

# Combined Children's Centre

1968 –

**Other Names:** • Clare House

**URL:** [http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/mentalhealth/mhs\\_tas/service\\_files/dhhs\\_services/clare\\_house](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/mentalhealth/mhs_tas/service_files/dhhs_services/clare_house)

## Details

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The Combined Children's Centre, run by the Mental Health Services Commission, opened on 29 March 1968, in Ellerslie Road, Battery Point. It provided mental health services to children, including state wards, and their families. In the early 1980s, it moved to Clare Street, New Town where, in 2014, it continues to operate as Clare House.

The Combined Children's Centre began as a pilot project which worked with the Guidance Branch of the Education Department. The Department of Health Services opened the Centre and handed it over to the newly formed Mental Health Services Commission within a year.

The Centre employed a psychiatrist, an assistant psychiatrist, and a Senior Medical Officer (Child Psychiatry). Later it also employed psychologists and social workers. They took referrals from doctors, schools, the paediatric and psychiatric units at the Royal Hobart Hospital, children's courts, child welfare officers, and children's Homes. The Centre saw a number of children in foster or institutional care. In about 1974, the Centre extended its services to Yalambee Hostel and special schools. Most children came to the Centre but its psychiatrists also made regular visits to children's Homes to see children and to hold discussions with staff about their care.

Staff used a community and family orientated approach to working with children. They assessed children medically and provided them with psychotherapy, play therapy, and medication for their emotional and behavioural problems. Their parents could receive counselling.

A report into the issue of 'socially maladjusted' teenage girls, released in the 1970s, suggests that a drawback to sending children to the Centre was that they became labelled with a psychiatric problem.

In 2013, the Combined Children's Centre is known as Clare House. A team made up of psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, occupational therapists, and clinical nurse specialists offer assistance to children with mental health problems. Clare House continues to use the premises in Clare Street but also operates out of a house in Davey Street, South Hobart.

## More info

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### Related Entries

**Run by**

- [The Mental Health Services Commission \(1968 - 1989\)](#)

**Related Events**

- [Investigation of the care and treatment of "socially maladjusted teenage girls", Sub-Committee of the Tasmanian Branch of the Australian Institute of Welfare Officers \(c. 1975\)](#)

#### **Related Organisations**

- [Children's Psychiatric Service Launceston \(1971 - 1990?\)](#)

The Children's Psychiatric Service Launceston worked in a similar way to the Combined Children's Centre in Hobart.

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