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## **MEDIA RELEASE**



### ***Broken Hill Children's Contact Service delivers for separated families***

Children from separated families are renewing bonds with the parent they don't live with at the Broken Hill Children's Contact Service (CCS).

The safe, nurturing and impartial centre launched by CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes has marked 12 months of providing a much-needed service to the remote NSW city.

Prior to its opening, Broken Hill families wanting the help of a CCS either had to travel hundreds of kilometres, with the closest CCS being at Mildura, or they missed out.

The launch of the Broken Hill CCS in February 2023 has enabled children to stay connected with both parents and other significant people in their lives, in situations where separated families are unable to manage their own contact arrangements.

It provides a safe, neutral and nurturing place for children to spend time with the parent or family member they do not live with, in supervised visits, or for children to move from one parent to the other.

CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes Healthy Relationships – CCS delivery leader Mark Braes says the child's needs are the primary focus of the service.

"Children of separated parents deserve relationships with the family they do not live with and our Broken Hill CCS is delivering this outcome," he said.

"We are seeing bonds between children and their parents being reestablished during visits.

"We have seen parents travel to Broken Hill from interstate for visits with their children."

In its first 12 months the Broken Hill CCS has built up to steady service activity as the community's awareness and understanding of what it offers has grown.

"We have seen an increase of court-referred visitation and are regularly offering video link visits," Mr Braes said.

CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes senior child contact worker Kristy Parker said the Broken Hill CCS rooms were colourful and full of resources and toys, set up with children in mind.

"Our space has been very popular with the children who have used it," Ms Parker said.

"We have something for everyone, and the children often don't want to leave."

The Broken Hill CCS offers supervised visits on both weekdays and weekends and to find out more, call 08 8087 3477.

CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes received \$2 million in Australian government funding over four years to establish the Broken Hill Children's Contact Service.

**Ends.....**

Media contact: CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes media officer Faye Wheeler – 6850 1788

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We respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging



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