is a large bowl-like carrier made from the wood of a tree. It is a traditional cot and keeps babies safe, strong and healthy.

Having material basics – Tree – Trees can provide essential items such as wood and bark for housing, tools for hunting and a source of bush food and medicine.

Being healthy – Hunting and gathering – Connection to land and culture through hunting and gathering ensures a healthy lifestyle – physically, developmentally and mentally. Plants and animals provide important food sources to maintain a healthy diet.

Learning – Oral tradition – There is a strong oral tradition in Aboriginal culture, as well as other cultures present in the Territory. Elders and grandparents sit with children and young people to pass on knowledge

Participating – Spear, boomerang and dilly bag – Spears, boomerangs and dilly bags represent active participation in Aboriginal community life - hunting and fishing gathering seeds and fruit as well as leisure, music and dance.

Positive sense of identity and culture – Kinship system – Everything in Aboriginal life is connected to and given its place in the kinship system. It is about the whole universe, the planets, stars, moon and sun – everything is connected.

Whilst we are separating elements of wellbeing, in life they are intrinsically linked and so there is crossover between domains. We have attributed indicators to the domains in which they are most commonly reported.

CONTENTS

In this Story, you will find:

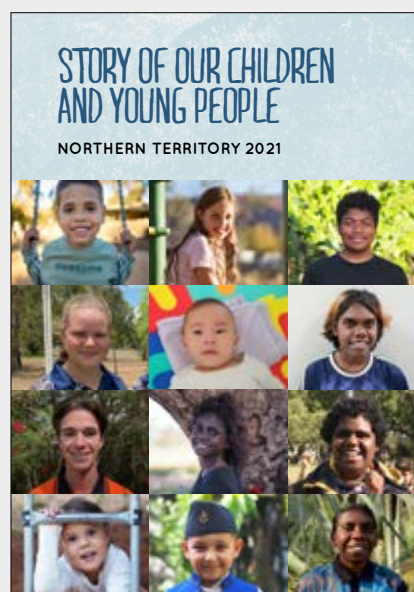
1. Information for Big Rivers including Katherine and the balance of the region
2. Population information about families, education, employment, language and culture
3. Data for measures of child and youth wellbeing across the six domains outlined above
4. Case studies demonstrating positive change
5. Cultural stories of wellness
6. Links to the data platform containing further information

While the data highlight many stories, the Story uses a simple and direct approach in the presentation of measures. The Story deliberately refrains from providing interpretation or opinion. Definition of measures are included in the Northern Territory 2021 edition of the Story.

GLOSSARY

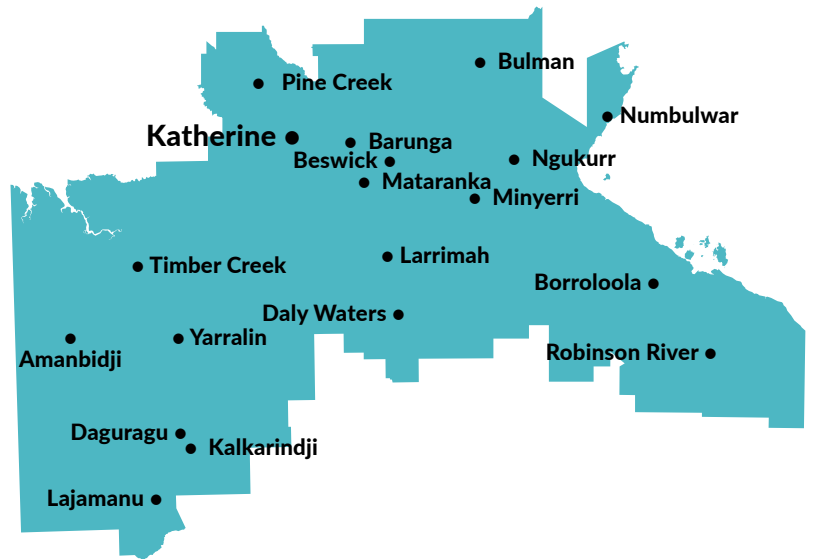
Aboriginal	Aboriginal people, including Torres Strait Islanders and also to mean First Nations peoples
Child/children	Usually aged 0-9, statistically and legally aged 0-17
Children and young people	Children and young people, aged 0-24
Community	Inclusive of all forms of community: local community, schools, sporting clubs, arts and music clubs, faith communities and others
Domain	An essential outcome area of wellbeing which encompasses indicators related to a central subject
Early Childhood/early years	Refers to early development years of children, aged 0-5
Indicator	A broad and measurable concept that can indicate change
Family	Inclusive of related families, caregivers, guardians, kinship carers, foster or adoptive families and any other arrangements where children are in the official care of adults
Measure	A specific and quantifiable variable which addresses an indicator
Outcome	A goal or aspiration for the wellbeing of children and young people
Youth/young people	Young people, aged 10-17
Young adults/people	Young adults, aged 18-24

Further information about the development of the Story with context for each measure, referencing, data sources and appendices, can be found in the Northern Territory edition of the 2021 Story online, cmc.nt.gov.au/children.





People of Big Rivers

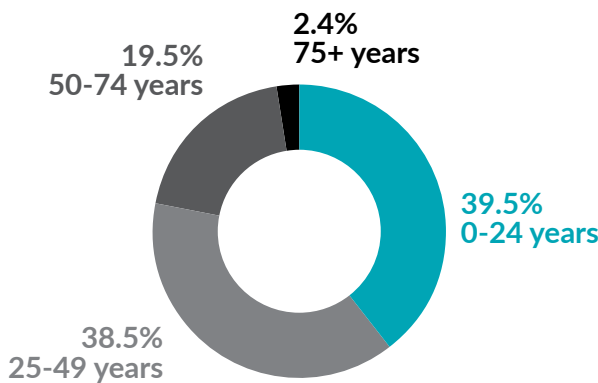


The Big Rivers region covers the mid-north and spans the width of the Territory, sharing borders with both Western Australia and Queensland. The main centre is Katherine. The region includes more than 20 other communities and 100 outstations.

POPULATION

Big Rivers has a population of 21,541 people. More than half of the population identify as Aboriginal (56.2%) and 1 in 13 people (7.7%) were born overseas. Big Rivers has the second most transient population of all the regions after Greater Darwin, with more than 1 in 10 people (12.5%) having lived interstate five years earlier. About 4 in 10 people (39.5%) are children and young people, aged 0-24.

Age distribution of population



	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
Total population	21,541	10,717	10,824
Aboriginal people ^a	56.2%	32.6%	79.2%
Children and young people, aged 0-24	39.5%	33.6%	45.4%
People who were born overseas ^b	7.7%	11.9%	3.5%
People who lived interstate five years earlier ^b	12.5%	17.9%	6.9%

Data source and year: ABS 3235.0 Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2019; ^a ABS Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016; ^b ABS Housing and Population Census, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

FAMILIES

In the region as a whole, about 1 in 4 families, with children under 15 years (26.2%), are single parent families. Of these, more than 8 in 10 single parent families (83.0%) have a female as the head of the family.

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
Families with children aged under 15, who are single parent families	26.2%	22.0%	29.8%
Single parent families, who have a female as the head of the family	83.0%	80.4%	84.8%

Data source and year: ABS Housing and Population Census, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Across Big Rivers almost half of people (46.5%) speak only English and more than 3 in 10 people (33.7%) speak an Aboriginal language at home. Outside of Katherine less than 3 in 10 people (27.6%) speak only English and more than 6 in 10 people (61.0%) speak an Aboriginal language at home.

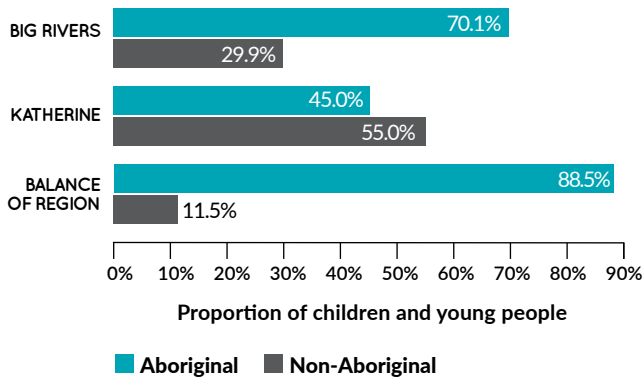
	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
People who speak only English	46.5%	64.9%	27.6%
People who speak an Aboriginal language at home	33.7%	7.3%	61.0%
People who speak a language other than English at home (including Aboriginal languages)	36.7%	14.8%	59.3%

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



There are 8,510 children and young people, aged 0-24, living in the region, over half of these live outside of Katherine (4,913). About 7 in 10 children and young people (70.1%) are Aboriginal.

Proportion (%) of children and young people, aged 0-24, by Aboriginal status



Number of children and young people

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
0-4 years	1,790	882	908
5-9 years	1,893	824	1,069
10-14 years	1,637	621	1,016
15-19 years	1,538	596	942
20-24 years	1,651	674	977
Total	8,510	3,597	4,913

Data source and year: Modelled based on SA2, IARE and IREG 2016 ERP and the ABS Census of Population and Housing, August 2016, prepared by PHIDU (special table).

Data source and year: ABS 3235.0 Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2019.

EDUCATION



Almost 3 in 10 people, aged 15 and over (28.1%), have a higher education qualification. The proportion is higher in Katherine, at almost 4 in 10 people (37.7%). There is a higher proportion of people where Year 10 is their highest level of education outside of Katherine, at more than 2 in 10 people (23.0%).

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
People, aged 15 and over, who have a higher education qualification (above Year 12 level)	28.1%	37.7%	17.3%
People, aged 15 and over, for whom Year 12 is their highest level of education	8.3%	9.2%	7.3%
People, aged 15 and over, for whom Year 10 or equivalent (including Year 11, Certificate I and II) is their highest level of education	19.2%	15.8%	23.0%

EMPLOYMENT



More than half of people, aged 15-64 (51.2%), participate in the workforce across the region. The workforce participation rate is higher in Katherine, 6 in 10 people (60.8%) than outside of Katherine, 4 in 10 people (40.9%). Of those who participate in the workforce, about 1 in 10 people (9.2%) are unemployed. The rate of unemployment differs substantially between those who live in and outside of Katherine. The major employment industries in Big Rivers are public administration and safety, health care and social assistance, and education and training.^a

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
People, aged 15-64, who participate in the workforce (employed or actively looking for work)	51.2%	60.8%	40.9%
People who are unemployed, of those who participate in the workforce	9.2%	3.7%	17.9%

Data source and year: ABS Housing and Population Census, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016. ^a ABS Housing and Population Census, 2016.



Domain 1

Being valued, loved and safe

Children and young people should be valued, loved and safe in the environment they grow up in, both in the family and the broader community. This need includes having loving family relationships, positive connections with their peers and other adults, and personal and community safety. These factors are critical for children and young people's healthy development and their ability to socialise, to understand society and to shape their future. When children are valued, loved and safe, they are more confident, resilient and have a stronger sense of identity.


The available data for this domain is service-based and commonly reports deficits rather than positive outcomes. The Editorial Committee investigated strength-based measures and there will be continued effort in the preparation of the 2023 Story. A case study highlights the positive work being done to ensure children and young people are valued, loved and safe.

There is the addition of one measure in this domain for the number of young people in detention. This new measure responds to a data gap identified in the 2019 Story.

In this domain, the two outcomes of safe families and safe communities are explored through eight indicators and one case study.


1.1 Safe families

1.1.1 Domestic and family violence

Number and proportion (%) of children, aged 0-17, in notifications with domestic and family violence recorded as a contributing factor 

		BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	Number	1,459	600	859
	Proportion	22.6%	21.8%	23.2%
Aboriginal	Number	1,409	555	854
	Proportion	30.2%	43.0%	25.3%
Non-Aboriginal	Number	50	45	5
	Proportion	2.8%	3.1%	1.5%

Data source and year: NT Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (special table extracted on 9 August 2021), 2020-21. Proportions calculated using 2016 ERP based on the ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table).

Number of domestic and family violence offences where children, aged 0-17, were subject to violence or heard/saw the incident 



Data source and year: NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services (special table extracted on 4 August 2021), 2020-21. Note: This measure is not available by Aboriginal status.

1.1.2 Child abuse or neglect

Child abuse and neglect refers to behaviour or treatment that either harms or has the potential to harm a child or young person, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, exposure to domestic and family violence, sexual abuse and neglect.

Number of notifications of child abuse or neglect

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	5,431	2,418	3,013
Aboriginal	5,179	2,183	2,996
Non-Aboriginal	252	235	17

Data source and year: NT Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (special table extracted on 9 August 2021), 2020-21. Note: Children can be reported on more than one occasion in a year.

Number and proportion (%) of children, aged 0-17, with notifications of child abuse or neglect

		BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	Number	2,648	978	1,670
	Proportion	41.1%	35.6%	45.2%
Aboriginal	Number	2,492	833	1,659
	Proportion	53.4%	64.5%	49.2%
Non-Aboriginal	Number	156	145	11
	Proportion	8.8%	9.9%	3.4%

Data source and year: NT Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (special table extracted on 9 August 2021), 2020-21. Proportions calculated using 2016 ERP based on the ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table).



A SPACE FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Youth Justice Group Conferencing (Group Conferencing) is a restorative justice program which has been operated by Jesuit Social Services across the Northern Territory since 2017. Under the *Youth Justice Act, 2005 (NT)*, young people pleading guilty to an offence can be referred by the Courts to participate in a Group Conference prior to sentencing. Referrals can also be made via the Back on Track program and other diversionary and sentencing pathways. Since its commencement the program has seen 107 Group Conferences held (January 2017 to June 2021).

Restorative justice views crime as more than breaking the law – it recognises crime also causes harm to individuals, relationships and the community. A Group Conference creates a safe space where affected parties can understand what happened, how people have been affected, and make a plan to repair the harm and improve things for the future.

For young people, a Group Conference provides the opportunity to tell their story, develop insight into the true impact of their offending behaviour, and take practical steps to repair the harm they have caused and avoid further offending. For victims, it provides a safe and structured space for their voice to be heard and to have a say in how the young person can make amends.

An internal evaluation of the program undertook conversations with young people and victims. Over the first two years, all but one young person reported an improved understanding of the impact of their behaviour. Almost 6 in 10 young people (59%) indicated their understanding improved 'a lot'. One young person shared, "All of it, it was one big change. It was like a wake-up call for me that I had to change and stop doing bad stuff and concentrate on my future."

In conversations with victims, almost 8 in 10 victims (78%) shared they were satisfied with the overall process and would recommend Group Conferencing to other victims of crime. Over 8 in 10 victims (85%) believed the young person had a better understanding of the impact of their actions on the victim at the end of the conference.

Photo: A space set up for a Group Conference in Katherine

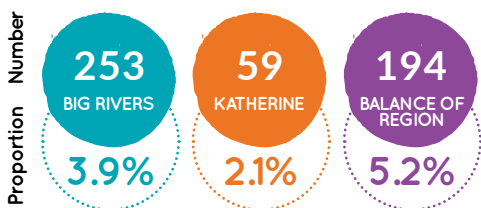
Substantiated cases of child abuse or neglect are those in which an investigation of a notification has confirmed there was reasonable cause to believe the child had been, or was likely to be harmed.

Number of substantiated investigations for children, aged 0-17



Data source and year: NT Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (special table extracted on 9 August 2021), 2020-21.
 Note: 1. This measure is not reportable by Aboriginal status due to small numbers.
 2. In July 2018 the NT Government introduced the One Child One Case policy to improve the way in which the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities responds to subsequent notifications for children who have a current open case. As a result, fewer investigations have been commenced.

Number and proportion (%) of children, aged 0-17, who were the subject of a substantiated investigation



Data source and year: NT Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (special table extracted on 9 August 2021), 2020-21. Proportions calculated using 2016 ERP based on the ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table).
 Note: This measure is not reportable by Aboriginal status due to small numbers.

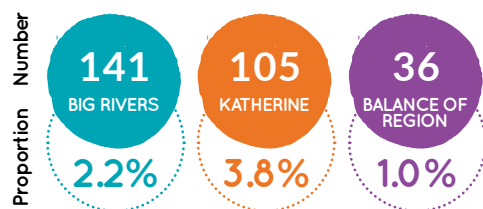
Resubstantiation refers to the circumstance when children who were the subject of a substantiated episode of child abuse and neglect are the subject of another substantiation within 12 months.

Number and proportion (%) of children, aged 0-17, who were the subject of resubstantiation, within 12 months

		Big Rivers	Katherine	Balance of Region
All	Number	34	9	25
	Proportion	10.6%	7.1%	12.9%
Aboriginal	Number	34	9	25
	Proportion	10.9%	7.6%	13.0%
Non-Aboriginal	Number	0	0	0
	Proportion	0%	0%	0%

Data source and year: NT Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (special table extracted on 9 August 2021), 2020-21. Proportions calculated using numbers of children who were the subject of a substantiated investigation in 2019-20.
 Note: 1. In July 2018 the NT Government introduced the One Child One Case policy to improve the way in which the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities responds to subsequent notifications for children who have a current open case. As a result, fewer investigations have been commenced.

Number and proportion (%) of children, aged 0-17, in out-of-home care



Data source and year: NT Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (special table extracted on 9 August 2021), 2020-21. Proportions calculated using 2016 ERP based on the ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table).
 Note: 1. This measure is not reportable by Aboriginal status due to small numbers.
 2. Numbers are estimated as at 1 July 2021. 3. Geography is where children are placed and not where they are from.

1.2 Safe communities

1.2.1 House break-ins

The number of reported house break-in offences for houses with children is not available, however there is data on all house break-in offences. This was chosen as one measure of community safety as it relates to a child's sense of safety in their community and at home.

Number of house break-in offences



Data source and year: NT Department of Attorney General and Justice (special table extracted on 11 August 2021), 2020-21.

1.2.2 Children and young people as victims of crime

Offences against the person are crimes that involve physical harm or force, such as physical assault.

Number and annual rate (per 1,000 population) of victims, aged 0-17, of an offence against a person

		Big Rivers	Katherine	Balance of Region
All	Number	155	155	0
	Rate	24.0	56.4	0
Aboriginal	Number	149	149	0
	Rate	31.9	115.4	0
Non-Aboriginal	Number	6	6	0
	Rate	3.4	4.1	0

Number and annual rate (per 1,000 population) of victims, aged 18-24, of an offence against a person

		BIG RIVERS
All	Number	254
	Rate	109.4
Aboriginal	Number	236
	Rate	159.5
Non-Aboriginal	Number	18
	Rate	21.4

Data source and year: NT Department of Attorney General and Justice (special table extracted on 11 August 2021), 2020-21. Rates calculated using 2016 ERP based on the ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table). Note: 1. Victims, aged 18-24, is not reportable by sub-region due to small numbers. 2. Crimes are counted once for each incident. Victims may be counted more than once, for different incidents, in a year.

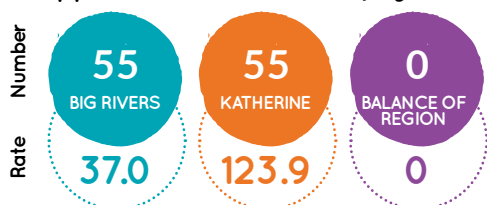
1.2.3 Young people involved in crime

An apprehension is any offence where a young person was arrested, issued a summons or notice to appear before court, or referred for youth diversion.

Number and rate (per 1,000 population) of apprehensions of males, aged 10-17

		BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	Number	191	191	0
	Rate	121.3	357.1	0
Aboriginal	Number	191	191	0
	Rate	191.4	673.5	0
Non-Aboriginal	Number	0	0	0
	Rate	0	0	0

Number and rate (per 1,000 population) of apprehensions of females, aged 10-17



Data source and year: NT Department of Attorney General and Justice (special table extracted on 17 August 2021), 2020-21. Rates calculated using 2016 ERP based on the ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table). Note: 1. Apprehensions of females are not reportable by Aboriginal status due to small numbers. 2. Apprehensions are calculated as one event for a person for one date. 3. In July 2020 the NT Department of Attorney General and Justice changed their standard counting rules to include where a young person received a 'Youth Diversion Assessment' as they are alleged to have committed an offence(s).

1.2.4 Youth diversion

Youth diversion programs include written or verbal warnings, family group conferences and victim-offender group conferences.

Number of diversions for young people, aged 10-17



Data source and year: NT Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Services (special table extracted on 9 August 2021), 2020-21. Note: 1. This measure is not available by Aboriginal status.

1.2.5 Young people in detention

Daily average number of young people, aged 10-17, in a youth detention centre

		BIG RIVERS
All		2.4
Aboriginal		2.4
Non-Aboriginal		0

Data source and year: NT Department of Territory Families Housing and Communities (special table extracted on 19 August 2021), 2020-21. Note: 1. This measure is not available by sub-region. 2. This measure reports where the young person was located at the time of the offence.

1.2.6 Young people in prison

Daily average number of young men and women, aged 18-24, in Northern Territory prisons

		BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
Men	All	38.2	38.2	0
	Aboriginal	36.5	36.5	0
	Non-Aboriginal	1.7	1.7	0
Women	All	1.6	1.6	0
	Aboriginal	1.6	1.6	0
	Non-Aboriginal	0	0	0

Data source and year: NT Department of Attorney General and Justice (special table extracted on 9 August 2021), 2020-21.



visit the data platform for more information on these measures.
cmc.nt.gov.au/children



Domain 2

Having material basics

Material basics are the foundational elements that children and young people need in life. These include a safe house to live in, adequate and nutritious food, clean water and appropriate clothing. Income is crucial for a family to pay for basic living expenses. Children who experience poverty early in life are more likely to experience ongoing disadvantage.

The majority of the measures in this domain are reported from the 2016 Census and so there are no changes since the 2019 Story. A measure specific to children, aged 14 and under, has been added to the indicator of internet access. Mobile phone use remains a data gap.

In this domain, four outcomes of financial stability, adequate housing, communication and technology, and access to transport are explored through six indicators and one case study.

2.1 Financial stability

2.1.1 Socioeconomic disadvantage

The measure of Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage is a score for relative socioeconomic disadvantage, with scores below 1,000 indicating relative disadvantage, and scores above 1,000 indicating relative advantage.

Scores for relative socioeconomic disadvantage



Data source and year: ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

2.1.2 Family income

Department of Social Services classify households with children aged 15 and under, earning under \$36,515 per annum in receipt of the Family Tax Benefit Part A as 'low income' households.

Proportion (%) of children, aged 15 and under, living in low income households



Data source and year: Department of Social Services, prepared by PHIDU (special table), June 2017.

Note: 1. Households are private dwellings only.
2. This measure is not available by sub-region or Aboriginal status.

2.2 Adequate housing

2.2.1 Overcrowded households

The ABS defines households as severely crowded when four or more extra bedrooms would be needed to accommodate the number of people usually living there. Information on overcrowding is not available for families, children or young people. This measure is based on people of any age.

Number and rate (per 10,000 of the population) of people living in severely crowded dwellings

		BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	Number	2,165	198	1,967
	Rate	1,393.0	267.6	2,415.1
Aboriginal	Number	2,157	nr	nr
	Rate	2,494.6	nr	nr
Non-Aboriginal	Number	8	nr	nr
	Rate	12.0	nr	nr

Data source and year: ABS Housing and Population Census, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

Note: 1. (nr) not reportable due to small numbers.
2. Rates are expressed as number per 10,000 population of usual residents.



2.2.2 Children and young people who are homeless

The ABS defines homelessness as the condition when a person's current living arrangement is in a dwelling that is inadequate; has no secure tenure; or does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations. This includes people living in temporary arrangements, boarding houses, tents or sleep out and in severely overcrowded dwellings.

Proportion (%) of children and young people, aged 0-24, who are homeless  



Data source and year: ABS Housing and Population Census, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

Note: This measure is not available by sub-region or Aboriginal status.

2.3 Communication and technology

2.3.1 Internet access

Proportion (%) of households where internet was accessed from dwelling   

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	65.6%	75.0%	51.7%
Aboriginal	48.0%	55.8%	43.9%
Non-Aboriginal	77.0%	80.6%	65.4%

Proportion (%) of children, aged 14 and under, living in dwellings from which internet was not accessed 

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	36.3%	17.5%	50.1%
Aboriginal	49.5%	35.7%	53.7%
Non-Aboriginal	6.4%	6.2%	7.2%

Data source and year: ABS Housing and Population Census, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

2.4 Access to transport

2.4.1 Household access to a vehicle

Proportion (%) of dwellings with no motor vehicle 

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	19.1%	7.9%	35.6%
Aboriginal	42.7%	24.5%	52.5%
Non-Aboriginal	3.8%	3.0%	6.1%

Data source and year: ABS Housing and Population Census, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.



A COMMUNITY SHUTTLE BUS – UPDATE

The community shuttle bus has continued to run in Katherine, providing residents with free transport into town. Run by the Kalano Community Association, the bus transports an average of 550 people each week providing easier access for business, medical and recreational needs through the day. Users of the bus service say the money they save on the cost of taxis means they can better afford groceries and other household expenses. Kalano also runs a night patrol service to help people travel home or to safe locations after the shuttle bus stops in the afternoon.

Photo: Katherine's community bus transports an average of 550 people each week





Domain 3

Being healthy

It is essential to take good care of the health and wellbeing of children and young people to ensure good health and opportunity into adulthood. Health is impacted by many factors including individual physiology, lifestyle, environmental and cultural influences and access to appropriate health care and support services. Children are particularly vulnerable in their early years and dependent on parents and caregivers for their physical and emotional needs.

There have been a number of developments in the measures used to indicate the health of children and young people from the 2019 Story. A measure of pre-term births has been added and three indicators of the health of young people have been added to address data gaps identified in 2019 – smoking prevalence, being mentally healthy and incidence of sexually transmissible infections.

In this domain, three outcomes of healthy before birth, healthy in the first year and growing up healthy are explored through 16 indicators and one cultural story of wellness.

3.1 Healthy before birth

3.1.1 Early antenatal visits

Antenatal care is the care received from health professionals during pregnancy to support the health of both the pregnant woman and the unborn child.

Proportion (%) of pregnant women with first antenatal visit in first trimester (less than 14 weeks) **CTG** **SOF**

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	74.8%	84.0%	62.2%
Aboriginal	64.8%	70.4%	61.7%
Non-Aboriginal	91.1%	92.2%	71.4%

Data source and year: NT Perinatal Data Collection, prepared by NT Department of Health (special table), 2019.

3.1.2 Regular antenatal visits

Proportion (%) of pregnant women who attended five or more antenatal visits **CTG** **SOF**

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	89.4%	92.0%	85.9%
Aboriginal	85.4%	84.5%	85.9%
Non-Aboriginal	95.9%	96.6%	85.7%

Data source and year: NT Perinatal Data Collection, prepared by NT Department of Health (special table), 2019.

3.1.3 Teenage mothers

Proportion (%) of births to women aged under 20 **SOF**



Data source and year: NT Perinatal Data Collection, prepared by NT Department of Health (special table), 2019.
Note: This measure is not reportable by Aboriginal status due to small numbers.

3.1.4 Smoking during pregnancy

Proportion (%) of women who reported smoking during pregnancy **CTG**

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	41.0%	26.2%	61.5%
Aboriginal	61.3%	54.9%	64.8%
Non-Aboriginal	8.1%	8.6%	0%

Data source and year: NT Perinatal Data Collection, prepared by NT Department of Health (special table), 2019.

3.1.5 Alcohol consumption during pregnancy

Proportion (%) of babies exposed to alcohol in first trimester of pregnancy 

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	11.4%	9.0%	14.7%
Aboriginal	15.9%	16.7%	15.5%
Non-Aboriginal	4.1%	4.3%	0%

Proportion (%) of babies exposed to alcohol in third trimester of pregnancy 

	BIG RIVERS
All	2.5%
Aboriginal	4.0%
Non-Aboriginal	0%

Data source and year: NT Perinatal Data Collection, prepared by NT Department of Health (special table), 2019.

Note: Proportion of babies exposed to alcohol in third trimester is not reportable by sub-region due to small numbers.

3.2 Healthy in the first year

3.2.1 Pre-term births

Pre-term birth is associated with increased risks including long-term neurological disability, re-admission to hospital in the first year of life and perinatal death.

Proportion (%) of pre-term births (less than 37 weeks) 

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	15.7%	10.6%	22.8%
Aboriginal	22.9%	nr	nr
Non-Aboriginal	4.1%	nr	nr

Data source and year: NT Perinatal Data Collection, prepared by NT Department of Health (special table), 2019.

Note: (nr) not reportable due to small numbers.

3.2.2 Low birthweight



Proportion (%) of babies born with low birthweight (less than 2,500g) 



Data source and year: NT Perinatal Data Collection, prepared by NT Department of Health (special table), 2019.

Note: This measure is not reportable by Aboriginal status due to small numbers.

3.2.3 Infant mortality

Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)  



Data source and year: Australian Coordinating Registry, Cause of Death Unit Record Files, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2014-18.

Note: This measure is not available by sub-region or Aboriginal status.

3.2.4 Breastfeeding

Proportion (%) of babies exclusively breastfed to 6 months of age 



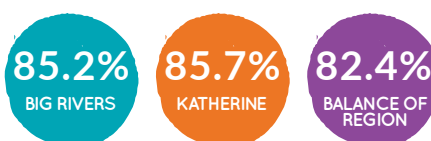
Data source and year: 2017-18 National Health Survey and 2018-2019 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey, ABS. Data extracted for non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal populations separately using ABS TableBuilder and combined, 9 August 2021 (special table).

Note: 1. Survey results for children aged 6 months to 3 years at time of data collection. 2. The 2019 Story reported exclusive breastfeeding to 3 months of age. 3. This measure is not available by region or Aboriginal status.

3.3 Growing up healthy

3.3.1 Child immunisation



Proportion (%) of children fully immunised at age two 



Data source and year: Australian Immunisation Register, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2018.

Note: This measure is not available by Aboriginal status.

3.3.2 Bodyweight for children and young people

Proportion (%) of children and young people, aged 2-19, who were overweight or obese  



Data source and year: 2017-18 National Health Survey and 2018-2019 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey, ABS. Data extracted for non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal populations separately using ABS TableBuilder and combined, 9 August 2021 (special table).

Note: This measure is not available by region or Aboriginal status.



visit the data platform for more information on these measures. cmc.nt.gov.au/children



NWARAN, AN ASTROLOGICAL NAMING CEREMONY

“My name is Manju and I was born in Kathmandu, Nepal. I came to Australia in 2007 and my husband and I have two children. In Nepalese culture we hold an astrological naming ceremony, a ‘Nwaran’, on the 11th day after the birth of a baby. A priest visits the family for the ceremony and family and friends attend, it is quite big.


During the Nwaran, a Hom (meaning fire) is conducted to purify the baby, mother and house. We put ghee on a stick of wood and light it and the priest says a mantra. This is very auspicious and means the family and the house are purified. Bad spirits will be removed from the house.

Nepalese people have two names, their common name and an astrological name. As part of the Nwaran, the priest will look at the time of the birth of the baby and make an astrological horoscope. The China (pronounced ch – e – na), also known as Janma Kundali, is an astrological chart which is prepared based on the date, time and place of a baby’s birth. The chart determines the location of planets, the sun and the moon. This sets out the astrological aspects of a person.

When a child is unwell, the China can be used to determine what has caused the illness. If anything arises for health and wellbeing, for physical and mental health we can look to the astrological reading. If a child is unsettled, we believe there are bad shadows and the Astrologer can look to the China to see the cause and how it can be fixed. My children’s China is with my husband’s family in Nepal.”

Photo: Manju (right) with her mother Mohan (left) and children Nirran and Myra

3.3.3 Children and young people with a disability


Number and proportion (%) of children and young people, aged 0-24, who have need for assistance with core activities 

		BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	Number	81	61	20
	Proportion	1.0%	1.8%	0.5%
Aboriginal	Number	43	21	22
	Proportion	0.9%	2.0%	0.6%
Non-Aboriginal	Number	38	38	0
	Proportion	1.8%	2.1%	0%

Data source and year: ABS Housing and Population Census, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

3.3.4 Mentally healthy


Mental health-related conditions are common and only a small proportion of individuals with these conditions are ever admitted to hospital. However, hospital admission records provide a consistent and reliable measure for mental health.

Number and rate (per 10,000 population) of hospital admissions for mental health-related conditions for young people, aged 15-24 

		BIG RIVERS
All	Number	98
	Rate	300.4
Aboriginal	Number	83
	Rate	381.4
Non-Aboriginal	Number	15
	Rate	138.2

Data source and year: NT Department of Health (special table), 2020. Rates calculated using ABS Census 2016 data, prepared by PHIDU (special table).
Note: This measure is not available by sub-region.

3.3.5 Smoking prevalence among young people

Proportion (%) of young men and women, aged 15-24, who are current smokers 

		NORTHERN TERRITORY
Men		46.3%
Women		24.5%

Data source and year: 2017-18 National Health Survey and 2018-2019 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey, ABS. Data extracted for non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal populations separately using ABS TableBuilder and combined, 9 August 2021 (special table).

Note: This measure is not available by region or Aboriginal status.

3.3.6 Sexually transmissible infections

Data is not available for all sexually transmissible infections (STIs). This Story reports the rates of two common diseases, chlamydia and gonorrhoea.

Number and rate (per 100,000 population) of chlamydia and gonorrhoea notifications among young people, aged 15-24

		BIG RIVERS
Chlamydia	Number	185
	Rate	5,671.8
Gonorrhoea	Number	99
	Rate	3,035.2

Data source and year: NT Department of Health (special table), 2020. Rates calculated using ABS Census 2016 data, prepared by NT Department of Health (special table).
Note: 1. Data are reported by NT health districts, which varies marginally from the geography used elsewhere in this Story.
2. This measure is not available by sub-region.

3.3.7 Death of children and young people

Death rate (per 100,000 population) for children, aged 1-14, and young people, aged 15-24 

		NORTHERN TERRITORY
Children		32.5
Young people		119.0

Data source and year: ABS 3303.0 Causes of Death, 2019.
Note: 1. ABS rates are based on preliminary death data and are subject to revision.
2. This measure is not available by region or Aboriginal status due to small numbers.



visit the data platform for more information on these measures.
cmc.nt.gov.au/children



Domain 4

Learning

Children and young people are constantly learning as they grow and develop. Learning takes place in many ways, at home with family, through interaction with the wider community and in formal settings, like schools.


There are a number of developments, from the 2019 Story, in this domain. A measure of developmentally on track has been added as an additional indicator for transitioning to school. There has been a change in the measure for preschool attendance to report the proportion of children attending a preschool program for 15 hours or more per week, to be consistent with national reporting. A measure of vocational education and training participation has also been added.

In this domain six outcomes of parent engagement in learning, early childhood learning, transitioning into school, school attendance, school progress and vocational learning are explored through 15 indicators and one case study.

4.1 Parent engagement in learning

4.1.1 Reading at home

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) is a nationwide survey of how young children are developing and their readiness for formal schooling as they begin their first year of full-time school. Teachers complete a questionnaire based on their knowledge and observation of the children in their class.

Proportion (%) of children who are regularly read to or encouraged to read at home 

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	51.4%	68.3%	33.1%
Aboriginal	29.7%	nr	nr
Non-Aboriginal	91.9%	nr	nr

Data source and year: Australian Early Development Census, prepared by Australian Department of Education, Skills and Employment (special table extracted on 6 October 2021), 2018.

Note: 1. Results include teachers' responses of 'Somewhat true' or 'Very true'.
2. (nr) not reportable due to small numbers.

4.1.2 Participation in Families as First Teachers as First Teachers

There are a number of early childhood and family support programs, Families as First Teachers (FaFT) being one of them. The aim of FaFT is to improve developmental outcomes for children by working with families and children, aged 0-4, prior to school entry. Data is not available to measure Territory-wide participation in similar programs.

Participation in Families as First Teachers program




	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
Number of communities	13	1	12
Number of children	711	87	624
Average days for children	21.8	13.0	23.0

Data source and year: Families as First Teachers (FaFT) program, prepared by NT Department of Education (special table) 2020.

Note: 1. Children can attend multiple FaFT program sites during the year; each child is counted once in a sub-region; data for the region may count a child more than once if they have attended a FaFT program in more than one sub-region in the year.
2. The average days is the average number of days each child attended over the reporting period.



4.1.3 Parent engagement with school

Proportion (%) of children whose parents or caregivers are actively engaged with the school in supporting their child's learning (SOP) 

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	67.9%	73.8%	61.5%
Aboriginal	54.1%	nr	nr
Non-Aboriginal	93.5%	nr	nr

Data source and year: Australian Early Development Census, prepared by Australian Department of Education, Skills and Employment (special table extracted on 6 October 2021), 2018.

Note: 1. Results include teachers' responses of 'Somewhat true' or 'Very true'. 2. (nr) not reportable due to small numbers.

4.2 Early childhood learning

4.2.1 Child care attendance

Proportion (%) of children, aged 0-5, attending approved child care (SOP) 

	BIG RIVERS
All	17.0%
Aboriginal	6.9%
Non-Aboriginal	38.9%

Data source and year: Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (special table), December quarter 2020. Proportions calculated using ABS 3235.0 Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

Note: This measure is not available by sub-region.

4.2.2 Preschool attendance

Proportion (%) of children, aged 4, attending a preschool program (CTG) (SOP)  

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	72.9%	90.4%	55.4%
Aboriginal	61.4%	nr	nr
Non-Aboriginal	98.0%	nr	nr

Proportion (%) of children, aged 4, attending a preschool program for 15 hours or more per week

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	59.4%	81.7%	23.0%
Aboriginal	38.6%	70.0%	19.5%
Non-Aboriginal	87.6%	88.0%	80.0%

Data source and year: Age Grade Census, prepared by NT Department of Education (special table), 2020. Proportions calculated using 2016 ERP based on the ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table).

Note: 1. (nr) not reportable due to small numbers.

2. Data include NT Government and Catholic schools only and does not include preschool programs provided at centre-based care by a qualified worker.

4.3 Transitioning into school

4.3.1 Developmentally on track

The AEDC measures the early development of children aged 5 across five key domains: physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills (school-based), and communication skills and general knowledge. Children are considered 'developmentally on track' if they score in the top 75% of the scores for the reference population in a domain.

Proportion (%) of children assessed as developmentally on track in all five domains (CTG) (SOP)   

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	27.6%	40.8%	14.0%
Aboriginal	13.0%	nr	nr
Non-Aboriginal	54.2%	nr	nr



Data source and year: Australian Early Development Census, prepared by Australian Department of Education, Skills and Employment (special table extracted on 6 October 2021), 2018.

Note: (nr) not reportable due to small numbers.





4.3.2 Developmental vulnerability

Children are considered 'developmentally vulnerable' if they score in the lowest 10% of the scores for the reference population in a domain.

Proportion (%) of children assessed as developmentally vulnerable in one or more domains  

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	54.8%	40.2%	69.9%
Aboriginal	71.0%	nr	nr
Non-Aboriginal	25.4%	nr	nr

Proportion (%) of children assessed as developmentally vulnerable in two or more domains  



	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	42.2%	27.5%	57.5%
Aboriginal	58.8%	nr	nr
Non-Aboriginal	12.1%	nr	nr

Data source and year: Australian Early Development Census, prepared by Australian Department of Education, Skills and Employment (special table extracted on 6 October 2021), 2018.

Note: (nr) not reportable due to small numbers.

4.3.3 Developmental strengths

The Multiple Strengths Indicator (MSI) was developed in 2017 to complement the existing AEDC measures of vulnerability with a strength-based view of early childhood development. The MSI uses the same Early Development Instrument used in the AEDC and has 39 items.

Proportion (%) of children assessed as having highly developed, well developed and emerging strengths using Multiple Strengths Indicator  

		BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
Highly developed strengths	All	32.5%	46.1%	18.2%
	Aboriginal	17.7%	nr	nr
	Non-Aboriginal	59.0%	nr	nr
Well developed strengths	All	19.3%	17.4%	21.4%
	Aboriginal	20.6%	nr	nr
	Non-Aboriginal	17.1%	nr	nr
Emerging strengths	All	47.9%	36.5%	59.7%
	Aboriginal	61.2%	nr	nr
	Non-Aboriginal	23.9%	nr	nr

Data source and year: Australian Early Development Census, prepared by Australian Department of Education, Skills and Employment (special table extracted on 6 October 2021), 2018.

Note: (nr) not reportable due to small numbers.

4.3.4 Transition attendance

School attendance in Transition, NT Government Schools  

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	67.0%	83.1%	51.1%
Aboriginal	57.2%	72.4%	50.2%
Non-Aboriginal	90.0%	91.8%	69.8%

Data source and year: Enrolment and Attendance data, prepared by NT Department of Education (special table), 2020.




Note: Data reporting period covers weeks 1 to 4 and weeks 5 to 8 of each term in a calendar year.

4.4 School attendance

4.4.1 School attendance

School attendance in Year 3, NT Government schools  

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	67.5%	81.4%	54.7%
Aboriginal	60.1%	72.1%	53.7%
Non-Aboriginal	92.1%	93.0%	nr

School attendance in Year 7, NT Government Schools   

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	64.6%	73.8%	44.0%
Aboriginal	52.2%	60.2%	42.7%
Non-Aboriginal	87.9%	88.2%	nr

Data source and year: Enrolment and Attendance data, prepared by the NT Department of Education (special table), 2020.

Note: 1. (nr) not reportable due to small numbers. 2. Data reporting period covers weeks 1 to 4 and weeks 5 to 8 of each term in a calendar year.

Proportion (%) of all Preschool to Year 12 students, with more than 80% school attendance, NT Government schools  

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	31.0%	51.8%	11.2%
Aboriginal	17.2%	31.7%	10.1%
Non-Aboriginal	70.0%	71.4%	46.5%

Data source and year: Enrolment and Attendance data, prepared by the NT Department of Education (special table), 2020.

Note: 1. Students who are passive at the end of the reporting period are excluded. 2. Students can attend multiple school sites during the year; each student is counted once in a sub-region; data for the region may count a child more than once if they have attended a school site in more than one sub-region in the year.

4.4.2 Continuation to Year 12

This measure is the proportion of students enrolled in Year 12, out of all students enrolled in the corresponding cohort in Year 7, for Northern Territory Government and Catholic schools. The rate may not accurately reflect all students who have completed Year 12 as students may travel to attend school in other regions or interstate.

Apparent retention from Year 7 to Year 12



	BIG RIVERS
All	26.0%
Aboriginal	17.7%
Non-Aboriginal	44.4%

Data source and year: Age Grade Census data, prepared by NT Department of Education (special table), 2020.

Note: 1. Data include NT Government and Catholic schools only. 2. Data is an underestimate due to interstate movement of students between Years 7 and 12 to complete school. Similarly results for regions may under or overestimate apparent retention as a result of movement of students between regions. This is most common with students from remote areas going to Greater Darwin and to Alice Springs to complete school. 3. This measure is not available by sub-region.

4.5 School progress

4.5.1 Literacy and numeracy skills

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is a nationwide annual assessment for students. The test assesses skills considered essential to progress through school in the domains of reading and writing, language conventions and numeracy. Due to the disruptions to education caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, NAPLAN assessments were not completed in 2020.



visit the data platform for more information on these measures.
cmc.nt.gov.au/children

Proportion (%) of students in Year 3 reaching the minimum national standard in literacy

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	64.1%	80.5%	41.2%
Aboriginal	45.9%	56.5%	40.0%
Non-Aboriginal	95.0%	95.9%	nr

Proportion (%) of students in Year 3 reaching the minimum national standard in numeracy

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	59.8%	82.1%	30.4%
Aboriginal	38.0%	56.4%	28.8%
Non-Aboriginal	96.0%	96.9%	nr

Proportion (%) of students in Year 7 reaching the minimum national standard in literacy

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	47.2%	62.0%	23.6%
Aboriginal	29.4%	37.3%	22.7%
Non-Aboriginal	89.7%	89.6%	nr

Proportion (%) of students in Year 7 reaching the minimum national standard in numeracy

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	55.8%	61.5%	45.8%
Aboriginal	41.8%	38.2%	45.1%
Non-Aboriginal	88.2%	88.1%	nr

Data source and year: NT Department of Education (special table), 2019.

Note: 1. Data include NT Government and Catholic schools only.
 2. (nr) not reportable due to small numbers



4.5.2 Year 12 or equivalent completion

Proportion (%) of young people, aged 20-24, who have attained a Year 12 or equivalent qualification **CTG** **SOF**

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	31.8%	45.2%	21.3%
Aboriginal	14.6%	21.0%	12.9%
Non-Aboriginal	68.7%	68.5%	69.2%

Data source and year: ABS Housing and Population Census, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016

4.5.3 NTCET completion

The Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET) is the final school qualification for students in the Northern Territory.

Proportion (%) of enrolled students who completed NTCET **SOF**

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	90.9%	90.9%	na
Aboriginal	83.3%	83.3%	na
Non-Aboriginal	93.0%	93.0%	na

Data source and year: NT Department of Education (special table), 2020.

Note: 1. (na) not available. 2. Data include NT Government and Catholic schools only.

4.6 Vocational learning

4.6.1 Vocational education and training participation

This measure reports young people, aged 15-24, who participated in both government subsidised and fee for service vocational education and training (VET) enrolments in 2019, regardless of the year they commenced. It includes school students engaged in VET.

Number and rate (per 1,000 population) of young people, aged 15-24, who participate in vocational education and training **CTG** **SOF**

		BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	Number	1,132	835	297
	Rate	347.0	626.9	153.9
Aboriginal	Number	510	296	214
	Rate	234.3	531.8	132.1
Non-Aboriginal	Number	622	539	83
	Rate	572.9	695.1	267.6

Data source and year: NCVET Total VET Activity prepared by NT Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade (special table), 2019. Rates calculated using 2016 ERP based on the ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table).





BUILDING A BRIDGE TO TERTIARY EDUCATION

Since 2018, the Wuyagiba Regional Study Hub, located between Ngukurr and Numbulwar, has offered university preparation courses for local Aboriginal students. It is a partnership between the Macquarie University in Sydney and South-East Arnhem Land communities and is funded by the Commonwealth Government's Regional University Centre program.

The course offered by the Study Hub combines traditional knowledge and academic skills. Kevin Guyurruyurru Rogers, Cultural Professor, Chairman of the Wuyagiba Bush Hub Aboriginal Corporation and Warndarrang Traditional Owner of Wuyagiba outstation said, "It's both ways education we provide here. Learning about our cultural heritage and the academic side. We teach the cultural side – education about country, bush medicine, bush tucker, culture. The Macquarie University teach the academic side." Macquarie University preparatory units taught at the Study Hub include computing, time management, budgeting and essay writing. Local units include South-East Arnhem Land Caring for Country and Culture and an Indigenous Science unit, both having been accredited through Macquarie.

"We build up their knowledge. We have local staff who work with them to develop their academic level to be able to go to university. We want to make an opportunity for them to be university qualified," Kevin says.

Students attend the Study Hub for two 10-week semesters in the year. In 2020, 12 students successfully completed the university preparation course. Seven previous graduates from the Study Hub are now based full-time at Macquarie University studying a variety of degrees including education, Indigenous studies, performing arts, child care, business and environmental management. Walanga Muru, the Aboriginal student support unit at Macquarie University supports the students while away from home.

A key element to the Study Hub's success is the strength of the partnership between Senior Traditional Owners and the University, and how together they have worked to navigate the many challenges. Kevin also describes the success as "the students themselves, their attendance and the effort they put into their study."

Photo: An outside class at the Wuyagiba Study Hub with teacher Kevin Guyurruyurru Rogers



Domain 5

Participating

It is important for the wellbeing of children and young people that they actively participate with their peers and within the community. Participation can take many forms – it can include children and young people being involved in sport, recreational or social activities, or volunteering with community groups. A key element of participation is children and young people being listened to and supported to have a say on issues affecting their lives and their community.

Measures in this domain focus on young people, aged 15 and above, as there is a lack of reliable information for participation among younger age groups other than formal education. Most measures in this domain use census data. As the latest census was in 2016, the data in these measures

has not changed since the 2019 Story (except for some minor adjustments for changed regional boundaries).

In this domain, the two outcomes of participation in employment or learning and participation in the community, are explored through five indicators.

5.1 Participation in employment or education

5.1.1 Young people earning or learning

Proportion (%) of young people, aged 15-24, who are engaged in school, work or further education and/or training   

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	49.0%	63.6%	38.1%
Aboriginal	37.0%	49.4%	33.8%
Non-Aboriginal	92.5%	92.1%	94.0%

Data source and year: ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

5.1.2 Unemployment among young people

Proportion (%) of young people, aged 15-24, who are unemployed  

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	15.0%	5.9%	26.8%
Aboriginal	36.0%	15.6%	42.8%
Non-Aboriginal	2.4%	3.1%	0%

Data source and year: ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

5.1.3 Community Development Program participation

The Community Development Program (CDP) is an Australian Government employment program operated in remote areas. The program aims to improve job seekers' skills and improve their employability, as well as benefiting the local community.

Proportion (%) of young people, aged 15-24, participating in the CDP

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	4.1%	0.3%	6.9%
Aboriginal	6.9%	nr	nr
Non-Aboriginal	na	na	na

Data source and year: ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

Note: 1. (na) not available. 2. (nr) not reportable due to small numbers.

5.2 Participation in the community

5.2.1 Young people volunteering

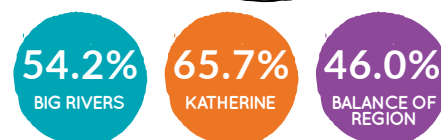
Proportion (%) of young people, aged 15-24, who spent time doing voluntary work  

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	9.8%	12.9%	7.5%
Aboriginal	5.7%	6.1%	5.6%
Non-Aboriginal	20.9%	19.9%	24.4%

Data source and year: ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

5.2.2 Young people enrolled to vote

Proportion (%) of young people, aged 18-24, enrolled to vote 



Data source and year: NT Electoral Commission, 31 March 2021. Proportions calculated using 2016 ERP based on the ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table).

Note: 1. Proportions are calculated using estimated resident populations, with no adjustment for residents not eligible to vote. 2. This measure is not available by Aboriginal status.



Domain 6

Positive sense of identity and culture

Having a positive sense of identity and culture is fundamental to a child or young person's wellbeing. Identity and culture are broad topics which are complex to define. Identity is generally understood to be a person's sense of self, their understanding of who they are, both individually and within their social context. Culture can be described as a shared approach and understanding of people's existence in relation to other people and their environment. Culture encompasses intangible concepts such as religion or spirituality, value systems and norms of behaviour as well as tangible or material items such as food, clothing, art and literature.


Many of the measures in this domain are reported from the 2016 Census with no update to the data available. In this Story there are a number of developments in the measures. The language spoken at home measure has been expanded to include the proportion of young people who speak Aboriginal languages. There are two additional measures presenting

information on language and culture in schools and Aboriginal employment in the Northern Territory Government.

In this domain the three outcomes of connection to culture, spirituality and cultural diversity are explored through eight indicators and one case study.

6.1 Connection to culture

6.1.1 Language spoken at home

Proportion (%) of young people, aged 15-24, who speak English, Aboriginal languages and other languages at home 


		BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
English	All	40.4%	63.0%	23.9%
	Aboriginal	25.8%	60.2%	16.7%
	Non-Aboriginal	88.7%	86.1%	98.4%
All Aboriginal languages		40.7%	9.3%	63.9%
Arnhem Land and Daly River Region Languages		4.0%	na	na
Northern Desert Fringe Area Languages		6.7%	na	na
Other Australian Indigenous Languages		28.2%	na	na

Data source and year: ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.
 Note: 1. Languages spoken at home by less than 1% of the population are not included in this table. 2. When English is recorded it indicates only English is spoken at home. 3. (na) not available.

6.1.2 Connection to Aboriginal culture

Connection to Aboriginal culture is complex and varied, often stemming from practices in the family, in ceremonies and on country which differ across nations and language groups. There is not a measure to adequately represent this connection.

6.1.3 Aboriginal culture in the workplace

Proportion (%) of employees of the Northern Territory Government who identify as Aboriginal 



Data source and year: NT Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment (special table), June 2021.
 Note: 1. Data include permanent, temporary, contract and casual employees. 2. Data does not include Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and NT Legal Aid.

6.1.4 Language and culture in schools

Proportion (%) of classroom teachers in Northern Territory Government schools who identify as Aboriginal



Data source and year: PIPS pay data, prepared by NT Department of Education (special table), 24 June 2020.
 Note: Data exclude other teaching staff (assistant or senior teachers and teaching principals) and school council employees.



visit the data platform for more information on these measures. cmc.nt.gov.au/children

6.1.5 Organisations promoting culture

Number of registered organisations promoting culture and the arts 



Data source and year: Register of Cultural Organisations – Australian Government, 5 March 2021.

Note: 1. Numbers reflect Registered Cultural Organisations (organisations that can receive tax deductible donations and which promote cultural arts and language diversity). For a full list go to: www.arts.gov.au. 2. This measure is not available by sub-region.

6.2 Spirituality

6.2.1 Connection to Aboriginal spirituality

Aboriginal spirituality is broad and holistic and can be understood as a framework that guides all aspects of life including relationships with family, community, environment, animals, plants and the land. While this is an important indicator of wellbeing for Aboriginal children and young people there is no quantitative measure of spirituality for Aboriginal children and young people.

6.2.2 Connection to a faith tradition

Proportion (%) of young people, aged 15-24, identifying with a religion 

	BIG RIVERS	KATHERINE	BALANCE OF REGION
All	43.1%	38.5%	46.4%
Aboriginal	48.6%	43.9%	49.8%
Non-Aboriginal	49.0%	47.6%	54.1%

Data source and year: ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016.

Note: Religion does not include secular or other spiritual beliefs.

6.3 Cultural diversity

6.3.1 Overseas-born

Proportion (%) of children and young people, aged 0-24, born overseas 



Proportion (%) of Australian-born children and young people, aged 0-24, who have both parents born overseas 



Data source and year: ABS Census of Population and Housing, prepared by PHIDU (special table), 2016



visit the data platform for more information on these measures. cmc.nt.gov.au/children





BRINGING LANGUAGE AND CULTURE INTO THE CLASSROOM

“I like working with the kids and I want to help the other teachers to bring language and culture into the school.” Tomisena Duncan, aged 21, is an Assistant Educator at Jilkminggan School, a community 140km from Katherine. Tomisena’s family is from Minyerri, Jilkminggan and Urapunga. Tomisena completed Year 12 while undertaking school-based training to work as an Assistant Educator.

Tomisena has been a leading contributor to the school’s Aboriginal Languages and Culture curriculum and works alongside the school’s Literacy Leader to organise and coordinate a Read Write Inc. Group. In 2020, Tomisena became the first Aboriginal educator to deliver the Read Write Inc. program at Jilkminggan School. She has started incorporating Kriol and traditional language into lessons and requested Read Write Inc. resources which are suitable for students with English as an additional language.

Tomisena said her favourite part about teaching was seeing “when the students are proud of their learning and they want to share it with everyone else. I like to hear the kids sharing stories with me and the other kids, I know they trust me. I like helping the kids to work with their emotions and find ways to calm their minds.”

She is currently completing her Certificate III in Education Support at the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education. “I finish studying at the end of the year and one day I would like to study to become a teacher. Studying away from home is hard so I hope I can find a way to study without having to go too far from my job and my community.”

“It is important to bring the voice of Aboriginal people back into the education of the kids. Aboriginal people know their culture and their language and are the best people to teach this in our schools. I’ve had a lot of support from my family, my teachers and my friends and I want to say thank you to them.”

Photo: Tomisena Duncan with students at Jilkminggan School

DATA CONSIDERATIONS

This Big Rivers Story provides more extensive information than presented in the Story of Our Children and Young People, Northern Territory 2021. The data presented in this Big Rivers Story is drawn from the data platform which may result in minor differences to the data presented in the Northern Territory 2021 edition.

The main reason for this variation is there are some records with missing data for Aboriginal status, location or gender (when reported). Missing data is treated differently between the Northern Territory 2021 edition and this Big Rivers Story:

- In the Northern Territory 2021 edition, records with missing data are included at the level for which data is available with a note reporting missing data for other levels of reporting. For example, if a record does not have location data for a region, the item will be reported for the Northern Territory but excluded in the regional data.
- This Big Rivers Story and the operation of the data platform requires consistency of data between levels of reporting. This requires exclusion of the small number of records with missing data for location, Aboriginal status or gender at all levels of reporting. For example, if a measure presents data by Aboriginal status then records with missing data for Aboriginal status are excluded from all levels of reporting for that measure.

A separate technical consideration is the need for care when publishing data with small counts due to the risk of confidentiality. Data with a count of less than 5 have been suppressed. It is also necessary to suppress related data which allow the calculation of the small number. The suppression of data with small counts has resulted in some items being 'not reportable'. The presentation of information by sub-region and Aboriginal status has resulted in an increase in the amount of data that are 'not reportable'.

For further technical commentary on the data, read Appendix I on page 128 of the Story of Our Children and Young People, Northern Territory 2021.

ACRONYMS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
AEDC	Australian Early Development Census
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ARACY	Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth
CDP	Community Development Program
CFCA	Child Friendly Community Australia
FaFT	Families as First Teachers
FASD	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex and Asexual
MSI	Multiple Strength Indicator
NAIDOC	National Aboriginal and Islander Day of Celebration
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NT	Northern Territory
NTCET	Northern Territory Certificate of Education
PHIDU	Public Health Information Development Unit
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
WHO	World Health Organisation



Where to from here?

For our children and young people of Big Rivers to flourish and reach their potential, there are basic human needs which must be met. While many of our children and young people are flourishing, there are too many who face substantial challenges. The data in this Story highlight both indications of positive change and areas where considerable improvement is needed.

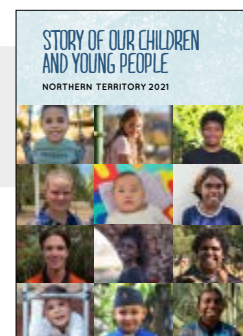
Further information is available for all measures in this Story on the data platform, allowing comparison with Australia, Northern Territory and its other regions. Trend data for select measures is also included to consider changes over time. Use the platform at cmc.nt.gov.au/children.

Process towards the next Story



This is the second Story, a biennial commitment by the Northern Territory Government to track progress over time across key indicators of wellbeing for children and young people. In 2023, progress will again be reviewed through both data measures and stories of positive change. Attention will once more be given to meeting identified data gaps and there will be continued effort to report relevant local indicators.

Further information about the development of the Story and its indicators, with referencing, data sources and appendices, can be found in the Northern Territory edition of the 2021 Story at cmc.nt.gov.au/children.



NOTES

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