Media Release

Adam Giles
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory

John Elferink
Minister for Children and Families

**Strong consequences for Alice Springs rock throwers**

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The Northern Territory Government has put parents of rock-throwing youths in Alice Springs on notice that their children will be put into care if the current situation continues.

Chief Minister Adam Giles said the current situation would not be tolerated.

“I’m giving the parents of the children responsible for this spate of violence a very clear message. Get your kids off the streets. Get them back to communities and back into school,” Mr Giles said.

“Otherwise, these children will be regarded as requiring protection and we will take immediate action. Parents should not doubt our resolve to do this,” Mr Giles said.

The Chief Minister has also directed the Department of Education Attendance Officers to start issuing infringements notices where any school age child is found on the streets during school hours.

“That’s a $298 fine. Parents are warned. If these Officers find a child on the streets tomorrow that should be in school, a notice will be issued,” he said.

Minister for Children and Families John Elferink is in Alice Springs assessing the situation first hand.

“I have directed my department to take strong action and take children into care where the legal grounds are met. Normally the department would see this as a last resort and be willing to work with parents but these are not normal circumstances,” he said.

“Gangs of youth throwing rocks at Police Officers is not normal and is illegal. It’s an extreme circumstance and will bring a zero tolerance approach for this kind of behaviour.

“Our advice is that many of the children throwing rocks and committing anti-social acts are from communities.
“If parents don’t want to see their children in care then they need to get off the grog and head back to their home community,” he said.

The Government is looking at organising bus transport to assist families with their return.

Mr Giles said the Government was also reviewing its support for next year’s Lightening Carnival in Alice Springs.

“If the organisers want taxpayers support then they best think long and hard about how they conduct their event and how to reduce the impact it has created on the town in the subsequent days.” Mr Giles said.

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