

# Bunyip House

1981 – 1984?

## Details

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Bunyip House opened in Darwin in 1981. Run by Somerville Homes and its successor Somerville Community Services, it provided residential care and treatment for children with severe disabilities. It accommodated up to 7 children. The closing date for Bunyip House is not yet known. Records suggest it may have closed in the mid-1980s.

Bunyip House opened in Darwin in 1981 as a group Home for children with disabilities. It was initially known as the Trower Road Project as it was located in the building of the former Trower Road Cottage at 37 Trower Road, Rapid Creek.

Bunyip House was run by Somerville Homes, and its successor Somerville Community Services, with financial assistance from the government. Its establishment marked the move of Somerville Homes into the care of children with disabilities. Somerville Homes began discussing the need for residential care for children with moderate to severe disabilities in 1980. At that time there was no residential care, apart from short term respite care, for children with disabilities available in the Northern Territory. Bunyip House aimed to provide residential care and intensive therapy for children with severe disabilities.

The first group of children were admitted into Bunyip House in 1981. Five were Aboriginal and 2 European. The House was referred to as a 'Developmental Group Home' because it aimed to develop children's communication, physical and cognitive abilities as well as their daily living and self-help skills. Staff worked in close conjunction with parents and families of the children. A 1982 report on the Home noted that contact had been made with some families who hadn't seen their children for a number of years prior to being placed in Bunyip House. Children were returned to their families for holidays and weekends.

Bunyip House also worked closely with the Darwin Hospital to ensure good medical care and children were often taken out into the community for recreational activities. A pool was available at the Home for recreation and physical therapy. Eight staff members worked at the Home, six of whom worked on a rotating roster with a Housekeeper and Coordinator working full time.

In 1983/84 the government funded Bunyip House on a month by month basis, and suggested that Somerville Community Services find alternative accommodation for the seven children who had lived in the Home since it began. The government wished the organisation to instead provide care for children with mild disabilities. The proposal deeply concerned staff members who were worried about the impact on the children of moving away from the House.

It is unclear from available records whether Bunyip House closed in 1984 or continued to operate.

## More info

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### Related Entries

**Run by**

- [Somerville Homes \(1965 - 1981\)](#)
- [Somerville Community Services Incorporated \(1982 - current\)](#)

**Related Organisations**

- [Trower Road Cottage, Somerville Homes Inc \(1969 - 1976\)](#)

## Records

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For more information and to access your records, follow the links below:

### Records

- [General Administration Files, Annual Single number series with "N" prefix, Department of Community Development](#)
  - [General Administration Files, Annual Single Number with "N" prefix \(1982 - 1984\)](#)
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