

Tasmania's approach to Youth Justice

Our Youth Justice system works to support young people at risk of offending and to keep our community safe. We're investing in recruitment and workforce development, our facilities, our training and our approach to make sure Tasmania's Youth Justice model is the best it can be.



A therapeutic approach

Our Youth Justice system uses a therapeutic approach. This means we tailor our responses to each young person and make sure they are appropriate to the level of offending and risk of reoffending.

We use a therapeutic approach to support each young person to address the factors that led to their harmful behaviours. We provide interventions and support options that aim to build upon the strengths of the young people.

Supported by a coordinated care team

The small number of Tasmanian children and young people who engage in offending behaviours need support from a range of services.

We aim to make sure all service providers work together to deliver a holistic approach. This places the young person at the centre of decision making and makes sure government and non-government services use common:

- models of care
- planning
- goal setting.

Focusing on prevention, early intervention, diversion

Wherever possible, we offer support to divert young people away from a justice system response by managing their behaviours in another way. We will continue to do this by:

- investing more in early intervention and prevention programs
- offering bail support programs and alternative sentencing options to avoid detention
- having specialist therapeutic interventions that address offending behaviours.

Community Youth Justice

Three Community Youth Justice teams oversee community service orders and provide supervision support. These teams are located in the north west, north and south of the State.

Community Youth Justice works with young people over the course of their court order to reduce their risk of re-offending. Youth Justice workers encourage young people to take responsibility for their actions.

They create opportunities for a young person to learn and practise skills like:

- problem-solving
- thinking through potential consequences
- how to cope when something goes wrong.

This is done with the aim of making and sustaining positive behaviour change.



Youth Justice workers respond to the young person's needs, motivation and learning style. They may engage with a young person in the car on the way to Centrelink, while walking along the coast picking up rubbish or while fishing off the wharf.

Importantly, Youth Justice workers help a young person's connection to family, community and culture. This builds a support network to last beyond their time with Youth Justice.

We are giving young people in Community Youth Justice a range of experiences, particularly things that they may not have tried before. We're looking to help them find something that will capture their interest and ultimately take forward in their lives once their Youth Justice orders are finished.

**Anita Torok Area Manager
Community Youth Justice Services (South)**

Custodial Youth Justice

The Ashley Youth Detention Centre provides secure care and custody for young people aged 10-17 who are detained or remanded by the courts. The centre is in northern Tasmania, near Deloraine.

All staff including youth workers, case management, health, leadership, kitchen and grounds staff support the young people at the centre.

There is an extensive range of programs that engage the young people while in the centre. All designed to give them life skills and build positive relationships with their Youth workers and other centre staff while in their care.

Having access to health services allows the young people to address their health needs including dentistry, alcohol and drug counselling, mental health services and general health and wellbeing.

The young people also attend Ashley School. Our goal is to involve every student in meaningful education, because we know being engaged in learning means they are much less likely to reoffend. School staff nurture positive relationships with the students and build their confidence and capacity in functional literacy, numeracy and work-related skills so they can see themselves as a learner beyond the centre.

The *Keeping Kids Safe* plan explains how we will ensure young people's safety and wellbeing in custody until the centre closes. It sets out actions we are taking while the centre remains open, and alternatives are being developed.

These include:

- Updating Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) and installing CCTV Control Room
- Implementing an updated Security Risk Management Plan
- Introducing body worn cameras for staff
- Maintaining an appropriate level of staff with the right experience and training
- Recruiting more youth workers
- Recruiting a Specialist Assessment Clinical Services Team
- Updating the policy for partially clothed searches
- Implementing x-ray screening.



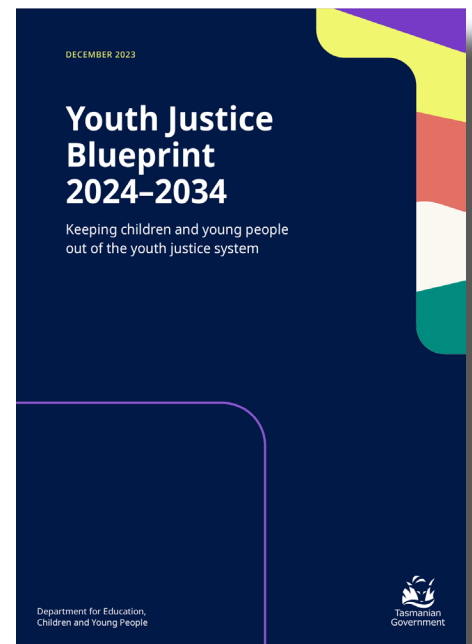
I would also like to thank the programs people and the Ashley School teachers for supporting me through my college work. They have helped me with my mathematics, my English, and my geography. Robert (aka Macca) was a great help with my maths, and Macca has supported me through tough times during conflict and has shown me that life is better beyond the bars. I would also like to thank Aquila for his sense of humour and pulling me up during my low points.

Young person upon leaving Ashley Youth Detention Centre

Youth Justice Reform

We have made many changes across the Youth Justice system in Tasmania in recent years. The 10-year Youth Justice Blueprint was released in December 2023. The Blueprint's outlines how we will reduce the involvement of children and young people in the Youth Justice system and create a contemporary Youth Justice system that:

- Keeps children and young people in Youth Justice facilities safe
- Reduces offending behaviour and re-offending by children and young people
- Reduces the overrepresentation of Aboriginal children and young people
- Supports children and young people to positively re-enter the community
- Improves community and staff safety.



The Blueprint includes plans for nation-leading system of support. It also includes assisted bail, secure custody and support for young people returning to the community.

The design of new facilities will strengthen our therapeutic approach to youth justice. This will support better outcomes for young people, their families and the community.

Contact:

Services for Youth Justice

www.decyp.tas.gov.au

Email: youthjusticeservices@decyp.tas.gov.au

Phone: (03) 6165 8551

Published: June 2024