

Question on Notice

No. 479

Asked on 20 April 2023

MR A TANTARI ASKED THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SMALL BUSINESS, MINISTER FOR TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER FOR YOUTH JUSTICE (HON D FARMER)

QUESTION

Will the Minister provide an update on how the Palaszczuk Government is partnering with the Hervey Bay community to tackle the complex causes of youth crime?

ANSWER

Community safety is a key priority of the Queensland Government. All Queenslanders have the right to feel safe in their homes and communities.

Diversionary and rehabilitation programs work for the majority of young people, noting most young people who enter the criminal justice system do not reoffend. However, there is a small group of serious repeat offenders who are continuing to offend and endangering community safety by committing serious offences.

The Hervey Bay Youth Justice Service Centre works closely with community and government agencies to deliver a range of evidence-based and evidence-informed core programs to young people that make a difference. Some of these programs include Transition to Success, Rethinking Our Attitude To Driving, Aggression Replacement Training, Changing Habits and Reaching Targets and Black Chicks Talking.

67% of all Transition to Success participants who completed a course did not offend or reoffend within 12 months of completing their course. Transition to Success participants who completed a course did not offend or reoffend within 12 months graduates spent less time in custody per month after completing the program and a cost benefit analysis of Transition to Success participants who completed a course did not offend or reoffend within 12 months showed that every \$1 spent on the program resulted in \$2.13 of benefits.

Young people in Hervey Bay also have access to the following programs:

- Conditional Bail Program - provides support for at-risk young people to increase their ability to remain in the community while before the courts;
- Restorative Justice Conferencing - an inclusive process that establishes a meeting between a child or young person who has committed a crime and the people who were affected - an evaluation of restorative justice found that 77% of young people who participated in restorative justice conferences either did not reoffend or decreased the magnitude of their reoffending within 6 months. It is also a cost-effective alternative to court processes and was found to be 33% more efficient than court processes.
- Multi-Agency Collaborative Panels (MACPs) - MACPs coordinate the provision of services, including assessments and referrals, to meet the needs of particular children charged with offences or at risk of being charged with offences; and
- Intensive Case Management - provides specialised case managers who deliver intensive support for a small number of high-risk young people and their families - 51% reduction in offending frequency and 72% reduction in proportion of crimes against the person.

A new Bail Support Service for young offenders on the Fraser Coast became operational from February 2023 through Save the Children trading as 54 Reasons.

54 Reasons works collaboratively with the Department and other service providers to increase confidence that young people referred to the program will comply with the conditions of their bail and assists to reduce the risk factors leading to non-compliance with bail by connecting young people with the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy, Department of Education, Queensland Health and family and culture to reduce offending.

Bail Support Services have proven to show a 32% reduction in reoffending frequency six months following the program.

As part of the Community Partnership Innovation Grants Round 2 in 2022-23, the Marigurim Yalaam Indigenous Corporation was successful for their Wanda-Rites of Passage proposal. The proposal focuses on a Rites of Passage framework which includes intensive support for young people over six weeks before attending a Rites of Passage camp, followed by another six weeks of assistance.

The Queensland Government also announced an expansion of the Youth Co-responder initiative to Hervey Bay in 2023, as part of a suite of reforms to address youth crime. Youth Co-responder teams are dedicated teams of police and youth justice workers focussed on reducing and preventing youth crime by working to stop offending and anti-social behaviour.

The Department will continue to work with the Queensland Police Service and other partners to ensure young people are held accountable for their behaviour. By protecting the community from repeat and serious offenders, and delivering interventions that address the causes of crime, in conjunction with our community partners we will continue to see improvements in youth offending rates across the state.

The Department will also continue partnering across government and with non-government organisations to enhance responses to health, mental health, housing, disability and education needs of young people.