

**Submission  
No 25**

## **INQUIRY INTO THE ADEQUACY OF YOUTH DIVERSIONARY PROGRAMS IN NSW**

**Organisation:** Redfern Aunties and Uncles Community Action Group  
**Name:** Ms Beverly Coe  
**Date Received:** 16 February 2018

16 February 2018

Elspeth Dyer  
Manager  
Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety  
NSW Parliament House


By email: [Lawsafety@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Lawsafety@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Elspeth,

**Inquiry into youth diversionary programs in NSW**

We are the Aunties and Uncles Community Action Group in the Inner City of Sydney conducting meetings to discuss and find solutions to get our Kids back on track.

We write to you as we wish to be heard on the issues in the attached document which is a result of our meetings to date.

Should you have any questions, please contact the writer, 

Thank you for considering these important matters.

Yours faithfully  
Beverly Coe

## **Aunties and Uncles Community Action Group**

To whom it may concern,

We are Aboriginal community members of the Redfern area who are greatly concerned with the direction of our young community members and the damage that drugs, alcohol, and unemployment has on our community. We have all seen the positives of our community and unfortunately we are seeing the negative and destruction of our family structure, community cultural respect and identity.

Unfortunately, in our contemporary Australian society, the rights of the child have overridden thousands of years of cultural protocols which means children are empowered to roam free even though they may be unemployed, hanging around the "wrong crowd", experimenting with drugs and using alcohol, feeding an addiction through crime or stealing cars to get the adrenalin hit of being chased by the police. We also know that many do not have homes where they can go home to, sleep in their own beds, go to school, have healthy food on their tables and just be "kids". Many see alcohol, drugs, and dysfunction as normal and if they get locked up at then least they get a meal and a safe bed to sleep in.

We want to work together as a community with government and services to undertake a new way of dealing with the destruction of our communities where young children face the courts, the correctional system and then the prison system when they become adults. Then their children will follow their parent's footsteps and do the same, the cycle begins again and continues. It's time to say no to the status quo and do things differently.

We need a change that is supported by special legislative changes made to empower families, carers, community and government departments and services to work together on each family group that comes to the attention of the criminal justice system. The idea is to provide each youth who have come to the notice of the criminal justice system and human services and provide an intensive case management service that involves closer management and communication between government and services and the youth, family, and support networks. This will empower families and help build their resilience amongst young community members who are at risk of participating in risky behaviours.

Our aim will also to gain the support of the many Aboriginal people who are resilient and achieving success in their lives to become part of the solution by become Brothers and Sisters (Buddies) to show leadership and help build resilience amongst our young community members who do not have role models in their families as they may grow up with drug addicted parents.

We call on your department and organisation to send your senior staff member and department head to come together and meet with us for an urgent meeting to be held on Wednesday 7 February at the Redfern Police Station at 12pm.

This is the beginning of our journey and we will aim to call on our ministers and government to pass legislation that empowers families and communities to undertake intensive case management of our young community members to ensure that in 10 years we will make positive generational change.

Please register your intentions of coming by emailing your name, role, and department/organisation to [REDACTED]

Thank you and together we will make a change.