

**JUSTICE REFORM INITIATIVE.
SUBMISSION TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSION:
CHILDREN AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE
SYSTEM IN AUSTRALIA**

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ABOUT THE JUSTICE REFORM INITIATIVE

The Justice Reform Initiative (JRI) was established in September 2020 with a goal to reduce Australia's harmful and costly reliance on incarceration. We seek to reduce incarceration in Australia by 50% by 2030 and build a community in which disadvantage is no longer met with a default criminal justice system response.

The Justice Reform Initiative seeks to work with parliamentarians from all sides of politics, policy makers, people with experience of the justice system, and people of good-will across the country to embrace evidence-based justice policy in order to reduce crime, reduce recidivism, and build safer communities. For more information about the work and approach of the Justice Reform Initiative, please visit our [website](#).

INTRODUCTION

The over-incarceration of children in Australia, especially of First Nations children requires immediate action. We currently have a situation where we are unnecessarily incarcerating thousands of children each year – often on remand, and often for short disruptive periods of time. Children are being ‘managed’ in prisons, rather than receiving support, care, programs, education, and opportunities in the community. Our current model of children’s incarceration is incredibly harmful, expensive, and utterly ineffective at addressing the drivers of justice system contact or building community safety.

This submission outlines a framework for change including:

- 4 key reform areas in which change is required
- 12 principles for guiding this change and
- 30 evidence-based examples of programs, supports and approaches that have achieved astounding outcomes when it comes to reducing children’s incarceration (these are included in Appendix A)

A SNAPSHOT OF CHILDREN’S IMPRISONMENT IN AUSTRALIA

The most recent ROGS data shows that there are **1,385 permanently funded beds in Australian youth detention centres**¹. The average number of young people in prison each night around Australia over the course of the year is 800.² AIHW data shows us that 56% of children in prison on any one night are First Nations children, 78% of children in prison are unsentenced, 90% are male and 10% are female³. Children’s court data shows us that in 2020/2021, that 982 children were actually sentenced to a period of custody in a Correctional Institution – (with an additional 293 sentenced to custody in the community, and a further 517 receiving a fully suspended sentence).⁴

¹ <https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2023/community-services/youth-justice> (table 17A.2)

² <https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2023/community-services/youth-justice> (table 17A.2)

³ <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/youth-justice/youth-detention-population-in-australia-2022/contents/summary>

⁴ <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/criminal-courts-australia/latest-release>

However, the total number of children who cycle in and out of prison over the course of the year is significantly higher. When designing policy responses to over-incarceration, it is the flow through data that requires close attention. ROGS data shows us that in 2021/2022 there were **4350 individual children** who were imprisoned over the course of the year. More than half (2310) of these children are First Nations.⁵ For the 471 children who were imprisoned over the course of the year aged 10-13, 68% (321) are First Nations.

When we look at release, reception, and length of time in custody, we begin to get a much clearer sense of what it is that is actually happening for these 4350 children. The AIHW data shows us that each year there are **8240 receptions (constituting 3,887 individual children)** into custody and **8227 releases (constituting 4,056 individual children)**. Children have on average 2 releases from custody over the course of a year.⁶

AIHW data from 2022 shows us that on an average day in children's prisons 589 children were (72%) unsentenced and 230 children (28%) were sentenced.⁷ However, again, the flow through data shows us a much more comprehensive picture of the over-use of imprisonment for unsentenced children. **97% of children received into custody in 2020/2021 were unsentenced.** And **90% of children released from custody were also released from unsentenced detention.**⁸ For those children who were released from unsentenced detention 63% ended up being released on bail (into the community). 36% of unsentenced children completed their remand period and received some form of sentence. But of this cohort, only 20% went on to be sentenced to detention.

AIHW (in their justice and safety research) also gives us a breakdown of length of time children are spending in custody. The average length of time children who are **unsentenced** are spending in custody in Australia is **49 days**. The average length of time in custody for children who are sentenced is **105 days**.⁹ The vast majority of children who are incarcerated in youth detention in Australia have not had their day in court, and the majority of these children will not go on to be given a custodial sentence.

The Justice Reform Initiative believes that it is time for us as a community to start asking *why* it is that we are incarcerating in this way. Why are we incarcerating so many children who are unsentenced and have not even had the courts determine either their culpability or their penalty? Why are we using prison for children so regularly, when we know without a doubt that the experience of imprisonment, *increases* the likelihood of future offending. Prison is criminogenic. **80% of children released from sentenced detention in Australia return within 12 months.**¹⁰

Although it is more complex to collect recidivism data for children who were not sentenced, it is clear from the sheer churn of numbers of children through the system that there are incredibly high rates of return to custody for children who have spent time in unsentenced detention as well.

In Australia, the cost of incarcerating one child in custody for one day is \$2,720. The cost of incarcerating one child in custody for a year is \$992,800. Across Australia we spend

⁵ <https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2023/community-services/youth-justice> (table 17A.9)

⁶ <https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/10da194d-5756-4933-be0a-29d41743d79b/aihw-juv-138.pdf.aspx?inline=true>

⁷ <https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/10da194d-5756-4933-be0a-29d41743d79b/aihw-juv-138.pdf.aspx?inline=true>

⁸ AIHW (2022) Youth Justice in Australia 2020-2021, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare <https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/10da194d-5756-4933-be0a-29d41743d79b/aihw-juv-138.pdf.aspx?inline=true>

⁹ <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/children-youth/australias-children/data>

¹⁰ <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/youth-justice/young-people-returning-youth-justice-2019-20/summary>

\$816,245,000 each year on locking up children. This does not take into account the cost of new capital works. And doesn't even begin to take into account the cost of crime, disconnection from family and community, the absence of education, disability and mental health, and the life-long costs in terms of risks of entrenched justice system involvement.

There are currently 18 children's prisons in Australia. At the time of writing, there are plans in Queensland to build two new prisons for children in Cairns (number of beds unknown) and Woodford (80 beds). In Darwin, construction of the 'new' Don Dale which will have 44 beds continues. In Victoria the new 'Cherry Creek' youth detention centre which cost \$420 million is currently sitting empty but is intended to house 140 children. In Tasmania, the Government has committed to shutting down Ashley Youth Detention centre and constructing two new therapeutic centres. The failure of children's prisons to achieve any of their intended crime-control and rehabilitative goals has been made abundantly clear. For the 4,350 children who are cycling in and out of prison each year, there is a need for a genuinely different approach.

THE YOUTH JUSTICE SYSTEM AND CHILDREN EXPERIENCING DISADVANTAGE

Most children who enter the youth justice system come from backgrounds where they have already experienced disadvantage and trauma, with a significant number also having experienced out of home care. Prison increases disadvantage and disconnection. Children in the youth justice system need family and community support, education, and life opportunities, not punishment that compounds disconnection and disadvantage.

The fact of disadvantage¹¹ cannot of course be used to discount the consequences of crime. However, it is crucial to understand the context in which most crime is committed¹² to build and implement effective policy to reduce the numbers of people in custody and strengthen genuine alternatives to prison.

A 2018 study by the Telethon Kids Institute and the University of Western Australia showed that 9 out of 10 (90%) of incarcerated children in WA had some form of neuro-disability, ranging from dyslexia or similar learning disability, language disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, intellectual disability, executive function disorder, memory impairment or motor coordination disorder.¹³ There is no evidence to suggest that this is any different in other jurisdictions.

Recent research from the Victorian Youth Parole Board notes of the children in custody:

- 55% had experienced being subject to a child protection order
- 72% had experienced abuse, trauma or neglect as a child
- 50% had experienced family violence
- 62% had accessed mental health support in relation to their diagnosed mental illness
- 28% had a history of self-harm, suicidal ideation or suicide attempts
- 29% had an active cognitive difficulty diagnosed or documented by a professional

¹¹ <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/prisoners/health-australia-prisoners-2018/summary>; For example see literature reviewed in <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/prisoners-australia/latest-release#prisoner-characteristics-australia>; <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports-data/population-groups/prisoners/overview>; <https://www.alrc.gov.au/publication/pathways-to-justice-inquiry-into-the-incarceration-rate-of-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples-alrc-report-133/2-context/social-determinants-of-incarceration/>

¹² For example, see analysis in Cunneen, Baldry, Brown, Schwartz, Steel and Brown (2013) *Penal Culture and Hyperincarceration: The Revival of the Prison*, Routledge.

¹³ Drum, M., & Buchanan, R. (2020). *Western Australia's prison population 2020: Challenges and reforms*. The University of Notre Dame Australia and the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth. http://csswa.perthcatholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/FINAL-WA-Prison-Population-Report-2020_WEB.pdf

- 66% had a history of use or misuse of alcohol
- 87% had a history of use or misuse of drugs (illicit or prescription) ¹⁴

Incarceration for children is trauma reinforcing. Children are removed from their carers, kin and communities, and often unable to participate in meaningful activities, or further education or vocational training. For First Nations children who are disproportionately-represented in youth detention, the trauma is amplified by the removal from country and community and disconnection from culture.

AIHW (2022) data notes that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are about 20 times as likely as non-Indigenous young people to be in detention¹⁵. This is higher in some jurisdictions. In Western Australia, over this same period, First Nations children were 54 times more likely than non-Indigenous children to be imprisoned. ¹⁶

4 KEY REFORM AREAS

There are four broad key areas of reform that provide a framework for understanding the different kinds of changes that are required in order to build a different justice system for children. What the evidence shows very clearly, is that while there is no single 'fix' to reduce the numbers of children in the justice system, there are multiple proven, cost-effective reforms that can work together to bring about change. Many of these reforms are already catalogued in an abundance of government and non-government reports and reviews. In addition, there are clear examples and case studies, both Australian and internationally, that point to approaches led by the community and health sectors which can make a profound difference in disrupting entrenched criminal justice system trajectories for children.

Four reform areas are noted below:

1. **Community sector reform** including increased **resourcing for supports, services and programs outside of the justice system**. This includes resourcing for evidence based programs and supports that are proven to reduce contact with the justice system. There is the need for increased resourcing and access to: early intervention and prevention services; child-centred and family-inclusive holistic wrap around support services; culturally safe support for First Nations children and their families; access to mental health support; access to alcohol and other drug support; access to disability support; access to bail support; access to supported accommodation; access to throughcare and post-release support and access to placed based supports.
2. **Justice system reform**. This includes changes to **policing** (different first responder models, different use of discretionary powers); changes to **courts** (specialist children's court models; restorative and transformative justice opportunities) and changes to the way that children who are currently imprisoned are treated (this means an urgent shift from the current model of **detainment to one that** that genuinely respects the human rights of incarcerated children, is child-centred, and trauma-aware).
3. **Legislative reform**. This includes raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility; ending mandatory sentencing; restoring the presumption in favour of bail and

¹⁴ https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/file_uploads/Youth_Parole_Board_Annual_Report_2021-22_vp7sJptq.pdf

¹⁵ AIHW 2022, 'Youth Detention Population 2021', Australian Government, pvi

¹⁶ AIHW, 2022 'Youth Detention Population 2021', Australian Government, Figure 4.3, page 14

embracing a human rights framework.

4. **Systems change reform.** This includes recognising youth justice as a whole-of-government responsibility; locating the responsibility for children who are at risk of justice system involvement *outside* of the justice system; recognition of the pipelines between child-protection and education with youth justice and the need for a whole-of-government strategy to address this.

12 PRINCIPLES FOR GUIDING CHANGE

1. **No child under the age of 18 should be subject to youth justice detention.** Youth detention should only be considered as a sentencing option of absolute last resort and reserved only for those who present a specific and immediate risk to the physical safety of another person or persons.
2. **The answers to the problems of the over-incarceration of children are located outside of the justice system.** Significant additional investment is required to build the capacity of community led (including First Nations led) alternative responses. This investment needs to be long-term, flexible, and coordinated.
3. **All police interactions with children should be focused on moving children away from the justice system.** Police should develop appropriate key performance measures to ensure discretion is exercised to divert children from the criminal justice system.
4. **Alternative first responder models** (including those that are First Nations, youth worker, and health practitioner led) and co-first responder models (where police work alongside other key community workers) are required to ensure wherever possible the option of pre-charge diversion, and to elevate the importance of addressing the social drivers of incarceration if children *do* come into contact with police.
5. There should be a **presumption in favour of bail** for all offences for all children charged with a criminal offence.
6. **Community led bail support programs**, including supported housing should be resourced in every jurisdiction in recognition of the extraordinarily high levels of children imprisoned on remand, and the current absence of supports in the community available to support this group. This should include First Nations led and culturally modelled options.
7. **Evidence based alternative court options** including restorative, transformative and First Nations led justice models should be made available in all jurisdictions.
8. Every jurisdiction should establish and adequately resource **separate specialist courts for children** in recognition of the specific developmental needs of children when they have come into contact with the justice system. These should operate as a separate Magistrates' Court and not just as a division of the existing Magistrates' Court.
9. **First Nations children should have access to First Nations led support.** The most effective responses for First Nations children are those that are culturally modelled, designed, and delivered by local First Nations communities and organisations, and which foster a genuine sense of community ownership and

accountability. Many First Nations people have intergenerational and/or personal experience of mainstream services working against them. Ensuring First Nations communities have community-control and cultural authority (as well as long-term and sustainable funding sources) will ensure programs are modelled on local systems and circumstances, and more effectively meet local priorities and needs.

10. Children should never be excluded from support on the basis of age, perceived complexity of need, past offending behaviour, or geographic location. That is, services and supports should be resourced to work with children with multiple support needs including children who are living in regional and remote areas. **Support should be holistic, child-centred, long term (when needed) and wrapped around the individual needs of the child and their family who require assistance.**
11. The Federal Government and all State and Territory Governments should commit to **raising the age of criminal responsibility to at least 14** (based on all available medical evidence)
12. Children should not be held in police watch-houses. Children should not be held in solitary confinement or confined to their cells in any form of detention for any extended period of time. For children who are currently detained by the state because they have broken the law there is the need for the environment in which they are detained (and the responsibility for their detainment) to be urgently reformed. There is the need for **therapeutic and trauma-informed detainment**. If any child is to be detained, the environment in which they are held should be (in line with the evidence) home like (rather than prison like), therapeutic (rather than punitive), trauma-informed (supporting children to build and maintain relationships and connectedness at the individual, family and community levels), small in scale, and run by highly skilled staff who are focused and specialise in the health, well-being and support of children.

WHAT WORKS

Decades of evidence shows us that for children, imprisonment doesn't work. It doesn't work to deter, rehabilitate, or make the community safer. Prison is in fact 'criminogenic'. The experience of going to prison makes it more likely that someone will go on to re-offend and return to prison. Across the country, governments on both sides of politics have regularly adopted a 'tough on crime' approach to justice policy which have resulted in increasing numbers of people in prison. Although these kinds of approaches can be politically popular, they have been monumentally ineffective at reducing cycles of incarceration, ineffective at building safer communities and extraordinarily expensive. The imprisonment rate of children in Australia has grown significantly in the last decade and recidivism rates show us that we're doing simply isn't working. We need to take a clear-eyed and evidence-based approach to criminal justice, forming policy and practice around what *works* – not what is popular or politically expedient.

Taking crime seriously requires taking the drivers of crime seriously and looking outside of the justice system to develop evidence-led solutions. There is strong evidence of the efficacy of community-led approaches that address the social drivers of over-incarceration, and examples of these are outlined in the appendix of this submission. Despite the strong evidence base, we have only seen a piecemeal approach to resourcing, expanding, and evaluating these solutions. Community-led programs in Australia are already doing considerable work in breaking cycles of disadvantage for individuals impacted by the justice

system. First Nations communities, and First Nations community-led organisations have been leading this work, often achieving remarkable outcomes with very limited support and resourcing.

While excellent programs exist, the policy and legislative environment in Australia drives far too many people into prison who would be much better served if they instead received support in the community to address the drivers of criminal justice system involvement. The often-limited scope and capacity of existing programs means that many people who are at risk of imprisonment or at risk of recidivism do not receive the support they require get out of the system. There is the need for a significant funding shift so that all children in Australia can receive effective support, care, connection, and opportunity in the community rather than being 'managed' in the justice system. This support needs to be available for children across the life-course and at different stages of contact within the justice system.

Children who come into contact with the police or courts should have every opportunity to **easily and quickly** be referred into and benefit from programs and supports that meet their needs. This should include community led alternatives, pre-charge diversion programs, bail support and supported accommodation programs, First Nations place based alternatives, intensive family support, and other programs and services and supports that we know can disrupt cycles of incarceration. We need to reconfigure our legislative framework and implementation of this framework so that incarceration is genuinely used only as a last resort. We need every child who does end up in front of court to have the option of a specialist children's court. For any child who is incarcerated, we need a commitment to genuinely therapeutic, trauma-informed and human rights based approaches, in which children are able to access supports, education, cultural and family connections and holistic healthcare.

There is an opportunity in Australia to build on the substantial evidence base about 'what works' to reduce incarceration, and re-orient our approach to one that prioritises community led diversionary and support options. We need to reframe and expand our policy approach to one that is based on a set of principles that focuses on pathways *out* of the justice system.

APPENDIX A

EVIDENCE BASED PROGRAMS THAT REDUCE CONTACT WITH THE YOUTH JUSTICE SYSTEM

A BRIEF NOTE ABOUT EVALUATION.

This appendix outlines some recent research and evidence in Australia and internationally. The programs noted below are by no means an exhaustive list. We have focused on programs that have independent and published evaluations that directly connect the outcomes of the programs with reductions in justice system contact. There are of course multiple programs around Australia achieving remarkable outcomes which have not had the resources or opportunity for evaluation, or that are focused on a different set of measures. We are hoping however that this appendix will provide a useful collection of programs as a starting point and marker of the extensive evidence that does exist about what is currently working, and enable us to explore how we might further build on these successes.

EVIDENCE-BASED EARLY INTERVENTION & DEVELOPMENTAL CRIME PREVENTION

Investment in a wide-variety of community-based early intervention as well as developmental crime prevention policies and initiatives is key to preventing offending and diverting children away from the justice system.¹⁷ Early intervention (secondary crime prevention) aims to intervene early in an individual's developmental pathway to address risk factors associated with offending and strengthen protective factors that support engagement in pro-social behaviour.¹⁸ Early intervention commonly occurs early in life, but it can also occur later in life at a crucial transition point on a pathway to offending.¹⁹ Children who are at risk of justice system involvement often experience a number of individual, family, peer, and school/community risk factors such as disconnection from education, unstable home environments, homelessness, and poverty.²⁰ Programs that work to reduce contact with the justice system tend to address a multitude of these factors at once.²¹ Primary crime prevention focuses on modifying 'criminogenic' factors in physical and social environments to stop crime before it starts.²²

¹⁷ Commonwealth of Australia. (1999). Pathways to prevention: Developmental and early intervention approaches to crime in Australia. https://eprints.qut.edu.au/4482/1/4482_report.pdf

¹⁸ Brantingham, P. J., & Faust, F. L. (1976). A Conceptual Model of Crime Prevention. *Crime & Delinquency*, 22(3), 284–296.

¹⁹ Commonwealth of Australia. (1999). Pathways to prevention: Developmental and early intervention approaches to crime in Australia. https://eprints.qut.edu.au/4482/1/4482_report.pdf

²⁰ Farrington, David. (2007). Childhood risk factors and risk-focused prevention. *The Oxford handbook of criminology*; Vinson, T., Rawsthorne, M., Beavis, A., & Ericson, M. (2015). Dropping off the edge 2015: Persistent communal disadvantage in Australia. http://k46cs13u1432b9asz49wnhcx-wpengine.netdnassl.com/wp-content/uploads/0001_dote_2015.pdf; Drum, M., & Buchanan, R. (2020). 'Western Australia's prison population 2020: Challenges and reforms. The University of Notre Dame Australia and the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth. <https://doi.org/10.32613/csos/2020.2>; Odgers, C. (2015). 'Income inequality and the developing child: Is it all relative?'. *Am Psychol.*, 70(8):722-31.; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2015). Vulnerable young people: interactions across homelessness, youth justice and child protection—1 July 2011 to 30 June 2015. Cat. no. HOU 279., Canberra.; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2018). National data on the health of justice-involved young people: a feasibility study. Cat. no. JUV 125. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/youth-justice/health-justice-involved-young-people-2016-17/summary>

²¹ Commonwealth of Australia. (1999). Pathways to prevention: Developmental and early intervention approaches to crime in Australia. https://eprints.qut.edu.au/4482/1/4482_report.pdf

²² Brantingham, P. J., & Faust, F. L. (1976). A Conceptual Model of Crime Prevention. *Crime & Delinquency*, 22(3), 284–296.

While there are clear limitations in studies that focus primarily on costs, these findings are important in framing the significance of the impact of early intervention and prevention, not just financially, but in terms of a range of social and health wellbeing measures. A study of children at risk of criminalisation in NSW found that 7% of individuals under the age of 25 will account for half the estimated costs of the state's social services by the time they are 40 years old. Additionally, 1% of this cohort will be responsible for 32% of NSW justice service costs, highlighting that early intervention targeting a small percentage can reduce future costs significantly.²³

A recent economic analysis of early intervention resourcing in Australia found that one dollar invested in early childhood education yields a return of two dollars.²⁴ The cost of late intervention in Australia has been estimated to be \$15.2 billion per year, including \$2.7 billion (18%) for youth crime.²⁵ Research findings support investing in capacity-building strategies that scale up community-based approaches to early intervention. Building on the success of relatively small-scale and economically efficient community-led innovations that create the conditions for healthy development pathways early in life can be a path to larger-scale crime prevention.²⁶

There remains a genuine opportunity in Australia to further invest in early intervention responses and build capacity for sustainable, scalable, place-based primary youth crime prevention.²⁷ Alongside this investment, there is the need for adjacent research in this area so that there is sufficient high quality data and evaluations that can drive evidence-based policy and investment. There is a particular need for longitudinal studies, using some form of matched-group comparisons at baseline to determine the impact of existing and new early intervention programs to reduce offending and improve community safety.

HOME VISITATION PROGRAMS (US)

Pre-natal and infancy home visitation programs show positive outcomes in terms of improving the health and wellbeing of children and families and reducing contact with the criminal justice system.²⁸ Within these programs, health professionals visit new parents (typically mothers or expected mothers) to provide support, care, and education pre-and-post birth. The most common home visiting programs involve sustained nurse home visiting (SNHV). The Elmira Nurse-Family Partnership program is an evidence-based SNHV program that originated in the United States.²⁹ This program has been shown to have sustained effects on outcomes for children and mothers within several randomised-controlled trials in the US, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.³⁰ In the United States (US), young girls whose mothers participated in the program were less likely to be arrested

²³ NSW Government (2019). Forecasting future outcomes: Stronger communities investment unit – 2018 insights report. <https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2019-07/apo-nid246396.pdf>

²⁴ The Front Project (2019). A smart investment for a smarter Australia: Economic analysis of universal early childhood education in the year before school in Australia.

²⁵ Teager, W., Fox, S., & Stafford, N. (2019). How Australia can invest early and return more: A new look at the \$15b cost and opportunity. Early Intervention Foundation, The Front Project and CoLab at the Telethon Kids Institute, Australia, p. 5. <https://colab.telethonkids.org.au/siteassets/media-docs---colab/coli/how-australia-can-invest-in-children-and-return-more---final-bn-not-embargoed.pdf>

²⁶ Homel, R., Freiberg, K., & Branch, S. (2015). 'CREATE-ing capacity to take developmental crime prevention to scale: A community-based approach within a national framework'. Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology, 48(3), 367–385.

²⁷ Homel, R., Freiberg, K., & Branch, S. (2015). 'CREATE-ing capacity to take developmental crime prevention to scale: A community-based approach within a national framework'. Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology, 48(3), 367–385.

²⁸ Piquero, A.R., Jennings, W.G., Diamond, B. Farrington, D. P., Tremblay, R. E., Welsh, B. C., & Reingle Gonzalez, J. M. (2016). A meta-analysis update on the effects of early family/parent training programs on antisocial behavior and delinquency. Journal of Experimental Criminology, 12, 229–248.

²⁹ Evidence Based Programs (2020). Evidence Summary for the Nurse Family Partnership. <https://evidencebasedprograms.org/document/nurse-family-partnership-nfp-evidence-summary/>

³⁰ Evidence Based Programs (2020). Evidence Summary for the Nurse Family Partnership. <https://evidencebasedprograms.org/document/nurse-family-partnership-nfp-evidence-summary/>

than those who did not participate in the program.³¹ In addition, participation in the program was shown to be associated with significantly reduced reports of child abuse and neglect, amongst other benefits.³²

PARENTING PROGRAMS (AUSTRALIA AND INTERNATIONAL)

Parenting programs found to be the most effective at reducing antisocial behaviour and youth crime include parent–child interaction therapy, the Triple P (Positive Parenting Program), and the Incredible Years Parenting Program.³³ These programs typically involve training and education that supports parents to develop positive parenting skills as well as strong relationships with their children.³⁴ Systematic reviews of parenting program evaluations have estimated such interventions have resulted in anywhere between a 34-48% reduction in problematic child behaviour.³⁵

The Triple P was developed in Australia and is now delivered around the world including in Queensland where it is free for all parents or carers of a child who is aged 16 years or younger.³⁶ There is an abundance of research demonstrating the effectiveness of the Triple P in addressing risk factors for offending. In addition, the Triple P has been recognised as a cost-saving intervention in the Queensland context.³⁷ The benefits of the program have the potential to save the Government and the taxpayer money by reducing the costs associated with conduct disorder and problematic behaviour.

MENTORING PROGRAMS (INTERNATIONAL)

Internationally, evaluations have found mentoring programs are effective at reducing offending and supporting children and young people to engage in prosocial behaviour.³⁸ One study that reviewed 25 experimental and quasi-experimental evaluations of mentoring programs and their impact on delinquency found a 19-26% reduction in behaviours of concern.³⁹

³¹ Eckenrode, J., Campa, M., Luckey D. W. Henderson, C. R., Cole, R., Kitzman, H., Anson, E., Sidora-Arcoleo, K., Powers, J., & Olds, D. (2010). Long-term effects of prenatal and infancy nurse home visitation on the life course of youths: 19-Year follow-up of a randomized trial. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, 164(1), 9–15.

³² Eckenrode, J., Campa, M., Luckey D. W. Henderson, C. R., Cole, R., Kitzman, H., Anson, E., Sidora-Arcoleo, K., Powers, J., & Olds, D. (2010). Long-term effects of prenatal and infancy nurse home visitation on the life course of youths: 19-Year follow-up of a randomized trial. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, 164(1), 9–15.

³³ Piquero, A.R., Jennings, W.G., Diamond, B. Farrington, D. P., Tremblay, R. E., Welsh, B. C., & Reingle Gonzalez, J. M. (2016). A meta-analysis update on the effects of early family/parent training programs on antisocial behavior and delinquency. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 12, 229–248.

³⁴ Piquero, A.R., Jennings, W.G., Diamond, B. Farrington, D. P., Tremblay, R. E., Welsh, B. C., & Reingle Gonzalez, J. M. (2016). A meta-analysis update on the effects of early family/parent training programs on antisocial behavior and delinquency. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 12, 229–248.

³⁵ Farrington, D. P., Gaffney, H., & White, H. (2022). Effectiveness of 12 types of interventions in reducing juvenile offending and anti-social behaviour. *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 64(4), 47-68; Piquero, A.R., Jennings, W.G., Diamond, B. Farrington, D. P., Tremblay, R. E., Welsh, B. C., & Reingle Gonzalez, J. M. (2016). A meta-analysis update on the effects of early family/parent training programs on antisocial behavior and delinquency. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 12, 229–248; Amit, B., Pawar, A., Kane, J. M., & Correll, C. U. (2016). Digital parent training for children with disruptive behaviors: Systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized trials. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology*, 26(8), 740–49.

³⁶ Queensland Government (2021). Triple P - Positive Parenting Program. <https://www.qld.gov.au/community/caring-child/positive-parenting>

³⁷ Mihalopoulos, C., Sanders, M. R., Turner KMT, Murphy-Brennan M, Carter R. Does the Triple P–Positive Parenting Program Provide Value for Money? *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*. 2007;41(3):239-246.

³⁸ Patrick, t., Henry, D., Schoeny, M., Bass, A., Lovegrove, P., & Nichols, E. (2013). Mentoring interventions to affect juvenile delinquency and associated problems: A systematic review. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, 10; Raposa, E. B., Jean Rhodes, Geert Jan J.M. Stams, Noel Card, Samantha Burton, Sarah Schwartz, and Saida Hussain 2019. The effects of youth mentoring programs: A meta-analysis of outcome studies. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 48(3): 423–43; Christensen, Kirsten M., Matthew A. Hagler, Geert-Jan Stams, Elizabeth P. Raposa, Samantha Burton, and Jean E. Rhodes 2020. Non-specific versus targeted approaches to youth mentoring: A follow-up meta-analysis. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 49(5): 959–72.

³⁹ Patrick, T., Henry, D., Schoeny, M., Bass, A., Lovegrove, P., & Nichols, E. (2013). Mentoring interventions to affect juvenile delinquency and associated problems: A systematic review. *Campbell Systematic Reviews* 2013: 10.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS (INTERNATIONAL)

Evaluations have shown after-school programs that incorporate skills training, mentoring and/or academic components may reduce anti-social behaviour. Two robust systematic reviews of after-school program evaluations estimated between a 6-14% decrease in anti-social behaviour.⁴⁰

ANTI-BULLYING/ANTI-CYBER BULLYING PROGRAMS (INTERNATIONAL)

Bullying is a known predictor of future offending and violence. Anti-bullying and anti-cyber bullying programs have the potential to contribute to reduced youth offending. There are various examples of programs in Australia and overseas that aim to intervene early (mostly during the school years) to reduce bullying. Several systematic reviews of anti-bullying and anti-cyberbullying program evaluations have estimated such interventions result in a reduction in bullying anywhere between 10%-35%.⁴¹

CHILD SKILLS TRAINING & BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE PROGRAMS (AUSTRALIA AND INTERNATIONAL)

In young people, the pre-frontal cortex (the part of the brain that controls executive functioning) is still developing. This means that children and young people are still developing the cognitive processes required in planning, controlling impulses, and weighing up the consequences of decisions before acting.⁴² There are various examples of programs that aim to build children's skills and cognitive abilities in areas that are often related to anti-social behaviour and offending (for example areas like self-control/impulsiveness, perspective-taking, and delayed gratification). Systematic reviews examining randomised-controlled trials of child skills training programs reported such interventions decrease anti-social behaviour by anywhere between 24-32%.⁴³ Similarly, systematic reviews of interventions that involve cognitive-behavioural therapy have shown effects on youth offending with anywhere between a 21-35% reduction in recidivism.⁴⁴

RESOLVE (LOGAN, QLD)

Resolve is an early intervention program for young people aged 12 to 16 years old who are at risk of justice system involvement. The program is delivered in Logan through a joint partnership between Youth and Family Service (YFS), Griffith University, Overflow Foundation, and Queensland Police Service. The program includes community outreach as

⁴⁰ See Farrington, D. P., Gaffney, H., & White, H. (2022). Effectiveness of 12 types of interventions in reducing juvenile offending and anti-social behaviour. *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 64(4), 47-68; Sema, T. A., & Welsh, B. C. (2016). After-school programs for delinquency prevention: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 14(3), 272 – 90; Kremer, K. P., Maynard, B. R., Polanin, J. R., Vaughn, M. G., & Sarteschi, C. M. (2015). Effects of after-school programs with at-risk youth on attendance and externalizing behaviors: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 44(3), 616 – 36.

⁴¹ Farrington, D. P., Gaffney, H., & White, H. (2022). Effectiveness of 12 types of interventions in reducing juvenile offending and anti-social behaviour. *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 64(4), 47-68.

⁴² Bonnie, J. R., & Scott, E. S. (2013). The teenage brain: Adolescent brain research and the law. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 22(2), 158-161. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0963721412471678>

⁴³ Farrington, D. P., Gaffney, H., & White, H. (2022). Effectiveness of 12 types of interventions in reducing juvenile offending and anti-social behaviour. *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 64(4), 47-68; Beelmann, A., & Lösel, F. (2021). A comprehensive meta-analysis of randomized evaluations of the effect of child social skills training on antisocial development. *Journal of Developmental and Life-Course Criminology*, 7(1), 41 – 65; Piquero, A.R., Jennings, W.G., Diamond, B. Farrington, D. P., Tremblay, R. E., Welsh, B. C., & Reingle Gonzalez, J. M. (2016). A meta-analysis update on the effects of early family/parent training programs on antisocial behavior and delinquency. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 12, 229–248.

⁴⁴ Koehler, J. A., Lösel, F., Akoensi, T. D., & Humphreys, D. K. (2013). A systematic review and meta-analysis on the effects of young offender treatment programs in Europe. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 9 (1), 19 – 43; Lipsey, M. W., Landenberger, N. A., & Wilson, S. J. (2007). Effects of cognitive-behavioral programs for criminal offenders. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, 6.

well as intensive case management that uses a flexible, relational, and strengths-based approach. A six-month review of the program showed early positive outcomes, with the majority of young people who exited the program meeting their goals or needs (79%), improving their level of hope (94%), improving their life skills (82%), and improving their wellbeing (88%). Griffith University is currently undertaking an outcome evaluation of the program.⁴⁵

THE PERRY PRE-SCHOOL PROJECT (US)

Pre-school programs provide early intervention and support for children at a crucial transition point in their development. There is a strong evidence base noting the relationship between behaviours in childhood that might be indicative of future offending.⁴⁶ In the US, the Perry Preschool Project is recognised as an evidence-based program that supports children from disadvantaged backgrounds to prevent the onset of offending. The Perry Preschool Project provided high-quality pre-school education to children aged three and four years old in small school-based sessions delivered by qualified teachers. In addition, teachers conducted a weekly home visit to support parents with at-home learning. An evaluation of the Perry Preschool Project found the program produced sustained effects well into adulthood. Positive outcomes included improved educational attainment, fewer teen pregnancies, reduced likelihood of spending time in prison, lower arrest rates for violent crimes, higher median incomes, and reduced likelihood of receiving government assistance.⁴⁷

COMMUNITIES THAT CARE (AUSTRALIA AND INTERNATIONALLY)

There is a strong evidence base in Australia and overseas for primary prevention models such as the Communities That Care (CTC) model.⁴⁸ These models mobilise communities to address risk factors that increase the risk of justice system involvement, including harmful substance use, low academic achievement, early school leaving, and violence. A recent study evaluated the impact of the CTC model across communities in Victoria, Australia between 2010 and 2019. This study supports the existing evidence base showing CTC is effective at preventing youth crime at a population level, with findings demonstrating significant reductions in crimes associated with CTC including a 2% annual reduction in risk for crimes against persons and a 5% annual reduction in risk for crimes of property and deception.⁴⁹

FAST TRACK (US)

Fast Track is an evidence-based early intervention program in the United States that focuses on disrupting the school to prison pipeline. The program delivers a series of multi-level, developmental, and age-appropriate interventions to support children (from the age of 5 onwards), families, and schools over a long-term developmental period. A 10-year longitudinal study found children who were randomly assigned to the intervention displayed a reduction in violent offences (31% reduction) and drug offences (35% reduction) as well as

⁴⁵ Youth and Family Service (2023). Resolve review, fact sheet (unpublished)

⁴⁶ Batchelor S et al. 2006. The Pathways to Prevention project: doing developmental prevention in a disadvantaged community. Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice no. 323. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.

⁴⁷ Evidence Based Programs. (2021). Perry School Project. <https://evidencebasedprograms.org/programs/perry-preschool-project/>

⁴⁸ Toumborou, J., Rowland, B., Williams, J., Smith, R., 'Community Intervention to Prevent Adolescent Health Behavior Problems: Evaluation of Communities That Care in Australia', Health Psychology, 2019, Vol. 38, No. 6, 536 –544; J. Hawkins, D., Oesterle, S., Brown, E., Abbott, R., Catalano, R., Youth Problem Behaviors 8 Years After Implementing the Communities That Care Prevention System A Community-Randomized Trial, JAMA Pediatrics, 2014;168(2):122-129. Further reading: <https://www.communitiesthatcare.org.au/research/publications>

⁴⁹ Rowland, B., Kelly, A. B., Mohebbi, M., Kremer, P., Abrahams, C., Abimanyi-Ochom, J., Carter, R., Williams, J., Smith R, Osborn, A., Hall, J., Hosseini, T., Renner, H., & Toumbourou, J. W. (2022). Evaluation of Communities That Care-Effects on Municipal Youth Crime Rates in Victoria, Australia: 2010-2019. Prev Sci, 23(1):24-35.

significantly lower internalising problems, externalising problems and alcohol and other drug use.⁵⁰ Fast Track costs \$58,000 per child over the 10-year investment period, which is much more cost-effective than incarcerating a child for just one year.⁵¹

YOUTH ADVOCATE PROGRAM (US)

The Youth Advocate Program (YAP) was developed in the United States. It is a strengths-based intensive support and advocacy program that provides individually tailored and wrap-around support to young people who are at risk of, or already experiencing, involvement with the justice system. Evaluations have shown the program is more cost-effective than incarceration, and that it reduces justice system involvement and improves other factors in children's lives.⁵² The Queensland Government has funded a 12-month trial of the Youth Advocate Program on the Gold Coast for children aged **10 to 17 years old**.⁵³

YOUTH PARTNERSHIP PROJECT (WA)

The Youth Partnership Project brings together state government, local government, and the community sector in a place-based, collective impact approach to youth justice. The project focuses on early identification of young people aged **8 to 12 years old** with complex needs, and the delivery of targeted community services to prevent their involvement with the justice system.

The Armadale Youth Intervention Partnership (AYIP) as part of the YPP achieved a 50% reduction in reoffending for those who completed the program.⁵⁴ Evaluation of YPP social outcomes used modelling to estimate that without the intervention, participants were likely to cost the government ~\$3 million in the future. It concluded that if the YPP Youth Justice Model reduces participants' future reliance on government by 10%, the program almost pays for itself, with ~\$300,000 of reduced government costs.⁵⁵

YOUTH CRIME ACTION PLAN, NEW ZEALAND

The New Zealand 10-year Youth Crime Action Plan⁵⁶ is an approach to reducing youth offending rates, with a focus on the overrepresentation of Māori people in the justice system. The program has sought to have a 'genuine partnership with communities' by involving Māori communities, frontline practitioners, and schools, to allow 20 communities across New Zealand to develop their own solutions to youth offending problems.⁵⁷ In 2015, the New

⁵⁰ Dodge, K. A., Bierman, K. L., Coie, J. D., Greenberg, M. T., Lochman, J. E., McMahon, R. J., & Pinderhughes, E. E. (2015). 'Impact of early intervention on psychopathology, crime, and well-being at age 25'. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 172(1), 59-70.

⁵¹ Dodge, K. A., Bierman, K. L., Coie, J. D., Greenberg, M. T., Lochman, J. E., McMahon, R. J., & Pinderhughes, E. E. (2015). 'Impact of early intervention on psychopathology, crime, and well-being at age 25'. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 172(1), 59-70.; Centre for Child & Family Policy (n.d.). Fast track overview [webpage]. <https://fastrackproject.org/overview/>

⁵² Youth Advocate Programs Inc. Evidence supporting YAP's model. <https://www.yapinc.org/Portals/0/Docs/YAP%20Evidence%20Base%20-%20booklet.pdf?ver=2020-11-22-003401-663>

⁵³ Queensland Government. (August 12, 2022). Media release: Queensland trials program to curb youth reoffending. <https://statements.qld.gov.au/statements/95951>

⁵⁴ Stewart, S. (2020). The Case for smart justice alternatives: Responding to Justice issues in WA through a justice reinvestment approach. Social Investment WA.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59c61e6dbefabf0293c04a54/t/5ef5632af22174273c5d18d5/1593140018902/SRWA+Discussion+Paper+on+Justice+Reinvestment+in+WA+March2020+%281%29.pdf>

⁵⁵ Youth Partnership Project (2021). Youth justice model: 2021 practice framework & evaluation summary.

https://www.youthpartnershipproject.org.au/files/ugd/d180ab_64766464fe62447c9d3c536354e18b4b.pdf

⁵⁶ New Zealand Ministry of Justice. 2013. Youth Crime Action Plan 2013-2023

<https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/YCAP-full-report.pdf>

⁵⁷ New Zealand Associate Justice Minister, 'Action Plan the next step forward for youth justice', Media Release, 31 October 2013 <<http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/action-plan-next-step-forward-youth-justice>>.

Zealand Justice and Courts Minister reported that the number of young people (aged 10-16) appearing in court had more than halved since 2007.⁵⁸

EVIDENCE-BASED TERTIARY RESPONSES FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Children – especially young First Nations children – need off-ramps from the criminal justice system into effective community-based supports and interventions. Tertiary prevention programs occur after a young person has offended or after a person has become a victim of crime, with the aim of preventing recidivism and repeat victimisation.⁵⁹ Like adult programs, community-led services and strategies for children and young people in contact with the justice system encompass diversion and sentencing alternatives, in-prison programs, and post-release support. Youth-focused options consider the specific needs of young people and their families.

GRIFFITH YOUTH FORENSIC SERVICE (QLD)

Griffith University delivers the Griffith Youth Forensic Service (GYFS) in Queensland, which provides state-wide multisystemic and specialist assessment and treatment services for young people adjudicated for sexual offences. In 2015, a study evaluating the impact of treatment provided in this service found it was equally effective at preventing sexual recidivism for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous youth. It also prevented violent and other recidivism for non-Indigenous youth living in remote and non-remote locations.⁶⁰

TED NOFFS FOUNDATION (QLD, NSW)

The Ted Noffs Foundation runs a residential alcohol and other drug treatment service called Program for Adolescent Life Management (PALM) for young people aged **13 to 18 years old** with problematic substance and crime-related behaviours. A recent evaluation of this program analysed three pre-referral trajectories of convictions (no or low, moderate, or high incline convictions) for over 891 young people referred to the PALM service in New South Wales. This study found treatment was associated with a significant decrease in convictions for the high incline convictions trajectory, with 4.36 fewer convictions on average over five years post referral.⁶¹ Queensland Government has allocated \$12.7 million to build a 10-bed PALM residential facility in Queensland, which will be located in the Moreton Bay Region and available to young people aged 14 to 17 years old. Ted Noffs Foundation also runs Street Universities in two locations across Queensland (Logan and Gold Coast) to support young people 12 to 25 years experiencing disadvantage.⁶² The Queensland Government recently committed an additional \$4.2 million in February 2023 to establish a Ted Noffs Foundation Street University in Townsville.⁶³

⁵⁸ New Zealand Justice and Courts Minister, 'Lowest number of youth in court in 20 years', Media Release, 24 March 2015 <http://beehive.govt.nz/release/lowest-number-youth-court-20-years?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+beehive-govt-nz%2Fportfolio%2Fcourts+%28Courts++beehive.govt.nz%29>.

⁵⁹ Brantingham, P. J., & Faust, F. L. (1976). A Conceptual Model of Crime Prevention. *Crime & Delinquency*, 22(3), 284–296.

⁶⁰ Allard, T., Rayment-McHugh, Sue., Adams, D., Smallbone, Stephen., & McKillop, N. (2016). Responding to youth sexual offending: a field-based practice model that "closes the gap" on sexual recidivism among Indigenous and non-Indigenous males, *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 22:1, 82-94.

⁶¹ Whitten, Cale, Nathan, Williams, Baldry, Ferry, and Hayden (2023) Influence of Residential drug and alcohol program on young peoples criminal justice trajectories, in *Journal of Criminal Justice*, Vol. 84, accessed January February 2023 at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0047235222001519>

⁶² Ted Noffs Foundation (n.d.). *Programs* [webpage]. <https://noffs.org.au/programs/>

⁶³ Ted Noffs Foundation. (2022). Herald Sun reports New Street University to be located in Townsville. <https://noffs.org.au/herald-sun-reports-new-street-university-to-be-located-in-townsville/>

TRANSITION TO SUCCESS (QLD - 20 LOCATIONS)

In 2018, Deloitte undertook a six-month outcome evaluation of the Queensland Government Youth Justice run Transition to Success (T2S) voluntary vocational and therapeutic service for young people.⁶⁴ Following this, Deloitte released further analysis evaluating outcomes from the program over a 12-month reporting period. This analysis found, when compared with a comparison group, T2S participants with a youth justice history had a lower reoffending rate (58% compared to 73% reoffended), a reduction in custody nights (0.7 decrease in average custody nights compared to a 1.7 increase in average custody nights), and a reduction in the average supervision days (1.4 decrease in average supervision days per month compared to a 1.9 increase in average supervision days per month). Additionally, the evaluation found for every \$1 spent on the T2S program, the program results in \$2.13 of benefits.⁶⁵

INTENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT (QLD - 15 LOCATIONS)

In February 2023, the Queensland Government published a report summarising findings from a 2022 Nous Group evaluation of the government-led Intensive Case Management (ICM) program. ICM is modelled on evidence-based practice frameworks including multi-systemic therapy,⁶⁶ Collaborative Family Work,⁶⁷ the Good Lives Model,⁶⁸ and Strengthening Families Protective Factors.⁶⁹ This evaluation found 42% of ICM clients did not reoffend (some for as long as three years post intervention). Additionally, the evaluation showed ICM resulted in a 51% reduction in the frequency of offending (in comparison to a 29% reduction for young people receiving alternative youth justice supports) and a 72% reduction in the proportion of crimes against the person (in comparison to a 13% reduction for young people receiving alternative youth justice supports). It is estimated that the program results in an \$8.1-15.7 million saving through reduced frequency and severity of offending and reduced time in custody.⁷⁰

SUPERVISED COMMUNITY ACCOMODATION (QLD)

⁶⁴ Deloitte Access Economics (2018). Transition to success: Evaluation report. Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women. <https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/about-us/performance-evaluation/program-eval/t2s-evaluation-report.pdf>

⁶⁵ Deloitte Access Economics (2018). Transition to success: Evaluation report. Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women. <https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/about-us/performance-evaluation/program-eval/t2s-evaluation-report.pdf>

⁶⁶ Porter, M., & Nuntavisit, L. (2016). An evaluation of multi-systemic therapy with Australian families. *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 37(4), 443-462.

⁶⁷ Trotter, C. (2013). *Collaborative Family Work: A practical guide to working with families in the human services* (1st ed.). Routledge.

⁶⁸ The Good Lives Model of Offender Rehabilitation (n.d.). *Welcome to the Good Lives Model website* [webpage]. <https://www.goodlivesmodel.com/>

⁶⁹ Center for the Study of Social Policy (n.d.). *Strengthening families: The Protective Factors Framework*. Florida Office of the Governor. https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/childadvocacy/strengthening_families_protective_factors.pdf

⁷⁰ Nous Group (2023). *Evaluation of Intensive Case Management* [summary report]. Department of Children, Youth Justice, and Multicultural Affairs. <https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/youth-justice/program-eval/summary-report-evaluation-of-intensive-case-management.pdf>

In 2019, Griffith University conducted an evaluation of the Supervised Community Accommodation (SCA) program for young people in Queensland. This evaluation found SCA provided young people with a high-level of service delivery that addressed the drivers of offending and provided long-term safe and stable accommodation in a home-like environment. This evaluation highlighted the relatively strong integration of case management partnerships between youth justice staff and non-government service providers operating the facilities.⁷¹ In 2020, Ernst and Young produced a follow-up evaluation and comparative analysis of SCAs in comparison to other residential care and bail support services. This evaluation concluded that SCA and residential care are higher in cost/less cost effective than bail support programs due to offering 24/7 housing. It also found over 70% of young people did not offend while residing at SCAs but 83% of young people reoffended after exiting the program.⁷² Following this review in January 2021, the Queensland Government ceased operation and funding of SCA facilities. There is an opportunity to adopt lessons learnt from this supported bail accommodation model in Queensland and evidence-based models in other jurisdictions to establish alternative community-based accommodation options that support children to comply with their bail conditions and address the drivers of incarceration. Importantly, future alternative residential options in Queensland must be designed and delivered in collaboration with Elders, First Nations service providers, and local communities.

WEAVE (CREATING FUTURES) EVALUATION (NSW)

This independent three-year evaluation of the WEAVE Creating Futures program (which provides intensive, culturally safe case work support to Aboriginal young people on release from custody) found that only 4.11% of the 93 young people engaged in the program over the period of the evaluation reoffended. This was compared to BOCSAR reoffending rates for young Aboriginal people which are 57.3% for a comparable cohort.⁷³

BACKTRACK YOUTH SERVICES IMPACT REPORT (NSW)

Over the last ten years, the intensive, holistic and relational case work provided by Backtrack Youth Services has supported 1,000 children and young people at risk of criminal justice system involvement or entrenched in the justice system. An impressive 87% of the young people who leave Backtrack transition into employment or education. A UNSW report of the impact of the program on the local community in Armidale found a 35% reduction in crime because of the engagement of young people in the program.⁷⁴

A PLACE TO GO (NSW)

The A Place to Go pilot has been operational in the Nepean Police Area Command and Parramatta Children's Court since November 2018. The program aims to improve supports and deliver a better service response for **10 to 17 year old children** in contact with the justice system, with a focus on young people on remand. It draws on services from across NSW Government and non-government service providers to deliver a coordinated and multiagency service solution that can support a young person to change their life trajectory.

⁷¹ Wood, W. R., Hayes, H. & Griffith University Criminology Institute (n.d.). *Supervised community accommodation: Final report*. Department of Children, Youth Justice, and Multicultural Affairs. <https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/about-us/performance-evaluation/program-eval/gu-sca-evaluation.pdf>

⁷² Ernst & Young Y. (2020). *Supervised Community Accommodation Evaluation, Multi-Criteria Analysis and Policy Options Report* [Evaluation report]. Department of Children, Youth Justice, and Multicultural Affairs. <https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/about-us/performance-evaluation/program-eval/sca-december-2020-report.pdf>

⁷³ Schwartz, M., & Terare, M., (2020). *Creating Futures: Weave's intensive support service for young people leaving custody or involved in the criminal justice system* [Evaluation report]. <https://apo.org.au/node/306819>

⁷⁴ Backtrack (2021). *Annual report 2020*. https://backtrack.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/2021/06/Backtrack_AnnualReport_2020.pdf

A Place to Go uses a young person's contact with Police and/or the court as an opportunity to intervene early by linking them with appropriate community supports and services, court liaison staff, cross-agency panels and dedicated short-term transitional accommodation. An independent evaluation found that young people were supported in finding stable and appropriate accommodation, accessing health services, removing barriers to education, and connecting with their communities.⁷⁵

FOCUSSED DETERRANCE (UK)

Internationally, focused deterrence strategies have been shown to reduce crime in circumstances where a small cohort of people are responsible for a disproportionate amount of crime. Focused deterrence works by gaining an understanding of the drivers behind offending and implementing appropriate interventions that combine police engagement, community mobilisation, and social service responses. It involves directly communicating the consequences of continued offending, whilst also ensuring required social services are available to the target groups or individuals. A systematic review of 24 evaluations on focused deterrence in the UK found it contributed to a reduction in crime by anywhere between 33-43%.⁷⁶ Exploration of focused deterrence strategies in Queensland must ensure appropriate representatives (such as youth workers or Elders) deliver deterrence messaging as well as connect young people with relevant supports.

DIAGRAMA MODEL (SPAIN)

Diagrama is an international non-profit organisation and operates over 35 custodial centres across Spain for young people aged 14 to 23 who have been remanded or sentenced to custody. The Diagrama model has demonstrated it reduces rates of recidivism and its operational costs are comparable to or lower than those of other providers. The model has been implemented across France and the UK. A study of 757 young people who had attended a Diagrama re-education centre in 2011 found that by December 2017, only 13.6% had been placed back in custody.⁷⁷

EVIDENCE-BASED CASE STUDIES: WHAT WORKS IN ALTERNATIVE COURT PROCESSES FOR CHILDREN?

PRE-COURT DIVERSION FOR CHILDREN (AUSTRALIA)

Children and young people may undertake pre-court diversion that involves an intervention (for example they are required to participate in a formal diversion program) or no intervention (for example they just receive a caution, reprimand, or warning).⁷⁸ Systematic reviews of studies that compare children who were diverted with children who were processed through formal court proceedings show pre-court diversion is associated with a decrease in

⁷⁵ NSW Government. 2022. *A Place to Go – Overview and referral pathway*. June 2022. 2-3.

⁷⁶ Braga, AA, Weisburd, D, Turchan, B. Focused deterrence strategies effects on crime: A systematic review. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*. e1051. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cl2.1051>

⁷⁷ Centre for Innovative Justice (CIJ) (2018). A European alternative approach to juvenile detention. RMIT University. <https://cij.org.au/news-and-views/a-european-alternative-approach-to-juvenile-detention/>. Diagrama Foundation (2019). A blueprint for change: Adapting the lessons of the Spanish Youth Justice System to the Northern Territory', 14-15, 25. <https://ddhs.org.au/sites/default/files/media-library/documents/Blueprint%20for%20Change%20-%20Diagrama%20Foundation%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>

⁷⁸ Farrington, D. P., Gaffney, H., & White, H. (2022). Effectiveness of 12 types of interventions in reducing juvenile offending and anti-social behaviour. *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 64(4), 47-68.

recidivism anywhere between 9-36%.⁷⁹ Pre-court diversion programs that include services and supports have been found to be significantly more effective than diversion on its own.⁸⁰

A 2011 study in Queensland found that in comparison to children who were processed through the court on their first contact with the justice system, children who were cautioned for their first contact were significantly less likely to have repeated contact with the justice system (as well as less frequent and less serious re-contact). This study also found that, when compared to non-Indigenous young people, First Nations young people were less likely to be diverted to cautioning for their first contact and less likely to be diverted by police for conferencing for their second, third and fourth contact with the justice system. This study noted there is a particular need to undertake rigorous evaluations of diversion programs to better understand what programs are working and could be expanded across the state.⁸¹

CHILDREN'S COURT YOUTH DIVERSION (VICTORIA)

In Victoria, the Children's Court operates a Youth Diversion Service based on restorative justice principles which aims to assist participants to take responsibility for their actions, repair harm and increase insight into the impacts of their offending upon the victim, their family, and the community. Children and young people can have court proceedings adjourned for up to four months to participate in diversion programs or services. They must acknowledge responsibility for the offence. An evaluation report found that the program was successful in diverting young people from the formal justice system. The Magistrates working across the pilot sites for the program uniformly agreed that it provided them with an important additional option to their decision-making process. All stakeholders and young people agreed that the program offered a positive alternative and filled an important gap to help keep the young people diverted from the formal justice system.⁸²

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE CONFERENCING FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS (QLD AND NZ)

Internationally, studies have found restorative justice conferencing is cost effective in terms of reducing repeat reoffending.⁸³ In Australia, restorative youth justice conferencing has also been shown to reduce reoffending in circumstances where young people are remorseful, and their conference outcomes are reached via consensus.⁸⁴ According to an internal 2018 12-month program evaluation of restorative youth justice conferencing in Queensland, 59%

⁷⁹ Wilson, David B., Iain Brennan, and Ajime Olaghere 2018. Police-initiated diversion for youth to prevent future delinquent behavior: A systematic review. *Campbell Systematic Reviews* 2018 : 5; Petrosino, Anthony, Carolyn Petrosino, Sarah Guckenburg, Jenna Terrell, Trevor A. Fronius, and Kyungseok Choo 2019. The effects of juvenile system processing on subsequent delinquency outcomes. In *The Oxford Handbook of Developmental and Life-Course Criminology*, ed. David P. Farrington, Lila Kazemian, and Alex R. Piquero, 553 – 75. New York: Oxford University Press; Wilson, Holly A. and Robert D. Hoge 2013. The effect of youth diversion programs on recidivism: A meta-analytic review. *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 40 (5): 497 – 518; Farrington, D. P., Gaffney, H., & White, H. (2022). Effectiveness of 12 types of interventions in reducing juvenile offending and anti-social behaviour. *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 64(4), 47-68.

⁸⁰ Petrosino, Anthony, Carolyn Petrosino, Sarah Guckenburg, Jenna Terrell, Trevor A. Fronius, and Kyungseok Choo 2019. The effects of juvenile system processing on subsequent delinquency outcomes. In *The Oxford Handbook of Developmental and Life-Course Criminology*, ed. David P. Farrington, Lila Kazemian, and Alex R. Piquero, 553 – 75. New York: Oxford University Press.

⁸¹ Little, S., Allard, T., Chrzanowski, A., & Stewart, A. (2011). Diverting Young Indigenous People from the Queensland Youth Justice System: The Use and Impact of Police Diversionary Practices and Alternatives for Reducing Indigenous Over-representation. Griffith University. <https://www.premiers.qld.gov.au/publications/categories/reports/assets/diverting-young-people-from-the-justice-system.pdf>

⁸² Thomas, S., Liddell, M. & Johns, D. (2016). *Evaluation of the youth diversion pilot program*.

https://www.childrenscourt.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-11/YDPP%20Stage%203%20Final%20Report%20Dec%202016%20-%20Executive%20Summary_%28final%29.pdf

⁸³ Sherman, L.W., Strang, H., Mayo-Wilson, E. et al. (2015). 'Are Restorative Justice Conferences effective in reducing repeat offending? Findings from a Campbell Systematic Review'. *J Quant Criminol* 31, 1–24.

⁸⁴ Hayes, H. Daly, K. (2003). Youth Justice Conferencing and Reoffending. *Justice Quarterly*, 20(4). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/29457142_Youth_Justice_Conferencing_and_Reoffending

of young people who participated in restorative justice conferencing did not reoffend within six months of their conference.⁸⁵ The Queensland Government has since reported that it has invested \$65.1 million towards restorative youth justice conferencing, with 77% of participants who either did not reoffend or decreased the magnitude of their offending.

Regardless of reoffending outcomes, restorative youth justice conferencing results in positive outcomes for victims and communities through actions that repair the harm caused by the young person's offending.⁸⁶ 70% of victims in Queensland reported youth justice conferencing helped them to 'manage the effects of the crime'.⁸⁷ Yet, restorative youth justice conferencing remains underutilised in Queensland⁸⁸ and the number of children referred to a restorative justice conference decreased substantially from 3,169 referrals in 2020-21⁸⁹ to 2,249 referrals in 2021- 22.⁹⁰ Reasons cited for the underutilisation of restorative justice conferencing in Queensland include discretionary gatekeeping by police, lack of a systematic and comprehensive consultation process with victims and children who are referred, and lack of evidence-based implementation of restorative youth justice conferencing.⁹¹

In Queensland, restorative youth justice conferences are convened by departmental staff.⁹² Comparatively, Jesuit Social Services in Australia run restorative justice conferences in Victoria and the Northern Territory. In a recent evaluation by Swinburne University, it was found that group conferencing was associated with a reduction in recidivism of between 24-40% compared to mainstream justice processes. This evaluation also found conferencing was extraordinarily cost-effective (running one conference costs about the equivalent of keeping a child in custody for four days).⁹³

In New Zealand, family-group conferences are used at different stages of interaction with the youth justice system,⁹⁴ including where there is an intention to charge, as a court-ordered option pre-or post-sentencing, when a young person is remanded (to explore alternative community-based options), and where there is a care and protection consideration (for children aged 10 to 13 years old).⁹⁵ Importantly, this model focuses on ensuring young people received community-based supports that address the drivers of offending.

There have been some important critiques in Australia of the way in which restorative

⁸⁵ Restorative Justice (2018). *Twelve-month program evaluation: Restorative Justice Project*.

<https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/about-us/performance-evaluation/program-eval/restorative-justice-evaluation-report.pdf>

⁸⁶ Restorative Justice (2018). *Twelve-month program evaluation: Restorative Justice Project*.

<https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/about-us/performance-evaluation/program-eval/restorative-justice-evaluation-report.pdf>; Hayes, H., & Daly, K. (2003). Youth Justice Conferencing and Reoffending. *Justice Quarterly*, 20(4).

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/29457142_Youth_Justice_Conferencing_and_Reoffending

⁸⁷ Restorative Justice (2018). *Twelve-month program evaluation: Restorative Justice Project*.

<https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/about-us/performance-evaluation/program-eval/restorative-justice-evaluation-report.pdf>

⁸⁸ Price, S., Prenzler, T., McKillop, N., & Rayment-McHugh, S. (2022). The evolution of youth justice conferencing in Queensland, 1990–2021. *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*, 34(1), 77-94.

⁸⁹ Children's Court of Queensland (2021). *Children's Court of Queensland: Annual report 2020 – 21*.

https://www.courts.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/714873/cc-ar-2020-2021.pdf

⁹⁰ Children's Court of Queensland (2022). *Children's Court of Queensland: Annual report 2021 – 22*.

<https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/tp/2022/5722T2094-21DD.pdf>

⁹¹ Price, S., Prenzler, T., McKillop, N., & Rayment-McHugh, S. (2022). The evolution of youth justice conferencing in Queensland, 1990–2021. *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*, 34(1), 77-94.

⁹² Restorative Justice (2018). *Twelve-month program evaluation: Restorative Justice Project*.

<https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/about-us/performance-evaluation/program-eval/restorative-justice-evaluation-report.pdf>

⁹³ Jesuit Social Services (2022). New youth justice spending data highlights effectiveness of restorative justice programs [webpage]. <https://jss.org.au/articles/new-youth-justice-spending-data-highlights-effectiveness-of-restorative-justice-programs/>

⁹⁴ McElrea, J.F. (1998). The New Zealand Model of Family Group Conferencing. *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research* 6, 527–543.v

⁹⁵ Becroft, A. (2017). *Family Group Conferences: Still New Zealand's gift to the world?*

<https://www.occ.org.nz/documents/98/OCC-SOC-Dec-2017-Companion-Piece.pdf>

conferencing has not always adequately engaged in a meaningful or respectful way with First Nations communities. The research in this space notes the importance of ensuring restorative programs are developed and implemented by First Nations communities with appropriate self-determination and resourcing.⁹⁶

FIRST NATIONS PLACE BASED APPROACHES

Place-based approaches seek to address complex social problems at the local level rather than through top-down policies. They draw on the unique capabilities and strengths, as well as the challenges, faced by First Nations communities and challenge governments to develop genuine partnerships with communities to alleviate complex disadvantage.⁹⁷ Place-based initiatives prioritise physical infrastructure, employment, education, community capacity building and cultural connection as ways to address the social drivers of crime.

Community Justice Groups (QLD)

Community Justice Groups (CJGs) were first trialled in three Queensland communities in 1993 in response to the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. The program has since been expanded state-wide, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led CJGs now operating in 41 communities across Queensland. CJGs work with key stakeholders to coordinate place-based responses that support First Nations people interacting with the justice system. A 2010 KPMG-led evaluation found stakeholders involved in Queensland CJGs widely supported the initiative and that it is closely aligned with state and national justice priorities; however, CJGs required greater resourcing and support to improve their capacity to deliver responses that reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in prison.⁹⁸ Following this evaluation, Queensland Government released a Framework for Stronger CJGs and allocated an additional \$19.1 million over four years in the 2019-20 state budget to enhance the initiative. Myuma Pty Ltd is currently undertaking a second outcome evaluation of the CJG initiative (due for completion in December 2023). A Phase 1 implementation evaluation report was released in November 2021, which noted the extensive outputs of CJGs and provided recommendations to strengthen program implementation and inputs during the program enhancement phase.⁹⁹ This implementation evaluation as well as the Our Community Justice website share early success stories from CJGs across Queensland.¹⁰⁰

THE YIRIMAN PROJECT

The Yiriman Project – which is run by the elders of four Kimberley language groups to reconnect their young people to culture while also reducing contact with the criminal justice system, harmful substance use and suicide – has received numerous awards and positive evaluations.¹⁰¹ Yet it has struggled over the past two decades to secure the funding it needs

⁹⁶ Coker, D. (2016). 'Restorative justice, Navajo peacemaking and domestic violence', *Theoretical Criminology*, 10(1):67–85; Jarrett, B. & Hyslop, P. (2014). 'Justice for all: An Indigenous community-based approach to restorative justice in Alaska', *Northern Review*, 38:239–268.

⁹⁷ Gilbert, R. (2012). Place-based initiatives and Indigenous justice. <https://www.indigenousjustice.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/mp/files/publications/files/brief013.v1.pdf>

⁹⁸ KPMG (2010). *Evaluation of the Community Justice Group Program, Final Report*. Department of Justice and Attorney General. https://www.courts.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/519898/final-report-community-justice-group-evaluation.pdf

⁹⁹ The Myuma Group (2021). *Phase 1 Report: Evaluation of Community Justice Groups*. Queensland Courts.

https://www.courts.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/738974/cjg-evaluation-annual-report.pdf

¹⁰⁰ Our Community Justice (n.d.). *Our Community Justice* [webpage]. <https://ourcommunityjustice.org/>

¹⁰¹ Thorburn, K. & Marshall, M. (2017). The Yiriman Project in West Kimberley: An example of justice reinvestment. Current Initiatives Paper. Indigenous Justice Clearinghouse. <https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2017-07/apo-nid116631.pdf>; Palmer, D. (2013). Yiriman youth justice diversion program business plan 2016 [evaluation report]. <http://kalacc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/yiriman-youth-justice-diversion-business-plan-2016.pdf>; The Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention (n.d.). Best practice – Prevention – Yiriman Project – Evaluation. <https://cbpatsisp.com.au/clearing-house/best-practice-programs-and-services/programs-for-preventing-youth-suicide/>

to continue its services. Children and young people aged 15 to 25 years are taken out on country to visit Elders where they are involved in deep learning and transmission of culture and language, workshops, making of artefacts and taking care of the land. A three-year evaluation found it reduced participants' subsequent contact with the criminal justice system, with some concluding it was better than most other sentencing and diversionary options in this regard.¹⁰²

MARANGUKA JUSTICE REINVESTMENT PROJECT (NSW)

The independent review of the Maranguka justice reinvestment Project at Bourke in 2016-17 found a 23% reduction in domestic violence offending; 38% reduction in the number of youth proceeded against for driving offences, alongside increased rates of school retention and estimated savings of \$3.1 million over the course of a year.¹⁰³ The close partnership between the community and police was critical to the success of this work, with regular meetings between police and community members, sharing of data, and working together to identify community members in need.¹⁰⁴

YUWAY NGARRI-LI (NSW)

Yuwaya Ngarrri-li is community-led partnership between the Dharriwaa Elders Group and the University of New South Wales aims to improve the wellbeing, social, built and physical environment and life pathways of Aboriginal people in Walgett, NSW, through collaboration on evidence-based initiatives, research and capacity building. A 2022 report from Yuwaya Ngarrri-li evaluating change in youth justice outcomes since the commencement of the partnership in 2018 showed there were overall increases in diversions in 2019 and 2020 (but decreases again in 2021); overall reductions in charges and court cases; and reductions in youth custody episodes but noted the need for ongoing work to embed systemic change.¹⁰⁵

OLABUD DOOGETHU (WA)

The Kimberley-based Olabud Doogethu project is Western Australia's first justice reinvestment site. Olabud Doogethu aims to create stronger communities, more resilient families and young people, and reduce youth involvement in the criminal justice system in the Halls Creek Shire. The project's focus is community-driven and Aboriginal-led initiatives that build local community cohesion, capacity, leadership and infrastructure; tackle disadvantage; and create local justice support opportunities. 90% local Aboriginal employment has been achieved for all Olabud Doogethu service programs.¹⁰⁶ Data provided by WA Police for the period 2017-20 showed significant reductions in youth crime at the site, including a 63% reduction in burglaries; a 43% reduction in oral cautions, a 69% reduction in arrests; a 64% reduction in Aboriginal persons admitted to police custody (aged 10+) and a 59% reduction in stealing of motor vehicles.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰² Palmer, D. (2016). "We know they healthy cos they on country with old people": Demonstrating the value of the Yiriman Project Maranguka Justice Reinvestment Project, Bourke, NSW [evaluation report]. <https://researchrepository.murdoch.edu.au/id/eprint/42383/1/Yiriman%20Project.pdf>

¹⁰³ Just Reinvest NSW (2018). Maranguka Justice Reinvestment Project Impact Assessment. KPMG. <https://www.indigenousjustice.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/mp/files/resources/files/maranguka-justice-reinvestment-project-kpmg-impact-assessment-final-report.pdf>

¹⁰⁴ Allison, F. & Cunneen, C. (2022). Justice Reinvestment in Australia – A Review of Progress and Key Issues. Justice Reinvestment Network Australia. https://jrna228913579.files.wordpress.com/2022/07/national-report_jr.pdf

¹⁰⁵ Reeve, D. R., McCausland, D. R., & MacGillivray, P. (2022). Has criminal justice contact for young people in Walgett changed over time? Analysis of diversions, charges, court, and custody outcomes 2016-2021. https://www.igd.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/documents/YN%20Research%20Report%20Has%20criminal%20justice%20contact%20for%20young%20people%20in%20Walgett%20changed%20over%20time_1.pdf

¹⁰⁶ Olabud Doogethu Aboriginal Corporation (n.d.). The impact [webpage]. <https://olabuddoogethu.org.au/about-us/the-impact/>

¹⁰⁷ Olabud Doogethu Aboriginal Corporation (n.d.). The impact [webpage]. <https://olabuddoogethu.org.au/about-us/the-impact/>

APPENDIX B: MULTIPLE ADVOCATES WORKING FOR CHANGE

The Justice Reform Initiative recognises that many of the principles and ideas outlined above have been identified by First Nations experts and advocates over decades of advocacy in this space. We also recognise the leadership and work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led organisations and leaders more broadly, over many decades in progressing reform when it comes to the over-representation of First Nations people in the criminal justice system. There have also in very recent years been some additional and significant contributions to advocacy and policy in youth justice by expert advocates.

This includes recent important contributions about changing youth justice nationally from:

- **Save the Children** and their 2023 publication calling for a rights based approach '*Putting Children First: A rights respecting approach to youth justice.*'¹⁰⁸
- **Jesuit Social Services** who have been committed to long-standing policy, research and advocacy work and have produced multiple publications on this topic of in youth justice.¹⁰⁹
- **Amnesty International** who have been campaigning on a range of youth justice issues, including their work outlined in their *National Plan for Youth Justice.*¹¹⁰
- **Change the Record** who along with the **Human Rights Law Centre** have been leading the *Raise the Age* campaign¹¹¹

There have been many other local service providers and local advocacy organisations campaigning on the specific needs of their jurisdictions and the Justice Reform Initiative acknowledges this important expertise. For instance, last year the SRWA coalition put out a comprehensive blue-print for reform in WA.

- **Social Reinvestment Western Australia** in its 2022 publication *Blueprint for a Better Future – Paving the Way for Youth Justice Reform in Western Australia.*¹¹²

In Queensland multiple organisations including QLD Peak Care, the Youth Advocacy Centre, QATISCPP and Sisters Inside have been campaigning specifically around the over incarceration of children in Queensland. In Victoria, Smarter Justice for Young People¹¹³, West Justice and the 'target zero' campaign¹¹⁴, and many others have been working on reform of Youth Justice. In the NT, the long-standing Central Australian Youth Justice group (CAYJ) have also been campaigning and advocating in this space.¹¹⁵ There are community-based advocates, researchers, campaigners and service providers in every state and territory who have enormous expertise in the area of youth justice. There is also enormous stakeholder expertise and goodwill. A growing coalition of First Nations leaders and communities, researchers, community sector practitioners, people with lived experience of incarceration, and a diverse group of advocates are all extraordinarily committed to sharing this expertise and supporting decision makers throughout Australia to develop and properly resource evidence-based approaches to criminal justice.

¹⁰⁸ https://www.savethechildren.org.au/getmedia/4befc9d7-c9de-4088-b591-547714fc8673/putting-children-first-a-rights-respecting-approach-to-youth-justice-in-australia_april-23.pdf.aspx

¹⁰⁹ <https://jss.org.au/policy-submissions/justicesolutions/>

¹¹⁰ <https://action.amnesty.org.au/act-now/cie-national-plan-of-action-kids-in-detention>

¹¹¹ <https://www.changetherecord.org.au/raisetheage>

¹¹² <https://www.socialreinvestmentwa.org.au/blueprint-for-a-better-future>

¹¹³ https://www.fclc.org.au/smart_justice_for_young_people#:~:text=Smart%20Justice%20for%20Young%20People%20is%20a%20coalition%20of%20over,contact%20with%20the%20justice%20system.

¹¹⁴ <https://www.westjustice.org.au/media-and-events/target-zero>

¹¹⁵ <https://www.cayj.org.au/new-page>