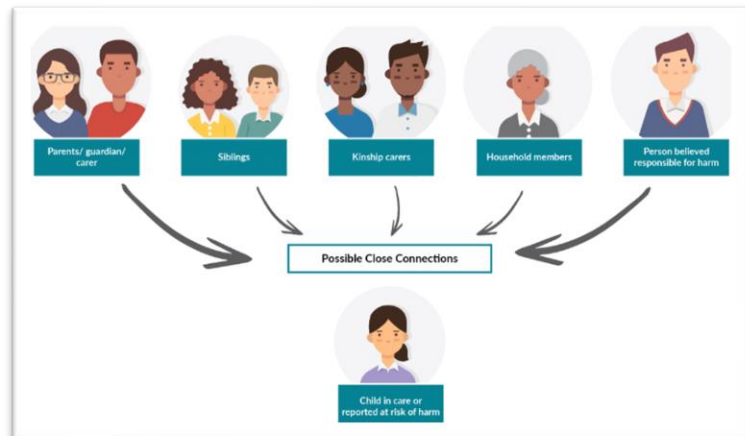


Close Connections Fact Sheet

What is a Close Connection?

A Close Connection is a person who is linked to or related to a child in the care of, or at the attention of, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) because they are:

- a sibling, a parent or a current or prospective legal guardian or carer
- another family member of the child (including as understood under the Aboriginal kinship system) identified as relevant to the safety and wellbeing of the child
- a household member at any premises where the child normally resides, or
- the person believed responsible for harm to the child.



Individuals who are defined and identified as a Close Connection in DCF's case management system (CARE) will have their data available in 360 Degree View of a Child (360VoC).

However, not all of a Close Connection's data that is held in the systems of the Participating Agencies will be available in 360VoC – only data that is described in Schedule 1 to the relevant Data Access Agreement for the following Participating Agencies of:

- Department of Health
- Department of Education and Training
- Attorney-General's Department
- Northern Territory Police Force
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development
- Department of Corrections.

Individuals that will always be considered Close Connections for the purposes of 360VoC data access are the child's biological parents and, if applicable, the person believed responsible for harm to the child – regardless of how involved they are in the child's life.

All other Close Connections must be considered and identified by the child protection worker before being confirmed in CARE and visible in 360VoC.

Close Connections

Fact Sheet

When will data be available in 360VoC?

Once we receive a notification about a child and determine either that further inquiries or a child protection investigation is needed, that child's details are entered into our CARE system and their police, health, education, justice and housing data is then available within 24 hours in 360VoC.

What will it mean to be a Close Connection?

While all relationships to the child are detailed in CARE, only those identified as a Close Connection will appear in 360VoC. This means that their police, health, justice and housing data will be visible to the relevant DCF worker for the purpose of their further inquiries or child protection investigation.

I'm a Close Connection, how long will you have access to my data?

Generally, data available in 360VoC about a Close Connection may only be accessed while the child has a current case (meaning that a child protection inquiry or investigation is underway or the child is in care), and where the individual has been identified as a Close Connection for that child. Once a child protection inquiry or investigation has closed or the child is no longer in care, or if the person has been removed as a Close Connection for the child, no new data will be transferred about the Close Connection into 360VoC unless the inquiry or investigation is re-opened or the person is re-identified as a Close Connection. However, point-in-time data will remain in 360VoC for historical record-keeping purposes.

What about my privacy rights?

Close Connections may have an impact on the safety or wellbeing of a child in care or at the attention of DCF.

The *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* (NT) provides that ensuring the safety and wellbeing of a child takes precedence over the protection of an individual's privacy needs (section 223(2)). Additionally, Information Privacy Principles 2.1(d) and (f) permit the disclosure of personal information where it is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious or imminent threat of harm to, or exploitation of, a child, or where it is authorised by law.