

## Making Queensland Safer Bill 2024

**Submission No:** 152  
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**Publication:** Making the submission public but withholding your name  
**Attachments:** See attachment  
**Submitter Comments:**

I am writing, on short notice, a submission to the Making Queensland Safer Bill 2024

-Firstly, I would like to say that I appreciate your concern re young people engaging in harmful activities and wanting to take steps to keep our community safer!

-At the same time, I hold concerns about potentially having young people faced with incarceration or heavy fines!

-I am a Psychologist and have worked with young people for over 40 years, both individually and in groups and in programmes designed to support young people to be the best version of themselves. I have worked in a youth detention centre, schools, prisons, mental health, suicide prevention, domestic and family violence retraining and support, loss and grief, post traumatic incident and complex traumatic growth, relationship counselling, and parenting programmes and support, both through government and community-led organisations.

-Unfortunately, incarcerating young people puts them together with others, who have been associating with, or have themselves, been engaging in acts of crime and further reinforces this tendency and can build their community with peer support and increased access to criminal activities – what some of the former inmates described as “the perfect training ground” for a life of crime or a life working outside and often against the system and those of privilege.

-I am currently involved with two community organisations that have been found to get “runs on the board” in transforming lives.

-One of these organisation, Alternatives to Violence, was founded in 1975 in a prison to address the rate of violence and recidivism in the young inmates. It is still being facilitated in prisons around the world (though, sadly, not in Qld since the change in administration.!) It is also been effectively used in First Nations and refugee communities as well as in schools and in community in Australia and the world over.

-The second programme, Initiatives of Change, has been running effective initiatives with young people and community for over 100 years. One of the members, Ron Lawler, himself a former Queensland, has been involved in Tirkandi Inaburra Cultural & Development which has been effectively implementing a juvenile justice diversion model that has been running in the Riverina for 15 years.

Investing in supporting the continuation of programmes such as these, would not only be significantly more cost effective, it is likely to produce effective results faster and with greater long term results and benefit for the young people themselves as well as the whole community.