

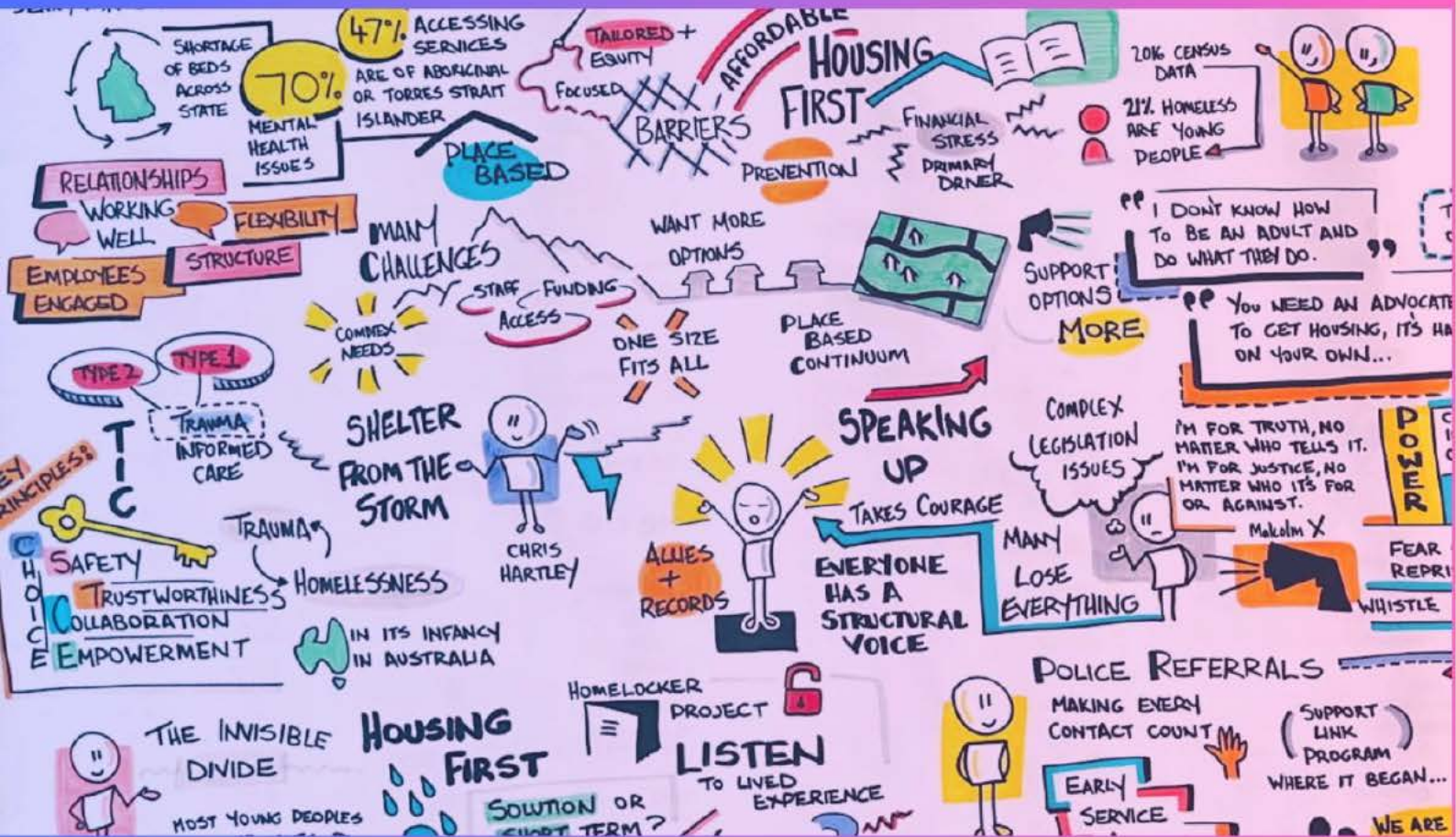
Making Queensland Safer Bill 2024

Submission No: 120
Submitted by: Queensland Youth Housing Coalition
Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Attachments: See attachment
Submitter Comments:



Queensland Youth Housing Coalition Inc.

Submission to Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee on the Inquiry into the Making Queensland Safer Bill 2024



All Young People Safely Housed



Contents

About QYHC	2
Queensland’s Current Status Quo	4
Punitive approaches are unlikely to enhance community safety	5
Homelessness, Domestic & Family Violence and Poverty – Intersections with Youth Justice.....	6
Many young offenders are vulnerable, homeless and victims of crime.....	9
Recognising the developmental stages of childhood and adolescence alongside trauma-based behaviours.....	9
QYHC is concerned about many aspects of this reform bill. In particular:.....	11
Unintended Consequences	13
International reforms in youth justice	15
There are more effective ways than detaining children and young people	16
We can take action to keep children, young people and communities safe	21
What we need moving forward	23
In Summary	24
References	26

About QYHC

The Queensland Youth Housing Coalition Inc. (QYHC) was established in 1984. We have evolved since that time to become a significant voice for the issues impacting marginalised young people with a focus on ending homelessness and addressing the underlying causes.

The vision of the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition is:

All young people safely housed.

QYHC is a not-for-profit state-wide coalition of organisations and individuals engaged across projects and campaigns. QYHC is intent on conducting research projects, informing policy, and enhancing community education as well as working on workforce development activities to ensure a robust sector and community able to address homelessness and the associated issues that impact young people.

QYHC is committed to improving the life opportunities and wellbeing of young people impacted by homelessness by working collaboratively across government and non-government organisations to address homelessness, through the provision of housing, and addressing the multitude of associated issues that impact wellbeing such as: poverty, access to education, health services, income, safety, and social inclusion. QYHC acknowledges that connection and relationships are key for all young people and underpin our collective work.

When young people experience homelessness, interventions need to occur at the earliest possible point in time to minimise the impacts. We accept there are a plethora of life issues that lead young people to homelessness but reject any notion that such issues need negatively impact their life trajectory. The experience of homelessness for young people can be short lived and rapidly resolved. There is no reason for young people to experience chronic homelessness and the associated myriads of problematic life outcomes.

Individuals and organisations join the coalition due to their collective belief that all young people need a safe and secure home to be included in our society and experience holistic wellbeing. In doing so, they agree to participate in QYHC's policy and practice activities as well as its campaigns. QYHC is a coalition of like-minded individuals and organisations who share social justice values, are intent on inclusion and use an evidence base to focus on strategies that ensure all young people have access to a safe and secure home. For more information go to: <https://www.qyhc.org.au/>

"I just want to send them a couple of photos of these little kids and tell their stories.

The money needs to go to intervention not punishment.

My heart is weeping."

This is the response of one of our regional Specialist Youth Homelessness Services when the call for submissions regarding the proposed amendments to the Youth Justice Act 1992 was received on Friday 29th November 2024. It sums up perfectly the sentiment across the sector at present. So much work has been done to begin to build a fairer and more just system for young people. To have this work undermined in such a tangible way is heartbreaking. The Queensland Youth Housing Coalition (QYHC) and our sector work tirelessly every day for safe, healthy and happy children, young people, families and communities. We believe this is a universal desire. This can be achieved by holistic responses to children, young people and families when difficulties arise. We don't dispute there is a place for detention in some instances, but Queensland already has the second highest rate of incarceration of our young people in the country. Getting tougher on children and young people who are already doing it tough, is not the answer. Guidance and support are.

Whilst we articulate our concerns through this brief submission from the point of view of the Youth Housing and Homelessness Peak, we are not the experts in youth justice and as such defer to our colleagues at Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP) and endorse their considered and well researched position. We are also not Lawyers. As such we defer to our colleagues at Youth Advocacy Centre (YAC) who are well versed in this legislation and the impacts on our most vulnerable young people. We also recognise the significant role QCOSS plays in this space whilst working across the community services sector and endorse their submission.

We need further time to consider the vast range of interventions that balance the rights of victims and offenders.

QUEENSLAND YOUTH HOUSING COALITION (QYHC)
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LORRAINE DUPREE
Email lorraine@qyhc.org.au M 0448 073 463
December 2nd, 2024

Queensland's Current Status Quo

Queensland has the second highest rate of children's incarceration in Australia (at a rate of 4.8 per 10,000), significantly higher than the larger states of New South Wales and Victoria (Justice Reform Initiative, 2023). Although the Northern Territory leads Queensland in terms of rate, more children are incarcerated in Queensland than anywhere else in Australia. While the children's prison population has decreased in New South Wales by 24% and in Victoria by 34% since 2019-2020, Queensland's child prison population has increased by 41% (Justice Reform Initiative, 2023). Considering that locking young people up is harmful and expensive, it does not reduce crime, is counterproductive to community safety and improving life outcomes, and does not address any of the social drivers of contact with the criminal justice system (Queensland Family and Child Commission, 2023a; Justice Reform Initiative, 2023), Queensland's approach to young offenders is counterintuitive.

It is evident that vulnerable and marginalised young people in Queensland often do not receive the timely assistance they require from the various systems charged with responding to their needs. For some young people this lands them in the youth justice system and further entrenches their disadvantage. In 2022, 45% of young offenders in Queensland were disengaged from education, employment and training, 27% had one or more disability, 27% were diagnosed with one or more mental health disorder, 14% with one or more behavioural disorder, 53% had been impacted by domestic and family violence, and 30% were in unstable and/or unsuitable accommodation (Queensland Government, 2023). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people were significantly overrepresented comprising 59% of all young offenders (Queensland Government, 2023). Young people who have been in out-of-home care are at a higher risk of having contact with the youth justice system (Queensland Family and Child Commission, 2023b). Analysis by the Queensland Family and Child Commission (2023a) showed that high rates of recidivism follow detention and that the detention centre population is largely comprised of 'repeat offenders'. Unless the core drivers of youth offending are targeted, Queenslanders will continue to cover the exorbitant cost of a system with "no evidence of efficacy in terms of rehabilitation, deterrence or community safety in the long term" (Justice Reform Initiative, 2023, p. 2).

Punitive approaches are unlikely to enhance community safety

After decades of research and anecdotal evidence, we know beyond the shadow of a doubt that intervention works and punitive measures do not, especially given that it is punitive measures that often lead young people to become disengaged from the systems intended to support and protect them thus increasing the likelihood of them falling foul of the law. “The best way to reduce children’s offending is to provide support to vulnerable children in the community and take preventative measures so they do not engage in offending in the first place” (Walsh, Beilby, Lim and Cornwall, 2024, p. 5). Reducing youth offending requires a focus on supporting vulnerable children through preventive and community-based measures rather than relying solely on the youth justice system. “For the best outcomes, we need to act protectively before the child commits offences. This can occur through the education system, the child protection system, and diversionary approaches to policing” (Walsh et al., 2024, p.5).

Education is a vital protective factor, as staying in school equips children with life skills, provides adult oversight, and reduces the likelihood of boredom-driven offending (Walsh et al., 2024). In the child safety system, unstable placements and residential care often exacerbate trauma, a key predictor of criminal behaviour. Protective interventions are crucial, as many children in detention are known to Child Safety but lack the stability and care needed to avoid criminalisation (Walsh et al., 2024). Policing strategies should prioritise diversion over arrests, with community policing, restorative justice, and immediate interventions serving as effective alternatives that reduce reoffending. Decriminalising survival-based offences and avoiding charges for incidents in residential care would further protect vulnerable children (Walsh et al., 2024). For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, culturally safe approaches, such as Family-Led Decision Making and community patrols, are essential to address historical trauma and rebuild trust. By addressing vulnerabilities through education, child protection, and reformed policing, safer communities can be fostered, and youth offending can be significantly reduced (Walsh et al., 2024).

By the government’s own admission, they’ve taken this proposed legislation steps too far: “I recognise that there may be less restrictive options available to achieve the stated purpose, such as by increasing maximum penalties for specific offences to mirror the maximum penalties for adult offences, without also exposing children to mandatory minimum sentences, or by providing courts with sufficient discretion to impose a sentence that fits the

crime and circumstances of the offender. I also recognise that, according to international human rights standards, the negative impact on the rights of children outweighs the legitimate aims of punishment and denunciation. The amendments will lead to sentences for children that are more punitive than necessary to achieve community safety” (Frecklington, Queensland Government, 2024, p.5).

The core logic of this policy proposes the answer to keeping the community safer is realised through the disregard of children and young people’s safety. Rather than recognising the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Queensland Human Rights Act 2019 as the foundation upon which a functioning society thrives, the proposed legislation favours a belief that punitive measures will keep us safer, despite comprehensive research to the contrary (Sotiri, Schetzer & Kerr, 2024). Chair of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Ann Skelton, calls out the proposed changes as showing a flagrant disregard for children’s rights and reinforces the argument these policy changes will not make Queensland safer (Skelton, 2024). The crux of the policy requires the community to accept the notion young people’s liberties and protections within our society are readily disposable. Rather than addressing the root cause of youth offending this policy will inevitably only serve to embed the seeds of future increased offending, exacerbate disadvantage and compound harm and trauma (Sotiri, Schetzer & Kerr, 2024).

We know detaining young people creates competent criminals, especially so for those who graduate to adult prison whilst still young. The less time young people spend in detention, especially for non-violent crimes the more likely they are to become fully functioning and holistically well contributing members of our community. It has taken considerable time, but we were on our way to a more workable youth justice system whereby the balance between early intervention and prevention and tertiary responses such as detention is improving - we still have a long way to go but we are on the trajectory for positive momentum whilst seeing youth crime rates decrease.

Queensland already has the second highest rate of incarceration in Australia. There is neither sound community safety evidence nor economic prudence underpinning this bill.

Homelessness, Domestic & Family Violence and Poverty – Intersections with Youth Justice

Core to addressing homelessness in Australia is an acknowledgement of, and targeted response to, the issue of poverty and social disadvantage. From Queensland Youth Housing Coalition’s perspective, offending behaviours and homelessness sit within a symptomatic

continuum of structural imbalances, poverty and social disadvantage. Relevant to this, is the reality that, in Australia, 1 in 6 children are living in poverty (Davidson, Bradbury & Wong, 2022).

Experts regularly draw a clear link between young people experiencing homelessness and juvenile offending and note that they are at a higher risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system than their housed counterparts.

Young homeless people are often unable to support themselves, ineligible for benefits, and unlikely to find employment. Consequently, they may engage in survival behaviours—begging, theft, drug dealing and prostitution—to earn income for food and shelter. Not only are some of these behaviours illegal, they are also more visible to police due to the lack of privacy experienced by homeless people.

Furthermore, *trauma adds to the risk of offending behaviour, contributing to the link between child maltreatment, homelessness and offending. Experiences of trauma—both prior to leaving home and a result of being homeless—lead to poor self-regulation and coping skills, placing the young person at high risk for serious illegal behaviour* (Hurren & Stewart, 2017).

The marked correlation between homelessness and involvement in the criminal justice system arises from specific vulnerabilities that exist for homeless and at-risk young people. Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) is a significant factor in young people experiencing homelessness (AIHW, 2023). Queensland Youth Housing Coalition's (QYHC) research with Specialist Youth Homelessness Services (SYHS) confirmed the overwhelming impact of DFV on young people's wellbeing, particularly their housing stability. In 2022-23, almost a third of young people (31%) presented to Queensland SYHS experiencing DFV (AIHW, 2023).

The protective needs of young people may be further exacerbated as a result of particular disadvantage due to cultural and social factors, including the impact of discrimination. These include but are not limited to:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.
- Young people with cognitive difficulties.
- Young people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds.
- Young people with psychiatric conditions.
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual and questioning (LGBTIQA+) and sistergirl/brotherboy young people.
- Young people who are pregnant and/or parenting.
- Young people exiting Juvenile Justice services, particularly young people on dual child protection and juvenile justice orders.
- Young people with substance misuse issues. (QYHC, 2021)

In Queensland at the time of the last Census, 27.4% of young people experiencing homelessness were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. In north and western Queensland these percentages were far higher with 83.9% in outback Queensland, 49.8% in Cairns and 55.6% in Townsville (ABS, 2023). There were also high concentrations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in those regions who were represented in 'severely overcrowded' dwellings (ABS, 2023). QYHC is cognitive of and concerned by the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in all our systems, including homelessness, juvenile justice and child protection.

The long-term impact and effect of poverty on the trajectory of a young person's life are profound. Childhood experiences of poverty lead to detrimental impacts on development (Tucker, Marx, & Long, 1998); and poverty has been found to lead to elevated stress and family breakdown in the home (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2017).

Countries with robust welfare states and concerted poverty reduction initiatives report lower rates of child poverty and homelessness (Fitzpatrick & Stephens, 2007). Research suggests that unless the structural drivers of homelessness are addressed the prevention or ending of youth homelessness is unlikely to ever be attained (Bramley & Fitzpatrick, 2018; Bramley et al., 2015; Culhane & Metraux, 2008).

Addressing homelessness is possible through preventative measures that focus on what leads to disadvantage and marginalisation, which includes addressing childhood poverty and trauma. The best way to end homelessness is to prevent people becoming homeless by providing enough housing supply that is affordable and accessible (Spinney et al. 2020). Research supports that preventative measures that reduce poverty, increase income and improve access to affordable housing, effectively reduce the risk factors associated with youth homelessness (Schwan et al., 2018a), and will see long term benefits to reduce young people offending (MacKenzie et al., 2020).

Young people who leave home at an early age are more likely to experience multiple episodes of homelessness, be involved with child protection services, be tested for ADHD, experience bullying, be victims of crime (including sexual assault), have greater mental health and addictions symptoms, experience poorer quality of life, attempt suicide and become chronically homeless (Gaetz et al., 2016). A study of young people experiencing homelessness in Canada noted that violent victimisation was significantly higher among homeless young people compared to the general population (59.6% compared to 7.6%). Young women (37.4%) and transgender/gender non-binary young people (41.3%) reported higher rates of sexual assault (Gaetz et al., 2016). Responses that aim to support young people transitioning out of an experience of homelessness, or inevitably engaged within the youth justice system, must

incorporate trauma-informed practice and seek to therapeutically address the history of abuse and violence encountered in the home environment (notwithstanding the trauma experienced through homelessness itself).

Many young offenders are vulnerable, homeless and victims of crime

Public policy debate regarding youth offending often ignores the myriad of issues young people, in particular vulnerable young people experiencing homelessness, face. A young person's experience of homelessness is filled with anxieties about survival, concern for personal safety and vulnerability to violence as a major source of fear (Adler, 1989). Young people are more characteristically the victims of crime, than they are the perpetrators (Gaetz, 2002; Yoder et al. 2013).

Young people rough sleeping lack private space to rest, recover and protect themselves whilst indiscretions become inevitably public. Due to their visibility, young people are vulnerable to exploitation, whether by unscrupulous landlords, employers, sexual predators or other criminals (Gaetz, 2002). This vulnerability is a particular concern of Queensland SYHS providers who recognise that some young people Under 16 years of age experiencing homelessness are unable to access a Child Safety response or safe housing options.

Research highlights that young people experiencing homelessness have an increased involvement in the criminal justice system (Yoder et al. 2013) and report negative interactions with law enforcement (Schwan et al, 2018b). Oftentimes young people experiencing homelessness struggle to arrange Centrelink benefits and disengage from education and employment. During these difficult times, young people, often compounded by mental health challenges and the effects of trauma, engage in behaviours that expose them to the attention of authorities (Gale, 2019). Transition from incarceration to independence can often place a young person at greater risk of homelessness given that support structures post-release are regularly inadequate (Estrada & Marksamer, 2006).

Recognising the developmental stages of childhood and adolescence alongside trauma-based behaviours.

Criminalising children's behaviours that are often trauma based is counter-intuitive and potentially re-traumatising. Most commonly, behaviours displayed have an underlying message that adults need to pay attention to. QYHC asserts that the role for adults and

systems in Australia is to pay more attention to what children and young people have to say. As an organisation we aim for the developmental needs of children and young people to be more widely recognised across our society in order that children receive the appropriate supports and interventions as they need them. Criminal behaviours exist in a continuum of many behaviours associated with complex social and familial factors. These need to be addressed in a holistic manner that includes a collaborative systems approach inclusive of families, communities and government and non-government organisations across the spectrum of education, housing and homelessness, health, child safety, juvenile justice, domestic and family violence and other relevant providers (Stewart, 2014; Lynch, 2003).

The more healthy relationships a child has, the more likely he will be to recover from trauma and thrive. Relationships are the agents of change and the most powerful therapy is human love. Bruce D. Perry

After decades of research, we now have at our disposal extensive research on child and adolescent development. We also know the need for children and young people to have meaningful connections and a key adult figure in their lives for holistic wellbeing and resilience, particularly in difficult circumstances. We also understand the costs of removing children and young people from their families and note this as a last resort.

The link between the compromised position of those who are homeless and the relationship between trauma, disadvantage and criminal offending is becoming all too clear. Amongst homeless young people high levels of strain are associated with elevated levels of offending behaviour, including theft, burglary, robbery, assault, aggravated assault, and substance use (Baron, 2006; Baron, 2008).

Robert Agnew's general strain theory (GST) 1992, is often used to demonstrate the correlation between adverse events and offending behaviour. It has more recently been used to highlight the relationship between offending behaviours and homelessness. Using GST as a guide, researchers sought to identify some of the key events and experiences that place homeless young people at high risk of juvenile justice system involvement. By expanding and elaborating on the particular types of strains and stressors that are relevant to homeless young people, they identified several key understudied strains that may help to account for their high risk of justice system involvement and that may also place them at risk of persistent homelessness. These strains include experiences of many forms of victimisation (noted as poly-victimisation), experiences of discrimination and violent victimisation that result from an LGBTIQ+ identity, and a variety of failures and setbacks associated with multiple system involvement (Snyder et al, 2016).

The implications of this work for policy, practice and interventions are significant. It makes sense that one of the recommendations of the researchers was the importance of equipping young people with the resources to interrupt or avoid strain. These include, educational, social, housing and system supports. They asserted that these interventions would lead to improved outcomes for young people in terms of their holistic wellbeing and a decrease in juvenile justice involvement (Snyder et al, 2016).

Anna Stewart and Emily Hurren in their 2017 article entitled: *Child maltreatment, homelessness and youth offending* noted that children and young people who have been harmed are at increased risk of offending, particularly when maltreatment continues into or begins during adolescence. They also state that homelessness plays a role in this link in that young people who leave home often do so to escape traumatic situations that include domestic and family violence. They are likely to experience mental health related issues resultant from trauma. Furthermore, homeless children and young people are at greater risk of victimisation with an estimated 83% of homeless young people experiencing physical and/or sexual assault after leaving home (Stewart & Hurren, 2017).

Trauma adds to the risk of offending behaviour, contributing to the link between child maltreatment, homelessness and offending. Experiences of trauma—both prior to leaving home and a result of being homeless—lead to poor self-regulation and coping skills (exacerbated by substance abuse), placing the young person at high risk for serious illegal behaviour (Stewart and Hurren, 2017).

Analysts are clear that there is a proven link between homelessness for young people and juvenile offending. Issues noted include the ineligibility of many young people for income support, low levels of income support and their difficulties in finding employment or means of adequately supporting themselves. As such, engagement in survival behaviours that are often illegal, such as begging, theft, drug dealing and prostitution to pay for food and shelter, is a reality (Stewart and Hurren, 2017; Malvaso, 2017).

QYHC is concerned about many aspects of this reform bill. In particular:

1. It breaches the Queensland Human Rights Act
2. It breaches the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC)
3. It does not differentiate between violent and non-violent offences

4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are significantly overrepresented in the Youth Justice system and are a group of young people who already face significant disadvantages that need to be addressed separate to the criminal justice system.
5. It tends towards a notion of serious repeat offenders when nearly 80% of young people who offend do so only once and respond to diversionary opportunities and support.
6. It fails to recognise that most offences committed by young people are minor.
7. A significant proportion of young people in detention have a disability including many with limited or impeded cognitive functioning. These need to be addressed holistically as health and wellbeing responses.
8. Young people engaging in criminal activity, for the most part, are an indication of our societal systems failing them.
9. The correlation between detention and safer communities is not proven. In fact, significant evidence to the contrary exists.
10. Aspects of this legislation hold young people to higher standards than adults. This is inappropriate.
11. Aspects of this legislation as well as being punitive and too harsh, sentence many young people to a lifetime of unemployment given the numerous workplaces that will not hire those with criminal records. Ensuring young people's crimes are carried with them for the rest of their lives ensures they are ostracised for life with significantly diminished opportunities. It also removes the option for young people with trauma histories and/or lived expertise of homelessness or other systems to work as sector professionals due to their inability to obtain a Blue Card or work with NDIS. As well as being unable to work in these spaces, in some cases access to support will be removed - for example NDIS where ability to access is potentially removed if it is determined the person has previously engaged in behaviours unbecoming.
12. Childhood and adolescence are times of development for children and young people. They need to be assessed as growing and learning. They will make mistakes.
13. There is no evidence that detention, especially long-term detention has any positive impacts on young people or community safety.
14. Rehabilitation is essential and is needs to be a focus of any youth justice system.
15. Poverty, Domestic & Family Violence and Homelessness exacerbate the vulnerabilities of young people. Experiencing unmet need in systems responsible for responding to those impacted by these issues often leads young people to engage with the Youth Justice system. First Nations young people are overrepresented in all domains.
16. A significant proportion of young offenders are also victims of crime.

Unintended Consequences

QYHC is concerned about the potential for many unintended consequences of this Bill. Particularly so considering the fact the time limit does not allow for discussion and consultation with various experts to analyse the significant changes and likely impacts. On initial perusal we note the following unintended consequences of the Bill for young people experiencing homelessness or housing instability and recognise there are likely many more for this cohort and the wider population of children and young people.

1. Increased Overrepresentation of homeless children and young people in the Youth Justice System

Issue: Homeless and at-risk children and young people are more likely to be criminalised for survival behaviours, such as trespassing (seeking shelter), shoplifting (meeting basic needs), or unlawful use of transport.

Impact: The Bill's harsher penalties and broader categorisation of offences risk drawing homeless children and young people into the justice system for behaviours linked to their lack of resources, rather than addressing the root causes of their offending.

2. Barriers to Bail for Children and Young People

Issue: Children and young people who experience homelessness often lack a stable address or family support, which are key factors in granting bail.

Impact: The Bill's removal of detention as a last resort could lead to more children and young people experiencing homelessness being held on remand simply because they cannot meet bail conditions or find suitable accommodation.

3. Disproportionate Punishment for Non-Violent Offences

Issue: Many children and young people who experience homelessness or are at risk engage in non-violent offences linked to poverty. These include crimes such as petty theft or trespassing. The Bill's failure to distinguish between violent and non-violent offences risks disproportionate detention for these children and young people.

Impact: Detention for minor infractions exacerbates trauma and disconnection, increasing the likelihood of recidivism.

4. Lack of Access to Rehabilitation and Support

Issue: Children and young people experiencing homelessness lack stability and have limited access to services, making them less likely to benefit from diversionary or rehabilitative programs that require consistent participation.

Impact: Without targeted outreach, these children and young people are more likely to face punitive measures rather than the support needed to address underlying issues such as trauma and homelessness.

5. Removal of Restorative Justice for Non-Violent Offences

Issue: Children and young people experiencing homelessness, who are already marginalised, benefit from restorative justice processes, which provide accountability without the harm of incarceration.

Impact: By removing restorative justice options for non-violent offences, the Bill eliminates an effective pathway to reintegration for these children and young people.

6. Increased Risk of Entrenchment in the Criminal Justice System

Issue: Homelessness often correlates with early contact with the justice system. The Bill's punitive measures, such as harsher sentencing and the removal of judicial discretion, increase the risk of entrenchment for children and young people who are experiencing homelessness.

Impact: Criminal records further limit their access to housing, employment, and education, perpetuating cycles of disadvantage and offending.

7. Amplified Disparities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children Without Housing

Issue: Homelessness and housing insecurity amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people is already disproportionately high. The Bill exacerbates existing inequities by introducing punitive measures that disproportionately impact First Nations children.

Impact: This undermines efforts to close the gap and address systemic barriers.

8. Naming and shaming children and young people

Issue: Children and young people are still developing. Children and young people who are marginalised can fall into criminal behaviours through coercion of those more powerful. Their circumstances need to be heard and understood. Their privacy needs to be maintained.

Impact: Being publicly named and shamed in court and by media is likely to impact all aspects of their life and wellbeing moving forward, including school attendance, employment opportunities, mental health, and relationships with peers.

International reforms in youth justice

There is much to learn from other jurisdictions including those such as Scotland, once notoriously punitive in their approach to children and young people. Since 2006 Scotland has undertaken significant reforms to its youth justice system, favouring early intervention, diversion from formal legal processes, and a focus on rehabilitation (Scottish Government, 2024a). Key elements to this policy reform include:

1. **Whole System Approach:** Introduced in 2011, this approach focusses on providing tailored support and interventions based on individual needs. It prioritises community-based responses over custodial sentences, advocating for diversionary programs, restorative justice, and social/mental health support (CYCJ, 2022; Scottish Government, 2024b).
2. **Age of Criminal Responsibility:** In 2019, Scotland raised the age of criminal responsibility from 8 to 12, emphasising that the young person should be treated through child welfare approaches.
3. **Early Intervention, Diversion and Alternatives to Custody:** Scotland adopted a proactive approach to prevent youth involvement in crime offering young people at risk of offending education, support, and alternative activities. Children who are convicted and sentenced are managed in "secure care" facilities.
4. **Children's Rights and Youth Justice Practice, Policy and Research:** Reforms included alignment of Children's Hearing System, National Safe guardians Panel and advocacy services with United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Targeted funding of Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice to aid understanding (Scottish Government, 2024a).

These reforms have led to significant benefits including lower youth crime rates; better rehabilitation outcomes and improved social integration. These reforms are rooted in the belief that young people are more capable of change and the justice system should focus on rehabilitation, education, and reducing the negative impacts of criminal justice involvement (Scottish Government, 2021). Scotland's youth justice reforms have understandably garnered international attention as a model for progressive and human rights-based approaches to dealing with young offenders.

On the back of sustained research and results, the Scottish government has remained committed to grounding its youth justice policies on the rights of young people. This commitment is evidenced by the development of a subsequent youth justice vision: A Rights Respecting Approach to Justice for Children and Young People (2021-2024), where Minister for Children and Young People, Clare Haughey MSP acknowledges (Scottish Government, 2021, p3):

“In Scotland we must do more to avoid criminalising our children; we must ensure that their rights are upheld and that they are supported to flourish and contribute positively to their communities. We must also do more to ensure systematic protections for the rights and interests of victims, particularly where those victims are themselves children.”

The Scottish Children and Young People’s Centre for Youth Justice further emphasises the desperate need for ‘justice’ to be front and centre of youth ‘justice’ responses highlighting.

“There is no justice in taking traumatised children; holding them solely responsible for their actions; putting them through processes they don’t understand and are unable to participate in; blaming and stigmatising them whilst failing to give them what they need; putting barriers in the way of loving and caring relationships; and taking existing supports and opportunities away from them” (Lightowler, 2020, p2).

International approaches to youth justice are diverse, ranging from welfare and restorative justice models focused on rehabilitation and reintegration, to more punitive models centred on deterrence and punishment. A significant factor in the move toward more restorative approaches has in fact been a commitment and adherence to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, along with influential UN agreements specifically related to youth justice (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2016).

While punitive approaches may prioritise deterrence, evidence highlights rehabilitation, prevention, and community-based interventions as more effective in reducing recidivism and promoting long-term positive outcomes (Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine, 2016). Early intervention, restorative justice, and integrated services offer strong models for addressing youth crime, particularly as they address underlying causes of offending behaviour i.e. poverty, education, and mental health.

There are more effective ways than detaining children and young people

The apparent fixation on detention of young people is difficult to justify given the exorbitant cost and inefficacy of locking young people up in contrast to cost-effective and successful evidence-based diversionary programs (Note: Queensland incarceration cost per year per young person - \$761,390, and incarceration cost per year for 267 young people - \$203,291,130; Australian Government, 2022). There is considerable evidence from a broad range of programs and projects that young people can be diverted from engagement in crime

with early support. Heartbreakingly, the policy and legislative context in Queensland already “drives far too many people into prison who would be more likely to stop offending if they received support in the community” (Justice Reform Initiative, 2023, p.7). The key feature of successful, evidence-based approaches is the response being ‘community-led’ (Justice Reform Initiative, 2023).

Shifting the engagement of young offenders away from court or youth justice departmental responses towards therapeutic community-led models (especially for First Nations communities), disrupts entrenched criminal justice trajectories (Justice Reform Initiative, 2023). Evidence-based case studies from within Australia and abroad demonstrate the value of:

- Early intervention and prevention.
- Place-based engagement.
- Bail support (linked to social and health well-being).
- Post-release support (linked to drug and alcohol programs).
- First Nations-led post-release services.
- Alternative and specialist court processes.
- Diversionary programs.
- Restorative justice processes.
- Alternative policing and first-responder models, and
- Alternative detention models that incorporate rehabilitation and therapy (Justice Reform Initiative, 2023).

Prevention and Early intervention are the most impactful solution to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and communities. We need to ensure improved supports for First Nations children and young people. We need to ensure timely and appropriate responses to concerns when noted. “Indigenous people have emphasised the need for community-led and place-based approaches to addressing criminal behaviour by Indigenous children” (Walsh et al., 2024, p. 47). Indigenous children in Australia are often labelled as a ‘hard to reach’ group, but this overlooks the adverse treatment they have historically faced from police, which continues to foster mistrust, suspicion, and hostility. Research highlights the importance of police legitimacy—built on trust, fair treatment, and sound decision-making—in deterring youth from crime. Indigenous communities advocate for community-led, place-based strategies to address criminal behaviour among Indigenous young people, emphasising culturally safe and decolonising approaches. The need to shift from government-run programs to community-owned and managed frameworks, focusing on the child’s family and community rather than the individual is emphasised. It is suggested that ‘on country’ programs, centred on healing and cultural learning, are vital for effectively addressing Indigenous children’s offending behaviours (Walsh et al.,2024).

To address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Queensland's youth justice system, a cultural safety approach is essential. This involves practitioners reflecting on their own cultural identities, fostering respect, and engaging in shared knowledge and active listening (Walsh et al., 2024). The Youth Justice Act 1992 (Qld) facilitates cultural participation but faces challenges due to under-resourced community justice groups and unpaid elder volunteers. Key reforms include:

1. Cultural Safety in Children's Courts:

- Employ First Nations Court Liaison Officers.
- Use Indigenous artwork in courtrooms.
- Include elders, respected persons, and justice group representatives in court processes.
- Begin court sessions with Acknowledgment of Country and respect for elders.

2. Support for Indigenous Families and Communities:

- Prioritize family-led decision-making.
- Provide adequate resources to address youth offending.

3. Improved Court Processes for All Children:

- Offer support from education, mental health, and cultural liaison officers.
- Provide specialist communication assistants and lay advocates.
- Simplify legal language with clear explanations by judges and magistrates.

4. Integration of Youth Justice and Child Protection Matters:

- Create a holistic system inspired by New Zealand's cross-over lists for efficiency and inclusivity.

These reforms aim to ensure fairness, cultural sensitivity, and accessibility for all children, particularly those from Indigenous communities (Walsh et al., 2024).

Youth Support Coordinator Program

Over a decade ago a centralised statewide Youth Support Coordinator (YSC) program operated in Queensland's high schools. This collaborative program for young people at risk of or experiencing homelessness garnered national and international interest. Queensland was contemplating extending this innovative program to primary schools. An important consideration given the recognition that so many children in early primary school were experiencing disadvantage also. The program was coordinated by statewide hub within QYHC and run in regions across Queensland by youth homelessness services. Three evaluations conducted over the course of this program demonstrated significantly positive outcomes for marginalised young people and the satisfaction of key stakeholders including over 80% of

school principals: *88% principals of the targeted schools believed it to be successful in targeting young people at risk of homelessness. 80% of principals believed it was successful in targeting early school leaving* (QYHC, 2010).

Whilst a couple of regions still have YSCs and report continued excellent outcomes, it is no longer a statewide coordinated program for all schools and all students. This, or a similar program for young people is the perfect way to support children in a timely manner. School staff don't need to do the support work with students, but they are perfectly placed to flag the need and refer to the program.

The Victorian 'Living Free' project is an excellent example of effective early intervention. Initiated in 2017, 'Living Free' targets two groups, girls aged 10-17 who have been reported missing and are at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system or sexual exploitation, and women aged 18-30 in early contact with the justice system (Kolovos, 2023).

All young women in the program have been exposed to family violence, the majority have disengaged from school, and many require support for alcohol and drugs, their mental health, or both. Since commencement the project has supported 750 girls and young women with only 10% being charged with further offending and more than 90% who were disengaged from school connected to education and training (Kolovos, 2023).

The 'Right Step'

Targeted diversionary programs can also play a significant part in responding to young offenders, curbing rates of recidivism. The 'Right Step' diversionary program in Victoria engages more fully with the issues that may have led the young person into criminal behaviour (Wilson & Schwarz, 2012). 'Right Step' attempts to address substance use, mental health, family breakdown and disengagement from education, training and employment by providing tailored support including refers to counselling, rehabilitation, education and employment services. Review of the intensive eight-week program of counselling and case support revealed that of the 100 young people referred to the program 67% had not reoffended (Wilson & Schwarz, 2012). The evaluation report highlighted strong support from participants, parents, police, magistrates, education providers and employers, as well as forming good working relationships with over 40 partnering services. Cost per client was assessed as no greater than \$2500-\$3500 per capita (Wilson & Schwarz, 2012).

In Queensland, several preventative and early intervention programs are in place with significantly positive impacts. These can be further expended within regions and across the state to benefit communities. We need to take stock of what is happening and look further afield for additional opportunities to ensure prevention and early intervention. This includes

expanding and investing in community organisations and youth services to respond to community need, particularly First Nation organisations. Investments need to be generational to be impactful.

Ranger Programs

Ranger programs encompasses National parks and wildlife Rangers looking after forests and reserves doing fire management and looking after flora and fauna, preservation of sites of cultural significance, developing eco- tourism opportunities for employment and business. Building capacity within communities for young people to engage with this program and learn is important.

Intensive On Country Programs

Looking at children and young people and the family unit. The family focus when talking with children and young people about their interface with police and courts – to bring back supports to home to find the barriers to successes. Why are the children on the streets? Part is due to overcrowding. Guidance and mentorship for children and young people.

Healing Centres

There are multiple households in regions where families, particularly First Nations, have been traumatised over many years. These families and communities need healing. Years of living under the Act on missions, asking permission to marry, where to live, what to wear, being inspected. Boundary streets in major towns and cities. Many note that these are still alive in many Towns. Local areas named after people who have massacred their families. Honouring and respecting those who have perpetrated so much harm. Impacts on children and young people of the stolen generation. Fear of Police because of that. Families still finding siblings and family members after decades. Punishment for speaking language, communities, women and children pillaged. “It’s ever present and we’re still feeling the pain and trauma and we’re continually having so many of our young people die through suicide because they just can’t hope.” said a regional SYHS provider

“Healing needs to be a multi-generational investment for the long-term benefit of communities. Stop building departmental empires and prisons and start building healing centres for communities and have the village raising children. All being in it together. Policy and decision makers need to sit with First Nations people and understand the complexities of addressing these issues. Then they need to invest in First Nations leaders in this space. The momentum is there – the opportunity is needed for community action”. The healing journey takes time, understanding, education and mentoring. We’re working with children and young

people now to break the cycle for their future benefit of their children and their children's children." SYHS provider.

STREET CRED

This preventative program and winner of several awards including a Queensland Child Protection Week Award is a multi-agency assertive outreach program including early intervention and responsiveness to changing local need. The first of its kind on the Gold Coast, they offer assistance to children and young people on the streets who need housing and other supports.

Youth Access and Support Service (YASS) focuses on supporting family relationships and assisting young people to remain and sustain their education, training and/or employment opportunities.

YASS is a Queensland funded program and provides practical support that is free and confidential for young people aged 12- 21 years who identify as needing support with family relationships or connecting with community/support networks; school, education, training/employment; being at risk of harm or homelessness. Support may involve speaking or acting on a young person's behalf, connecting with specialised services and developing practical life skills.

TRANSITION TO SUCCESS (QUEENSLAND) 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.¹⁷² 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.

We can take action to keep children, young people and communities safe

The need for a whole of government intersectional approach in addressing young people's exposure to homelessness and the youth justice system is highlighted in the Final Report: Towards a Youth Homelessness Strategy for Victoria (Alves & Roggenbuck, 2021).

Interventions in the youth homelessness domain and housing interventions in the youth justice domain work hand in hand. Alves & Roggenbuck (2021) emphasise the importance of early intervention and prevention, noting that addressing homelessness early in a young person's life can lead to future cost reductions in both the criminal justice system and health system. Similarly, the report drew attention to key provisions within Victoria's youth-specific justice policy (i.e. Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2020-2030), which highlights the need for partnerships between homelessness and housing providers and the justice system. These partnerships enable young people to experience positive transitions out of the justice system and have access to housing and support.

Partnerships with housing providers must be accompanied by sound transitional supports within the justice system. We need a robust model of discharge planning and support that enables young people to receive case management whilst in detention, an aftercare plan upon release, alongside housing and support (Gaetz & Redman, 2016). Without transitional planning and support young people are not only at greater risk of homelessness, but also face increased risk of reoffending. An intersectional approach that engages cross-government departments overseeing youth justice, child safety, housing, health, disability and education gives young people the opportunity to address many of the issues that have led to involvement in the youth justice system.

Access to housing, alongside engagement in programs and supports that foster healing of trauma and substance use, and that strengthen connection to education and employment, will not only reduce youth homelessness but serve as effective crime prevention and public safety initiatives (Gaetz & Redman, 2016). Recognising the importance of a cross-government response to young offenders compels a need for a youth justice strategic plan that includes provisions to address the housing needs, and planned transition, of young people exiting detention, alongside other health, educational and child safety considerations.

Children and young people who commit offences comprise a very small, complex and marginalised section of young people in our communities. They also tend to have a plethora of needs, and we owe it to them to address these needs as soon as possible in their life trajectory. Understandably, those who commit serious offences need to be held to account. However, across the board what we need is a medical response for substance use, more drug and alcohol and mental health services, counselling for traumatised young people, educational responses for those who've disengaged and stable housing for children and young people and their families. If we are intent on raising young people who are active and engaged members of our communities, we need responses to acting out behaviours that are commensurate with their trauma and need. Punitive crime and punishment models

don't work, and they make no sense to young people in the midst of their often-complex life experiences.

Instead of channelling billions of dollars of state revenue into tertiary responses Queensland must recognise the overwhelming international and national evidence in support of social investment to tackle the core of youth offending. Rather than piecemeal funding that enables a small number of services to engage after the fact, we need concerted effort to empower community-led approaches to address the presenting need with the most appropriate support response. The principle of 'providing the response needed, when needed' must also guide responses from government agencies. It is critical that Queensland's response to young people who engage in offending behaviours acknowledges the poverty and disadvantage that characterises the reality for the majority of those caught up within the youth justice system. We must intervene early and collectively to ensure evidence-based community-led approaches, especially in First Nations communities. In cases where serious offending does require the need for a custodial sentence the focus of this response must be dedicated to rehabilitation and therapy to ensure detention is a one-off remedial experience and not a necessitated revolving door.

What we need moving forward

1. **Specialised housing-focused diversion programs** for children and young people to address their unique circumstances.
2. **Alternatives to detention** that provide safe and stable housing as part of bail or diversionary conditions.
3. **Retaining restorative justice options** for non-violent offences, particularly for children and young people experiencing homelessness.
4. **Expanded investment in housing-first solutions** to prevent homelessness and housing insecurity as a driver of justice involvement.
5. **Culturally safe, trauma-informed services** to support children and young people experiencing homelessness, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.
6. **Early intervention and prevention options** that are place based, well-resourced and encompass all Queensland communities.
7. **Unmet needs across all portfolios relating to children and young people need to be addressed** through priority policy and practice, and legislation where necessary. This

8. includes ensuring a focus by departments responsible for: education, child safety, housing and homelessness, disability, domestic and family violence and youth justice.
9. **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities need to be adequately resourced to lead/provide the services and support children and families need.**
10. **A specialised organisation/team needs to be implemented for children and young people who are victims of crime to support them through their trauma including but not limited to court support and counselling.**
11. **Increased accommodation and support models for children and young people experiencing homelessness and those who are at risk.**
12. **Housing and support options for young people exiting detention.**
13. **Accessing accommodation and support options for young people exiting detention need to be a central part of their case plan as soon as they enter youth detention.**
14. **A focus on therapeutic interventions for young people in detention, including specialist Alcohol and other Drug detox and rehabilitation.**
15. **There is a need for a cross-government intersectional approach that compels engagement and support across multiple domains including Youth Justice, Child Safety, Housing, Health and Education.**
16. **Provisions to address the housing needs, and planned transition, of children and young people exiting detention.**

In Summary

For a justice process to work well, ideally a child or young person needs to be guided in understanding the nature of their behaviour, its criminality and the impacts of their crime on themselves and others. Being supported to consider the consequences of their behaviour, taking responsibility for their mistake, making recompense to those harmed and recognising the need to change their behaviours is optimum.

We know that adolescence is a crucial developmental time, physically, emotionally and cognitively. Given the ongoing brain development at play and the reality that biologically young people are predisposed to act more impulsively and take more risks, decision makers need to recognise that the cognisance and decision making of young people is not always as developed as we may assume, and they require appropriate interventions until the brain is fully formed at the age of 25.

We know the importance of compassion for the countless children and young people who are traumatised as victims of abuse and crime, and we advocate the same compassion for the small number who act out their trauma in inappropriate and sometimes illegal ways. We believe, as evidence indicates, that criminalising children and young people's behaviours that are often trauma based is counter-intuitive and potentially further traumatising. Most commonly, the behaviours displayed have an underlying message that adults need to pay attention to. As an organisation we aim for the developmental needs of children and young people to be more widely recognised across our society in order that children and young people receive the appropriate supports and interventions as they need them. Criminal behaviours exist in a continuum of diverse behaviours associated with complex social and familial factors. Addressing these behaviours in a holistic manner that includes a collaborative systems approach is necessary. We need to be asking: "Why are children and young people offending?" Equal attention to this is required alongside evidence-based strategies to ensure community safety.

References

- Adler, C. (1989). Homeless youth as victims of violence. Criminology Research Council, Canberra. <https://www.aic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-05/35-88.pdf>
- Alves, T. & Roggenbuck, C. (2021) Final Report: Towards a Youth Homelessness Strategy for Victoria, prepared by AHURI, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2023). 2021 Census: Counting persons, Estimating homelessness, AGEP Age by STATE (EN) by OPGP Homelessness Operational Groups [Census TableBuilder], accessed 25 May 2023.
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2016). Youth justice fact sheet no. 74. Comparisons between Australian and international youth justice systems: 2014–15. Cat. no. JUV 95. Canberra: AIHW. Retrieved December 2, 2024, from <https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/6cdb6022-91da-4fd3-98ec-21d29f5db44c/juv-95-yjfs-74-aust-int.pdf.aspx>
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2023). Specialist homelessness services annual report 2022–23. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-annual-report/contents/young-people-presenting-alone>
- Australian Government (2022). Report on Government Services 2022. Part F, Section 17, Table 17A.21. Australian Government Productivity Commission. <https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2022/community-services/youth-justice>
- Bramley, G. & Fitzpatrick, S. (2018). Homelessness in the UK: Who is most at risk?, Housing Studies, 33,1, 96-116. DOI: 10.1080/02673037.2017.1344957
- Bramley, G., Fitzpatrick, S., Edwards, J., Ford, D., Johnsen, S., Sosenko, F. & Watkins, D. (2015) Hard Edges: Mapping Severe and Multiple Disadvantage, LankellyChase Foundation.
- Culhane, D. & Metraux, S. (2008). Rearranging the deck chairs or reallocating the lifeboats?: Homelessness assistance and its alternatives. Journal of the American Planning Association, 74(1), 111-121.
- Davidson, P., Bradbury, B., & Wong, M. (2022). Poverty in Australia 2022: A snapshot Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) and UNSW Sydney.

- Estrada, R. & Marksamer, J. (2006). Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender young people in state custody: Making the child welfare and juvenile justice systems safe for all youth through litigation, advocacy, and education. *Temple Law Review*, 79(2), 415- 438. https://www.nclrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/youth_in_state_custody_article.pdf
- Fitzpatrick, S. & Stephens, M. (2007). An international review of homelessness and social housing policy. London: UK Government, Department for Communities and Local Government.
- Gaetz, S. (2002). *Street Justice: Homeless Youth and Access to Justice*. Toronto: Justice for Children and Youth.
- Gaetz, S., O’Grady, B., Kidd, S. & Schwan, K. (2016). *Without a Home: The National Youth Homelessness Survey*. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press
- Gaetz, S. & Redman, M. (2016). *Towards an Ontario Youth Homelessness Strategy*. Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Policy Brief. Toronto: The Homeless Hub Press.
- Gale, N. (2019). Section 28: Criminalising the young and homeless. *Parity*, 32(4), 9–10. <https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.686127605457285>
- Hurren, E., Stewart, A., (2017). *Child Maltreatment, Homelessness and Youth Offending*. Australian Institute of Family Studies. <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/2017/10/04/child-maltreatment-homelessness-and-youth-offending>
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation. (2017). *UK Poverty 2017*. JRF. Retrieved from: <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2017>
- Justice Reform Initiative, (2023). *Highlights: The need for alternative to incarceration in Queensland*. https://assets.nationbuilder.com/justicereforminitiative/pages/337/attachments/original/1685393827/JRI_Alternatives_QLD_Highlights_Report.pdf?1685393827
- Kolovos, B., (2023). ‘They honestly saved my life’: The Victorian project saving girls from the cycle of exploitation and abuse. *Victoria, The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/dec/19/they-honestly-saved-my-life-the-victorian-project-saving-girls-from-the-cycle-of-exploitation-and-abuse?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Other
- MacKenzie, D., Hand, T., Zufferey, C., McNelis, S., Spinney, A., & Tedmanson, D. (2020). *Redesign of a homelessness service system for young people*, AHURI Final Report No. 327, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/327> doi:10.18408/ahuri-5119101.

Queensland Family and Child Commission, (2023a). Who's responsible: Understanding why young people are being held longer in Queensland watch houses. The State of Queensland. <https://www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/sector/monitoring-and-reviewing-systems/young-people-in-youth-justice/who's-responsible>

Queensland Family and Child Commission, (2023b). Queensland Child Rights Report 2023. The State of Queensland. <https://www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/child-rights/report>