

Sending Children to Casuarina Prison Response

Key Asks: Immediate Action on Banksia Hill/Casuarina

Children under 18 should not be sent to Casuarina maximum security adult prison.

- 1. Develop and implement tailored trauma informed Treatment and Rehabilitation Plans for these young people, based on comprehensive assessments of their needs**
This should ensure their specific individual needs are being met in a therapeutic, rehabilitative environment, and their rights upheld, so they can effectively reintegrate into the community.
- 2. Provide an adequate Model of Care in Youth Detention, building pathways out**
This must include fair and respectful treatment, access to high-quality healthcare, mental health and trauma informed supports, facilitated connections to family and culture, meaningful education, training, welfare and legal support; all of which is targeted towards building pathways out of the youth justice system. Prioritise therapeutic responses to young people, ensuring children are under no circumstances held in solitary confinement.
- 3. Immediately invest in community-based alternatives to detention and move children aged 10 to 13 out of Banksia Hill Detention Centre**
Work across government to ensure immediate investment in multiple community-based alternatives to detention. To support this move, focus on keeping children connected to communities, culture, education, training and practical life skills, mentors, alcohol and drug treatment, and therapeutic supports. This will protect children, improve outcomes, prevent recidivism, and reduce pressure on the strained youth detention system.

Key Asks: Urgent Reform to our Youth Justice System

- 4. Reform legislation to prioritise diversion and prevention; Including Raising the Age of Criminal Responsibility from 10 to 14 years, and abolishing mandatory sentencing.**
Our youth justice legislation is outdated and is unjustly funnelling disproportionate numbers of young people into detention. We need reform to bring us into line with international standards and ensure appropriate alternatives to detention are prioritised and available to vulnerable children. Legislation such as the *Young Offenders Act 1997 (WA)* needs urgent review following its last suspended review in 2018.
- 5. Develop a cross-government vision and strategy to fix our broken youth justice system.**
We need an evidence based, connected vision and approach across government silos, which intervenes early to turn off the tap of children flowing into the youth justice system and ensures no wrong door for struggling young people. This strategy should be co-designed, and use incarceration as an absolute last resort; prioritise early intervention, prevention, diversion, and rehabilitation to support cultural, social, and emotional wellbeing; and incorporate mechanisms that ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Self-Determination.
- 6. Identify the communities in most urgent need of youth justice action, and resource place-based justice reinvestment initiatives to address the root causes of offending.**
These initiatives should be strengths based, prevention focused, and data driven. They need to be co-created and led collaboratively in partnership with the community, including lived experience and Aboriginal voices, and prioritise building the capacity of locals to be employed.

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These Responses and Key Asks were developed in partnership with
SRWA Coalition Members and other key stakeholders.

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