



BLUEPRINT FOR YOUTH JUSTICE



IN THE ACT 2012-22

Summary Progress Report 2012-15

This summary provides an outline of key findings and trends of the first three years of the *Blueprint for Youth Justice 2012-22*.

About the Blueprint

The *Blueprint for Youth Justice 2012-22* is a 10 year plan to guide the way government and community responds to children and young people who come into contact with the youth justice system in the ACT. This summary provides an outline of key findings and trends of first three years of the *Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT 2012-22*.

The seven strategies focus on:

- early intervention
- prevention
- diversion.

Progress

A three-year action plan supports the Blueprint to achieve a vision of keeping young people 'safe, strong and connected'.

Of the 45 actions identified in the action plan:

- 43 are complete or substantially complete
- 2 have work underway.

Priorities

Focus of work for 2014-15 has been on:

- strengthening prevention and diversion strategies
- establishing the new *Child and Youth Protection Services*
- implementing *A Step Up for Our Kids* (Out of Home Care Strategy 2015-2020)
- embedding policy and program work.

The full report can be found at [Community Services Directorate](#).

Major achievements

Work under the Blueprint continues to demonstrate reducing numbers of young people coming into contact with, or becoming further involved in, the youth justice system (*see table below*). This includes the number of young people being apprehended, under youth justice supervision and in detention in the ACT.



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Table 1 shows reduction in young people's involvement in youth justice

Young people apprehended by ACT Policing	2011-12 2,441	2013-14 1,946	down by 20%
Young people under youth justice supervision	2011-12 243	2013-14 174	down by 28%
Young people under community-based supervision	2011-12 215	2013-14 153	down by 29%
Young people in detention	2011-12 135	2013-14 88	down by 35%

What is making the difference?

The data for the year three annual report shows sustained reductions in the number of young people coming into contact with, or becoming further involved in, the youth justice system.

This means that youth crime is being prevented, the impact of youth crime is reduced and public safety is improved. Initiatives that are contributing to the downward trend include:

- fewer young people being apprehended by ACT Policing
- prevention and diversion initiatives (*the After Hours Bail Crisis Service that supports young people to keep to conditions of their court orders*)
- restorative justice (*all first time offenders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders are referred*)
- transition support through the Bendora Throughcare Unit at the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre (young people are supported to develop skills and networks to move back into the community and to reduce the likelihood of reoffending).

Tracking the trends

The Blueprint is now in year three of its 10 year lifespan. We are continuing to see positive outcomes for young people in the ACT.

Since the implementation of the Blueprint in 2011-12, there have been reductions in the number of young people apprehended by ACT Policing (20%) and under youth justice supervision (28%).

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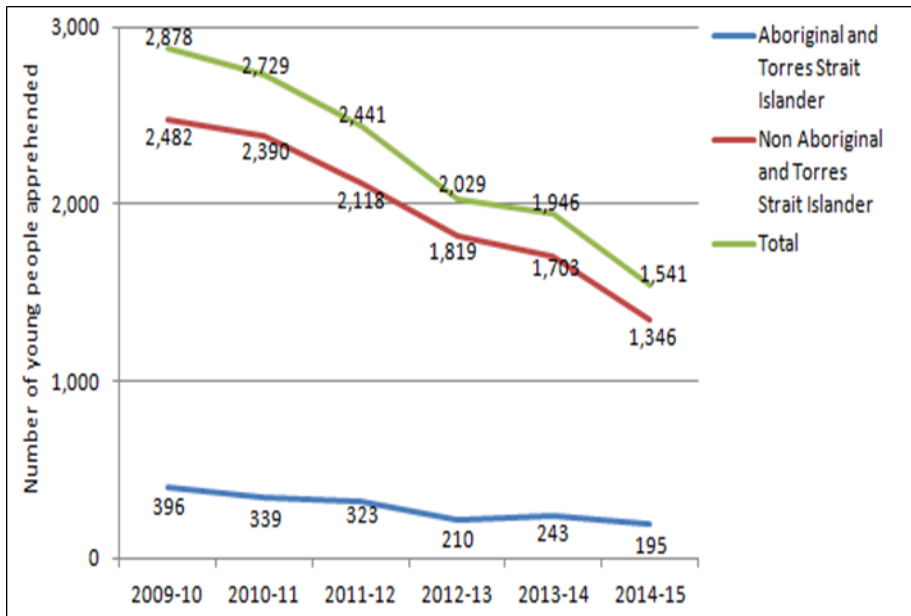


Figure 1: Young people apprehended by ACT Policing by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

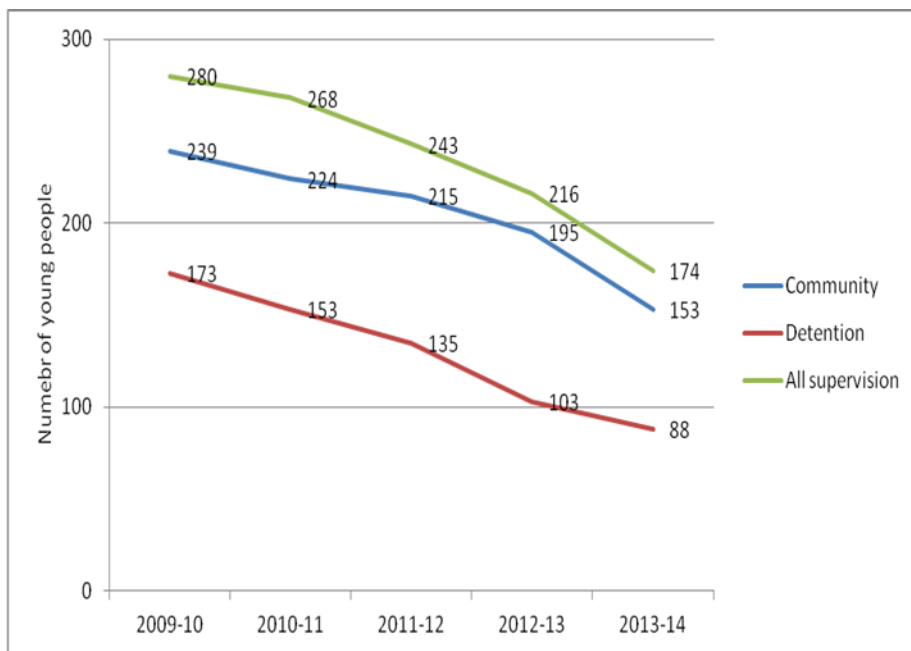


Figure 2: young people under youth justice supervision

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How many young people are in the ACT?

- In 2013-14, there was an estimated 58,790 young people in the ACT aged 10-21 years.
- Of these young people, 0.26 per cent were under community-based supervision and 0.15 per cent were in detention.

On an average day in 2013-14, there were:

- 89 young people under youth justice supervision

Of these:

- 73 were under community-based supervision
- 17 were in detention
- 22 identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- 66 were non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

A note about the data

'average day' is calculated by summing the number of days each young person spends under supervision during the year and dividing this total by the total number of days in the financial year. The number of young people on an 'average day' is rounded and some young people may have moved between community-based supervision and detention on the same day, leading to discrepancies in totals.

Type of offences

Most offences by children and young people were:

- traffic and/or vehicles (932)
- justice procedure offences such as a breach of court ordered conditions (823)
- theft or theft related offences (535).

Sources

- *ACT Criminal Justice Statistical Profile (Sept 2013 to June 2014 Quarter)*
- *Australian Institute of Health & Welfare Youth Justice in Australia 2013-14*
- *ABS Population by Age and Sex Tables, 30 June 2013.*

Ongoing commitment

The disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the youth justice system remains a continued focus of work.

Although Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people aged 10-17 years make up 3% of the total ACT population, they represent 26% of all young people under youth justice supervision on an average day.

In 2013-14, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young person was 12 times as likely to be under youth justice supervision during the year as compared with other young people. Nationally, this figure was 15 times.

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Since the implementation of the Blueprint in 2011-12, the following reductions have occurred:

Table 2 shows reduction in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people's involvement in youth justice

	2011-12	2013-14	change
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people under youth justice supervision	66	43	down by 35%
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people under community-based supervision	60	39	down by 35%
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in detention	45	24	down by 47%
Average time spent in custody (nights)	3,017	1,951	down by 36%
Rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people under supervision on an average day	347.7	204.3	down by 41%

Where to from here?

Key areas of focus for the continued implementation of the Blueprint are:

- strengthening early intervention for vulnerable children and young people
- improving life outcomes for young people in or leaving out of home care
- supporting high-risk young offenders with complex needs who enter and remain in the youth justice system
- reducing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the youth justice and child protection systems
- responding to risks associated with exposure to family and domestic violence.

Next steps

- Work is underway to further integrate with existing strategic priorities and to undertake an evaluation of outcomes from the first three years of implementation of the Blueprint.