



fact sheet: Bimberi

PHILOSOPHY AROUND YOUTH JUSTICE IN THE ACT

The establishment of Bimberi signals a new direction in the care of young people in the youth justice system. The major difference between the old and the new is the active engagement of children, young people and families and a human rights framework and philosophy.

The philosophy that underpins juvenile justice in the ACT is:

To assist children and young people to maximise their potential, within positive and supportive environments, to become valued members of the community by enhancing meaningful opportunities for rehabilitation balanced with community safety.

The ACT Juvenile Justice system operates in accordance with the following principles:

- the community has a right to be protected from crime;
- the successful rehabilitation and reintegration of children and young people best meets the long-term needs of the community;
- children and young people learn better when they have appropriate role models to mentor them;
- children and young people who are detained must be provided with similar opportunities as those afforded to children and young people in the community;
- children and young people will have the opportunity and support to be actively engaged in education, vocational training, recreation, preventative healthcare and social activities;
- living environments, services and programs, staffing and operational practices must be sensitive and responsive to the gender, geographical origins, culture, religious, developmental and individual needs of children and young people, including and in particular those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background; and
- interaction between children/young people and staff maximises the effectiveness of the rehabilitation efforts and increases the chances of successful transitioning back into the community.





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Youth Justice Values

- Rehabilitation:** Improved community safety through working with children and young people to change their behaviour.
- Pro-social Modelling:** Children and young people can develop positive social skills, attitudes and behaviours when provided with positive role models who aid them to recognise negative attitudes and behaviours and replace them with positive attitudes and behaviours.
- Making a Difference:** Improving the health and well being of children and young people, positively influencing their life choices, building on their strengths and raising their confidence will provide them with the best chance to maintain positive changes in their lives.
- Restorative Practice:** Restorative justice provides children and young people with an avenue to make restitution for the negative consequences of their offending behaviour.
- Building Positive Links:** Developing links between children, young people, their families and community services to enhance their ability to take positive control over their own lives.

In addition to this, best practice in juvenile justice and particularly in youth detention involves assisting children and young people to develop constructive problem solving and conflict resolution skills.

There is a movement away from just “warehousing” young offenders to using the time they are in custody as an opportunity to positively engage with them and intervene to address any issues that may have become pathways to offending.

There is also a movement away from a punitive approach to a more humane and child centred approach that focuses on the strengths of children and young people rather than on the deficits (ie not just on offending).

There is a strong emphasis on collaborative work between other agencies that a child or young person may be involved with. The youth justice area within DHCS has worked hard to form close working alliances with shared case management, so that a child or young person will have one lead case manager and one case plan that will be the same in each agency.

