



Briefing for the Advocate: For information

ACYP Responses to Questions on Notice

Topic	ACYP Response to Questions on Notice to the Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety: Community Safety in Regional and Rural Communities Inquiry
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Questions on Notice

Subject	Committee Member	Question on Notice	Response
Backtrack	Dr HUGH McDERMOTT	How many kids are in Backtrack?	<p>Backtrack currently has 16 beds in total.</p> <p>There are 10 beds in the Warrah house, in addition to six semi-independent beds in the Warrah tiny homes and Cubba cabins.</p> <p>There are plans to increase the number of beds in the Cubba cabins, however this has not been determined.</p> <p>There are currently 53 young people on the waitlist from both the local area and out of area.</p>
Youth Justice – Exit Interview Report	Mr TRI VO	Could you tell us what you learnt from conducting the exit interviews at Youth Justice centres?	<p>The Advocate supports diversionary programs and alternatives to detention for children and young people.</p> <p>The Advocate further supports prevention and early intervention initiatives that provide pathways and opportunities for children and young people to thrive. Should children and young people be incarcerated as a last resort, the deprivation of liberty is punishment in itself, and Youth Justice Centre's focus should be to support the rehabilitation and reintegration of children and young people back to the community.</p> <p>Children and young people had positive things to say about their experiences in Youth Justice with educational programs and</p>

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			<p>professional support services identified as most helpful. Children and young people praised cultural programs and programs run by external organisations within Youth Justice Centres. Key themes emerged around routine practices and operations within the Youth Justice Centres relating to admissions, movements, incentive schemes and programs.</p> <p>Children and young people spoke about access to basic needs such as toiletries, being treated with dignity and respect, they wanted less time confined in their rooms and to participate in programs that will help them upon release.</p> <p>A complete copy of the report has been provided to the Committee for further consideration.</p>
Youth Justice – Exit Interview Report	Mr TRI VO	Why wasn't the report publicly released and what key recommendations and findings were made in the Youth Justice exit interviews report?	<p>As discussed in the hearing, a conscious decision was made by the Advocate to not release the report so that children and young people had an opportunity where they could speak openly and honestly about their experience without fear of public commentary.</p> <p>The recommendations from children and young people focused around:</p>

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			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upon first time entry to custody children and young people complete a full induction to the centre's rules and routines, including who to ask for help. 2. Community organisations run programs such as life skills and employment programs. 3. Incentive schemes are fair to all children and young people. 4. Mentors and people with lived experience of overcoming similar difficulties visit the Centre and share their experiences. 5. Less time spent confined in rooms as part of daily routine. 6. Food free of bugs and healthier food options for young women in particular 7. Quality toiletries such as shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste and soap (quality tampons for young women) to be available to young people outside the centre's incentive schemes. <p>The Advocate also made a number of recommendations focused on systems reform.</p> <p>A complete copy of the report has been provided to the Committee.</p>
Youth Justice – Exit Interview Report	Mr TRI VO	Were you satisfied with the Government's response?	As the Advocate did not formally table to report, it was not required that the Government provide a formal response. However, as discussed at the Inquiry, the experience of our partnership with Youth Justice has always been collaborative and focused on driving reforms that benefit children and young people.
Youth Justice – Exit Interview Report	Mr TRI VO	So it wasn't publicly released so that the interviewees would be more comfortable to participate?	Yes.
Youth Justice – Exit Interview Report	Mr TRI VO	It's not publicly released, but we can get a copy if we wish to?	A full copy of the report has been provided to the Committee.



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Children Diversionary Programs -	Dr HUGH McDERMOTT	Are there programs that you're aware of that have been successful in capturing this group?	<p>The experience of ACYP around diversionary programs for children often rely on specific individuals and limited resources within the local community. This presents a number of challenges around consistency and continuity should resources or individuals change.</p> <p>These programs are often based on the simple idea of giving children and young people activities or opportunities to participate in.</p> <p>For example, from our consultations with regional communities, it is a recurring theme that young people want opportunities to rugby league but are prohibited by access to transport and administrative costs.</p> <p>In this instance, ACYP partnered with NSW Police to facilitate a touch football tournament in Tamworth with young people who had contact with police and the justice system. In an effort to fulfill their right participate and play in community, with a goal to divert offending. From anecdotal evidence, this initiative proved successful in the community.</p> <p>It is imperative that Government identify, acknowledge and resources these individuals in community who are passionate about creating similar programs and services.</p>
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