

Question on Notice

No. 454

Asked on Thursday, 6 June 2013

MR KAYE asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (**MR BLEIJIE**)—

QUESTION:

What steps is the government taking to address community concerns about youth crime in the Greenslopes Electorate?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Greenslopes for his question.

Twenty years of Labor Government policy has created a generation of arrogant repeat offenders in Queensland.

I am committed to transforming the youth justice system to break the cycle of youth crime and make our communities safer in the electorate of Greenslopes and across Queensland.

Brisbane South Youth Justice Service Centre delivers statutory services to young offenders south of the Brisbane River including young offenders in the Greenslopes electorate. Offence focused programs such as Aggression Replacement Training (ART) and Changing Habits and Reaching Targets (CHART) are delivered to youth justice clients.

ART is a program that helps young offenders develop social skills, anger management techniques and moral reasoning. CHART is delivered to young offenders to target individual factors contributing to offending and in turn, reduce their risk of re-offending.

Brisbane South Youth Justice Service Centre in partnership with Government and non-Government service providers are on a collaborative panel to ensure intensive case management and integrated responses are collectively provided to high risk young offenders and their families.

In partnership with Boystown and the Department of Education, Training and Employment, the Service Centre also facilitates an alternate education program for young people disengaged from mainstream education.

The Department of Justice and Attorney-General funds the Youth and Family Support Service (YFSS) which is an early intervention service, covering Greenslopes and the Brisbane city region, that engages with young people and their families who are at risk of entering the youth justice system.

To further reiterate this Government's commitment to making our communities safer and holding young offenders more accountable, last year, I announced a formal review of Queensland's *Youth Justice Act 1992*. The review has commenced and forms part of the Government's Six Month Action Plan.

The key areas of reform that are being considered as part of the review of the *Youth Justice Act 1992* include broadening the scope for the naming and shaming of young offenders, creating an offence for offenders who breach bail, removing the requirement to consider the principle of detention as a last resort upon sentencing, making childhood findings of guilt admissible against an adult upon sentencing and automatically transferring 18 year olds out of youth detention centres and into adult correctional facilities.

In addition to the review, the Government has already undertaken initial steps to reform the youth justice system. This included the allocation of \$2 million in funding for the trial of two youth boot camp programs – The Sentenced Youth Boot Camp Program in the Cairns area and an Early Intervention Youth Boot Camp Program on the Gold Coast. The youth boot camps aim to instil discipline, values and respect through a highly structured program that involves the young person's family.

In March this year, I announced the expansion of the youth boot camp trial to three new locations - Townsville, Rockhampton and the Fraser Coast/Sunshine Coast regions. Three new boot camps will be established in these areas by September 2013.

For young graffiti offenders, I have introduced legislation into Parliament that will make it mandatory for these young offenders to clean up graffiti as part of their sentence. The aim of the Graffiti Removal Order is to ensure young offenders take responsibility for their actions, understand the consequences and give back to their community.

Already our Youth Justice Service Centres, including Brisbane South Youth Justice Service Centre are working with their local councils and community groups to establish or continue programs to address graffiti in their areas.

Community views are necessary in order to transform the youth justice system into an innovative and transparent system that delivers more efficient and effective youth justice responses. I have recently released the *Safer Streets Crime Action Plan – Youth Justice* to seek the community's views.

This consultation will culminate in the development of a *Blueprint for the Future of Youth Justice*, which will provide a systemic and structural overview of the way reform can be achieved in the medium to long term in the youth justice system.

It is through collaboration and community input that we will develop a youth justice system that will make sure young offenders are held accountable for their actions while being offered the best possible opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration. This will ensure that our communities are safer and remain safe.