

# Expanding Adult Time, Adult Crime and Taking a Strong Stance on Drugs and Anti-Social Behaviour Amendment Bill 2026

**Submission No:** 085

**Submission By:** Adam Head

**Publication:** Making the submission and your name public

---

# **Submission on the Expanding Adult Crime, Adult Time and Taking a Strong Stance on Drugs and Anti-Social Behaviour Amendment Bill 2026**

**Submitted to:** Queensland State Government

**Date:** 16 March 2026

**Submitted by:** Adam Head

**Location:** Queensland

---

## **Introduction**

This submission responds to the proposed **Expanding Adult Crime, Adult Time and Taking a Strong Stance on Drugs and Anti-Social Behaviour Amendment Bill 2026**, which aims to strengthen community safety by expanding the application of Adult Crime, Adult Time offences, introducing a new drug enforcement and diversion framework, and expanding police powers in designated community precincts.

The objective of improving public safety and ensuring accountability for serious offending is supported. However, the Bill currently focuses primarily on **punitive responses directed at young offenders**, without addressing one of the most significant contributing factors to youth offending: **parental disengagement and lack of accountability within the family environment**.

For the legislation to achieve long-term reductions in youth crime, it should include mechanisms that **encourage and require parental responsibility and engagement** in addressing offending behaviour.

---

## **The Need for Parental Accountability**

Youth offending rarely occurs in isolation from family context. Research consistently shows that risk factors such as:

- Lack of parental supervision
- Parental disengagement from education and behavioural supports
- Unstable home environments
- Exposure to substance abuse or criminal behaviour within the home

are strongly correlated with youth crime and antisocial behaviour.

While the proposed Bill increases penalties for youth offenders under the Adult Crime, Adult Time framework, punitive responses directed solely at young people may not address the underlying drivers of offending behaviour.

Without parental involvement in behaviour change and rehabilitation strategies, the likelihood of **repeat offending remains high**.

---

### **Shared Responsibility for Youth Behaviour**

Young people under the age of 18 remain legally and developmentally dependent on parents or guardians. For this reason, youth justice reforms should acknowledge the principle of **shared responsibility between young offenders, families, and the broader community**.

The legislation should therefore include provisions that:

- Require reasonable parental engagement in rehabilitation or diversion programs.
- Allow courts to direct parents or guardians to participate in support programs where youth offending is linked to family circumstances.
- Recognise that successful rehabilitation often requires **family-based behavioural change**, not just individual punishment.

Such measures would complement the Bill's objectives by addressing **the causes of youth crime rather than only the consequences**.

---

### **Proposed Measures to Strengthen Parental Accountability**

The Bill could be strengthened by introducing provisions such as:

#### **1. Mandatory Parental Participation Orders**

Courts could require parents or guardians to attend:

- Behavioural intervention programs
- Parenting education courses
- Youth justice conferences
- Case planning meetings with youth justice or community services

Failure to participate without reasonable cause could result in appropriate civil penalties.

---

#### **2. Parental Engagement in Youth Rehabilitation Plans**

When a young person is subject to court supervision, diversion programs, or intervention plans, parents should be required to:

- Attend scheduled meetings with youth justice officers or service providers
- Participate in behaviour management strategies at home
- Support school engagement and attendance requirements

This would ensure that intervention strategies extend beyond the justice system and into the home environment.

---

### **3. Early Intervention Family Programs**

The Bill's policy intent of improving community safety could also be supported through **preventative family-based programs**, including:

- Parenting support and education programs
- Family counselling services
- Drug and alcohol intervention programs for families
- Structured support for parents of youth involved in antisocial behaviour

These programs should be linked to the proposed **Illicit Drug Enforcement and Diversion Framework**, ensuring that families are involved in treatment and behavioural change strategies where substance misuse is present.

---

### **Benefits of Including Parental Accountability**

Including parental accountability provisions would help:

- Reduce repeat offending among youth
- Strengthen family responsibility for behavioural outcomes
- Improve rehabilitation success rates
- Reduce long-term costs to the criminal justice system
- Enhance community safety outcomes

Evidence from multiple jurisdictions demonstrates that **family-based interventions are among the most effective strategies for reducing youth reoffending.**

---

### **Balancing Accountability and Support**

Any parental accountability provisions should be implemented in a balanced way that recognises that some families face significant social, economic, or mental health challenges.

Therefore, enforcement measures should be accompanied by access to:

- Family support services
- Mental health and addiction support
- Parenting education and skill-building programs

The goal should be **constructive accountability rather than punitive action against parents alone.**

---

## **Conclusion**

The objectives of the **Expanding Adult Crime, Adult Time and Taking a Strong Stance on Drugs and Anti-Social Behaviour Amendment Bill 2026** to strengthen community safety and hold offenders accountable are supported.

However, to achieve sustainable reductions in youth crime, the legislation should expand its scope to include **parental responsibility and engagement as a core component of youth justice reform.**

Youth behaviour is strongly influenced by family environments. Addressing youth crime without addressing parental accountability risks treating symptoms rather than causes.

By incorporating structured parental participation and accountability measures, the Queensland Government can strengthen the effectiveness of this legislation and support safer communities across the state.

---

## **Submitted by:**

Adam Head

