

**Submission
No 119**

COMMUNITY SAFETY IN REGIONAL AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

Organisation: St Vincent de Paul Ballina

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St Vincent de Paul Youth Strategy Suggestions

The following are suggestions from St Vincent de Paul (SVDP) Reconciliation Committee as ways to reduce youth crime in the Ballina area. Most of the suggestions apply to all youth, indigenous and non-indigenous.

- Improve access to Circle Sentencing at the Youth Justice Conference. Pursue the introduction of a Youth Koorie Court in the Northern Rivers area. These are both mechanisms to include Community in determining suitable outcomes to crime that are alternatives to incarceration.
- Invest in housing for youth staying out at night to avoid violence back at home.
- Provide programs for parents relating to drug and alcohol abuse and parenting skills.
- Police target drug sellers. There are serious drug issues in the whole community and a need for safe houses and rehabilitation facilities.
- There is a need for a transparent review of all current available services for youth and adults so all organisations working to help people with problems know who is doing what. This may help consolidate and coordinate their use.
- Create a number of small venues for different activities for youth. For example, a venue with a pickle ball court; another venue with a basketball court; another with a boxing gym etc. This avoids concentration of numbers in one place and reduces the fee to attend. (Is there a way the Department of Education facilities could be used out of school hours? For example, facilities in East Ballina's Southern Cross High School are sitting vacant and unused.)
- Provide funds to increase the number of Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers (ACLOs) in the Ballina Police. There are currently none based in Ballina and this role improves the relationship between youth and the Police.
- Provide funds for Social Futures to run their Youth Diversionary Programs. They have successfully run these in the past but lost their funding to do so.
- Invest in cultural camps, where Elders take youth to learn more about their cultural heritage on Country.