

# Child Welfare Division

c. 1953 – 1980

## Details

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The Child Welfare Division of the Social Services Department, and the Social Welfare Department that succeeded it, managed all aspects of child welfare work, including foster care and the government-run homes.

In 1970, the Child Welfare Division had a Head Office in Hobart and three District Offices in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie. Following de-centralisation of the Department in about 1974, it had Sub-District Offices in Queenstown, Devonport, and George Town. In 1975, after the collapse of the Tasman Bridge, it also opened a Sub-District Office in Bellerive.

The Division investigated the proposed homes and employment of child migrants, liaised with the organisations that brought them to Australia, and acted as their guardians under delegation from the Commonwealth Minister of Immigration.

Under the *Matrimonial Causes Act* 1959, at the court's request, child welfare officers employed by the Division investigated the plans made by divorcing parents to look after their children.

In 1961, the Division took over responsibility for adoptions from the Registrar-General's Department. Women child welfare officers approved potential adoptive parents, talked to relinquishing mothers, and found placements for their babies. By the 1970s, many more mothers were able to keep their babies. This meant that the welfare officer's role changed to helping the mother to make the decision and, if she kept the baby, putting her on the single mother's allowance, and maintaining regular contact in order to offer support.

Child Welfare Officers employed by the Child Welfare Division registered and monitored foster Homes. They supervised state wards and other children coming under the auspices of the Social Welfare Department and its successors. From the 1970s onwards, the approach became more preventive and the officers worked with families in an attempt to make it less likely that their children would become state wards.

The Division managed the Department's receiving homes, Malmesbury Girls' Home, Wybra Hall, Weeroona Girls' Training Centre, Ashley Home for Boys, and West Winds Boys' Home.

## More info

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### Chronology

- Children of the State Branch (1936 - c. 1953)
  - **Child Welfare Division (c. 1953 – 1980)**

### Related Entries

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- [Malmesbury Girls' Home \(1950 - 1962\)](#)  
The Child Welfare Division of the Social Services Department and its successor, the Social Welfare Department, managed Malmesbury Girls' Home.
- [Rochebank Hostel \(c. 1950 - c. 1980\)](#)
- [Abermere Hostel \(1965 - 1975\)](#)
- [Casablanca Receiving Home \(c. 1968 - c. 1980\)](#)
- [Gilburn Receiving Home \(1959 - c. 1980\)](#)
- [Malmesbury Receiving Home \(c. 1962 - c. 1980\)](#)
- [Omaru Receiving Home \(1910? - 1968\)](#)
- [Binnowie Receiving Home \(1973 - c. 1980\)](#)
- [Kanangra Receiving Home \(1958 - 1975\)](#)
- [Mardon Receiving Home \(1969? - c. 1980\)](#)
- [Miroma Receiving Home \(1969? - 1979\)](#)
- [Kanangra Hostel \(1975 - c. 1985\)](#)
- [Omaru Hostel \(1968 - c. 1974\)](#)
- [Bevis Marks Receiving Home \(1973 - c. 1980\)](#)
- [Hobart Receiving Home \(1898 - 1958\)](#)
- [Danbury Receiving Home \(1976 - 1980\)](#)
- [Cornwall Receiving Home \(1978? - 1980\)](#)
- [Eastville Receiving Home \(1979 - 1980\)](#)
- [Woodbridge-West Winds Receiving Home \(1963 - 1967\)](#)
- [Lismore Receiving Home \(1973 - 1979\)](#)
- [Ashley Home for Boys \(1926 - 1999\)](#)  
The Child Welfare Division managed Ashley Home for Boys.
- [Abermere Receiving Home \(1975 - 1980\)](#)
- [Mosley Receiving Home \(1974 - 1980\)](#)
- [Wybra Hall \(1956 - 1988\)](#)  
The Child Welfare Division managed Wybra Hall.
- [Weeroona Girls' Training Centre \(1959 - 1979\)](#)  
The Child Welfare Division managed Weeroona Girls' Training Centre.
- [West Winds Boys' Home \(1967 - 1983\)](#)

### Related Organisations

- [Social Welfare Department, State of Tasmania \(1961 - 1983\)](#)  
The Child Welfare Division was a part of the Social Welfare Department.
- [Registrar-General's Department, State of Tasmania \(1959 - 1972\)](#)  
The Child Welfare Division took over the administration of the *Adoption of Children Act* 1920 from the Registrar-General's Department in 1961.
- [Relief Division \(c. 1953 - 1980?\)](#)  
Families often required help from both the Relief and Child Welfare Divisions.
- [Social Services Department, State of Tasmania \(1934 - 1961\)](#)  
The Child Welfare Division was part of the Social Services Department.

## Records

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### Records

- [Case Files of the Child Welfare Division \(Northern Office\) \(1932 - 2003\)](#)
  - [Case Files of the Child Welfare Division \(1939 - 1972\)](#)
  - [Case Files of the Child Welfare Division \(North West Office\) \(1943 - 2002\)](#)
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