

Youth Justice Reform Select Committee inquiry into youth justice reform in Queensland

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Submission to: Youth Justice Reform

I am a concerned resident of the Rockhampton region that is currently experiencing high levels of community crime.

I am interested in offering some solutions towards Juvenile crime issues that exist in our communities around the Qld State in regards to the parliamentary committees 7 priorities.

Priority 1: 10 year strategy for youth justice in Queensland that engages all government agencies and community organisations which deliver services along the youth justice service continuum.

. The strategy should include accurate documentation of results from organisations showing details of success and failure.

. KPI's need to be administered in regards to improving service delivery and delivery time frames and a due cause notice should be issued to providers, if programs are failing to deliver.

Priority 2: How to instigate earlier assessment, intervention and prevention strategies that support children and their families to access health, education, housing and other services.

.Front line people that deal with juveniles, such as teachers, police, medical services and social care workers need to be aware of any signs of problems and have knowledge of key support services. If an issue has been made aware of, then immediate consultation with parents or guardians needs to take place in order to implement a suitable resolution.

Priority 3: Reimagining youth justice infrastructure, including best practice standard accommodation for children and young people who are detained, held on remand or transitioning from detention to the community.

. Children that are detained need to have basic needs supported, not 5 star accommodation standards.

Priority 4: How to improve:

- a. Children and young people's engagement with positive programs, particularly for those held on remand or released on bail where engagement may be lower compared to those in detention.
- b. Children and young people's transition back into the community, including consideration of supported accommodation models.

.a Young children may never have had any upbringing from a stable family unit and have no concept of discipline and respect. Before any positive programs can be successfully adopted and engaged by the child, I believe that a program needs to address the child's self-esteem and understanding of respect for themselves and others in our community.

.b Young children need a good leader/mentor to assist them back into the community. This authority figure needs to be someone that they can trust and be guided by. A military sergeant in the army has a lot of respect from his soldiers as he is expected to lead and assist them into combat.

Priority 5: The current operation of the Youth Justice Act 1992, including sentencing principles, the criteria for serious repeat offender declarations and traffic offences.

. The Youth Justice Act 1992 needs to ensure that detention as a last resort is removed for serious repeat offenders. It would be easy to see how much community crime would be immediately reduced if repeat offenders were removed from our community until they are fully rehabilitated. The police know who they are as they are catching them and find that they are being released from the courts creating a revolving door effect. How much would crime in our communities be reduced if 15% of repeat offenders that were creating 80% of the crime problems were removed to rehabilitation centres?

Priority 6: How to strengthen public confidence in the youth justice system, including by:

- a. examining the impact of social media and traditional news media on youth offending and community perceptions of safety
- b. improving the way data on youth crime is communicated to the public.

.a the only way to improve public confidence and perceptions of safety through social media and news media is to see that justice is applied to the criminal and that the criminal is removed immediately out of the community to prevent further crimes from happening. The more that the repeat offenders get released after capture; the more dangerous activities happen. The 70 yr old lady that was killed in broad daylight in a shopping centre in Ipswich, in front of a 6 year old child after offering her car keys; just shows how dangerous crimes are becoming.

.b data showing the amount of repeat offenders being detained in rehabilitation centres and data showing rehabilitated offenders being released would give an indication of how programs are working.

Priority 7: How to improve youth justice system responses to victims and ensure they are able to access support services across the state.

. victims of crime need immediate help and counselling from police and associated support services. The crime impacts victims in regards to no longer feeling safe in their homes or at public places. We should not have to lock our homes up like fort Knox as we live in a free democratic country.

Please consider my points as we all live in a free democratic society and deserve to live in our communities without fear of juvenile criminals. Stealing, destroying property and in some cases murder, needs to stop immediately and all powers need to work together in a unified approach towards the solutions.

Intervention at an early age is essential to stop problems escalating to what they are today. Discipline and respect needs to be taught and if families are unfit to follow through then they need to be removed into a better environment where they will get the support to lead a better life supporting our communities instead of destroying our communities.

Military school would teach discipline and respect as well as life skills. This may well be a good path for repeat offenders.

Yours Sincerely,

Leyland Barnett