

**Submission
No 5**

INQUIRY INTO JUVENILE OFFENDERS

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Date Received: 01/03/2005

Subject:

Summary



SUBMISSION RE: INQUIRY INTO JUVENILE OFFENDERS

February 28, 2005

The Director
Select Committee on Juvenile Offenders
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000
VIA FACSIMILE: 9230 2981

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on this extremely important matter.

Terms of Reference Item 2. a) The reasons for, and the consequences of, the transfer of management responsibility for the Kariong Juvenile Justice Centre from the Department of Juvenile Justice to the Department of Corrective Services

Justice Action is totally opposed to any legislation which gives the Department of Corrective Services control or any involvement in an Juvenile Justice Centre.

The large statistical movement of youth into adult prisons should be seen as a total failure of Juvenile Justice in its primary purpose of, "Striving to break the Juvenile Crime Cycle".

The importance of the structural separation of juvenile and adult corrections was emphasised when the government a few years ago ensured that the portfolios of Minister for Juvenile Justice and Minister for Corrective Services were held by two different Ministers.

Terms of Reference Item 2. b) Whether the transition of Kariong Juvenile Justice Centre into a correctional centre operated by the Department of Corrective Services is the most effective method of addressing management problems at the Centre

According to the U.S. Rand Report, \$1 spent on early intervention is worth \$9 spent on adult offenders. Money and attention that would accrue to the Department of Corrective Services as a result of the proposed legislation would be better spent on programs for juveniles in juvenile centres.

(continued...)

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Terms of Reference Item 2. e) alternatives to the establishment of a juvenile correctional centre.

Community access to juvenile offenders will lead juveniles away from acting out their frustrations and further involvement with the criminal justice system. Access creates links to the community and provides the chance for young people to feel a sense of belonging and pride, and therefore less likely to offend and cause disruption. Programs to increase access should include support for families, community mentors, welfare workers including Centrelink and NSW Health.

Access also includes openness with the media to report to the public the effectiveness and the personal reality of the young people held in juvenile detention centres.

End Submission.
Justice Action

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