

## **BLUEPRINT FOR A BETTER FUTURE: PAVING THE WAY FOR YOUTH JUSTICE REFORM JOURNEY & CONSULTATION TO DEVELOP THIS REPORT**

This report is the culmination of several years' work by the Social Reinvestment WA team and the contributions and collective expertise of our coalition of 29 non-government organisation members, and over 70 individuals who represent these organisations on SRWA's committees. **The Blueprint builds an evidence-based vision as an alternative to our existing, failing youth justice system.**

**This report came about because** in our ongoing advocacy for justice reinvestment and to Raise the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility, SRWA has continually been met with the same obstacle and question: "Of course we don't want to incarcerate children, but what do we do with them instead?" Whilst we're of the firm belief there are plenty of better options and alternatives, many already running, what was clear is there was no recent document that summarised the evidence, and laid out in detail how such a different system could look. SRWA were not funded by government to do this work, but the coalition prioritised it because they saw it was needed.

**The Blueprint was informed by** desktop data analysis and research provided pro bono by King & Wood Mallesons Law Firm, and the SRWA team undertook extensive research, and a drafting and development process with our coalition members. In developing this report, we also sought to consult with people who have lived experience of the justice system, and other non-government organisations and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations working in this space through open invitation.

Originally we had planned to release a version of this report only for further external consultation and input. However the dire situation with young people being moved to Casuarina maximum security adult prison from Banksia Hill last month, meant our coalition made the decision that we needed to publish some concrete ideas of how to do things differently as *a matter of urgency*. **Our aim is to use the Blueprint to prompt and lead ongoing conversations about reform**, culminating in a summit next year. Our Blueprint is an Edition 1- open to evolution and additions, and potential future re-releases.

We are proud of this substantial piece of work, and we hope policymakers will clearly comprehend possible alternatives to the current youth justice approach. **Our Key ask of Government** is to commit to a strategic reform of the Youth Justice system and Young Offenders Act in service of a new holistic vision; and to immediately fund place based solutions in the communities in most urgent need of action.

This work, and the work of SRWA to campaign to end the systemic over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in WA's justice system is made possible through the generous contributions and commitments of our 29 member organisations, and since 2021, our partnership with Change the Record. Thank you to everyone who has contributed their time, knowledge, and experience to shape this Blueprint.

**This report seeks to lay foundations for a new beginning, and to launch ongoing conversation and action to reform how we provide truly just outcomes for young people and build safe communities in WA.**

### **DEVELOPMENT PHASES**

#### **2020**

- **Data Analysis** by King Wood Mallesons for SRWA
- **2 Half Day Open Sector Consultation Workshops by SRWA, 6 Feb and 8 Dec 2020**

117 Total Attendees; Advertised on Social Media, Emails, Eventbrite.

**Organisations Represented (Alphabetically):** Aboriginal Legal Service of WA, Aboriginal Health Council of WA, Aboriginal Family Law Services, Anglicare, Centrecare, Communicare, Connect Groups, Curtin University, Dismantle, Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service, Department of Justice (Frontline Staff), King Wood Mallesons (scribing), Mission Australia, Noongar Family Safety and Wellbeing Council, Outcare, Save the Children, Telethon Kids Institute, Uniting Justice, Uniting WA, Waalitj Foundation, WA Council of Social Service, WA Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies, Wungening Aboriginal Corporation, Youth Legal Services, Youth Affairs Council of WA, Youth Partnership Project.

- **Lived Experience Consultations by SRWA Staff including** 6 Young People currently in System (5 male, 1 female, all Aboriginal)

## 2021

- **Lived Experience Consultations by SRWA Staff,** 4 SRWA Lived Experience Ambassadors (4 female, 3 Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.)
- **Literature Review** by SRWA staff
- **Drafting** by SRWA staff
- **Individual Organisation Consultations;** Aboriginal Legal Service of WA, Outcare.
- **SRWA Review and Feedback Process:** Internal Briefings and Presentations to 30 SRWA Member Organisations through Sub Committee and Quarterly meetings, Multiple Drafts Circulated

## 2022

- **Individual Organisation Consultations;** Aboriginal Legal Service of WA, Aboriginal Health Council WA, Noongar Family Safety Wellbeing Council, Community Legal WA, Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services, Commissioner for Children and Young People, Olabud Doogethu, CPSU/CSA.
- **Review and Editing Process:** Monthly Review and Feedback of Updated drafts by SRWA Law Reform Sub-Committee, Drafts Circulated to Wider Coalition for Input.
- **Finalisation and Endorsement Process:** SRWA Coalition; June to August 2022
- **Sharing with Wider Sector Prior to Launch:** WA Council of Social Service Emerging Issues Presentation; Email Out to 75 organisations who signed on to SRWA RTA Report & Open Letters.
- **Government Engagement:** June- August 2022; Department of Justice, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services, Commissioner for Children and Young People, Ministers for Youth, Communities, Corrective Services, Attorney General.
- **Graphic Design:** June – August 2022
- **Launch:** August 2022; Approximately 250 invites sent to NGOs, Community and Government.

## MAIN AUTHORS

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## DRAFTING FEEDBACK, REVIEW, AND ENDORSEMENT COMMITTEES

### SRWA Law Reform Sub Committee

**Engagement Type:** Key Monthly Review and Feedback Group; Assisted in shaping outline of report and engagement, development, and report plans; Sent updated drafts monthly from December 2021; engaged in monthly meetings and outside meetings with written feedback.

**Representatives from:** Aboriginal Legal Service of WA, Wungening Aboriginal Corporation, Outcare, Red Cross, Amnesty International, Youth Affairs Council WA, WA Council of Social Service, Change the Record, WA Justice Association, Centrecare, Youth Legal Services, Human Rights Law Centre, Save the Children, Community Legal WA, Anglicare.

### SRWA Wider Coalition Group

**Engagement Type:** Briefed and given feedback opportunities at SRWA Quarterly Coalition Meetings, and SRWA Justice Reinvestment Sub Committee Monthly meetings; Sent drafts for review in December 2021, March 2022, June 2022.

**Organisations (Alphabetically):** Aboriginal Legal Service of WA, Anglicare WA, Amnesty, Australian Red Cross, Bringing Them Home Inc/ Yokai, Centrecare, Connect Groups, FISH Foundation for Indigenous Sustainable Housing, Kin Advocacy, Life Without Barriers, Mercycare, NAIDOC Perth, Outcare, Oxfam, Palmerston, Reconciliation WA, RUAH, Save the Children/54 Reasons, Waalitj Foundation, WA Council of Social Service, WA Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies, White Lion, World Vision, Wungening Aboriginal Corporation, Uniting WA, Uniting Church in WA, Youth Affairs Council of WA.