

# Chapter 11

## SOCIAL WELFARE

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# Chapter 11

## SOCIAL WELFARE

**The main objective of the Australian social welfare system is the alleviation of poverty. Support for families with children is also provided in accordance with the high value Australians have traditionally placed on family formation and child rearing.**

In pursuing these objectives, certain major principles have long been embodied in the system:

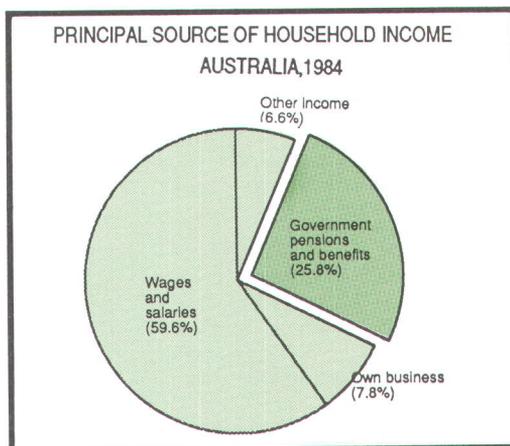
- the community as a whole accepts responsibility for the provision of income support to those individuals and families who are unable (or are not expected) to support themselves;
- payments are provided to such people as a right;
- payments are targeted towards particular categories of people in need (eg. to the aged, sole parents, the sick and unemployed) and, generally, according to people's means;
- support for children is provided in recognition that, at any level of income, people with children have greater needs than do those without.

Historically, the Federal Government became responsible for income security at a time when the only people seen to be 'in need' were those unable, as a result of age, widowhood or handicap, to support themselves.

The State Government's role has been one of child welfare, in areas of protection, neglect and care.

The past ten years, however, have seen both State and Federal Governments broadening their spheres of operations, introducing both family and community oriented services. For example:

- the recognition of the lone father by extending, in 1978, the supporting Mothers Benefit to encompass *all* lone parents;
- the introduction in the same year of the family Support Services Scheme for the introduction of new and innovative welfare services by the non-government sectors;



- in 1975, funds became available for Family Day Care Schemes and Childhood Services;
- in 1979, the Department for Community Welfare introduced the Family Assistance Scheme;
- funds were allocated to Neighbourhood Houses in 1981;
- such allowances as Family Allowance Supplement, Rental Assistance, Carer's Pension are among some of the many other services to be made available.

Against this, however, have been:

- the demise of the universal pension for people over 70 years;
- the abolition of family allowances for students over 16 who got Secondary Allowance Scheme (SAS) payments, and
- the change in child care funding from an operational subsidy to a fee relief scheme.

In the absence of a commonly accepted framework for describing and analysing 'social welfare' in its totality, two strands are prominent. A large component of 'social welfare' consists of cash payments to people in need. Although perhaps not all embracing nor definitive, the term income maintenance can be used to encompass all regular cash benefits paid to individuals.

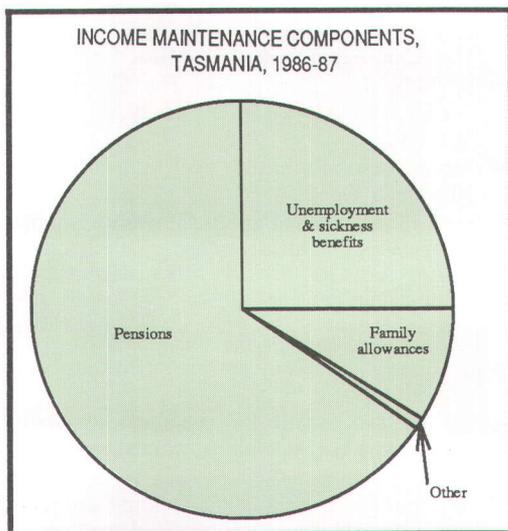
An equally large, if not larger, component of 'social welfare' consists of a vast array of direct services provided by governments, and non-government agencies, often with at least some funding provided by government.

Together, income maintenance payments and direct services to individuals, the 'social welfare' system is a complex net of activities providing communal assistance to individuals that in one way or another involves almost all members of our society.

## 11.1 INCOME MAINTENANCE

**Income maintenance payments to individuals are mostly provided by the Federal Government. During 1986-87, \$16 068 million were expended in Australia on social security and welfare by the Commonwealth, 27 per cent of the total Government outlay.**

In 1986-87 \$473 million were paid to Tasmanians in the form of pensions and benefits. At the end of the year (30 June 1987) in excess of 144 000 people (almost one third of the State's population) were being financially assisted with cash payments direct from the Federal Government.



### 11.1.1 Pensions

The introduction of a pension for aged persons in 1909 began Australia's national provision of social security payments. Since then a number of other regular income payments have been introduced to meet specific cases of perceived need: for people incapacitated for work, for spouses of age or invalid pensioners, for sole supporting parents. In addition, disability and service pensions have been provided for returned servicemen and women and their dependents.

#### 11.1 DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY PENSIONS PAID, TASMANIA, 1986-87

<i>Pension type</i>	<i>Number of beneficiaries at 30 June 1987</i>	<i>Expenditure (\$m)</i>
Age (a)	38 743	180.3
Invalid	10 904	53.9
Widow's	4 723	29.8
Supporting parents'	5 193	39.0
Sheltered employment allowance	513	3.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>60 076</b>	<b>306.1</b>

(a) Includes wife and carer pensioners.

Source: Department of Social Security Annual Report.

#### Age Pensions

Women aged 60 and over and men aged 65 and over are eligible for the age pension subject to income and assets conditions and residential qualifications.

During the financial year 1986-87 just over \$180 million were paid to aged people in Tasmania. At June 1986, 65 600 people aged 60 or over comprised 15 per cent of the State's population of whom 60 per cent were age pensioners.

#### 11.2 AGE PENSIONS, TASMANIA

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number at 30 June (a)</i>	<i>Financial year expenditure (\$m)</i>
1975	34 269	60.1
1979	39 428	97.0
1983	41 639	143.9
1985	39 782	165.2
1987	38 743	180.3

(a) Includes wife/spouse/carer pensioners from 1983.  
Source: Department of Social Security Reports.

By the year 2001 an estimated 82 600 persons or 22 per cent of Tasmanians will be aged 60 or

over. At the same rate of pension claim, the number of pensioners will increase to 48 500.

### Service Pensions

In addition to the Social Security age pension, the Department of Veterans' Affairs provides service pensions to male veterans aged 60 years and over and female veterans aged 55 and over. At June 1986 15 895 service pensions were being paid, 9 311 to veterans and 6 584 to wives and widows of veterans.

#### 11.3 SERVICE PENSIONS, TASMANIA, JUNE 1986

War service	Number of pensions
1914-18 war	166
1939-45 war	14 045
Korea and Malaya	135
British Commonwealth	1 165
Allied Forces	250
Special overseas service	72
Miscellaneous	62
<b>Total</b>	<b>15 895</b>

In 11 years the number of service pensions has almost trebled. In that time the composition of the recipients has undergone considerable change due principally to a trebling in the number of World War II veterans reaching the age of eligibility. In 1975 the 5 375 service pensioners comprised: Boer War, 3; 1914-18 war, 1 088; 1939-45 war, 4 265; Korea and Malaya service, 17; and miscellaneous, 2.

#### 11.4 SERVICE PENSIONERS, TASMANIA

Year	Number at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$m)
1980	9 887	21.8
1982	12 093	32.5
1984	14 878	51.8
1986	15 895	63.5
1987	15 970	68.8

### Invalid and Disability Pensions

An invalid pension is payable to people over 16 years of age who are permanently incapacitated for work (to the extent of at least 85 per cent), or are permanently blind. At 30 June 1987, 10 904 persons were receiving this pension.

In addition to the invalid pension provided through the Department of Social Security, the Department of Veterans' Affairs provides a similar pension to veterans as compensation for incapacity accepted as war-service related. At 30 June 1986, 16 774 disability pensions were being

paid and expenditure for the year amounted to \$31.9 million.

#### 11.5 INVALID AND DISABILITY PENSIONS, TASMANIA

Year	Invalid pension (a)	
	Number at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$m)
1979	8 052	20.7
1981	8 142	25.3
1983	8 530	32.2
1985	9 820	44.0
1987	10 904	53.9

Year	Disability pension	
	Number at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$m)
1979	18 127	18.7
1981	16 944	21.9
1983	16 805	28.9
1985	16 743	38.8
1987	15 337	31.8

(a) Includes spouse carer pensioners from 1983.

Source: Departments of Social Security and Veterans Affairs reports.

An allowance equal to the invalid pension can be paid to people who work in approved sheltered employment services, if they are otherwise eligible for the invalid pension. During 1986-87 a total of \$3.1 million were paid as sheltered employment allowances and at 30 June, 513 persons were receiving the allowance.

### Widows' Pension and Supporting Parents' Benefit

The widows' pension was introduced in 1942 to provide a regular income for women who had lost the support of their partner. For the first year since 1977 the number of pensions paid dropped to under 5 000 at June 1985. At 30 June 1987 the figure had dropped to 4 723.

#### 11.6 WIDOWS' PENSIONS, TASMANIA

Year	Number of recipients at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$m)
1977	4 572	12.5
1979	5 229	16.6
1981	5 230	21.0
1983	5 144	24.2
1985	4 979	27.7
1987	4 723	29.8

Source: Department of Social Security reports.

Sole parents who have the custody, care and control of a qualifying child aged under 16 can be

eligible for a supporting parent's benefit. It was originally introduced in 1973 as the supporting mothers' benefit and renamed in 1977 when extended to supporting fathers.

**Widows' Pension**

A widow's pension may be paid to:

- a (de jure) widow;
- a woman who is a divorcee;
- a woman who has been deserted by her husband without just cause for a period of not less than six months;
- a woman whose husband has been convicted of an offence and has been imprisoned for a period of not less than six months;
- a woman who was the de facto wife of a man for at least three years immediately before his death; and
- a woman who is a victim of a bigamous marriage in certain circumstances.

**Supporting Parents' Benefit**

A person eligible for a supporting parent's benefit includes:

- a widower, or a man whose de facto wife has died;
- a male divorcee;
- a separated husband or wife or a separated de facto husband or wife;
- an unmarried parent;
- a parent whose spouse or de facto spouse has been convicted of an offence, and has been imprisoned as a result for 14 days or longer; and
- a married person left caring for a child or children and unable to live with his/her spouse in the matrimonial home because of the spouse's illness or infirmity.

The number of recipients has almost trebled in the ten years to 1987.

**11.7 SUPPORTING PARENTS' BENEFIT, TASMANIA**

Year	Number of recipients at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$m)
1977	1 778	5.6
1979	2 057	7.5
1981	3 519	13.6
1983	4 047	22.1
1985	4 776	30.3
1987	5 193	39.0

Source: Department of Social Security reports.

**11.1.2 Unemployment and Sickness Benefits**

**Unemployment Benefits**

With rising unemployment during the 1970s and early 80s, the number of people receiving benefits has risen more than five fold; from 3 825 recipients in 1970, to 18 880 people at June 1987 after a peak of 32 147 during 1981-82. As a consequence, the amount paid on this category of welfare expenditure is now exceeded only by age pension payments. During the 1986-87 year a total of 24 276 benefits were granted in Tasmania.

**11.8 UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS, TASMANIA**

Year	Number of recipients at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$m)
1975	4 439	7.8
1979	10 420	28.6
1981	12 929	34.7
1983	20 355	78.3
1985	18 870	96.9
1987	18 880	109.5

Source: Department of Social Security reports.

An unemployment benefit may be paid fortnightly, generally after a seven-day waiting period, to people aged at least 18 but under 65 in the case of men or under 60 in the case of women. They must be Australian residents and in Australia on the day claims are lodged.

To be eligible for unemployment benefit a person must:

- have been unemployed for the period covered by the benefit;
- be capable of undertaking and willing to undertake suitable paid work;
- be taking reasonable steps to obtain work;
- not be unemployed due to being, or having been, engaged in industrial action;
- not be unemployed due to industrial action by other members of a trade union of which the person is a member; and
- be registered as being unemployed by the Commonwealth Employment Service.

Unemployment benefits paid to 16 and 17 year olds was replaced by a job search allowance. The allowance is subject to unemployment benefits rates and conditions, and a parental income test also applies.

**Sickness Benefits**

A sickness benefit is paid to people who have been temporarily incapacitated for work because of sickness or accident and who have suffered a

loss of income as a result of the incapacity or who, but for the incapacity would qualify for the unemployment benefit. During the 1986-87 financial year a total of 2552 benefits were granted in Tasmania, the lowest number since 1972-73. At June 1985, 1 025 benefits were being paid. An assets test on unemployment, sickness and special benefits for recipients aged 25 and over applied from December 1986 based on the pensions assets test threshold.

### 11.9 SICKNESS BENEFITS, TASMANIA

Year	Number of recipients at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$m)
1977	4 662	2.4
1979	3 881	2.0
1981	3 626	2.9
1983	3 750	4.6
1985	1 025	5.5
1987	1 209	7.5

Source: Department of Social Security reports.

### 11.1.3 Allowances for Families

#### Family Allowances

In 1976 child endowment, along with tax rebates for dependent children, was replaced by a family allowance, usually payable to the mother.

People who have the custody, care and control of one or more children under 16, or one or more full-time students aged 16 to 24 inclusive, who are wholly or substantially dependent on them, may receive the family allowance. Payment is normally made to the mother. Payments for students aged 18-24 were withdrawn from November 1985 (other than for those in needy families). An income test applies to family allowance payments for children under 18.

### 11.10 FAMILY ALLOWANCE, TASMANIA,

Year (to 30 June)	Number of dependents	Number of families & approved institutions	Financial year expenditure (\$m)
1977	129 394	61 358	31.2
1979	125 603	61 135	28.9
1981	123 270	61 309	27.8
1983	122 729	61 820	39.1
1985	123 079	62 734	42.8
1987	116 937	60 637	39.5

Source: Department of Social Security reports.

To be eligible for the allowance the person and children must have been born in Australia or intend to remain permanently in Australia. If neither of these conditions is met, family

allowance is payable after the claimant and children have been in Australia for 12 months.

#### Child Disability Allowance

Child disability allowance is available to parents or guardians of mentally or physically disabled children under 16 or dependent full-time students aged 16 to 24 inclusive. The allowance is not payable if the student is receiving an invalid pension or supporting parent's benefit.

For the allowance to be payable the disabled child must require and receive constant, or almost constant, care and attention because of the disability and must be living in the family home.

Child disability allowance was formerly known as handicapped child's allowance.

### 11.11 CHILD DISABILITY ALLOWANCES, TASMANIA

Year	Number of recipients at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$'000)
1977	467	345
1979	568	407
1981	766	529
1983	863	839
1985	996	916
1987	1 027	975

Source: Department of Social Security reports.

#### Double Orphan's Pension

A guardian or an institution may be paid a double orphan's pension for a child under 16, or a dependent full-time student aged 16 to 24 inclusive, whose parents are dead. The pension is also payable if one parent is dead and the whereabouts of the other parent are not known or is serving a sentence of imprisonment of 10 years or more or is an inmate of a mental hospital and will require care and treatment in that or a similar hospital for an indefinite period.

### 11.12 DOUBLE ORPHAN'S PENSIONS, TASMANIA

Year	Number of recipients at 30 June	Financial year expenditure (\$'000)
1979	93	54
1981	88	53
1983	122	84
1985	110	72
1987	56	53

Source: Department of Social Security reports.

### Family Allowance Supplement

Certain low income families are eligible for a family allowance supplement, an income-tested, non-taxable supplement payable for each child under 16 years or dependent full-time students aged 16 to 24 inclusive.

A person may qualify, subject to residence requirements, for the allowance provided that:

- the person or his/her spouse is qualified to receive family allowance for a child;
- the person or his/her spouse is not in receipt of other forms of Commonwealth income support or overseas payment that provide for additional payments in respect of that child; and
- the child does not receive or attract payment of a Commonwealth income-tested pension, benefit or allowance.

The allowance is generally paid to the person receiving family allowance for the child (normally the mother). Family Allowance Supplement was formerly known as Family Income Supplement.

#### 11.13 FAMILY ALLOWANCE SUPPLEMENT, TASMANIA

Year	At 30 June, number of		Financial year expenditure. (\$m)
	Recipients	Children	
1983	1 076	2 843	0.2
1984	1 418	3 844	1.8
1985	1 309	3 607	2.1
1987	1 498	4 102	2.8

Source: Department of Social Security reports.

#### 11.1.4 Other Benefits and Allowances

The social security system provides a number of other allowances additional to the main benefit provided, the most significant of which are the special benefit, funeral benefits, and fringe benefits for pensioners.

##### Special Benefit

A special benefit may be paid to people who are not eligible for a pension, unemployment or sickness benefit but who are unable to earn a sufficient livelihood for themselves and their dependants.

The grant of a special benefit and the rate of payment are at the discretion of the Secretary of the Department of Social Security. The rate may not exceed the rate of unemployment or sickness benefit that would be paid if the claimant were qualified to receive either of those benefits.

The benefit is designed to meet cases of special need and payments may be made immediately in an emergency.

##### Funeral Benefit

A funeral benefit of \$20 is payable to a person liable for the funeral costs of an eligible age, invalid, wife or spouse carer pensioner or of a recipient of sheltered employment allowance, a tuberculosis allowance, or rehabilitation allowance in lieu of one of these payments. A benefit of up to \$40 is payable to an eligible age, invalid, wife, spouse carer or widow pensioner, a supporting parent beneficiary, or a person in receipt of a sheltered employment allowance, tuberculosis allowance, or rehabilitation allowance in lieu of one of these payments, or a repatriation service pensioner who is liable for the funeral costs of a spouse, child or other eligible social security pensioner.

#### 11.14 SPECIAL BENEFITS AND FUNERAL BENEFITS, TASMANIA, 1986-87

Benefit	Number of benefits granted	Expenditure (\$'000)
Special	2 822	3 946
Funeral	1 039	36

Source: Department of Social Security reports.

##### Fringe Benefits

The majority of pensioners, beneficiaries of sheltered employment, rehabilitation and supporting parent allowances are entitled to a range of non-cash benefits including concessions on pharmaceuticals, free hearing-aid services, telephone and postal concessions, concessions on some rail and bus travel, council rates, driver's licences, car registration fees, power charges and land taxes. At 30 June 1987, 51 706 pensioners (85.6 per cent of all pensioners) were receiving pensioner fringe benefits.

In addition, the State Department for Community Welfare provides a number of supplementary allowances to people who are in receipt of pensions or benefits and who satisfy a means criterion.

#### 11.15 SUPPLEMENTARY ASSISTANCE 1986-87

Assistance	No. assisted	Expenditure (\$)
Heating allowance	10 801	587 317
Spectacles	5 873	379 355
Furniture removals	297	28 837
Funeral expenses	169	85 316
Transport	21	3 148
Mortgage Rental Relief Scheme	1 064	167 241

Source: Department for Community Welfare Annual Report.

## 11.2 DIRECT SERVICES

While it is the Federal Government that provides almost all income maintenance payments, it is the State Department for Community Welfare, together with voluntary agencies, that provide the personalised help to people in need.

Services provided by the Department, including child welfare, assistance to families and individuals, community programs and grants accounted for more than \$15 million in 1986-87.

### 11.16 STATE GOVERNMENT WELFARE EXPENDITURE, 1986-87 (\$)

Management Services	1 107 000
Assistance to Families and Individuals	2 248 000
Child Welfare	6 537 000
Financial Assistance to Community Organisations	5 343 000
Community Services	601 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>15 836 000</b>

Source: Department for Community Welfare Annual Report.

#### 11.2.1 Child Welfare

Child welfare is primarily focussed on neglected, or orphaned children and children brought to notice through the courts.

#### Children Under Supervision

The *Child Welfare Act* provides that children who are found guilty of offences and those who are found to have been neglected may be placed under the supervision of a Child Welfare Officer for a period up to three years. Whilst this order requires the child to comply with the reasonable directions of the officer, its principal purpose is to facilitate the provision of advice, guidance, counselling and practical help. At 30 June 1987 there were 133 children under the legal supervision of Child Welfare Officers.

#### Wards of the State

As at 30 June 1987 there were 480 children under Guardianship of which 267 were males and 213 females.

A child may become a Ward of the State in a number of ways. A parent may apply to the Minister to have their child admitted into Guardianship. This practice is most common in the case of babies who are offered for adoption but who are not suitable for immediate placement. A Children's Court may declare a child to be a Ward of the State after finding that the child is neglected, or after finding the child guilty of a

certain class of offence. The *Child Welfare Act* also provides for a parent to submit a plea at a Children's Court that their own child is beyond their control.

Once a child has become a Ward of the State, the Director for Community Welfare becomes his or her legal guardian to the exclusion of all others. Through the staff of the Department, and with the help of individuals and groups in the community, the Director may exercise this responsibility for guardianship in a variety of ways.

In many cases it is considered to be in the best interests of a child to provide care by supplementing, rather than substituting for, the care offered by the natural parents. Where it is necessary to remove the child from his/her normal home, it often remains possible to assist both the child and parents in a way which leads towards the re-establishment of a normal and fulfilling parent/child relationship.

### 11.17 PLACEMENT OF WARDS OF THE STATE, JUNE 1987

Approved Children's Homes	43
Family Group Homes	39
Institutions	16
Foster Care	227
Living with parents or relatives	91
Living independently	47
Other	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>480</b>

#### Foster Homes

Some children, through circumstances beyond their control, are unable to live with their natural parents. In some cases their parents are dead, missing, or unable to provide for them. Foster homes provide a form of long-term 'substitute care' approximating more closely to that of a normal family environment. Foster care also provides sensitive and appropriate short-term care for special categories of children.

#### Children's Homes

Children's Homes are run by charitable bodies to provide care for children. They are approved under the *Child Welfare Act* 1960 to care for Wards of the State, but also receive other children on the application of their parents or the request of the Department for Community Welfare.

Each home has its own style of operation and seeks to meet the needs of a particular group of children. The Department pays an allowance for each approved bed as well as a board rate for each Ward and a contribution towards the cost of caring for other children. Grants have tradi-

tionally been provided for both administrative support costs and for specialist support services to the children in care. Grants are now also being used to encourage community based child welfare organisations to develop innovative child welfare services within specific communities.

#### 11.18 GRANTS TO APPROVED CHILDREN'S HOMES, 1986-87 (\$)

Clarendon Children's Homes	26 000
Community Hostels — Mara House	500
Foster Parents Association	6 170
Glenhaven Children's Homes	21 000
Glendel Children's Homes	12 155
Kennerley Children's Homes	27 675
Launceston Community Church	3 500
Tasmanian Children's Community Chest	3 000
	100 000

Source: Department for Community Welfare Annual Report.

#### Family Group Homes

The Department for Community Welfare owns 18 family group homes. All residences are large family homes, strategically placed throughout the State and run by married couples who care for up to six children at a time. Care is provided for a wide range of children including Wards of the State, for short periods of time.

Reasons for admittance to a family group home include the emergency care of children who are — or appear to be — neglected, and care whilst a child's normal family home is unavailable (perhaps because a mother is in hospital).

#### Adoption

Adoption is regarded first and foremost as a service for children. Adoption is the legal and social process which enables a child to become a complete and permanent member of a new family. Through adoption the child is able to enjoy the same rights and acquire the same legal status within the family as if he or she was a child born of the marriage.

#### ADOPTIONS, TASMANIA

1982-83	117
1983-84	87
1984-85	97
1985-86	76
1986-87	83

#### Review of Tasmanian Adoption Legislation

A major review of the State's adoption legislation, which was initiated in 1985 concluded in October 1986. About 92 separate recommendations for changes to existing laws were presented to the Minister. Following Cabinet approval of the Review Committee's recommendations in their entirety a new adoption Bill was expected to go before Parliament.

#### Inter-Country Adoption

Interest in inter-country adoption continues at a high level within Tasmania with a total of 96 applications on the waiting list as at 30 June 1987.

Between July 1986 and June 1987, 51 applications for inter-country adoptions were received and 43 children from overseas were placed with approved applicants (19 more than for the previous year). Countries from which children were received during this period were: Korea 30, Sri Lanka 11, India 1 and Thailand 1.

#### Residential and Community Youth Services

Residential and community youth services in co-operation with field services provides special support and assistance to children and young people whose behaviour may be damaging to themselves or others.

The services are provided through two residential institutions (Ashley Home for Boys and Wybra Hall) and through two non-residential Resource Units.

#### Ashley Home for Boys

Ashley provides residential institutional care for 14 to 17 year old male offenders. It includes a secure section, although the Home is regarded as a medium to low security facility. There is an increasing focus on integrating Ashley programs with the wider community and in developing specialist programs to match the needs of the young people in care. Current programs include: personal development; small engine and bicycle restoration; rollover program (community integration); independent living; drug education; artist in residence; and camping and wood-working.

#### Wybra Hall

The purpose of Wybra Hall is to provide residential care, custody, control, guidance and direction to young people to increase their ability and opportunity to find a socially acceptable and satisfying way of participating in the community. Wybra Hall caters for girls up to the age of 18 years and boys up to the age of 15 years.

Wybra Hall is child centred and the staff have a collective responsibility to establish positive working relationships, as well as maintaining a

high standard of mutual trust and understanding in order to fully recognise and acknowledge the needs of the individual child.

In addition to providing supervision, control, custody and direction to young people, Wybra Hall also develops the young person's knowledge and skills, as well as assisting them to review their circumstances, so as to increase their ability to live satisfying and socially acceptable lives.

Officers at Wybra Hall work closely with services both within and outside the Department for Community Welfare, thereby providing the opportunities for each young person to find a place in the community which best meets the needs of their personal development and well being.

Where possible the children at Wybra Hall attend local schools. With the co-operation of the Education Department, this program has been most beneficial to the children. In addition, the Education Department provides funding for a special school unit to operate within Wybra Hall for those children who cannot be catered for elsewhere.

#### 11.19 OCCUPANCY OF GOVERNMENT RESIDENCES FOR CHILDREN, TASMANIA

At 30 June	Ashley Boys Home	Wybra Hall
1981	19	13
1983	21	14
1985	12	3
1987	13	7

Source: Department for Community Welfare Annual Report.

#### Child Care

The Department for Community Welfare is responsible for the licensing and supervision of facilities where a fee is charged to provide substitute care for children younger than seven years.

These responsibilities include assessment of applicants, maintenance of a support service to licensees, and the keeping of records of holders of current licences. In carrying out these duties, the over-riding aim is to encourage and develop a range of services to meet the needs of families who require substitute day care or short term overnight care for their children.

The Department for Community Welfare staff actively foster community management of locally based children's services and promote high quality care, particularly through training programs and meetings, provision of resource

materials, and access to the Department's toy and equipment library.

In June 1986 Tasmania agreed to participate in the Commonwealth-State co-operative arrangements to establish 267 long-day-care centre-based places throughout Tasmania. As a result of the May 1987 'Economic Statement', 30 of these places were converted to family day-care places. Since June 1986, three centres with a licensed capacity of 25 places each have been established in Clarendon Vale, Wynyard and Queenstown. Centres due to be completed before December 1988 are planned for Ravenswood, Launceston South, Glenorchy and Rosny. In addition, extensions to the Bridgewater, Channel, Community Child Care centres have been approved.

The demand for quality child care continues to exceed supply. An increasing number of children in the 0-5 year age range are spending up to fifty hours in care each week.

#### Regional Resource Centres

These centres offer day, after-school and holiday activities as a medium through which children and families requiring assistance can receive the support and help which would otherwise have only been available if the children had been received into the full-time care of the Department for Community Welfare. The service provides a more cost-efficient service than residential services and has the capacity to reduce the pressure of numbers, and thus costs, of residential care.

#### 11.2.2 Family Assistance

The Department for Community Welfare has developed a comprehensive program of assistance to individuals and families. These programs comprise financial relief in emergency situations, supplementary and on-going assistance programs and services such as the home-help and home-maker schemes.

#### Emergency Assistance

Funds are available to field officers to be used in times of crisis or in situations where the family is in danger of breakdown because of immediate financial pressures.

Under Family Assistance, needs such as accommodation costs, debt settlement, essential repairs to household appliances, clothing and household power costs, can be met. All applications for assistance are carefully investigated and need established before a payment is made.

The front-line in many emergency situations is normally the non-government sector. Nevertheless, from time to time situations occur when the

Department itself has no alternative other than to provide a quick response where no other service can assist.

### 11.20 ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE, TASMANIA (Number of Cases)

Type of Assistance	1985-86	1986-87
Emergency —		
Family Assistance	1 172	881
Food Orders	7 803	7 377
Mortgage Rental Relief	1 064	949
Supplementary —		
Heating Allowance (a)	10 917	10 801
Spectacles	6 069	5 873
Furniture Removals	227	297
Funeral Expenses	182	169
Transport	36	21

(a) Figures represent on-going cases as opposed to new cases during the year.

Source: Department for Community Welfare Annual Report.

In addition to the provision of direct assistance, the Department for Community Welfare provides grants to enable agencies to meet demands for emergency relief.

### 11.21 GRANTS TO COMMUNITY AGENCIES FOR EMERGENCY RELIEF, 1986-87

Organisation	\$
Hobart City Mission	32 000
Glenorchy City Mission	8 000
Christian Care Group, Rokeby	7 500
Bridgewater-Gagebrook	
Community Service Group	31 000
Launceston City Mission	24 000
Society of St Vincent de Paul	25 000
Australian Red Cross	1 500
Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre	3 000
Total	132 000

Source: Department for Community Welfare Annual Report.

### Family Support

The Department for Community Welfare provides services to meet the needs of neglected children and young offenders. There are, however, many children and families who experience difficulties and seek help, although they do not fall into either of these categories. Often this help requires only a brief involvement with the Department, but where a longer period of assistance is agreed upon the service is referred to as 'Family Support'.

At 30 June 1987 there were 78 families receiving Family Support.

### Homemaker Service

The Homemaker Service provides more intensive family support to those who require such help. Homemakers provide an advisory, referral and supportive service with child care, budgeting, domestic organisation and other related areas.

The objectives of the service are to assist the children to remain with or be reunited with his or her parents and to support families to achieve tasks essential to the survival of the family and allow them to move on to the task of meeting the child's developmental needs for education and growth.

The service aims to preserve family integrity and offer support in the home and neighbourhood and provides an alternative to institutional care, either of parent or of child.

During 1986-87, 336 children from 130 families received support. There were 61 new family support cases during 1986-87.

### 11.2.3 Community Programs

#### Youth Services

The Tasyouth Unit of the Department for Community Welfare is responsible for identifying and meeting, where possible, the needs of young people by providing grants to non-government organisations working with unemployed youth.

### 11.22 TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT GRANTS FOR YOUTH SERVICES, 1986-87

Organisation	\$
South —	
Hobart Streetwork Group	25 785
Kingborough Unemployed Concern Group	15 000
Youth Affairs Council	10 000
Chigwell C.Y.S.S. Evening Program	1 100
Clarence Council Evening Programs	3 000
Glenorchy Community Evening Program	2 800
North —	
Outreach Child and Family Service	13 000
Youthline	2 000
North West —	
Youthlink	14 000
KARE	2 200
Devonport Youth Theatre	1 115
Total	90 000

Source: Department for community Welfare Annual Report.

The problem of homeless youth, while not new, has become more visible in recent years. Services to homeless youth include: emergency shelters; teaching of survival skills, and reconciliation where possible between parents and youth.

The aim is to provide homeless youth with shelter in the short term and the skills in the long term to maintain independent accommodation. The valuable work of non-government organisations is an important adjunct to this service for which funds are provided.

### 11.23 GRANTS FOR YOUTH SERVICES ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMS, 1986-87

Organisation	\$
Youth Housing Task Force	2 836
Anglican Family Care Services (a)	178 174
HYPO	99 988
Northern Youth Shelter	156 360
North-West Youth Shelter	164 671
Stepping Stone	86 511
Fusion Youth Shelter	17 652
Total	706 192

(a) Includes funding for Youth Shelter and North-West Housing Outreach.

Source: Department for Community Welfare Annual Report.

### Handicapped Persons' Services

The trend towards disabled people living at home rather than in special institutions has increased the demand for community support services as disabled people strive for a better quality of life.

During 1986-87 the proportion of grants paid to organisations providing day care and activity services for more severely handicapped dependent persons was increased to approximately 40 per cent of the handicapped services budget.

The Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service assists handicapped people to become economically and socially independent. The service is free to virtually any disabled person in the broad working age group who can benefit from it. Teams comprising medical specialists, therapists, trade instructors, teachers and vocational counsellors work towards developing each person's maximum physical, mental, vocational and social potential. A rehabilitation allowance is payable to people who are receiving vocational treatment or training under the CRS program.

### Multicultural Services

Assistance is provided to help integrate migrants and refugees into the Tasmanian

community. Financial support is given for the continuation of ethnic cultures.

### 11.24 GRANTS TO MIGRANT ORGANISATIONS, 1986-87

Organisation	\$
St Martino Vietnamese Group	995
Kangaroo Island Pioneer's Club	100
Migrant Resource Centre (Southern Tasmania)	5 000
Migrant Resource Centre (Northern Tasmania)	2 667
Ethnic Communities' Council of Tasmania	1 000
Australian-Yugoslav Association	500
Task Force Action for Migrant Women	1 100
Australian Indonesian Association	600
Polish Association of Northern Tasmania	1 500
Hispano-Australian Society	500
Good Neighbourhood Council of Tasmania	1 000
Total	14 962

Source: Department for Community Welfare Annual Report.

Migrants and refugees totalling 948 persons arrived during 1985-86. This was 153 more than in 1984-85 and represented about 1 per cent of the total Australian overseas migrant intake.

### 11.25 MIGRANT ARRIVALS IN TASMANIA

Region/Country of Birth	1983-84	1985-86
UK and Ireland	215	251
Northern Europe	67	101
Southern Europe	17	22
Middle East	9	20
USA and Canada	45	49
South & Other America	9	5
Africa	36	49
Asia	248	276
Oceania	121	171
Australia	5	4
Total	772	948

Source: Department of Community Welfare Annual Report.

### Women's Shelters

Women's Shelters have as their primary purpose the provision of shelter and support services to women and children who have been subjected to domestic violence or who are rendered homeless through some personal or social crisis. Most shelters are not designed to provide accommodation to women and children requiring intensive, sustained specialised services and in cases where it is necessary to provide longer term accommodation and more intensive support, funding is made available to specific purpose refugees. Annie Kenney and Karinya for example accommodate

single young women only and Caroline House provides for women with alcohol and drug related difficulties.

Approximately 2000 women and children were accommodated during 1986-87.

Most shelters have not been established to provide longer term support although most are forced into this role because of the increasing difficulty faced by women with children in locating alternative accommodation. The Housing Department continues to provide valuable assistance to both the Launceston and Hobart Women's Shelters in making special provision for women and children accommodated in refuges who seek public housing. Women moving out of the shelter in need of financial assistance may apply to the Family Assistance Scheme.

Shelters vary in respect of the mode of management employed and the intensity and breadth of services provided to users. Some shelters employ a style of management which involves the users of the shelter in the everyday operations of the shelter, e.g. cooking, cleaning, shopping. Staff are free to engage in the primary functions of the shelter, e.g. the provision of support and information to women in crisis. Other shelters have adopted a less participatory style of operation and have as their primary focus the provision of accommodation to women and children in crisis. All shelters are required, as a condition of funding, to provide services which are accessible on a 24 hour, 7 day a week basis. Some shelters provide a field work service to women who have left the shelter but who require continued support and visitation to prevent their return to the shelter.

### ***The Crisis Intervention Unit***

The crisis intervention service is statewide and is primarily directed at providing a crisis service (in co-operation with the police) to victims of domestic violence and their families.

The unit has a staff allocation of 7.5 equivalent full-time positions and is based in the main urban areas of Hobart, Launceston and Burnie. The total annual budget is \$239 000.

As most assaults take place at night or on weekends an after hours service is provided seven nights a week. A post-crisis follow-up service is provided to ensure that clients gain access to the legal and support services required to prevent further violence.

During 1986-87 crisis intervention staff attended 762 calls. The police department was responsible for referring 50 per cent of the clients, 30 per cent were self referred and 20 per cent were referred by other State or community agencies.

Men assaulting the women with whom they were living accounted for 61 per cent of all calls while 24 per cent were the result of men assaulting estranged partners. The remainder included sibling assault, parents assaulted by children and children assaulted by parents.

Eighty-one per cent of all assaults involved past repetitious violent behaviour, often over many years. Alcohol abuse on the part of the offender was involved in 47 per cent of assaults. Emergency accommodation and legal services were the services most often provided. It is essential that women at risk be assured of a place of safety and information about their legal rights.

Funds are also made available to provide for telephone installation costs for families at risk, particularly when a telephone is essential to the enforcement of a Domestic Restraint Order. Future plans include a program to provide improvements to home security to prevent harassment from an estranged partner and the installation of facilities to enable radio access between the Police Radio Room and mobile staff of the unit.

### ***Neighbourhood Houses***

The Neighbourhood Houses Program is a joint investment by government and local communities in the planning, development and management of community services at the neighbourhood level. Houses provide a wide range of community services such as recreational activities, child care, fitness classes, life skill classes, adult education, meeting facilities, community newsletters, effective parenting courses, food co-operatives and ante-natal clinics.

Neighbourhood Houses are managed by representatives of local communities and not by single organisations. Although Houses may employ a paid co-ordinator to assist in management of the day-to-day activities of Houses, most of the projects and activities are run by local residents. In this way, Houses can take advantage of people with a broad range of skills and backgrounds, promote the development of services relevant to the needs of the local area and be more accountable to the communities they serve.

The aim of Neighbourhood Houses is to assist families and individuals to identify and solve their own problems, reduce dependence on formal government services, establish and strengthen local community networks and provide people with a greater opportunity to control their own lives.

The provision of child services has facilitated women's involvement in Neighbourhood Houses. Women comprise the largest group of users of Neighbourhood Houses and most Houses are

### 11.26 TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT GRANTS TO NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES, 1986-87

House	\$
South —	
Bridgewater Neighbourhood House	6 480
Chigwell Neighbourhood House Committee	13 200
Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood Centre	15 400
Colony 47	3 520
Gagebrook Neighbourhood Centre	14 325
Geeveston Neighbourhood House	14 130
Goodwood Community Centre	12 300
Maranoa Heights Neighbourhood Centre	15 780
Midway Point Neighbourhood Centre	11 350
Richmond Neighbourhood Centre	12 000
Risdon Vale Neighbourhood Centre	11 950
Rokeby Neighbourhood Centre	10 350
Warrane/Mornington Neighbourhood Centre	12 600
West Moonah Community Action Group	4 330
North —	
Beaconsfield Municipality	10 117
Fingal Neighbourhood House Association	4 516
George Town Neighbourhood House	11 660
Mowbray Neighbourhood House	14 932
Ravenswood Neighbourhood House	14 350
Rocherlea Community Centre	15 110
St Helens Neighbourhood Centre	9 600
North-West —	
Acton/Shorewell Community House	13 020
Devonport Community House	15 500
Rosebery Neighbourhood Centre	15 580
Savage River Neighbourhood House	11 350
West Ulverstone Community House	5 600
Zeehan Neighbourhood Centre	7 790
<b>Total</b>	<b>306 840</b>

Source: Department for Community Welfare Annual Report.

managed by women. Problems of isolation and disadvantage caused by geographic location, inadequate income, poor transport services and lack of community services are often most intensely felt by women, the aged and the unemployed. Neighbourhood Houses provide women especially with opportunities to reduce individual isolation, widen their range of interests and help them develop skills which can be used in the development of a better environment for themselves and for the benefit of the wider community.

There are 27 Neighbourhood Houses in various stages of development throughout the State. Most Houses average 200 contacts per week.

### 11.2.4 Residential Care for the Aged and Disabled

Under the *National Health Act* and the *Nursing Homes Assistance Act*, the Commonwealth provides recurrent subsidies to nursing homes for the aged and disabled. There are 53 nursing homes in Tasmania providing 2 135 beds for which the Commonwealth provided \$29.3 million in 1986-87. There are also 23 hostels offering 716 beds which in 1986-87 received \$1.4 million in Commonwealth subsidies.

In addition the *Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act* 1974 of the Commonwealth provides for capital grants to non-profit organisations and local government bodies. During 1986-87 grants totalling \$1.8 million were paid in Tasmania.

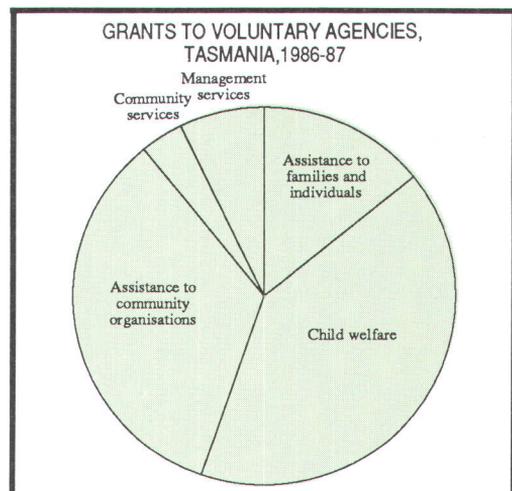
## 11.3 VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

**It has long been recognised that many welfare services are effectively and efficiently provided by the many voluntary welfare agencies which operate throughout the State.**

The non-government sector can usually respond swiftly to emerging community needs and can also provide significant voluntary support to funded services.

In an environment of increasing levels of need, and increasing scrutiny of the spending of the welfare dollar, it is important to ensure that funded programs complement rather than duplicate existing services.

State Government grants to voluntary welfare agencies in 1986-87 totalled just over \$5.3 million, a third of the State's total expenditure on welfare for the year.



In addition to receiving government grants, voluntary agencies rely heavily on voluntary labour and donations from the public to provide assistance to needy families. Services provided include shelter for the homeless, provision of household items, food parcels, clothing and toys for families in need, as well as counselling and support services. Many organisations also provide long-term accommodation in hostels and homes for invalid and elderly people.

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