

# Methodist Church of Western Australia

1829 – 1977

**Other Names:**

- Central Methodist Mission, Perth
- Perth Central Methodist Mission
- Wesleyan Missionary Society

## Details

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Wesleyan Methodists arrived in Western Australia in 1829 and were involved in out of home care from the early days of colonial settlement. In 1900 an independent Methodist Conference was established in Western Australia. In 1915 the 'Central Methodist Mission' was established to manage metropolitan charity work on behalf of the Methodist Conference. In 1977, the Methodist Church combined with the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches to form the Uniting Church.

Francis Armstrong, the interpreter at the Native Institution from 1834 was a Methodist. He was the earliest 'Wesleyan' known to be formally associated with out of home care in Western Australia. Another notable person was the Reverend John Smithies who arrived with his wife, Hannah, and family in 1840 and established the Perth Native School in that year. The Wanneroo Native School followed in 1844 and Gerald's Mission (York) from 1851-1854. An Order of the Sisters of the People started in the 1890s and it is not uncommon to see Sisters named as carers in the Methodist children's homes during the first few decades of the twentieth century. The Methodist Church established the Methodist Girls' Home in 1918, the Methodist Children's Home (later, Mofflyn) in 1922, and Werribee Farm School in 1929. As part of the broader Australian church, the Methodist Overseas Mission ran Mogumber (at Moore River) from 1951 until it closed. By the 1950s, the Methodist Church was also running high school hostels in regional and metropolitan areas, for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

From its inception, the Methodist Church was also involved in 'outreach' activities, including establishing the Wesley Church Canteen in the city. The Methodist Church started a Newspaper Boys' Club', which ran in the 1920s and was reported to support boys who sold newspapers on the streets and who had 'come to know many of the difficulties of life very early indeed' and who needed 'helpers' who understood and appreciated the boys' 'special characteristics and often their special form of bravado'. This outreach, social work approach possibly influenced the relatively early adoption of 'in home' support that was being practised from Mofflyn in the mid-1980s as an alternative to taking children 'into care'.

## More info

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### Chronology

- **Methodist Church of Western Australia (1829 – 1977)**
  - Uniting Church in Australia (Synod of Western Australia) (1977 - current)

### Related Entries

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- [Methodist Girls' Home \(1917 - 1924\)](#)
- [Perth Native School \(1840 - 1845\)](#)
- [Methodist Hostel for Boys, Albany \(1946 - 1972?\)](#)

The Home Missions Department of the Methodist Church was responsible for overseeing the operations of the Methodist Hostel for Boys at Albany.

- [Wanneroo Native School \(1844 - 1851\)](#)
- [Gerald Mission \(1851 - 1855\)](#)

Date: 1851 - 1854

### Related Organisations

- [Methodist Homes for Children \(1922 - 1977\)](#)

Methodist Homes for Children was an agency of the Methodist Church.

- [Native Institution, Mount Eliza \(1834 - 1838\)](#)

Francis Armstrong, a prominent early Wesleyan (Methodist) settler, was the superintendent at the Native Institution, Mount Eliza.

- [Methodist Overseas Mission \(c. 1930 - 1980\)](#)

The Methodist Overseas Mission was part of the broader Methodist Church and was involved in out of home care in WA. However, it was not an agency of the Methodist Conference in Perth.

## Resources

- [Central Methodist Mission](#), The West Australian, 9 January 1923
- [Magistrate's Court](#), The Perth Gazette and Western Australian Journal, 30 May 1835

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