

**Submission  
No 46**

## **COMMUNITY SAFETY IN REGIONAL AND RURAL COMMUNITIES**

**Name:** Dr Angela Pattison

**Date Received:** 10 May 2024

Thank you for your time to conduct this enquiry.

I live and work in a rural area, including with young people. The rise in youth crime is more than just 'bored teenagers', and thus the government spending more money on events to 'keep them off the streets' is not going to help (this is not to say these events are not valuable, just that I do not believe holding more events than currently available will reduce crime in the most effective way).

The greatest way to help teenagers navigate their teenage years is for parents or carers (including grandparents and aunts/uncles) to be present and available, and for families to enjoy activities together at least each week. We are all susceptible to getting too busy (me included), and also to be physically in the same room but on our phones rather than doing activities together.

My suggestion is to ensure parents have meaningful work which supplies adequate finance without taking all the hours in a week, then that they can finish their meaningful work for the day/week and spend time with their children to enjoy being together.

For those children who sadly do not have parents who are able to show love to their own children for complex reasons of trauma or otherwise, there needs to be early intervention so the children can connect to other support networks. Love cannot be bought with funding, and social workers cannot show unconditional support. However local solutions where young people from a young age can be around people who show good examples of being together in a fun and healthy way will result in the greatest outcomes.

I am hopeful that some smarter people than I can think of ways to reduce the device screentime for both kids and adults. If there is research with practical and fundable solutions, this should be seriously considered. Being in the same room but not 'present' is such a danger as parents may feel they are with their children but their children do not feel they are actually with them.

Unfortunately I cannot think of ways to fix this problem with funded programs other than public awareness campaigns, however hopefully there is some research into things that work that can be called upon for ideas.

These are long term solutions which should not replace short term increases in policing and curfews where appropriate.

Thanks for your consideration