

Youth Justice



Main Investments

Where is the money going?	How much is being invested?
<p>Additional police staffing and infrastructure including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 950 additional police officers • A recruitment campaign to source new officers • Operation Regional Shield, which increases policing in the Kimberley. • Creating a District Support Facility in Broome and Kununurra (non-public facing police accommodation). 	\$106 million
<p>A Kimberley Youth and Community Justice Response Package to address rising community concerns about crime in the region. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating an on-country residential facility • Funding to extend the Kimberley Schools Project for 3 years which aims to promote educational connection • Establishing Broome Night Patrols (and some across other areas of the Kimberley) • Intensive Family Support Services • Other youth justice-related initiatives in the community (details to be determined) 	\$40.4 million
<p>Improvements to conditions at Banksia Hill Detention Centre including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ establishing a Crisis Care Unit. ○ creating an Aboriginal Services Unit to provide cultural support and address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal young people in detention ○ critical infrastructure works. 	\$25.1 million
<p>Extending the Target 120 program to nine additional locations. Target 120 provides wraparound family support to prolific young offenders at risk of engagement with the justice system.</p> <p>The new locations are: Broome, Halls Creek, Fitzroy Crossing, Derby, Karratha, Newman, Carnarvon, Mandurah and Ellenbrook.</p>	\$11.1 million
<p>Extension of the Therapeutic Pilot Court in the Children’s Court of Western Australia. No additional details are available.</p>	\$1.38 million
<p>Continued implementation of the Kimberley Juvenile Justice Strategy, an inter-agency government initiative aiming to address the disproportionate number of young people from the Kimberley coming into contact with the justice system.</p>	\$154,000

The Impact

The good:	The bad:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Kimberley Youth and Community Justice Response Package, particularly the on-country residential facility will provide significant improvements to service delivery in the youth justice system. However, it is crucial that these measures are designed and delivered with local communities and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to ensure they are effective and locally-relevant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite the focus on diversion and prevention spending, the resources allocated to these areas are far outweighed by the \$106 million allocated towards punitive and crisis responses. With more than 50% of young people leaving Banksia Hill Detention Centre returning in two years¹ it is clear this approach is not working and our priority should be on prevention programs based in the community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements to conditions at Banksia Hill Detention Centre are long overdue and urgently needed following the 2022 Report detailing human rights abuses at the centre.² However much more work is required to ensure the Detention Centre is fit-for-purpose as a rehabilitative facility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional investment in policing is a missed opportunity to invest in community development and address the underlying causes of crime. Increased policing does not always translate to reduced crime without addressing the root causes of offending and may lead to over policing and higher rates of incarceration.³
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More alternatives are also needed to move young people under 14 out of detention and into community-based supports. Western Australia urgently needs a strategy to reduce the population of young people in detention in real terms, including through investment in community-based supports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YACWA wishes to see investment in a youth justice strategy focused on preventing young people from entering the justice system and improving engagement in education, work, and social supports.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded funding for the Therapeutic Pilot in the WA Children's Court is welcomed. While details on the pilot's implementation are lacking, it appears to involve a separate list of cases in the Perth Children's Court, focusing on families in need and taking a holistic lens.⁴ 	

¹ Department of Justice (2020). 'Annual Report, 2019/20', *The Department of Justice, WA*. Retrieved from: https://www.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/Department-of-JusticeAnnual-Report-2019-2020_0.pdf

² Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (2022). *2021 Inspection of the Intensive Support Unit at Banksia Hill Detention Centre*. Retrieved from: <https://www.oics.wa.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Inspection-of-Banksia-Hill-Detention-Centre-ISU-CORRECTED.pdf>

³ Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration (2016). *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experience of law enforcement and justice services*. Retrieved from: https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Finance_and_Public_Administration/LegalAssistanceservices/Report

⁴ Department of Justice (2020). *A Therapeutic Approach (Pilot Court) for Protection and Care in the Children's Court of WA*. Retrieved from: https://childrenscourt.wa.gov.au/_files/Discussion_Paper_PnC.pdf