

OPEN STATEMENT CLOSE UNIT 18

Dear Premier Cook,

No child deserves to be locked alone in a cell for over 22 hours a day.

Yet in Western Australia this is happening every day in an outer suburb of Perth.

When you assumed the role of Premier, you stated “... Above all else, Banksia Hill must be made safe for staff and children in detention.”

Since July 2022, your government has placed children inside maximum-security adult prison, in a facility called ‘Unit 18’.

Since it opened, there have been 20 suicide attempts and more than 350 instances of self-harm.

In September, children spent an average of 22 hours and 14 minutes in their cell each day. That’s just 1 hour and 46 minutes outside of their cell a day.

WA’s own Supreme Court has ruled this violates WA law.

It has been described as torturous, and a form of solitary confinement by human rights watchdogs.

And tragically, a 16-year-old boy has died in custody at Unit 18.

His name was Cleveland Dodd. He was the first child death in detention in WA. His death was foreseeable and preventable.

Experts warned of the risks of Unit 18. Lawyers, child and mental health experts, Aboriginal leaders, families, workers, and the young people detained spoke up. Evidence based solutions and alternatives to Unit 18 were provided.

Today, we are speaking up together again.

We recognise you agree Unit 18 is not working. The announcement of new leadership inside the Department of Justice is a first step.

But more is needed – for the children inside Unit 18.

We call for the immediate closure of Unit 18, and to urgently reform WA’s failed youth justice system.

You can end the imprisonment of children in adult prison.

You can choose to listen to the chorus of voices telling you the evidence-based solutions to fix the youth justice system.

You can choose to care for the children your government is responsible for, and act now to prevent another tragedy before it occurs.

Today.

Signed by,

136 Organisation Heads and Notable Australians.

Contact for response: srwa@srwa.org.au

[Listed alphabetically by first name]

Name	Title	Organisation
Adj. Prof. Tony Pietropiccolo AM	Director	Centrecare Inc.
Aidan Ricciardo	Lecturer	The University of Western Australia Law School
Aimee McVeigh	CEO	Queensland Council of Social Service
Alan Dingo	Wajarri Yamatji	Clontarf Aboriginal College
Alex Arpino	Development Coordinator	Alcohol and Other Drug Consumer & Community Coalition
Amanda Hunt	Director - WA	54 reasons (part of the Save the Children Australia Group)
Andrew Hall JP	Executive Officer	Perth Inner City Youth Service
Anthony Smith	CEO	MercyCare
Ashleigh Small	CEO	Hello Initiative
Barbara Henry	Managing Director	Noongar Family Safety and Wellbeing Council
Bella Broadway	Managing Director	Connection And Wellbeing Australia (CAWA)
Ben Webb	General Manager Justice	Waalitj Foundation
Bep Uink	Dean of Indigenous Knowledges	Murdoch University
Bev Jowle	CEO	Consumer Credit Legal

		Service
Caitlin Reiger	CEO	Human Rights Law Centre
Carly Stanley	CEO	Deadly Connections
Cassandra Goldie	CEO	ACOSS
Chelsea McKinney	CEO	Community Legal WA
Chelsea Watego	Professor	QUT
Chloe Collard	CEO	Geraldton Streetwork Aboriginal Corporation
Chloe Wood	Co-Convenor	Western Australia for a Human Rights Act Coalition
Chris Pickett	CEO	Pilbara Aboriginal Health Alliance
Chris Povey	CEO	Justice Connect
Clare Mullen	Executive Director	Health Consumers' Council WA
Damian Griffis		First Peoples Disability Network
Damien Parriman	CEO	KRED Enterprises
Daniel Morrison-Bird	CEO	Wungening Aboriginal Corporation
Daniel Pisani	Western Australian State Manager	Whitelion Youth Agency
Darren Mundau	CEO	Consumers of Mental Health WA
David Collard	Consultant	David Collard Associates
Dawn McAleenan	CEO	Crosslinks
Debra Barnes	CEO	Sexual Health Quarters

Debra Zanella	CEO	Ruah Community Services
Judge Denis Reynolds	Former President	Children's Court of WA
Denisa Konecny	CEO	Broome CIRCLE
Derm Ryan	Acting CEO	Youth Affairs Council Victoria
Derry Simpson	CEO	Youth Focus
Dr Mindy Sotiri	Executive Director	Justice Reform Initiative
Dr Richard Walley OAM	Director	Aboriginal Productions & Promotions
Dr Stephanie Kelly	CEO	NTCOSS
Dylan Storer	President	UN Youth WA
Elisha Jacobs-Smith	Whadjuk Noongar, Cultural Immersion Facilitator	Curtin University
Emma Jarvis	CEO	Palmerston Association Inc
Evan Nunn	CEO	Accordwest
Fiona Stanley AC	Professor	<u>Telethon Kids Institute</u>
Francis Lynch	Director	Youth Legal Service
Fred Chaney	AO	Former Federal Minister
Gail Beck	OAM	Executive Manager Ruah Community Services
George Newhouse	CEO	National Justice Project
Gerard Veltre	CEO	Phunktional Arts
Glenda Kickett	CEO	Karla Kuliny Aboriginal Corporation
Greg McIntyre SC	President	International Commission of Jurists (WA Branch)
Hannah McGlade	Associate Professor	Curtin law School
Hayley McQuire	CEO	National Indigenous Youth

Education Coalition		
Hayley Passmore	Lecturer	UWA Law School
Hilde Tubex	Professor	UWA
Holly Doel-Mackaway	Senior Lecturer, Macquarie University Law School	Macquarie University Law School
Jaime Yallup Farrant	Convenor	Climate Justice Union
Jain Moralee	CEO	Twenty10, LGBTIQ+ Youth Support
Janine Terry	COO	Keedac
Jayde Conway	Whadjuk /Ballardong, Lead/Cultural Capability	Curtin University
Jennie Burns	Executive Director	MercyCare
Jennie Gray	CEO	Women's Legal Service WA
Jennifer O'Mullane	CEO	WA Community Action and Advocacy Network
Jill Rundle	CEO	WA Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies
Jo Sadler	CEO	Wanslea
Jody Nunn	CEO	Reconciliation WA
Jolleen Hicks	Deputy Chairperson	Mawarnkarra Health Service
Jonathon Hunyor	CEO	Public Interest Advocacy Centre
Julie Falck	Lecturer	UWA Law School
Justine Colyer	CEO	Rise
Kacey Teerman	Indigenous Rights Campaigner	Amnesty International Australia
Karl Briscoe George Newhouse	Co-Chairs	Partnership for Justice in Health (P4JH)

Kate Munro	CEO	Youth Action
Kate Richardson	A/ Associate Director	Youth Law Australia
Kathleen Johnson	CEO	Peel Community Legal Services
Kerry Weste	President	Australian Lawyers for Human Rights
Kim Brooklyn	CEO	Parkerville Children and Youth Care
Laurel Sellers	CEO	Yorgum Healing Services
Lenny Yarran	Chairperson	Whadjuk Northside community centre
Liza Frazer-Gooda	Co Chairperson	Foundation for Indigenous Sustainable Health
Louise Giolitto	CEO	WACOSS
Maggie Munn	National Director	Change the Record
Marius Smith	CEO	Vacro
Mark Anderson	CEO	Foundation for Indigenous Sustainable Health
Marni Tuala	President	Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM)
Martin Smith	CEO	Ebenezer Aboriginal Corporation
Melanie Every	Executive Officer	Financial counsellors Association of WA
Melissa O'Donnell	Associate Professor	University of Western Australia
Melissa Perry	CEO	Communicare
Michael Ogilvie	Whadjuk / Ballardong / Yamatji	Leader

Michael White	Executive Officer	South Australian Network of Drug and Alcohol Services
Michelle Dillon	CEO	Ngala
Mitty Williams	Trustee	The Kimberley Foundation
Natasja Verschut	Centre Manager	Headspace Mandurah
Nick Abraham	Family Advocate	Noongar Man
Nicole Jolly	Director	Neami National
Professor Pat Dudgeon	Researcher	UWA
Paul Maginn	Interim Director	UWA Public Policy Institute
Paul Morgan	CEO	Betterlink Group
Peter Lewis	National Director	ANTAR
Philippa Boldy	Acting CEO	Anglicare WA
Rach McPhail	Community Engagement Associate Campaigner - Indigenous Rights Team	Amnesty International Australia
Raewyn Mutch	Clinical Associate Professor	University of Western Australia
Ralph Mogridge	Director	Ralph Mogridge & Associates
Renae Barker	Senior Lecturer	UWA Law School
Rev Dr Ian Tozer	Moderator	Uniting Church WA
Richelle Douglas	Medical Director	Derbarl Yerrigan
Rob Hulls	Director	Centre for Innovative Justice
Robyn Smith-Walley	Director	Aboriginal Productions & Promotions
Rochelle Francis	Chair	Rights Advocacy Project (RAP)
Ross Womersley	CEO	South Australian Council of

Social Service (SACOSS)

Sally Stevenson AM	Executive Director	Illawarra Women's Health Centre
Sandy McKiernan	CEO	Youth Affairs Council of WA
Sarah Toovey	Acting CEO	Ruah Legal Services
Shane Mauger	Managing Director	Outcare
Sharon Gough	CEO	Indigo Junction
Sophie Stewart	Principal Manager	Social Reinvestment WA
Sophie Walker	SEO	Langford Aboriginal Association
Stacey Campton	Director	Children's Ground
Stella Tarrant	Associate Professor	UWA Law School
Stephan Lund	Associate Professor/ Head of Social Work	The University of Western Australia
Sue Budalich	State Director	Mission Australia
Susan Rooney	CEO	Vinnies WA
Tamara Tulich	Associate Professor	UWA Law School
Tammy Solenec	Project Coordinator	KALACC - Jalngangurru Healing Project - THPP
Tania Murray	A/CEO	Youth Involvement Council Inc
Taryn Harvey	CEO	WA Association for Mental Health
Terry Murphy	Former Chair and Director General	WANADA Department for Child Protection and Family Support
Tina Holtom	CEO	Child Australia
Tina Williams	CEO	Volunteering WA

Tracey Brand

CEO

Derbarl Yerrigan

Wayne Nannup

CEO

Aboriginal Legal Service of
Western Australia Ltd

Wendy Rose

CEO

Kin Disability Advocacy Inc.

Zrinka Highfield

CEO

Samaritans WA