



STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Mr Johnathan Davis MLA (Chair), Mr James Milligan MLA (Deputy Chair), Mr Michael Petterson MLA

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2020-2021
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA: To ask the Assistant Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services

Ref: Youth Justice, CSD Annual Report 2020–21, pp. 88–89

In relation to: successful completion rates for young people on community-based orders

1. Last year, the proportion of community-based orders successfully completed by Indigenous young people in the ACT was the lowest in the nation: 15.9 per cent. The figure in this year's RoGS report is much improved: 61.5 per cent. What changes to case management has the ACT Government made to help improve this rate?
2. Despite the improvement, the ACT still has the second worst rate when it comes to the successful completion of community-based orders by Indigenous young people, with only the NT performing lower. In the past year, has the government analysed this persistent underperformance to identify causes and solutions? If not, why not? And if so, what has been learnt?
3. In Victoria, more than 90 per cent of community-based orders are successfully completed by Indigenous young people, and in New South Wales the figure is almost 90 per cent. What are those two states doing differently to account for those outcomes?

MS DAVIDSON: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. The Report on Government Services (RoGS) data submission shows that the number of young people experiencing a period of community-based youth justice supervision decreased in 2020-21, compared to prior years. This continues a long-term trend for smaller numbers of young people being under community-based supervision in the ACT.

The result of 61.5 per cent reflects 8 successfully completed community-based supervised youth justice orders involving 7 young people. Due to the very small numbers of young people who are involved in the youth justice system in the ACT, rates can vary and may lead to disproportionate trends.

Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS) staff maintain a focus on active case management, targeted intervention and prevention programs, and greater emphasis on diverting young people from the youth justice system. Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS) deliver the Changing Habits and Reaching Targets (CHART) program. The program is an offending behaviour program designed specifically for young people. CHART is designed to be a practical tool to support casework with young people who offend, employ a skills-oriented, cognitive behaviour focus on case work, be clearly directive in its approach to intervention and use active, participatory and learning methods.

In addition, CYPS use the Youth Level of Service / Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) which is a tool that surveys a young person's risk, need, responsivity and strength factors. The purpose of the tool is to assess these factors to identify areas of concern that may impact on a young person's likelihood of reoffending. This in turn assists with the development of an individual case plan.

2. The directorate frequently monitors trends relating to the proportion of young people who have successfully completed their community-based orders. Given the relatively small number of young people on community-based youth justice orders, trend information should be interpreted with caution.

CYPS continues to work in collaboration with young people, their families and services across the ACT youth justice system to provide a targeted response to the small numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people on supervised community-based orders.

3. Community Services Directorate does not comment on the practices or services offered in other jurisdictions. The Directorate recognises that many of the young people who come into contact with the youth justice system do so because of their social disadvantage. Effectively addressing disadvantage requires a broad societal focus on prevention and early support, and attention to the underlying factors that contribute to such disadvantage, which varies between jurisdictions. The ACT Government remain committed to diverting young people from entering or re-entering the youth justice system.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing

Signature: 

Date: 16 March 2022

By the Assistant Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services, Emma Davidson MLA