

## Some Key Government Services

This section outlines key government services workers should be aware of, so they are better equipped to assist young people to access the services.

In this section you will find information on:

- Alcohol and Drug Program;
- Care and Protection (formerly Family Services);
- Centrelink and Income Support;
- Government dental clinics in the ACT;
- Housing ACT; and,
- Mental Health ACT

### Alcohol and Drug Program (ADP)

The Alcohol and Drug Program, ACT Health provides information, advice, referral, intake, assessment and support 24 hours a day. Services are available for individuals, their family and friends, general practitioners, other health professionals and community groups in the ACT. The ADP provides the following services which can all be accessed through the 24 hour helpline listed below.

#### **Alcohol and Drug Program Services:**

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##### **24 Hour Helpline**

Provides access to all ADP services, AOD information, advice, support, assistance and referral.

**Phone:** (02) 6207 9977

##### **Withdrawal Service**

Provides supervised medical withdrawal from AOD. This includes support, education, group programs or medication. Options include outpatient and inpatient detoxification.

##### **Medical Service**

Offers appointments with doctors for assessment and treatment of AOD related problems. Also provides professional advice to other medical and health practitioners in the ACT and surrounding areas.

##### **Opioid Treatment Service**

People dependant on opioids can be assessed and considered for treatments such as Methadone and Buprenorphine. The program manages and doses clients receiving treatment. Service also works closely with other methadone providers, pharmacies and general practitioners to ensure coordinated client care.

##### **Counselling Treatment Services – For Individuals and Families**

Provides counselling, coordinated care programs and a variety of therapeutic groups.

##### **Aboriginal Liaison Officer**

Provides support to Indigenous clients to find the service that best suits their needs. They also provide assistance and support to other service providers.

### **Diversion Service**

*For people referred by the Australian Federal Police and the Courts*

Co-ordinates the ACT's diversion programs including Police Early Diversion, Court Alcohol and Drug Assessment Service and the Treatment Referral Program. The aim is to divert people apprehended for drug use or drug related offences from the judicial system into the health system.

### **Professional Advice for Health and Community Workers**

Provide advice and support to health and community workers who work with people who use AOD.

### **Consultation Liaison Service**

Works with hospitals to ensure expert professional help is available for people who may have AOD issues. The service is also available for people who work with people with a dual diagnosis.

### **Health Promotion and Education Service**

Provides access to health information, resources, policy development, education and training for consumers, community groups, schools, health care workers and other associated professionals.

### **Needle and Syringe Program**

The ADP is an accredited provider under the Needle and Syringe Program based at Level 1, corner Moore and Alinga Streets, Canberra City.

### **How to Access ADP Services:**

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- Phone the 24 Hour Helpline on (02) 6207 9977.
- They will be assessed by the telephone staff who will link them to the service/s that they need.
- They will be required to see a health care worker who will coordinate a plan of action for them.
- For more information visit the ACT Health website at [www.health.act.gov.au](http://www.health.act.gov.au) or the ACT AOD Sector website at [www.aodsector.org.au](http://www.aodsector.org.au).

## **Care and Protection Services**

Care and Protection Services, DHCS, is responsible for facilitating coordination across government for the care and protection of children and young people considered 'at risk' of serious harm in the ACT. In the context of Care and Protection, the Children and Young People Act defines a young person as being aged 12 - 17 inclusively.

Specialist professional workers operate in a team structure to provide both short and long-term assistance to children and families. These teams appraise any reports of concern from the public, which relate to the safety and wellbeing of children, they also make applications to court for care and protection orders and maintain an ongoing role with children and young people in foster or residential care placements.

Reporting concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person is an important step in preventing or stopping abuse, and protecting the child or young

person from further harm. In 1997 the ACT Government introduced legislation that requires certain professional groups to report non-accidental physical injury and/or sexual abuse of children and young people to Care and Protection Services. Even if you are not mandated to do so, all persons may choose to make a voluntary report if they believe or suspect a young person is in need of care and protection.

### **Mandatory Reporting**

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Mandatory reporting occurs where a person is obliged by law to report specific forms of child abuse to a government authority where that person reasonably suspects that abuse has occurred. Care and Protection in the Office of Children Youth and Family Support, under the Department of Disability is the ACT government authority, Housing and Community Services (DHCS). Section 159 of the Children and Young People Act 1999 outlines which professions are mandated to report in the ACT.

It is best practice to let the young person know, at the beginning of your relationship, if you are a mandated reporter and what the implications are. These and related issues are addressed in the booklet *Keeping Children and Young People Safe - Reporting Child Abuse: A shared community responsibility* (August 2006), produced by the DHCS. The updated booklet, which reflects recent amendments to the Children and Young People Act 1999 as of 1 August 2006, is available from [www.dhcs.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/5660/keeping\\_childweb.pdf](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/5660/keeping_childweb.pdf) Anyone working with children and young people should make themselves familiar with the Act and this booklet.

If you suspect a child or young person is suffering abuse or neglect or you wish to discuss your concerns, you should telephone **Care and Protection Services Centralised Intake Services** as soon as possible. You are protected by law if a report is made in 'good faith', and you can call anonymously.

**Phone:** Mandated Reporters: 1300 556 728  
General Public: 1300 556 729

It's important to note that if you are working in New South Wales (NSW) with children and young people you may be mandated depending on your role. It is important to clarify this with your workplace or with the NSW Department of Community Services (DOCS) by contacting the DOCS Head Office on (02) 9716 2222.

## **Centrelink: Income support**

Income support can be an important issue for supporting young people and their families. Centrelink is the primary provider of ongoing basic income support and a range of other Commonwealth services in Australia. It's administered by the Federal Government, under the Department of Human Services. It has a range of payments and general services available to people who meet the criteria set out by Centrelink.

### **Payments are available to eligible people who are:**

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- A parent or guardian
- Recently separated or divorced
- Looking for work
- Studying, or planning to start studying
- Self-employed or responsible for a farm

- In crisis or are in need of special help
- Recently settling in Australia
- Ill, injured or have a disability
- Caring for someone who is frail, aged, ill or has a disability
- Needing help after someone has died

### **Centrelink services:**

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- **Concession and Health Care Cards:** Entitles a person to reduced cost medicines and to a range of additional subsidies including health, transport and educational concessions. These concessions may vary from state to state. People must meet residence requirements to get a concession card.
- **Australian Passport Information Service.**
- **Centrelink Community Officers:** Provide outreach services to homeless people and people at risk of becoming homeless of all ages.
- **Centrelink International Services:** Help people claim pensions from other countries and handles Social Security payments for customers who are outside Australia for more than 26 weeks (in some cases more than 13 weeks).
- **Centrelink Multilingual Services:** A service where Centrelink staff can answer questions in a person's own language.
- **Centrepay:** A direct bill-paying service offered free to Centrelink customers to have amounts voluntarily deducted from their Centrelink payment for various expenses, including private rent, phone bills, electricity, gas and water, education fees and expenses, ambulance costs, child care, home care services, rental of household goods, and court fines.
- **Compensation Recovery Teams.**
- **Centrelink Confirmation eServices:** Services allowing people to have their Centrelink details electronically provided or confirmed directly to a concession or service provider.
- **Financial Information Service:** Provides free, independent and expert financial information.
- **Grief Counselling:** Counselling for those experiencing periods of grief or loss.
- **Indigenous Specialist Officers:** A service available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- **Legal Aid:** Assists those who may not normally be able to access necessary legal services.
- **Multicultural Service Officers:** Provides links between Centrelink and the migrant and refugee communities.
- **Reconnect Program:** A range of community based early intervention services aimed at young people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

- **Rent Deduction Scheme:** Allows people to have their government housing payments automatically deducted from their Centrelink payments and sent directly to their housing authority.
- **Services for Homeless People:** Services to help homeless people and or those at-risk of becoming homeless.
- **Social Work Services:** Provides Social Workers to help a range of people, including young people without family support, counselling, applying for Centrelink payments, and information and referrals to community organisations and groups.
- **Someone to deal with Centrelink on behalf of a young person:** Information about how people can authorise another person to deal with Centrelink on their behalf.
- **Support Services for Problem Gambling:** Help services for problem gamblers.
- **Visiting Services:** Provides services to places in rural and remote Australia.

To find out more about eligibility for income support payments and to gain access to these services:

- Visit your local Centrelink office;
- Telephone 13 27 17; or
- Visit the Centrelink website, [www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)

Centrelink also hold Community Youth Partnerships Meetings which offer an opportunity for youth service providers and Centrelink to network and discuss issues of concern. For more information:

**Phone:** (02) 6200 6121

### **Centrelink Offices**

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#### **Belconnen**

**Mail:** PO Box 350, Belconnen ACT 2616

**Location:** Shop 1, Level 1 Northpoint Plaza, 183 Chandler St, Belconnen

#### **Braddon**

**Mail:** PO Box 5141, Braddon ACT 2612

**Location:** 13 Lonsdale St, Braddon

#### **Gungahlin**

**Mail:** PO Box 220, Gungahlin ACT 2912

**Location:** Shop 33, Gungahlin Marketplace, Hibberson St, Gungahlin

#### **Lanyon**

**Mail:** PO Box 6078, Conder ACT 2906

**Location:** Lanyon Market Place, Sidney Nolan Place, Conder

#### **Tuggeranong**

**Mail:** PO Box 1216, Tuggeranong ACT 2900

**Location:** Tuggeranong Square, Anketell St, Tuggeranong

#### **Woden**

**Mail:** PO Box 274, Woden ACT 2606

**Location:** 90 Corinna St, Woden

### **Career Information Centre**

**Note:** The Career Information Centre is a career and course library, and not a centre that can process payments.

**Location:** 13 Lonsdale St, Braddon ACT 2612

*The information in this section has been taken from the Centrelink website, [www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)*

## **Dental Health Services in the ACT**

A number of places in the ACT provide affordable dental treatment for children and young people.

**The Child and Youth Dental Service** (for people aged up to 18) **and Emergency Dental Services** (for people aged over 18) provide various dental services, ranging from general to emergency treatment, from community based clinics.

### **Who can use the services?**

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- All children under five who live in the ACT;
- All children five years to under 14 years of age who live or attend school in the ACT;
- All ACT residents aged 14 and over who hold a Centrelink Concession Card; and,
- Interstate Centrelink Concession Card holders and children under 14 who are visiting the ACT for a short period.

### **How can a young person access the services?**

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- Appointments can be made over the phone for general treatment. If it is not an emergency it is likely that they will be placed on a waiting list.
- Emergency services are available for clients of the Child and Youth Dental Service, Monday through Friday, and you can contact your nearest clinic between 8.30am and 9.00am to be triaged.
- For weekend and public holiday emergencies please phone (02) 6205 1653 (Recorded information line).

### **Where are the clinics?**

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#### **Belconnen Health Centre**

**Phone:** (02) 6205 1541 or (02) 6205 1202

**Location:** Cnr Benjamin Way & Swanson Court, Belconnen

#### **Moore St Health Building**

**Phone:** (02) 6205 0978 or (02) 6205 0982

**Location:** Cnr Moore & Alinga Sts, Civic

#### **Phillip Health Centre**

**Phone:** (02) 6205 1463 or (02) 6205 1695

**Location:** Cnr Corinna & Keltie Sts, Phillip

## **Tuggeranong Health Centre**

**Phone:** (02) 6205 2768 or (02) 6205 0585

**Location:** Cnr Anketell & Pitman Sts, Tuggeranong

### **How much does it cost?**

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- □ There is a minimum charge of \$30 for an emergency visit for adults. Additional fees may apply if the patient requires more treatment.
- Children up to 14 years of age: \$47 per child per “course of care”.
- Free for families who receive the Family Tax Benefit Part A at more than the minimum rate per child per fortnight, and free for families covered by a current Centrelink Concession Card.

A parent or a legal guardian who is authorised to sign relevant paperwork and consent to treatment must accompany children. Young people need to bring their Centrelink Concession Card and/or family Tax Benefit letter to each appointment.

## **Housing ACT**

Housing and Community Services ACT (Housing ACT) is the primary ongoing basic housing support provider for Canberra residents. It’s administered by the ACT Government, under the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS).

Public Housing is provided to low-income households and those people who are unable to find appropriate accommodation in the private rental market, such as people with a disability. Housing ACT also leases properties to community organisations such as community housing providers and emergency and crisis accommodation service providers.

Tenants of Housing ACT pay either a maximum of 25% of their income in rent, or the market rent, whichever is lower.

Housing ACT also provides support for people who are disadvantaged or experiencing a crisis. It does this through a variety of programs, including the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP), which assists people experiencing homelessness (see [www.dhcs.act.gov.au/hcs/Services/SAAP.htm](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/hcs/Services/SAAP.htm) for a list of SAAP services).

Housing ACT also supports other programs such as the Community Linkages Program: Community projects that would benefit Canberra’s community housing tenants and public housing tenants. The primary focus of the program is to link tenants to a range of support services and facilitate community building.

Housing ACT now has Housing Managers who provide first point of contact client support on a referral basis. Housing Managers provide a broad range of personal affects in the residency setting, assisting to identify issues and provide referral to appropriate support agencies and services.

### **Eligibility guidelines**

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(Each person is assessed individually)

- Young person must be 16 years or older.

- Young person must be an Australian citizen or a permanent resident.
- Personal assets (not counting furniture, clothing and one vehicle) must not be worth more than \$40,000.
- Young person must not own any residential property.
- The income barriers applying to rental housing assistance are as follows:

Single Applicant	\$525 gross per week
Family of two persons and joint tenancies	\$656 gross per week
Family of three or more persons	\$656 plus \$87 each for the third, fourth, fifth person etc.
Rental Rebate	25% of gross weekly income

*Please check with Housing ACT for further information*

**Note:** These conditions apply when a young person registers for assistance, while they are on the applicant list, and when they are allocated a dwelling. They may be checked at any time a client is registered for public housing.

### **How does a client apply?**

A Registration for Assistance form needs to be filled out and lodged at the Applicant Services Centre where needs are assessed during an interview. The form is available at [www.dhcs.act.gov.au/publications](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/publications) and the Applicant Services Centre is located at:

Applicant Services Centre  
Nature Conservation House  
Corner of Emu Bank and Benjamin Way  
Belconnen

*TIP: If you're working with a young person whose housing is at risk, support them to apply to Housing ACT as soon as possible. You may need to write a letter of support for a young person. A template is available at [www.dhcs.act.gov.au](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au).*

### **Required Documentation**

The young person may bring a friend, advocate or interpreter when they submit their form. The young person will need to provide a number of documents when they apply, including:

- Proof of identity (sufficient pieces of identity to get 100 points, eg, a passport, current or expired less than three years, not cancelled, equals 70 points, Medicare card equals 25 points, bills, e.g. electricity or telephone bills equal 25 points per bill).
- Government issued license or permit e.g. drivers license.
- Proof of residency in Australia and the ACT.
- Birth certificate.
- Proof of income and assets.
- Proof of legal custody of dependent children.

### **Housing ACT Outreach**

Housing ACT staff are able to meet with young people in their homes, the Applicant Service Centre or other suitable venues by arrangement. Clients wishing to arrange a

meeting with their Housing Manager or Applicant Support Officer should contact Housing ACT on 13 DHCS (133 427).

### **Eligibility for Early Allocation of Housing**

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A young person may be eligible for early allocation of housing (or 'priority housing') if their circumstances include:

- ☐ Homelessness;
- ☐ Mental health or medical issues;
- ☐ Disability, including frail aged;
- ☐ Women and children escaping domestic violence;
- ☐ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons facing complex issues; and,
- ☐ Children at risk, including their parents and carers.

For more information on priority housing, call Housing ACT on 133 427 or visit [www.dhcs.act.gov.au/hcs/Services/PublicHousing/Application/priority.html](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/hcs/Services/PublicHousing/Application/priority.html)

### **Contacting Housing ACT**

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**Phone:** 133 427. A free Housing ACT courtesy telephone is installed at the Tuggeranong Canberra Connect Shopfront and within the City and Phillip Health Centres.

**Maintenance Inquiries:** (02) 6207 1500

**Mailing Address:** Housing ACT, Locked Bag 3000, Belconnen ACT 2617.

Clients may also attend the Applicant Services Centre to access information regarding Housing ACT services, to apply for public housing or rental bond loan assistance in the ACT. A courtesy telephone is available for maintenance issues.

*The information in this section has been taken from the ACT Housing and Community Services ACT website, [www.dhcs.act.gov.au/hcs](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/hcs)*

## **Mental Health ACT**

Mental Health ACT, ACT Health, is the free and confidential public mental health service for residents of the ACT and region. The services are staffed by Registered Mental Health Nurses, Doctors, Psychologists, Social Workers and Psychiatrists.

Mental Health ACT services are available to adults, older people, adolescents and children who have moderate to severe psychiatric, emotional or behavioural disturbances. There are also services available for families, carers and community agencies.

Mental Health ACT can also provide treatment and support to culturally and linguistically diverse people and employ accredited interpreters when there are communication difficulties.

Services provided may include:

- ☐ Crisis intervention;
- ☐ Short term care and treatment;

- Long term care and treatment;
- Review and monitoring by specialised medical and clinical staff; and,
- Referral to, and liaison with, other services and community organisations.

## **Mental Health ACT Services:**

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### **Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team (CATT)**

Provides a 24 hour, seven day a week service for assessment and treatment of mentally ill people in crisis situations.

**Phone:** 1 800 629 354

### **Community Based Adult Mental Health Teams**

Provide clinical management, specialist assessment and treatment, information and education to ACT residents. The Adult Community Mental Health Teams are divided into four regional areas:

**Belconnen:** (02) 6205 1110

**City:** (02) 6205 1338

**Tuggeranong:** (02) 6205 2777

**Woden:** (02) 6205 1488

### **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)**

Provides assessment and treatment for young people under 18 years of age who are experiencing moderate to severe mental health problems including depression, anxiety and phobias, early onset psychosis, bipolar affective disorder, obsessive compulsive disorders, suicidal thoughts and behaviours and co-morbid eating disorders.

Services CAMHS provides include:

- □ Assessment and treatment for children and young people (and their families and carers) where there are moderate to severe mental health problems;
- Group programs for a range of child, adolescent and family issues;
- Individual and family counselling where a moderate to severe psychiatric problem is evident;
- Consultation and liaison with other services including GP's and school counsellors;
- Mental health assessments and treatment for Quamby residents;
- Adolescent therapeutic and educational day program (The Cottage);
- Community education and training upon request;
- MindMatters Mental Health Promotion Program in secondary schools; and,
- Children of Parents with a Mental Illness (COPMI) Support Network Project.

**Note:** CAMHS is unable to provide assessments or treatment for Autism Spectrum Disorders, ADD/ADHD or Behavioural problems.

CAMHS has community teams located on the north and southside:

**Belconnen:** (02) 6205 1050

**Woden:** (02) 6205 1469

Referrals to CAMHS can be made to the Intake Team from GP's, school counsellors or other concerned health workers between 8.30am and 4.50pm.

**Phone:** (02) 6205 1971

**Older Persons Mental Health Service**

Provides specialist mental health assessment, treatment and clinical management for people aged 65 and over, experiencing psychiatric, emotional or behavioural disturbance.

**Phone:** (02) 6205 1957

**Psychiatric Services Unit**

A 20 bed unit that provides acute care services for people with a mental illness.

**Phone:** 6244 3210

**Ward 2N Calvary Hospital**

An 18 bed unit that provides acute care services for people with a mental illness. It also caters to a very wide range of mental illnesses and dysfunctions and people at different life stages, including providing a special facility for mothers with postnatal depression and their babies.

**Phone:** (02) 6201 6022

**Brian Hennessy Rehabilitation Centre**

Provides supported accommodation for up to 20 people with varying mental health needs as well as rehabilitation, extended care, respite care and subacute facilities for residents.

**Phone:** (02) 6205 1222

**Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services**

**Phone:** (02) 6205 1952

For more information on Mental Health ACT Services go to [www.health.act.gov.au](http://www.health.act.gov.au).