

**W**hen you apply to become a carer, you can nominate the type of care you would most like to provide.

Generally, children and young people stay in care until they are able to safely return home. Therefore, children and young people can stay in care for varying lengths of time. Where a return to their birth parents is not possible, NT Families and Children (NTFC) will make every effort to locate a member of the child's extended family to care for them. For some children it takes longer to achieve this goal and they need to remain in care for a longer time.

There are generally four types of foster care:

### **Emergency**

Emergency placements are for children who need an urgent placement because there are concerns for their immediate safety. These placements occur during office hours but also after hours and on weekends. Due to the urgency of these placements there is minimal notice before the child is placed with carers.

### **Respite**

It is recognised that parents and carers need a break from their caring role from time to time. Carers can provide respite care for children placed with foster carers for short periods of time, eg. school holidays, weekends or for short periods during the week. Respite care is usually planned care and can be scheduled in advance.

### **Short to medium-term care**

These are placements usually up to three to six months in duration. Short to medium-term placements have a strong focus upon reunifying the child with their birth parents or extended family.

### **Long-term care**

These are placements are for over six months' duration or longer. Long-term placements can become more permanent placements if all options to reunify the child with their family have been unsuccessful.