

## Crisis Response team protects children

When emergencies happen outside business hours, Community Services' After Hours Crisis Response team is on hand to help protect children and families in NSW.

The Crisis Response team operates overnight and weekends 365 days a year to respond to urgent situations where a child is in danger.

This could be a result of neglect, homelessness, drug and alcohol misuse, mental illness, physical or sexual assault or domestic violence.

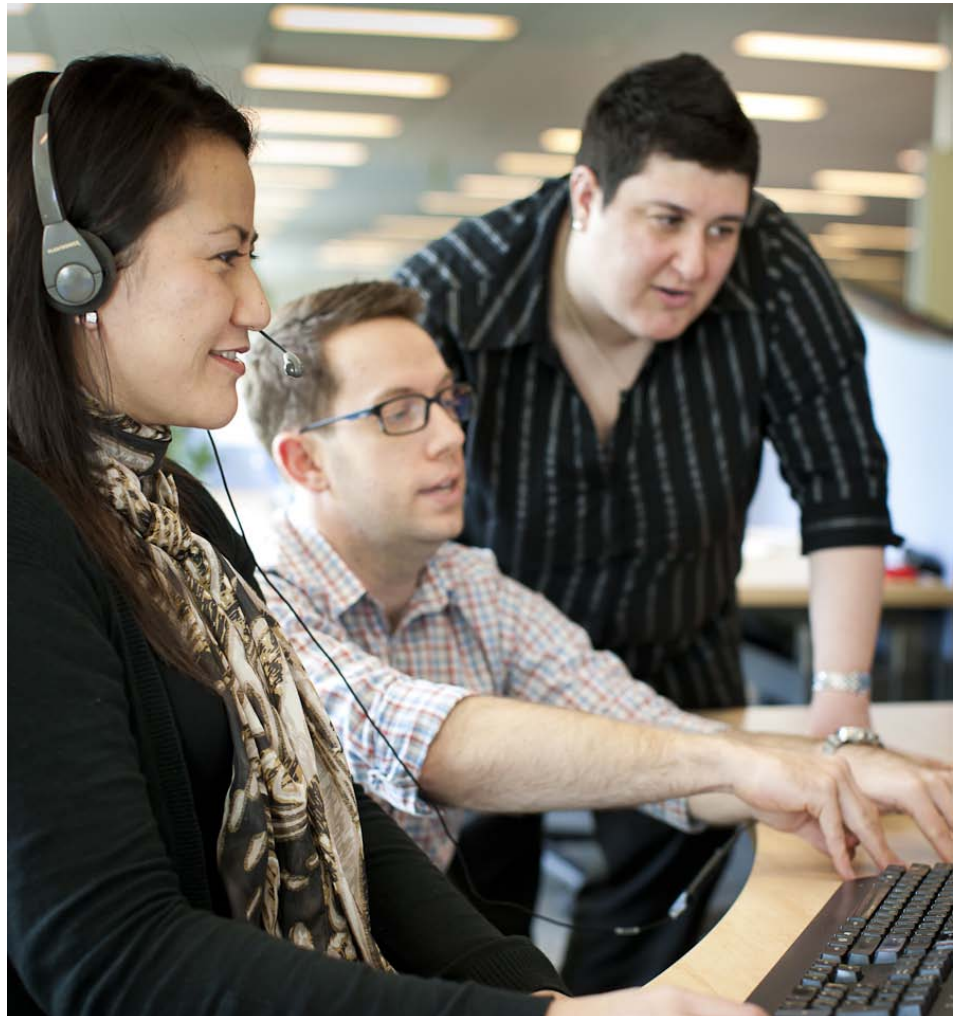
The team works closely with other government departments to ensure that children are protected at any time of the day or night.

Commonly, caseworkers require police to be present when they go out after hours, particularly where there is a history of violence with a family or the information received suggests that the situation is likely to be volatile.

Director of the Child Protection Helpline, Jody Grima, said staff worked with families, professionals and the community to provide immediate support.

"In some cases that involves removing children from their carers to ensure their immediate safety.

"Our caseworkers are specialists in crisis intervention and work closely with NSW Health, NSW Police and other specialist services which operate after hours.



"Our priority is to meet the immediate needs of the child or young person until they can be connected with other specialist services the next business day," Jody said.

In 2010–2011, the service received 9,739 referrals.

Some of the most common reports include children who are homeless, violence in the home or injuries to a child.