

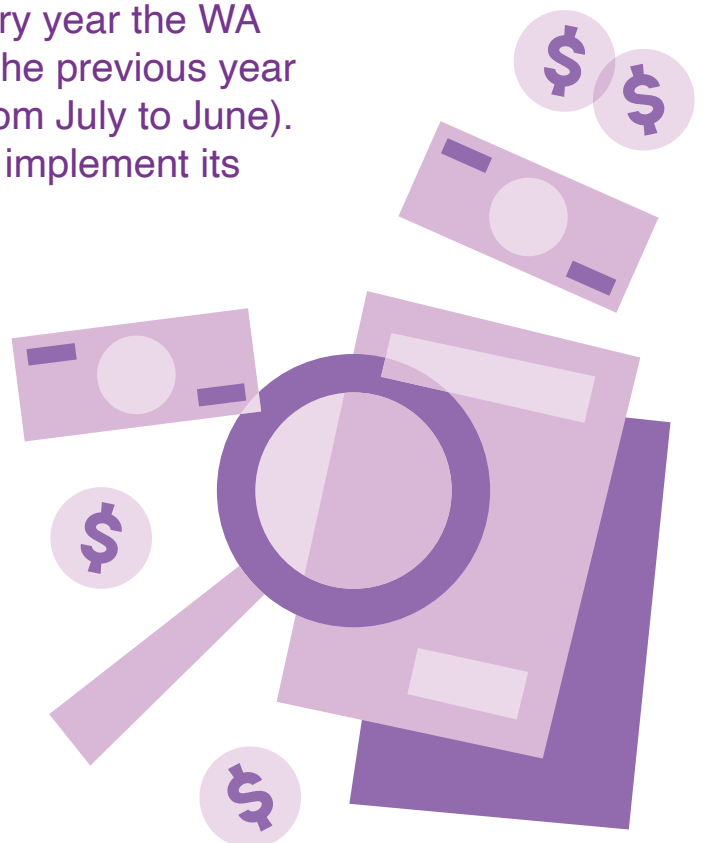
2025–26 WA STATE BUDGET ANALYSIS

On 19 June 2025, the Western Australian Government released the 2025-26 State Budget. Every year the WA Government outlines their spending over the previous year and its plans for the next financial year (from July to June). This sets the stage for the Government to implement its election commitments and priorities.

The 2025-26 State Budget outlines numerous initiatives that address gaps in support for vulnerable young people. Community-based youth services such as the Kununurra Night Space and Pilbara Safe are crucial to address the underlying disadvantages some young people face. Aligning with this approach, the investment into a therapeutic model of care for young people at Banksia Hill Detention Centre signals a promising direction from the Government to create better futures for vulnerable young people.

The investment into early intervention and prevention is promising, however the Budget overlooks some aspects of young people's wellbeing. There is a need for more targeted investment to address homelessness, housing affordability, and cost of living for young people in WA. There were some positive youth justice investments, such as on-Country diversionary programs and the implementation of a therapeutic model of care, however there is a need to address the urgent issues with youth justice.

Other initiatives such as mental health support for regional young people and the investment into Passages Youth Engagement Hub signal a step in the right direction.



Provide cost of living and housing support to young people

WHAT WE RECOMMENDED	WHAT WAS DELIVERED	WHAT'S MISSING
Reform WA's rental system to better protect young renters by ending no grounds evictions and introducing rent caps.	No specific commitment.	Housing reform is welcomed; however, the Budget misses the opportunity for specific social and affordable housing for young people.
Resource and implement a Housing First for Youth model in WA.	\$3.06 million over next 4 years for Housing First Support Service expansion in Bunbury.	Whilst we acknowledge the positive step in increasing opportunities for young people, these initiatives do not go far enough to address the housing disparities they face. We urge immediate rental system reform including ending no-grounds evictions and capping rent increases, so that young people are better protected by our rental system.
Establish three (3) new Youth Foyers in WA at Albany, Bayswater and Broome locations.	No specific commitment.	Young people need supported pathways out of homelessness and into secure housing. Youth Foyers are a proven model that the Government should implement across WA.
Address the service availability gap for young people under 15 by developing a suite of specialist accommodation services targeted at 12 to 15 year olds.	No specific commitment.	We hope that the increase in affordable and social homes and expansion of the Bunbury Housing First Support Service brings about positive impacts for young people.
Increase public, social and affordable housing stock specifically available to young people across all regions of WA.	\$246 million to deliver an additional 548 affordable and social homes across Western Australia.	

\$4.8 million in funding has been allocated to Passages Youth Engagement Hub (Perth) to assist the continuation of their service.

Passages provides vital supports for vulnerable young people in the Perth Metro community who are experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness. We have worked very closely with Passages through the Youth Homelessness Advisory Council and welcome the investment.



Prioritise prevention and early intervention for young people

WHAT WE RECOMMENDED	WHAT WAS DELIVERED	WHAT'S MISSING
Rapidly increase investment into prevention and early intervention services and programs for young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$10.5 million to support service delivery from 16 Police and Community Youth Centres across WA. • \$65 million towards establishing the Infants, Children and Adolescent Taskforce to support regional communities with responding to young people's mental health needs. • \$100 million towards fee-free TAFE courses. 	Investment into early intervention and prevention programs for young people is highly welcomed. Further investment is needed in early intervention for young people at risk of Family and Intimate Partner Violence (FIPV).
Resource and establish a Western Australian Early Intervention Investment Fund budgeting mechanism.	No specific commitment.	We encourage the development and resourcing of a Western Australian Early Intervention Fund as a budget mechanism to improve the lives of young people and alleviate the costs of acute service delivery.
Establish more place-based youth service hubs across WA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$5.9 million towards the establishment of the Kununurra Night Space. • \$3 million towards the Marra Worra Worra Night Place in Fitzroy Crossing. • \$1.4 million for the Pilbara Safe Spaces. • \$13.8 million towards a mental health Acute Care and Response Team in Bunbury for children and young people. 	We welcome significant investment in regional youth hubs, which will help divert young people from the justice system by providing a safe space and wrap-around supports.



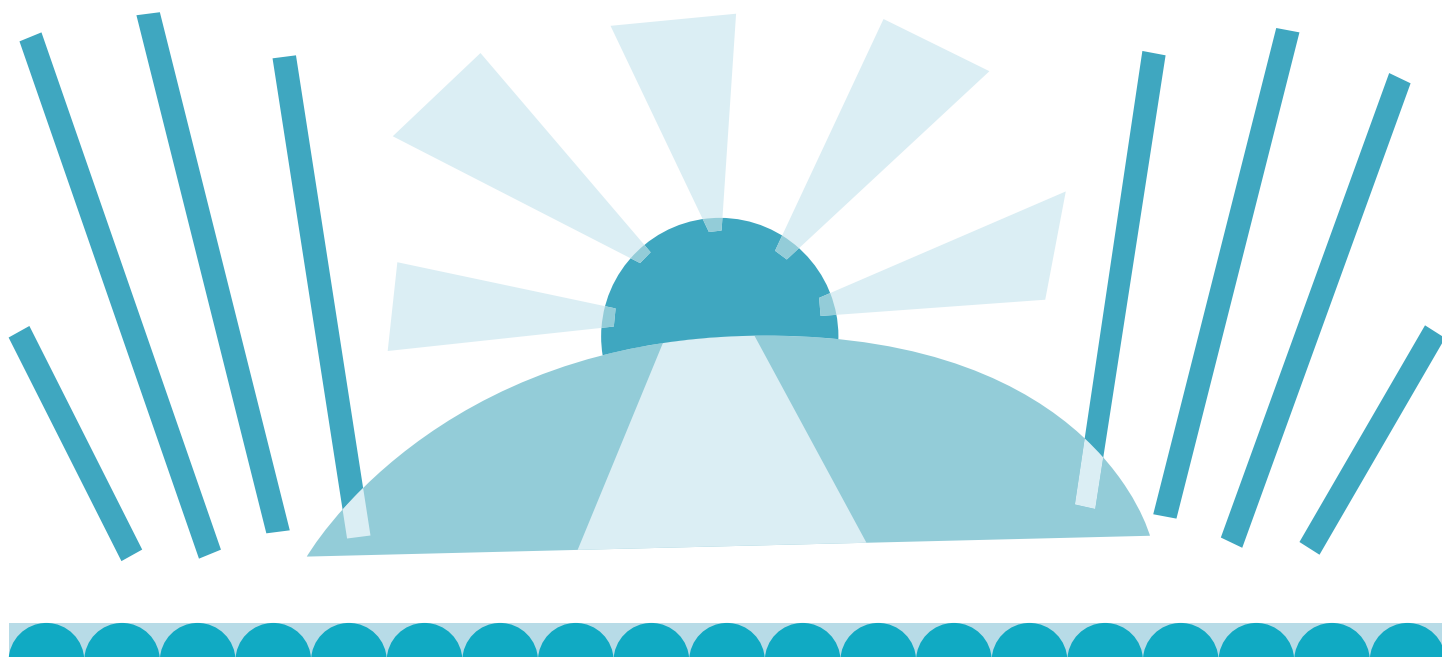
Create a strong and sustainable youth sector

WHAT WE RECOMMENDED	WHAT WAS DELIVERED	WHAT'S MISSING
Commit to sustainably funding WA's youth sector.	\$60 million towards funding 31 new child protection case managers, including 3 Aboriginal Practice Leaders.	We welcome investment in child protection and essential housing but call for more targeted support for youth workers in schools and regional communities, acknowledging the unique and essential role of Youth Work.
Resource youth worker positions in every school across WA.	\$16.5 million in funding for 64 full-time equivalent Complex Behaviour Support Coordinators across 192 WA public schools through the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement.	
Increase housing stock specifically for youth sector workers in regional areas.	\$145 million towards boosting housing availability in regional areas for essential workers.	
Fund mental health crisis response training to upskill and support youth workers in WA, starting with investment into WA's regional workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$13.8 million towards an Acute Care and Response Team in Bunbury to help young people, and their families, impacted by mental health challenges. • \$12.2 million to establish the Virtual Infants, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service Hub, supporting regional community service to respond to young people's complex mental health needs. • \$2.7 million to expand sector recognised training, allowing out of home care providers to better recognise, respond, and support people experiencing FIPV. • \$1 million towards delivering Coercive Control Education and First Responder Training for frontline workers and legal professionals. 	<p>We welcome the investment into regional-specific youth mental health services.</p> <p>We are pleased with the expansion of FIPV training for frontline and legal professionals, as this upskilling is essential to ensuring individuals impacted by FIPV receive comprehensive support. We encourage the Government to expand this initiative to include FIPV and mental health training for all youth sector staff to best support young people's various needs.</p>



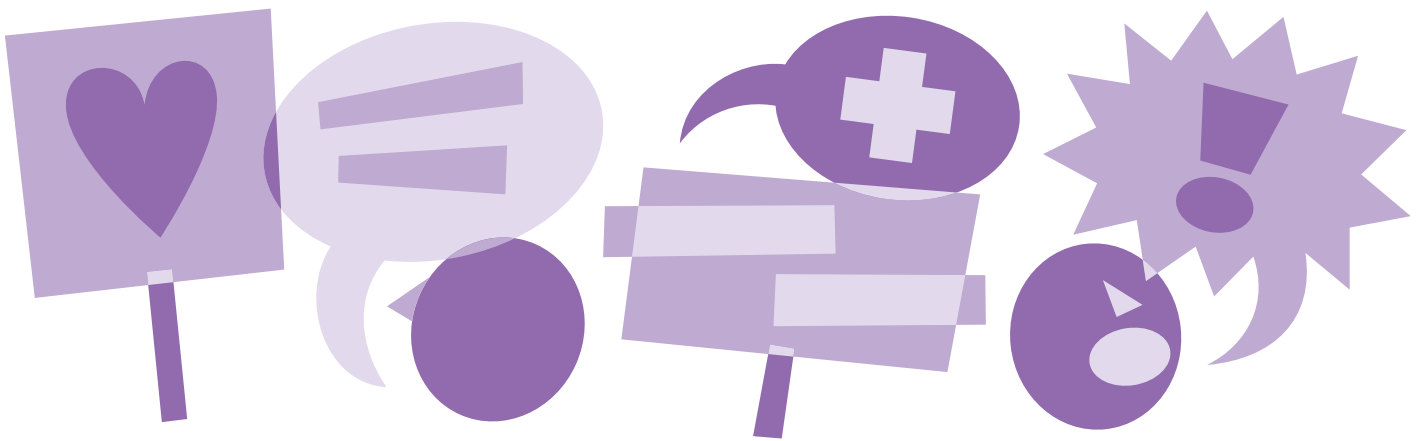
Commit to a total overhaul and reformation of WA's youth justice system

WHAT WE RECOMMENDED	WHAT WAS DELIVERED	WHAT'S MISSING
Immediately implement a therapeutic service delivery model in WA's youth detention facilities.	\$20.3 million towards implementing a therapeutic model of care, including additional case management staff, additional health staff for a new crisis care unit, and expansion of Aboriginal cultural security.	The implementation of a therapeutic model of care is a crucial step towards a safer youth justice system, providing essential care for at risk young people in Banksia Hill detention centre.
Rapidly increase investment into community-based programs for young people across WA based on justice reinvestment modelling to prevent engagement with the justice system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$3.4 million towards Kimberley on-Country residential youth facilities for young people at-risk. • \$5.9 million towards the establishment of the Kununurra Night Space. • \$3 million towards the Marra Worra Worra Night Place in Fitzroy Crossing. • \$1.4 million for the Pilbara Safe Spaces. 	We welcome the significant investment into place-based youth service hubs, particularly for the Kimberley on-Country facilities, as it is vital for diverting young people from engaging with the justice system. The investment into community-based youth programs across WA's region shows a promising shift in the Government's youth justice approach.
Resource a long-term, strategic vision for youth justice system transformation in WA where no children end up in prison.	\$10.8 million towards justice reform initiatives, such as the Post and Boast Law.	Despite the positive shift towards diversionary and therapeutic initiatives, the increased funding into the criminalisation of offenses targeting young people hinders the Government's capacity to address the underlying causes of offending. We advocate for the total overhaul and reformation of WA's youth justice, and encourage the Government to invest in further diversionary and preventative programs.



Embed and amplify the voices of young people with lived experience in decision making and service delivery

WHAT WE RECOMMENDED	WHAT WAS DELIVERED	WHAT'S MISSING
Actively include and value the voices of young people at all levels of Government decision making, starting with adequately resourcing all Local Government areas to deliver youth strategies, youth centres and youth advisory groups in their communities.	No specific commitment; recognised in Youth Action Plan 2024-2027.	Young people's perspectives are essential to the development of effective strategies and policies, especially in areas such as homelessness and LGBTQIA+-related issues. Through the Youth Action Plan 2024 – 2027, the Government has demonstrated a commitment to including young people's lived experiences. We will continue to work with the Government to advocate that young people's voices and their lived experiences are valued.
Commit to ongoing funding for the Youth Pride Network.	No specific commitment.	
Commit to ongoing funding for the Youth Homelessness Advisory Council.	No specific commitment.	



We remain committed to working with the Government to ensure all young people in WA are respected, valued, and enabled to shape the world they live in.

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