

Multi-Agency Community and Child Safety Teams (MACCST) – Community Fact Sheet

What is a MACCST?

Multi-Agency Community and Child Safety Teams (MACCSTs) deliver timely, coordinated responses to ensure Northern Territory children, young people and families are **cared for, protected, safe and able to reach their full potential**. MACCSTs do this through developing collaborative response plans to address identified child, family and community safe risks.

Why do we need a MACCST?

When it comes to coordinating services to ensure child, family and community safety, MACCSTs make sure that Northern Territory Government agencies and their key partners are transparent, accountable and consistent in: remote engagement; the coordination and collaboration of practice within the Government, communities and across regions; and, the responses, recording and tracking of decision making in relation to ideas and local issues raised. It is critical to the success of the MACCSTs that operationalisation is reflective of a set of values and principles with an emphasis on genuine, open and honest engagement with community members and MACCS Team members with cultural authority.

Where are MACCSTs?

MACCSTs are rolling out in at least 27 remote communities and some major centres.

Who is in a MACCST?

MACCST membership must include:

- At least two Aboriginal members of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, local staff of the relevant government agencies and /or members with cultural authority.
- Locally based non-government service providers that provide services for families, children, young people and communities.
- The most senior delegate based in the community from each of the following agencies:
 - Territory Families, Housing and Communities
 - Northern Territory Police
 - Department of Health and/or Aboriginal Medical Service
 - Department of Education and/or Independent School
 - Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet
 - Department of Attorney-General and Justice (Correctional Services)
 - Manager, Children and Families Centre
 - Government Engagement Coordinator (Commonwealth)

It is acknowledged that not all agencies have permanent representatives at each community and the makeup of the MACCST may therefore vary from location to location dependent on local requirements.

From time to time, the MACCST may invite any other person with relevant expertise, resources or cultural authority to attend meetings or present agenda items.

How do I nominate a child, family or community safety concern for a MACCST discussion?

Any person who is worried about the safety of a child, family, group of children or the broader community can make a referral to the MACCST with the assistance of a MACCST Member. For domestic and family violence concerns the referrer can use the Domestic and Family Violence Common Risk Assessment Tool (CRAT) as the referral document, the CRAT can be found at [here](#).

Will children and family be asked their permission to be on the MACCSTs?

Wherever possible, MACCST members who would like to refer a child and/or their family to the MACCST will discuss the referral with the child (in an age and developmentally appropriate way) and their family.

How will children and family's information be kept confidential?

All MACCST members should attend the part of the MACCST meeting that is about community level issues.

Only MACCST members who are authorised to share information according to the law attend the part of the meeting that is about children and their families. These people that are authorised information sharers are required by law to:

- only share information when it is about the safety and wellbeing of a child.
- only share information when doing so will help the authorised person they are sharing with conduct an investigation; or make a decision, assessment or plan that relates to a child's safety or wellbeing.

Authorised information sharers are not allowed to gossip or tell other people the information about the child and family they know unless it is for the above reasons: this is against the law.

Who is the leader of a MACCST?

MACCSTs are informed by issues that are brought to the table by MACCST members or by community members via MACCST members.

MACCSTs are chaired, co-chaired and minuted (secretariat) by members who are elected by the local MACCST. What agency or who the chairs and secretariat represents at the meeting may be different from community to community. For example, in one community the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet lead the Community Safety Response Planning part of the meeting and Territory Families, Housing and Communities lead the Shared Case Planning. Save the Children are the lead in providing secretariat support to the group. In another community, the Aboriginal Community Controlled Medical Service leads the Community Safety Response Planning part and the School Principal is the lead in providing secretariat support. In another community, Northern Territory Police and Territory Families, Housing and Communities co-chair meetings while the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet lead secretariat support.

How do I find out more?

To find out more, you can ask local MACCST members (e.g. Manager of the Safe House, Clinic Manager, School Principal, or Police Officer). Alternatively, you can contact MACCS Framework Implementation Team on 1800 MACCSF (622 273) or at MACCSFramework@nt.gov.au.

Where are the MACCST communities?

Multi-Agency Community and Child Safety Teams Northern Territory

- Major Centre
- MACCST
- Remote Community
- Greater Darwin
- Arafura (Top End)
- East Arnhem
- Big Rivers (Katherine)
- Barkly
- Central Australia

