Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT 2012-22

Progress Report 2012-15
Youth Justice Blueprint Implementation Group

April 2016
Acknowledgment of Country

The Community Services Directorate acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the traditional custodians of the Canberra region. The region was also an important meeting place and is significant to other Aboriginal groups. The Community Services Directorate acknowledges and respects their continuing culture and the unique contribution they make to the life of this city and region.

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While care is taken to provide links to suitable material, the nature of the internet prevents the Territory from guaranteeing the suitability, completeness or accuracy of any material to which this report may be linked.

Acknowledgements

The artwork incorporated in the design of the Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT 2012-22 was created by young people as part of their involvement in programs at the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre.

Data used in the report is primarily sourced from the AIHW 2015. Youth justice in Australia 2013-14: an overview. AIHW bulletin 127. Cat. no. AUS 188. Canberra: AIHW.

More information

For more information about the Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT 2012-22 is at: www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/the_blueprint_for_youth_justice_in_the_act

For more information about Better Services visit: www.betterservices.act.gov.au/
Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT 2012-22

Progress Report 2012-15
## Contents

- **Minister’s message** ........................................... 5
- **Overview** .......................................................... 6
- **Executive Summary** ........................................... 7

### Section 1  Achieving the goals of the Blueprint... 8
- Youth offending is reduced .......................... 9
- Youth re-offending is reduced ................. 13
- Detention rates are reduced ......................... 14
- Over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people is reduced .... 16
- Children and young people are diverted from the formal youth justice system ....... 20
  - Young people are helped early and provided with the supports and services they need ..... 23
  - Young people are successfully reintegrated into the community upon leaving detention. . 25

### Section 2 Progress on actions .................. 27
- Summary of progress on actions .................. 28

### Section 3  Data trends and Blueprint strategies ... 29
- Next steps ......................................................... 32

### Section 4 The Blueprint: making a difference ... 34
- **Appendix A** .................................................. 37
  - Blueprint for Youth Justice 2012-22 ......... 37
  - Detailed progress on actions .................... 37

**Strategy 3 - Engaging and encouraging the participation of children, young people and their families** .............................................................. 45
- Strategy 4 - Providing intensive individualised support to children and young people .... 47
- Strategy 5 - Connecting and reintegrating children and young people into a home and community through effective throughcare .... 49
- Strategy 6 - Creating an integrated whole of government and community system to support children and young people ......................... 52
- Strategy 7 - Building a strong and smart workforce ..................................................... 55
Minister’s message

I am pleased to present this latest annual report on the *Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT 2012-22*. The report brings together the progress of the Blueprint’s implementation in achieving its identified goals (see page 8).

Three years into implementation, we are still in the early stages of realising the ACT Government’s ten year strategy. However, it is heartening to see that our data across a number of areas is evidence that we are on the right path.

We have achieved significant reductions in the levels of youth offending and the number of young people in contact with, or becoming further involved in, the youth justice system. We are also seeing fewer young people in detention. This outcome reflects the Blueprint’s intent for the youth justice system to use detention only as a measure of last resort.

It is pleasing to note that the ACT is making progress in addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the youth justice system. Since 2011-12, there has been a 47 per cent drop in the number of young people under supervision and in detention. This is a remarkable result over the life of the first three-year action plan.

Our longer term, coordinated efforts to bring significant and lasting change here will be supported by the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2015-18*. The Agreement’s focus on strong families, and the elements of cultural identity and connections, is relevant for future work under the Blueprint. These are important in understanding the complexities around the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the justice system.

The achievements to 2015 confirm that the Blueprint’s focus on early intervention, prevention and diversion is sound policy and practice.

I believe that we have started 2016 in a sustainable position to continue this work.

This is particularly important in the context of the transformational change that is occurring across the ACT to support children and young people.

The *Human Services Blueprint* is the key reform driving transformational change through *Better Services*. I am pleased to share with you that the Blueprint for Youth Justice is forming part of the *Better Services* reform and is building collaborative practice amongst services to achieve more integrated and holistic responses for clients.

The ACT is the first jurisdiction in Australia to integrate child protection and youth justice services. The newly established *Child and Youth Protection Services* focuses on intervening early when issues arise so that children and young people receive the right service, at the right time, for as long as they need it.

*Better Services* is also guiding the *A Step Up for Our Kids* reform which is supporting children, young people and families in out of home care. *A Step Up for Our Kids* is building a therapeutic, trauma-informed system that is able to intervene early to prevent children and young people from entering care. The reform works to reunify children and young people with their birth parents, and where this is not possible, will move children and young people into safe and permanent homes.

In closing, I would reaffirm that our efforts to keep young people *safe, strong and connected* are a shared responsibility. It is a responsibility that must always be balanced with a commitment to maintain a safe and inclusive community. The achievements under the Blueprint so far are shaping the way forward to maintain this vision.

Dr Chris Bourke  
*Minister for Children and Young People*
Overview

This report demonstrates progress and achievements of the Blueprint over its first three years by:
- measuring the performance of the youth justice system against the Blueprint’s goals;
- providing case studies to illustrate how outcomes are being achieved for young people; and
- tracking the progress of 45 actions set out in the action plan.

The structure of the report is as follows:
- Section 1 – data picture against Blueprint goals;
- Section 2 – summary of progress on actions;
- Section 3 – data trends and Blueprint strategies, and next steps;
- Section 4 – case studies; and
- Appendix A – detailed progress on actions.

Further information about the Blueprint and previous annual progress reports are available at: http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/the.blueprint_for_youth_justice_in_the_act

ACT youth justice system

The ACT youth justice system deals with young people who have committed or allegedly committed offences. In the ACT, this includes young people aged 10 to 17 years at the time of the offence, as well as young people up to the age of 21 years for an offence committed as a minor.

The ACT youth justice system includes the police, courts, the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre and the Community Services Directorate for the supervision of young people on court orders.

The Blueprint aligns with the core principles of the Human Services Blueprint and Better Services:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person Centered</td>
<td>Young people and communities are at the centre of decision making, and services are delivered holistically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community focussed</td>
<td>Service design responds to the context in which it is delivered by understanding the needs and expectations of people and communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths based</td>
<td>Relationships and service responses empower individual and familial resilience, self – determination and independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes focused</td>
<td>Service design, funding, accountability and performance measurement focus on individual, community and system outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple</td>
<td>Information and access to services is easy to understand, navigate and access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Young people and communities, community services and government agencies are aligned and united in their efforts to build collective impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable</td>
<td>The current need of young people and communities are balanced with considerations for future needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High quality</td>
<td>Young people and communities are supported by evidence-informed, innovative, continuously improving responses that appropriately meet their needs and enable them to achieve their desired outcomes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More information about Better Services is available at: www.betterservices.act.gov.au
Executive Summary

This third report presents the progress in implementing the Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT 2012-22 (the Blueprint) and demonstrates how outcomes are being met through key indicators for youth justice.

Progress and achievements over the first three years of implementation are demonstrated by:
- measuring the performance of the youth justice system against the Blueprint’s goals; and
- tracking the achievement of initiatives set out in the action plan.

Of the 45 initiatives in the three-year action plan, 41 are complete, one is substantially complete and the remaining three are progressing.

Data from the first three years shows:
- the number of young people apprehended by ACT Policing decreased by 37%;
- the number of young people under youth justice supervision decreased by 28% and by 35% for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people;
- the number of young people under community based supervision decreased by 29%;
- the number of young people in detention decreased by 35%; and
- the number of days young people spent in detention reduced by 60%.

Evidence from the Blueprint’s commencement shows sustained reductions in the number of young people coming into contact with, or further involved in, the youth justice system. This suggests that crime is being prevented, the impact of crime is reduced and community safety is improved. Initiatives contributing to the downward trend include the After Hours Crisis Service, Narrabundah House, the Youth Alcohol Diversion Program, evidence-based practice and case management in youth services, restorative justice practices and support for young detainees to transition back into the community.

In the ACT, the Blueprint is making a difference to the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the youth justice system. This work will continue to be supported through the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2015-18 and the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Partnership 2015-18.

The Blueprint forms part of Better Services which is a long term plan to reform how justice, health, education, and community services work together to improve the way people are supported through human services. Future work to achieve the Blueprint’s goals will focus on collaborating with partners so gains are sustained and shared across the human services system.

For example, in 2016 a key focus will be to strengthen links with the ACT Justice Reinvestment Strategy. This collaboration is about investing in community-driven solutions that will reduce crime, break cycles of re-offending and intergenerational offending. Ultimately, this investment is about building safer and more inclusive communities.

Delivery of an outcomes evaluation in 2016 will help to determine the impact, value and sustainability of the Blueprint. Findings from the evaluation will drive the future direction of work.

About the Blueprint

The Blueprint is a ten year, whole-of-government and community plan to reduce youth crime by better supporting young people.

The Blueprint provides an evidence-based approach to improving outcomes for young people who are involved or at risk of involvement in the ACT youth justice system. Strategies to support young people and their families focus on early intervention, prevention and diversion.

The Blueprint recognises that by reducing risk factors and strengthening protective factors, our community will be better equipped to keep young people safe, strong and connected.
Section 1 Achieving the goals of the Blueprint

The Blueprint was substantially developed during 2011-12 and released in August 2012. The data presented on the following pages provides a picture of young people in contact with the youth justice system in 2014-15, and a picture of how the ACT youth justice system has been performing:

- over time – by providing long-term trend data, dating from 2009-10; and
- since the development of the Blueprint – in 2011-12.

Data is available to measure the performance of the youth justice system against the six goals of the Blueprint.

In most cases, the performance of the youth justice system is assessed using data from 2013-14, and 2014-15 where possible, as this is the most recent data available at the time of completing the report.

The data shows that in its first three years, the Blueprint has already achieved positive outcomes for young people and the youth justice system in the ACT. These early achievements are the result of significant investment and commitment to the strategies and actions in the three-year action plan.

Early intervention, prevention and diversion have been a key focus of this work, involving collaboration between police, courts and youth justice services.

Blueprint goals:

- Youth offending and re-offending is reduced
- Detention rates are reduced
- The over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the youth justice system is reduced
- Children and young people are diverted from the formal youth justice system
- Children, young people and their families are helped early and provided with the supports and services they need
- Children and young people are given every possible chance to be successfully reintegrated into the community upon leaving detention.

Note: Numbers of young people for ‘all ages’ (i.e. aged 10-21 years if the offence was committed as a minor) during the year are primarily used in the report.

‘During the year’ is a financial year (e.g. 2011-12) measure that provides a count of the number of unique individuals who are supervised in a year. Rates of young people aged 10-17 on an average day are used for national comparisons. Data used is primarily sourced from: AIHW 2015. Youth justice in Australia 2013-14: an overview AIHW bulletin 127. Cat. no. AUS 188. Canberra: AIHW
Youth offending is reduced

This goal continues to be achieved as youth offending and the number of young people involved in the youth justice system is reducing.

How are we tracking?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>young people apprehended by ACT Policing</td>
<td>2,441</td>
<td>1,946</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young people under youth justice supervision</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young people under community-based supervision</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Young people apprehended

Since the development of the Blueprint, the number of young people entering the youth justice system through police apprehensions has decreased by 20 per cent (2011-12 to 2013-14).

This decrease is consistent with longer term trends that show that over a six year period (2009-10 to 2014-15) the total number of young people apprehended by ACT Policing declined by 46 per cent (Figure 1).

This long term trend reflects decreases in the number of apprehensions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people by 51 per cent and 46 per cent, respectively (Figure 1).

In 2013-14, a total of 4,201 charges resulted from police apprehensions of young people aged 10-21 years.

Figure 1: Total number of young people aged 10-21 apprehended by ACT Policing by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Source: ACT Criminal Justice Statistical Profile, June 2015 Quarter, ACT Policing Tables 10-11 & September 2015, ACT Policing Tables 5-6
This means that each police apprehension of a young person (10-21 years) in 2013-14 resulted, on average, in two charges being placed.

Over the last five years, young people were most likely to be charged in relation to justice procedure offences (3,960), followed by traffic and vehicle offences (3,955) and theft or theft related offences (3,224) (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Charges from apprehensions of young people (10-21) by ANZSOC offence* – 5 years to Sept 2015

![Figure 2: Charges from apprehensions of young people (10-21) by ANZSOC offence* – 5 years to Sept 2015](image)

* List of ANZSOC offences are non-exhaustive and represent the seven most populated charge-types only

Source: ACT Criminal Justice Statistical Profile, September 2015, ACT Policing Table 14

Young people under supervision

Young people who enter the youth justice system can be ordered by a court to undertake a period of supervision. Young people may be supervised in the community or in detention.

In 2013-14, there was an estimated 58,790 young people in the ACT aged 10-21 years (Figure 3). Of these young people, 0.26 per cent were under community-based supervision and 0.15 per cent were in detention.

Figure 3: Young people under supervision in the ACT and Australia (all ages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Young people in the ACT</th>
<th>Young people in Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of children and young people *</td>
<td>58,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of young people under community-based supervision *</td>
<td>153 (0.26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of young people under in detention *</td>
<td>88 (0.15%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


# Source: AIHW Youth Justice in Australia 2013-14, Tables S36b and S74b

On an average day in 2013-14, there were 89 young people (all ages) under youth justice supervision in the ACT (Figure 4). Of these, about:

- four in five (82 per cent) were under community-based supervision
- one in five (19 per cent) were in detention
- three in four (73 per cent) were male
- one in four (26 per cent) were female
- one in four (25 per cent) were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and
- three in four (75 per cent) were non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.
On an average day in 2013-14, almost nine in ten young people under supervision were aged 10-17, with most falling between 15-17 years (Figure 5).

The number of ACT young people, on an average day, under community-based supervision is 89. This is similar to the national trend, which shows that 85 per cent of young people under supervision were on community-based supervision (AIHW Australian Capital Territory, Youth Justice Factsheet no. 37).

Most young people who were under supervision during the year 2013-14, were aged between 14-17 years when they were first placed under supervision (Figure 6).

Of these young people, 77 per cent (103 out of 134) were non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and 22 per cent (30 out of 134) were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

This is a significant over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, as this group represents just three per cent of the ACT youth population aged 10-21 years (ABS, Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Australia, 2001-2026, Table 8).
Trends in young people under supervision

Trend data shows that the number of young people under supervision in the ACT decreased by 28 per cent since the development of the Blueprint (243 to 174) with an overall decrease of 38 per cent from 2009-10 to 2013-14 (280 to 174) (Figure 7).

This long-term reduction is largely due to a decline in the number of young people experiencing youth justice supervision for the first time by 53 per cent (126 to 59) from 2009-10 to 2013-14 (AIHW Youth Justice in Australia 2013-14, Table S16). This means that fewer young people are entering the youth justice system.

Figure 7: Young people under supervision during the year by supervision type in the ACT (all ages)

Source: AIHW Youth Justice in Australia 2013-14, Table S11b, S46b and S84b

Young people under community-based supervision

Young people under community-based supervision may be supervised on un-sentenced (e.g. bail) or sentenced (e.g. good behaviour) orders.

On an average day in 2013-14, 82 per cent of young people under supervision in the ACT were supervised in the community (Figure 4). Of these young people, most (78 per cent) were serving a sentence (AIHW Youth Justice in Australia 2013-14, Table S66a).

Since the development of the Blueprint, the number of young people under community-based supervision decreased by 29 per cent (215 to 153) (Figure 7). This is consistent with longer term trend data showing a decline in the number of young people under community-based supervision of 36 per cent from 2009-10 to 2013-14 (239 to 153) (Figure 8).

This long term trend is largely due to a decline in the number of young males under community-based supervision of 38 per cent (180 to 111) from 2009-10 to 2013-14 (Figure 8).

Nationally, on an average day in 2013-14, the ACT had the third lowest rate of young people (10-17) under community-based supervision, at 18.3 per 10,000 compared to the national rate of 19.7 per 10,000 (including WA and NT) (AIHW Youth Justice in Australia 2013-14, p5).

Figure 8: Number of young people under community-based supervision during the year in the ACT by gender (all ages)

Source: AIHW Youth Justice in Australia 2013-14, Table S52b
Youth re-offending is reduced

This goal continues to be achieved as re-offending by young people on community-based orders is declining.

How are we tracking?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2014-15</th>
<th>change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>recidivism of sentenced young people in custody</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>13% points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recidivism of young people on community-based orders</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>8% points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Re-offending by young people

Reoffending, otherwise known as recidivism, by young people on community-based orders is measured by the number of young people who have been subject to more than one final supervised community-based order during the current and previous financial reporting year.

Recidivism by young people in detention is measured by the number of young people who have been subject to more than one sentence of imprisonment in the current and previous financial reporting years.

Since the development of the Blueprint, the recidivism rate of young people on community-based orders (the largest group subject to youth justice orders) has decreased by eight percentage points.

In contrast, for the same period, the recidivism rate of young people in detention increased by 13 percentage points.

However, this increase in recidivism rates over time incorporates a sharp decline in the recidivism rate of young people in detention by 14 percentage points over the 2013-14 to 2014-15 periods (Figure 9).

These rates for young people in detention fluctuate significantly due to the small number of young people in detention as compared to the number of young people under community-based supervision.

Higher levels of recidivism, combined with a decrease in the number of young people entering the youth justice system, may also indicate that detention is targeting young people in detention who have a more serious offending history.

Figure 9: Recidivism rates of young people under supervision in the ACT (all ages)
Detention rates are reduced

This goal continues to be achieved as fewer young people are entering and remaining in detention.

How are we tracking?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>young people in detention</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>young people in detention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young people in un-sentenced detention*</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young people in sentenced detention*</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note: young people can be subject to both sentenced and un-sentenced detention concurrently

Young people in detention

Since the development of the Blueprint, there has been a 35 per cent (135 to 88) decrease in the number of young people in detention in the ACT. This is consistent with longer term data trends showing a decline in the number of young people in detention of 49 per cent from 2009-10 to 2013-14 (173 to 88) (Figure 10).

This longer term trend is due to significant declines in the number of males (51 per cent) and females (44 per cent) who were in detention during the year, over the five year period (Figure 10).

Nationally, on an average day in 2013-14, the ACT had the third highest rate of young people (10-17) in detention, behind WA and NT, at 4.03 per 10,000 compared to the national rate of 3.5 per 10,000 (AIHW Youth Justice in Australia 2013-14, Table S77a).

Figure 10: Number of young people in detention during the year in the ACT by gender (all ages)

Source: AIHW Youth Justice in Australia 2013-14, Table S87b

However, the ACT rate of detention in 2013-14 demonstrates a decrease from 4.36 per 10,000 in 2012-13 (including WA and NT) (AIHW Youth Justice in Australia 2012-13, Table S75a).
Types of detention served

Young people in detention may be supervised on unsentenced or sentenced orders. When a young person is held in unsentenced detention, they have been charged with an offence and are awaiting the outcome of their court matter. When a young person is held in sentenced detention, they have been found guilty of an offence in a court and are serving a set period in detention.

Following the development of the Blueprint, the number of young people in unsentenced detention has declined steadily by 35 per cent from 127 to 83. Over the past four years, the number of young people in sentenced detention has declined by 27 per cent from 26 to 19, following a peak in 2010-11 (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Number of young people in detention during the year in the ACT by legal status (all ages)

On an average day in 2013-14, approximately half of the young people in detention in the ACT were serving a sentence (AIHW Youth Justice in Australia 2013-14, Table S109a).

Time young people spent in detention

Over the life of the Blueprint, the length of time young people spent in detention has decreased by 60 per cent (8,347 to 3,331).

This rate of decline has been greatest over the last twelve months, where the number of nights young people spent in detention decreased by 43 per cent (5,878 to 3,331).

It is assumed that this is due to having fewer young people in detention and who have committed possibly less serious offences.

Conversely, longer term trend data shows that the length of time young people spent in detention increased by 36 per cent from 2009-10 to 2010-11 (6,379 to 8,676) prior to Blueprint development (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Number of nights served in detention by young people in the ACT

This is consistent with the national quarterly average over the last four years (2010 to 2014) showing that approximately half of young people in detention on an average night were serving a sentence (AIHW Youth detention population in Australia 2014, p11).
Over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people is reduced

This goal is being achieved as the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in the youth justice system is declining.

How are we tracking?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people under supervision</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people under community-based supervision</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in detention</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people under supervision

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people have a long history of over-representation in both the youth and adult justice systems in Australia.

This is evident in the ACT where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people constituted 3 per cent of the population aged 10-17 years in 2014, but comprised about one quarter (27 per cent) of young people (10-17) under youth justice supervision on an average day in 2013-14 (AIHW Australian Capital Territory, Youth Justice Supervision in 2013-14, p2).

Following the development of the Blueprint, the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people under supervision in the ACT has declined by 35 per cent (66 to 43). This marks a change in trend, after a period of increase of 20 per cent from 2009-10 to 2011-12 (55 to 66) prior to Blueprint development (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Young people under supervision during the year in the ACT by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status (all ages)

Source: AIHW Youth Justice in Australia 2013-14, Table S11b

During 2013-14, the ACT had the second-highest rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (10-17) in youth justice supervision on an average day at 204.31 per 10,000 (excluding WA and NT). Importantly, the ACT rate has decreased by 41 per cent (347.68 to 204.31) following the development of the Blueprint (Figure 14).
Figure 14: Rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people under supervision during the year in the ACT – all ages

Table 1: Over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (10-17) under supervision by rate ratio in 2013-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate ratio</th>
<th>Tas</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>Vic</th>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>NSW</th>
<th>Qld</th>
<th>NT</th>
<th>WA</th>
<th>Aust</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>11.48</td>
<td>11.75</td>
<td>12.03</td>
<td>14.88</td>
<td>14.75</td>
<td>16.64</td>
<td>29.27</td>
<td>15.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calculated using rate data in AIHW Youth Justice in Australia 2013-14, Table S4a

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people under community-based supervision

In 2013-14, there were 153 young people under community-based supervision in the ACT. Of these young people, 25 per cent (39) identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

The total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people under community-based supervision during the year increased by 30 per cent from 2009-10 to 2011-12 (46 to 60) but decreased by 35 per cent following Blueprint development (60 to 39). This decrease is largely due to a reduction in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males under community-based supervision of 43 per cent (46 to 26) from 2011-12 to 2013-14 (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Number of young people under community-based supervision during the year in the ACT by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status – all ages

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females under community-based supervision increased by 78 per cent from 2009-10 to 2012-13 (9 to 16). These numbers declined by 19 per cent from 2012-13 to 2013-14 (16 to 13).

# Total number of young people includes non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people for whom cultural identity was not recorded.

Source: AIHW Youth Justice in Australia 2013-14, Table S52b

In 2013-14, on an average day, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people aged 10-17 years in the ACT were 12 times as likely as non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to be under youth justice supervision. This is lower than the national average (15 times) (See Table 1).
Fluctuations in this data should be interpreted with caution due to the small numbers represented.

Nationally, on an average day in 2013-14, the ACT had the third lowest over representation (by rate ratio) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (10-17) under community-based supervision, at 11 per 10,000 compared to the national rate of 14 per 10,000 (Table 2).

Table 2: Over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (10-17) under community-based supervision by rate ratio in 2013-2014

| Source:Calculated using rate data in AIHW Youth Justice in Australia 2013-14, Table S39a |

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in detention

In the ACT, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are significantly over-represented in detention (sentenced and un-sentenced), as a proportion of the total number of young people in detention.

In 2013-14, there were 88 young people in detention in the ACT. Of these young people, 27 per cent (24) identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Figure 16).

The total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in detention increased by 28 per cent (39 to 50) from 2009-10 to 2010-11 but decreased by 47 per cent (45 to 24) from 2011-12 to 2013-14, following Blueprint development.

This decrease is largely due to a reduction in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males in detention of 46 per cent (35 to 19) (Figure 16).

Across Australia, on an average day, the over-representation (by rate ratio) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (10-17) in detention has increased over the 5-year period (2009-10 to 2013-14) from 21 to 24 per 10,000 (AIHW Youth Justice in Australia 2013-14, p1).

The level of over-representation (by rate ratio) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (10-17) in detention in the ACT is unavailable due to the small numbers represented.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in unsentenced and sentenced detention

In 2013-14, 28 per cent of young people in unsentenced detention were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, and 32 per cent of young people in sentenced detention were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (Figure 17). This is a significant over-representation given that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people represent around two per cent of the ACT youth population (10-17 years).
Figure 17: Young people in detention during the year (2013-14) by detention type and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status in the ACT – all ages

Source: AIHW Youth justice in Australia 2013-14, Tables S114b and S121b

Figure 18: Number of nights served in detention by young people in the ACT, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Source: Productivity Commission (2016), Report on Government Services, Table 16A.12

Time spent in detention by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people

Overall, the total number of nights Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people spent in custody is decreasing.

At its highest, there has been a 72 per cent decrease in the number of nights young people spent in custody from 3,790 nights in 2010-11 to 1,064 nights in 2014-15.

Over the past year, the number of nights Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people spent in detention decreased by 45 per cent from 1,951 nights in 2013-14 to 1,064 nights in 2014-15 (Figure 18).
Children and young people are diverted from the formal youth justice system

This goal is being achieved as a consistent proportion of youth diversions continue, despite falling numbers of young people involved in the justice system.

How are we tracking?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>change</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>youth diversions as a proportion of offenders</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2014-15</th>
<th>change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young people referred to Alcohol and Other Drug Programs</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young people diverted from short-term remand in Bimberi</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>45%</td>
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</table>

Young people diverted by ACT Policing

In the ACT, young people who come into contact with ACT Policing may be diverted away from the courts, where it is considered safe and appropriate to do so (e.g. where it is in the interests of the young person and public).

Diversion includes formal cautioning, protective custody, referral to group (restorative justice) conferences and other diversionary programs like drug assessment and treatment programs.

In 2013-14, ACT Policing diverted 40 per cent of young people who had formal contact with police due to offending, were diverted away from court.

The number of youth diversions as a proportion of offenders in the ACT has remained stable over the last five year period (Figure 19).

**Figure 19: Youth diversions (10-17) as a proportion of youth offenders in the ACT**

Source: Productivity Commission, Report on Government Services 2015, Police Services Table 6A.39
In December 2010, the Early Intervention Drug Diversion Program commenced. The program diverted eligible young people who came to the attention of ACT Policing for under-age drinking and drug use away from the formal justice system to health assessment and information sessions.

This program has since been replaced by the Alcohol and Other Drugs Diversion Program which delivers separate Youth Alcohol Diversion (YAD) and Illicit Drug Diversion (IDD) programs to young people. Under a partnership agreement, ACT Policing divert eligible young people away from the courts and provide them an opportunity to participate in a health assessment and information sessions (facilitated by ACT Health).

In 2014-15, a total of 123 young people were diverted under the Alcohol and Other Drugs Program (Figure 20). Of these, 46 young people were referred to YAD, and 77 young people were referred to IDD.

**Figure 20: Young people referred by ACT Policing to Alcohol and Other Drugs Program (Early Intervention Drug Diversion Program)**

![Graph showing number of young people referred by ACT Policing to Alcohol and Other Drugs Program]


The number of young people diverted from the formal youth justice system under these respective programs has varied over time. As the number of young people eligible for diversion is dependent on the number of young people who come to the attention of police for eligible offences, this variability is to be expected.

Young people diverted from remand in detention

Where young people are not eligible for direct diversion from the courts, they may receive support from the After Hours Bail Support Service (AHBSS); known as the After Hours Crisis Service from 1 July 2015. AHBSS aims to assist young people who have come into contact with police, or are subject to bail order conditions. AHBSS works collaboratively with ACT Policing to divert young people in police custody away from short-term remand in detention while they are awaiting their court appearance.

In 2014-15, 16 young people who were in police custody were diverted away from remand in detention while awaiting their court appearance (Figure 21). This is a 45 per cent decrease in the number of young people who were successfully diverted away from remand in detention (29) since commencement of the AHBSS in 2011-12.

**Figure 21: Number of AHBSS diversions from detention for young people**

![Graph showing number of AHBSS diversions from detention]

*AHBSS commenced operations on 28 October 2011
Source: Community Services Directorate Annual Reports: 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14

This decline may be the result of:
- fewer young people becoming involved in the youth justice system; and
- ongoing training and consultation between AHBSS and ACT Policing to investigate alternative bail options for young people who come to the attention of ACT Policing.
**Young people in restorative justice**

ACT Policing is the primary referral source for young people referred to restorative justice (group conferences). The total number of young people referred to restorative justice declined from 2009-10 to 2013-14 by 40 per cent (217 to 130) (Figure 22). The decline was most substantial in the 2012-13 to 2013-14 year, when the total number of young people referred to restorative justice decreased by 43 per cent (227 to 130).

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people referred to restorative justice also declined from 2012-13 to 2013-14 by 11 per cent (62 to 55) and 52 per cent (157 to 75), respectively (Figure 22).

The decline in the number of young people referred to restorative justice may be due to:

- a decline in the number of young people encountering the youth justice system following police apprehension (Figure 1);
- progression (in 2013-14) from a trial initiative to an established program for all eligible first time offenders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people; and
- an improved awareness of referral criteria following the trial.

**Figure 22: Total number of young people referred to restorative justice by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status**

![Graph showing the number of young people referred to restorative justice by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status from 2009-10 to 2013-14.](Source: Justice and Community Safety Directorate, Criminal Justice Statistical Profile, June 2014)

While referrals of young people to restorative justice declined in 2013-14, more young people participated in restorative justice conferencing as a result of referral, when compared with 2012-13.

Table 3 shows there was a 30 per cent increase in the proportion of young people taking part in restorative justice in 2013-14 (57%) when compared with 2012-13 (44%).

**Table 3: Proportion of young people and victims referred in 2013-14 that participated in restorative justice**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012-13</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young people</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*Source: Justice and Community Safety Annual Report 2013-14, Output 1.1, p23*

In 2013-14, 81 restorative justice agreements were established with young people with 91 per cent total compliance (compared to 85 per cent in the previous year).

This means that more young people participated in restorative justice in 2013-14 with a higher rate of compliance with their agreements, when compared to 2012-13.

Of the 81 agreements, 64 were complied with, 10 conferences satisfied the victims’ needs and further agreement was not required, and seven were not complied with (Table 4).

**Table 4: Restorative justice agreement outcomes by young people in 2013-14**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Agreement Status</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complied</td>
<td>64 (79%)</td>
<td>64 (79%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference satisfied needs</td>
<td>13 (11%)</td>
<td>10 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failed to be complied with</td>
<td>15 (18%)</td>
<td>7 (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Compliance</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Justice and Community Safety Annual Report 2013-14, Output 1.1, p24*
Young people are helped early and provided with the supports and services they need

This goal is being progressed as young people with risk factors that can increase vulnerability are provided with support to address their welfare, wellbeing and safety needs.

How are we tracking?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2014-15</th>
<th>change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>young people who accessed youth engagement services</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>4,550</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young people who received support from single case management</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>-35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young people who received justice health services (within 24 hours of detention)</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>+3% points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children and young people who received domestic violence crisis services</td>
<td>13.4% (Jun Qtr)</td>
<td>21.1% (Jun Qtr)</td>
<td>+7.7% points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Specific attention is given here to support provided to young people involved with the youth justice system, or who are vulnerable or at risk of exposure to harm. Broad, outcome-based reporting on early intervention across community services will be captured by work under the Human Services Blueprint.

**Young people who accessed youth engagement services**

Young people who are disengaged or at risk of disengaging from family and other services, including education, are provided youth engagement services by various community organisations in the ACT. Youth engagement services are delivered through a range of strategies including drop-in, assertive engagement and street outreach. Young people are prioritised according to their level of disengagement and complexity of need. In 2014-15, 4,550 young people accessed youth engagement services. This shows that approximately five per cent of children and young people in the ACT (0-17 years) were provided with early intervention and prevention services helping to address risk factors, including vulnerability or disengagement from family and other services.

**Young people who received justice health services**

Young people who are in contact with the youth justice system are supported by Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drug Services. This support includes primary health services, assessments and care for young people with mental ill-health who have or are at risk of offending, hospital-based specialist services, therapeutic rehabilitation, counselling, supported accommodation and other community-based services. These services include *Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services* (CAMHS), which provide mental health care to young people up to the age of 25 years experiencing moderate to severe mental health presentation.
In 2014-15, 94 per cent of all young people admitted to Bimberi had a health assessment completed within 24 hours of detention. This was due to four health assessments not being undertaken within the 24 hour period where:

- one was due to a potential security risk of the young person and was completed approximately 48 hours after admission; and
- three were due to health staff not being advised of the admissions in time and health assessments were completed at 24.5, 27 and 27.5 hours after admission.

Justice Health Services has commenced the 2015–2016 Young Persons in Custody Health Survey to further understand the health needs and outcomes of young people in detention. It is anticipated that 50 or more young people will participate, providing further information about the health, sexuality, education, employment, social circumstances, alcohol and other drugs exposure. This information will be used to inform future service provision.

**Young people who received support from single case management**

Young people are provided coordinated, single case management that focuses on their changing needs when in Bimberi or the community. This approach enables effective collaboration between agencies and improves planning when young people enter or exit custody, helping to achieve more positive outcomes for young people.

In 2014-15, 170 young people received support under single case management. This number has reduced by 35 per cent since commencement of the Blueprint (2011-12).

While this appears to be a significant reduction, it corresponds with similar reductions in the number of young people under youth justice supervision (28 per cent during the year from 2011-12 to 2013-14 (Figure 7).

**Children and young people who received domestic violence crisis services**

Children and young people can receive crisis support services through crisis visits when experiencing family or domestic violence.

Crisis visits are face-to-face interventions provided by the Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS) in immediate response to an incident of domestic or family violence to support those who are affected. DVCS crisis visits involving children occur when children are involved or present at a domestic violence incident.

Additional support services including early intervention, accommodation and longer-term support are also provided through ACT Housing’s Social Housing and Homelessness Services.

The proportion of children and young people (0 to 24 years) who received domestic violence crisis services increased by 7.7 percentage points across June quarters from 2011-12 to 2014-15 (Figure 23). This indicates that children and young people are an increasing proportion of all domestic violence crisis services clients.

**Figure 23: Proportion (%) of children and young people as domestic violence crisis service clients**

![Figure 23: Proportion (%) of children and young people as domestic violence crisis service clients](source: ACT Criminal Justice Statistical Profile, September 2015, Domestic Violence Crisis Service Table 1)
Young people are successfully reintegrated into the community upon leaving detention

This goal is being progressed as young people are supported to develop skills to help them transition successfully into the community upon leaving the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre.

### How are we tracking?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2014-15</th>
<th>change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>young people who attained nationally recognised qualifications</td>
<td>36 (2011)</td>
<td>21 (2014)</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young people who participated in the Bendora Throughcare Unit</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21*</td>
<td>n/a*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(*total since 2011-12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young people supported by the Youth Housing Program</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012-13</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>young people supported to transition from out of home care</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Young people who attained qualifications in detention

Young people in detention at the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre (Bimberi) are supported to maintain engagement in education, build and maintain family ties and develop the living skills they need to reintegrate successfully into the community.

The Murrumbidgee Education and Training Centre (METC) at Bimberi provides a range of educational and vocational programs, including recognised certificate courses, tutoring and transitional support back into the community.

Young people are supported to complete their Year 10 Certificate (or equivalent), as well as a variety of nationally recognised qualifications in areas like construction, computing, hospitality, fitness, business and horticulture. Since 2011, a total of 127 young people have received nationally recognised qualifications through METC (Figure 25).

![Figure 25: Number of METC students who attained nationally recognised qualifications](source)

Source: Education and Training Directorate, ACT Government, unpublished internal data

The number of METC students who attained nationally recognised qualifications has reduced by 42 per cent, following the commencement of the Blueprint (2011 to 2014). While this appears to be a significant reduction, it corresponds with similar reductions in the number of young people in detention of 35 per cent during the year from 2011-12 to 2013-14 (Figure 9).
The data above (Figure 25) presents general information about the number of young people who engage in these programs while in detention. It is not possible at this time, to link this data with information about the nature of these young people’s sentences, the length of detention experienced, or the re-offending rates following release.

**Young people who have participated in Bendora Throughcare Unit**

In August 2011, Bimberi launched the Bendora Throughcare program, a fourth residential unit that prepares sentenced young people to transition back into the community. The program provides young people with living skills training and planned leave from Bimberi in order to prepare for a successful community transition. A total of 21 sentenced young people have successfully transitioned through the program since it opened (August 2011).

In 2013, a Family Engagement Officer position was established in Bimberi to engage families and young people in detention and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the day-to-day functioning of Bimberi. All young people and their families have been contacted by the officer and offered support to maintain family and community connections during the young person’s detention.

**Young people supported by housing services**

Young people are assisted by a range of housing and homelessness services, including Housing ACT’s *Youth Housing Program*. This program assists young people to sustain a long term tenancy and engage with education, employment and the community. The program supports young people aged 16 to 25 years who are transitioning from the youth justice system, care and protection or homelessness services.

The number of youth tenancies supported by the program has increased by nine per cent from 2011-12 to 2013-14 (Figure 26). This increase also reflects expansion of the program to all young tenants aged 16 to 20 years in 2014.

**Figure 26: Number of young people supported by the Youth Housing Program**

![Figure 26](image)

Source: Community Services Directorate Annual Reports: 2009-10; 2010-11; 2011-12; 2012-13; 2013-14; 2014-15

**Young people supported to transition from out of home care**

Young people aged 18 years who have been in out of home care, including young people who may also be exiting the youth justice system, were supported by the *Youth Support and Transition Team* (established in 2012–13), to transition into independent living. This support includes access to practical support, brokerage funding, mentoring and living skills development. This team provided direct support to 101 young people in 2012-13, 119 young people in 2013–14 and 161 young people in 2014-15.

The implementation of Child and Youth Protection Services in July 2015 provided the opportunity to offer a broader service system response to these young people with case workers able to case manage and support these young people from 12 years of age.

In addition, under *A Step Up for Our Kids* carers can now continue to access carer subsidy payments for young people aged 18 to 21 years, extending the continuum of care for young people and supporting a gradual transition to adulthood.
Section 2 Progress on actions

The Blueprint’s goals are underpinned by seven strategies for reducing risk factors, strengthening protective factors and achieving long-term change in the ACT youth justice system.

The Blueprint strategies encourage government agencies to work together more closely and with community organisations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other communities, schools and others to address youth crime and risk factors that lead to offending.

Each strategy is supported by practical actions for delivery, set out in the Blueprint’s first three-year action plan. The actions are a ‘to-do list’ that focus on reducing youth crime by promoting early intervention, prevention and diversion. This work has involved collaboration between police, courts and youth justice services.

The information presented in the progress tables at Appendix A (see page 36) tracks achievements against actions set out in the action plan.

The tables highlight significant work against individual actions, rather than providing a comprehensive list of initiatives delivered between 2012 and 2015.

Notably, of the 45 actions in the plan 42 are complete or substantially complete, and work is underway to finalise three actions.

Blueprint strategies:

1. Focusing on early intervention and prevention of contact with the youth justice system
2. Diverting children and young people away from the formal youth justice system
3. Engaging and encouraging the participation of children, young people and their families
4. Providing intensive individualised support to children and young people
5. Connecting and reintegrating children and young people into a home and the community through effective throughcare
6. Creating an integrated whole-of-government and whole-of-community services system to support children and young people
7. Building a strong and smart workforce.
Summary of progress on actions

Of the 45 initiatives in the three-year action plan:

- 41 are complete
- 1 is substantially complete; and
- 3 have work underway.

![Progress Chart]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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Legend:
- Complete
- Substantially complete
- Work underway
- To commence
Section 3  Data trends and Blueprint strategies

The third progress report demonstrates that the Blueprint’s focus on prevention and diversion strategies is producing positive outcomes for young people in the ACT.

Reduced numbers of young people coming into contact with the youth justice system means that the impact of youth crime is reduced, youth crime is being prevented and community safety is improved. Keeping young people out of the youth justice system means we are contributing to a safer and more inclusive community and are likely to be preventing a lifetime of crime.

What is happening?

Recent statistics show that the ACT youth justice system is experiencing unprecedented success by achieving:

- reduced youth offending;
- fewer young people involved with the youth justice system;
- fewer young people being supervised on justice orders in the community;
- fewer young people entering and remaining in detention;
- fewer young people on remand;
- reduced re-offending by young people on community-based orders;
- fewer Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people involved with the youth justice system; and
- a declining rate of over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the youth justice system.

Anecdotal reports from staff on the front line of youth justice are also positive. Staff report that the improved tools provided by the Integrated Management System and Knowledge Portal have given them a greater ability to address youth offending.

This early success creates an opportunity to work proactively rather than simply trying to keep up with demand. It allows the youth justice sector to devote more effort to addressing the underlying issues that lead to youth offending to achieve better long term results.

Importantly, this achievement suggests that the social and financial benefits being made by the youth justice sector at this time are likely to benefit the justice sector, young people and the ACT community for years to come.

Building on this opportunity is the next step. This means delivering a youth justice sector that builds on the government’s commitment to provide ‘Better Services’, reinvest in community-based crime prevention and contribute to a socially inclusive community.

What is making a difference?

It is difficult to identify a single cause for the decline in young people coming into contact with the ACT youth justice system; rather, it is more likely that several have coincided.

Effective diversion

Diversionary programs that target young offenders, many who are first-time offenders and could be at risk of becoming persistent offenders, are diverting young people from entering or continuing in the youth justice system. Key examples include:

- The After Hours Crisis Service (formerly the After Hours Bail and Support Service) aims to keep young people out of custody by providing alternative community-based options to being remanded in Bimberi and assisting young people on justice orders to comply with the conditions of their orders. In 2014-15, AHBSS responded to over 1,411 client-related matters and 16 young people...
who were in police custody were diverted away from remand in detention while awaiting their court appearance.

- Alcohol and Other Drugs Diversion Program diverts young people away from the youth justice system and refers them to assessment and education programs, including:
  - Youth Alcohol Diversion for under-age drinkers who are intoxicated, in possession of, or consuming alcohol in a public place. In 2014-15, 46 young people were diverted to a health assessment and information session.
  - Illicit Drug Diversion for people who are found in possession of illicit drugs for personal use alone. In 2014-15, 77 young people were diverted to the program.
  - ACT Policing Crime Reduction Education and Diversion (CRED) team offers education and awareness presentations in relation to drugs and alcohol in ACT secondary schools. In 2014-15, the CRED team delivered drug and alcohol presentations to over 3,170 school students in 16 secondary schools.

- Narrabundah House Indigenous Service Residential Facility provides short to mid-term and crisis accommodation and intensive case management primarily for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young men aged 15 to 18 years who are on community-based justice orders.

Responsive youth justice and support services

The decrease in the number of young people on remand suggests that young people are more likely to receive bail, where appropriate, and that their welfare, safety or other needs are being addressed when on bail with assistance from youth justice and support services. This is consistent with legislative obligations to ensure that detention is used as a last resort for young people and that the justice system acts in the best interests of the child.

Effective Restorative Justice

The participation of young people in restorative justice and compliance with agreements is appearing to prevent young people becoming further involved in the youth justice system.

Although referrals to restorative justice decreased in 2013-14, more young people participated in restorative justice with a higher compliance rate with their agreements, when compared to 2012-13. This means that more young people were successful in achieving conference outcomes, contributing overall to positive outcomes for young people, victims and the ACT community.

Enhanced evidence-based practice

Child and Youth Protection Services have focused on delivering a more effective and evidence-based approach to the supervision of young people on justice orders. Practice improvements have been made to strengthen the skills of case managers to reduce risk factors associated with offending, increase the compliance of young people under supervision with justice orders and strengthen protective factors. These improvements include:

- embedding single case management across youth services in the assessment, supervision and support of young people on justice orders. Single case management encourages staff to work differently and empowers them to be a ‘single point of contact’, not only for young people but also other key service providers and stakeholders. In 2014-15, 170 young people were supported under the single case management model.

- embedding the Youth Justice Support and Intervention Framework to guide staff and agencies in the design and delivery of support, interventions and programs based...
on a young person’s risk of re-offending (low, medium or high) and their areas of criminogenic need.

- strengthened cultural planning for young people on justice orders. A revised approach to cultural planning was developed through consultation with government and community organisations, with particular consideration of the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

Strategic approach to youth justice

The Blueprint provides a strategic approach to youth justice in the ACT by establishing a vision to keep young people safe, strong and connected. The intent of the Blueprint is about taking an evidence-based approach, informed by the views of stakeholders across government and community, including the voices of young people and families. This approach has resulted in identifying clear priorities, strategies and initiatives to realise the Blueprint’s vision.

A part of this approach has been the understanding that youth justice outcomes must not be seen in isolation. Instead, shared efforts and a shared responsibility involving services and supports across health, education, justice and the community are recognised as being the most effective way to getting better outcomes for young people involved in, or at risk of coming into contact with the youth justice system.

Strengthened throughcare

Initiatives that focus on providing sustainable exits from the youth justice system and transition to the community are demonstrating some success:

- **Bendora Throughcare Unit** at Bimberi is better preparing young people for their transition into the community. A total of 21 young people have transitioned from Bendora since it was established in 2011. Of this group, about 60% have not re-offended.

- **Youth Housing Program** continues to support young people (16 to 25 years) who are transitioning from youth justice, care and protection, or homelessness services. In 2014-15, 160 youth tenancies were managed under this program.

Reduced recidivism

Efforts to reduce re-offending by young people under the Blueprint strategies are demonstrating some success in stopping young people from returning to the youth justice system.

Since the development of the Blueprint, the recidivism rate of young people on community-based orders (the largest group subject to youth justice orders) has decreased. In addition, the number of first-time offenders entering the youth justice system has fallen by 53 per cent (126 to 59) from 2009-10 to 2013-14.

In contrast, since 2012, the recidivism rate of young people in detention has increased (however, recidivism rates for young people in detention can fluctuate significantly due to the small number of young people in detention).

Higher levels of recidivism for young people in detention, combined with a decrease in the number of young people entering the youth justice system and a decrease in the number of first-time offenders, may also indicate that detention is targeting young people with a more serious offending history.

This also suggests that most of what remains of the youth crime problem in the ACT is primarily a recidivism issue.
Next steps

The Human Services Blueprint sets a vision that: All Canberrans have the capability to fully participate in strong, healthy, safe and inclusive communities. The Human Services Blueprint, through Better Services, is reforming how education, justice, health and community services work together so that the system can intervene early in people’s lives, and prevent the need for intensive high cost service responses.

The Blueprint for Youth Justice forms part of the Better Services reform and is demonstrating how ameliorating risk factors through early intervention, prevention and diversion is achieving results for children, young people and their families. This direction will continue to lead us into 2016 and beyond.

The youth justice sector sits at a cross-road between the social and justice sectors. How well young people navigate this space is very much shaped by the risk factors they are exposed to, and the protective factors around them.

As outlined in the Blueprint, long-term predictors for risk include:

- socio-economic disadvantage and discrimination;
- family breakdown;
- involvement in out of home care;
- poor physical health or mental ill-health;
- intergenerational trauma and violence;
- neglect; and
- individual and family drug or alcohol misuse.

Different individuals respond to risk and protective factors in different ways. While not every child or young person with one or more of these factors will come into contact with the youth justice system, without the presence of protective factors, the likelihood of this occurring can increase.

Protective factors such as supportive environments and strong bonds with family, mentors, schools and a young person’s community may moderate or reduce the influence of risk factors. In some cases, they can decrease the likelihood of anti-social and offending behaviour. Young people’s healthy beliefs, attitudes and behavioural standards also have a role in mitigating risk factors.

While the Blueprint’s current direction will continue, strategic work from 2016 will be around strengthening linkages to significant work that is already occurring to support young people and families who face long-term predictors of risk.

This is work that sits alongside initiatives that focus on supporting young people to stay connected to family and friends, engaged in school, training or employment and increase their resilience and wellbeing.

Opportunities to consolidate the work of the Blueprint that enhance responses to long-term predictors of risk and strengthen protective factors are supported by the following:

- the trauma-informed approach to support children, young people and families involved in the out of home care system through A Step up for Our Kids (Out of Home Care Strategy 2015-2020);
- the strengthening of support to children, young people and families through the combining of statutory functions of the youth justice and care and protection systems with the establishment of Child and Youth Protection Services;
- the reform of the ACT’s human services system set out in the community and
The strategies and initiatives outlined above are not intended to be a comprehensive ‘list’ of work that is occurring across community and government.

The aim is to highlight the common threads that align with the Blueprint’s focus on intervening early in the life of problems so that these do not escalate to require more intensive support (early intervention and prevention).

Lastly, in looking to the future we will be turning our attention to ensuring that the Blueprint continues to be based on evidence that focuses on identifying and achieving outcomes.

A key piece of work during 2016 will be the completion of the outcomes evaluation for the Blueprint’s first three years of implementation. While robust annual data is critical in checking progress and trends, it tells only part of the story about understanding ‘what is working’.

The evaluation will outline progress against the Blueprint’s goals, objectives, assumptions and program logic to assess whether implementation has achieved the original intended aims. Importantly, the evaluation will assist in identifying and developing baseline data and measures.

This work will include analysis of:

- youth justice supervision and detention;
- offending and re-offending;
- youth justice supervision of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people;
- diversion measures/activities;
- availability and use of services;
- cost of supervision/services/initiatives;
- early intervention and prevention initiatives;
- reintegration following detention; and
- community safety.

The evaluation will deliver a comprehensive and evidence-based picture of how the youth justice system is working under the Blueprint. This work will determine the quality and impact of the Blueprint’s implementation, including its ability to deliver value and sustainability.

Importantly, the evaluation will drive the future direction of work under the Blueprint in measuring our efforts to keep young people safe, strong and connected.

In line with the principles and design of the Human Services Blueprint, the next steps in the implementation of this strategy will focus on:

- conducting person-centred practice;
- early intervention, prevention and diversion from the youth justice system;
- integrated, strengths based and outcomes focused responses for young people.
Section 4 The Blueprint: making a difference

While progress in meeting goals of the Blueprint can be measured against individual actions (see page 28), real and lasting change is about the positive difference that is made in a young person’s life, and to their family and community.

The following case studies illustrate how goals are being met in real life circumstances. These stories about young people (names have been changed) also show how collaboration across services and supports get the best outcomes for young people.

Lucy’s story...

Youth Engagement Services

Goal
Children, young people and their families are helped early and provided with the supports and services they need.

Lucy was referred to the program when her situation meant that she returned to her birth family after being in out of home care.

Concerns were raised about Lucy’s role as a young carer in her birth family, and possible emotional and financial impacts on her. As a young carer, Lucy was experiencing high stress and anxiety that resulted in her withdrawing from school.

After referral and discussions, Lucy agreed to work with her support worker and identified her wishes to finish school and to live independently.

Her worker assisted her to develop her résumé and to request more training to increase her opportunities for education and training.

Lucy was also supported by her support worker in her application for public housing. When Lucy was allocated a property, she felt comfortable about asking for help to move and settle in.

With a place to call home, Lucy is now looking for work in her local area until she can re-enrol in school to achieve her next goal to finish school.

Sharon’s story...

After Hours Crisis Service

Goals
- Children and young people are diverted from the formal youth justice system
- Detention rates are reduced
- The over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the youth justice system is reduced.

Sharon is a 15 year old Aboriginal young woman who is on a care order with Child and Youth Protection Services. She is being supervised under a Good Behaviour Order from an offence committed at 14 years of age.

Sharon came into contact with the After Hours Crisis Service after police requested bail support for her. Sharon had been charged with trespassing and was in custody in the ACT Policing Watch House.

Police were considering conditional bail for her, but were concerned about her living arrangements.

Staff from the After Hours Crisis Service assessed Sharon as being suitable to remain in the
community but agreed that she needed alternative accommodation.

The service worked to find Sharon suitable accommodation and transport. Staff also negotiated with the police for Sharon to be granted bail and supervised in the community.

This was the second time that Sharon had contacted the After Hours Crisis Service. Previously she had requested a change to the conditions of her order from the Court so she could live at a different address.

While the request was not agreed to, staff at the service talked her through the reason for the decision. They also made sure Sharon understood what she needed to do to meet the existing conditions of her order.

Sharon’s story demonstrates how the After Hours Crisis Service works with statutory agencies to divert young people from custody, where this is appropriate and to support them to comply with the conditions of their community orders.

Alex’s story...

Bendora Throughcare Unit

Goals:

- Children and young people are given every possible chance to be successfully reintegrated into the community upon leaving detention
- Youth offending and re-offending is reduced
- Detention rates are reduced.

Alex came into the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre (Bimberi) after a conviction for property and violence offences when he was 17. Around the time of his offending, Alex was experiencing significant change in his life - his parents had separated and were in new relationships and he was frequently using alcohol and marijuana. He became involved with a group of young people whose anti-social and offending behaviour had a strong influence over Alex.

Alex was able to continue his education and work through his drug and alcohol problems, and make decisions about other areas of his life. Alex was supported to learn social and relationship building skills and this helped him to resolve issues with his parents and to strengthen a connection with his sister.

His positive attitude meant he was well suited to move into Bendora. The Unit supports young people to live independently to help them move from detention into the community. Young people have a chance to develop their living skills and to take approved leave to help them prepare for a successful transition to restart their lives.

It’s now more than a year since Alex left Bimberi. He is a more confident and independent young person who has started a trade, has his own car and is working. Alex has not re-offended since he left Bimberi.
**Michael’s story...**

**Restorative justice**

**Goals:**
- Children and young people are diverted from the formal youth justice system
- Youth offending and re-offending is reduced
- The over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the youth justice system is reduced.

Michael is a young Aboriginal man who was referred to restorative justice in 2011 after being caught by ACT Policing for breaking into a house with several other young people.

As part of the restorative justice process, Michael met with the family who lived in the house and who had also agreed to a face-to-face conference.

During the conference, the family had a chance to talk about how Michael’s offence had affected them and what would help them to deal with their experience.

As well as expressing their concern about the damage that had occurred, they were generous in their concern for Michael and his future, especially if he continued to break the law.

For Michael, who had a background of family conflict and negative peer influences, the conference was very challenging.

With the support of the Indigenous Guidance Partner, he was able to complete the process and take responsibility for his actions.

He also came to an agreement about how he could make amends.

Part of the outcome of the conference was a commitment by Michael to find ways to connect with young Aboriginal people who might be in a similar situation.

He believed that others could learn from his experience of restorative justice.

Michael wrote about his reflections on his personal journey and why he decided to be part of the process, eventually turning this into a written presentation.

After seeing the presentation, one Magistrate forwarded it to colleagues describing it as a compelling expression of the positive outcomes that could be achieved through restorative justice.
Appendix A

Blueprint for Youth Justice 2012-22

Detailed progress on actions
## Strategy 1 - Focusing on early intervention and prevention of contact with the youth justice system

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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
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<td>1.1</td>
<td>▪ <em>Prevention and Early Intervention Principle Statement</em> sets out the Community Services Directorate’s commitment to the provision of prevention and early intervention services for individuals, families and communities. Practitioners will be assisted in identifying opportunities to provide support to reduce risk factors and promote protective factors.</td>
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<td>▪ <em>Child and Youth Protection Services</em> (CYPS), commenced 1 July 2015, work to provide a better service response to children, young people and families requiring a care, protection or youth justice response. CYPS will deliver better client outcomes by providing a trauma-informed response that focuses on diversion, protection, restoration, transition, and permanency. This new service will improve information sharing and continuity of case management across the child protection and youth justice areas. It will also allow earlier identification and support to be offered to families for children and young people who are at risk of entering the youth justice system.</td>
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<td>▪ <em>Strengthening Families</em>, a ‘Better Services’ initiative, continues to deliver a new way of working with families who have complex needs and are involved with multiple services. The initiative delivers an intensive cross-government support package to a family that is led by a single worker and family plan. In 2014-15, 30 families (154 family members) were involved in this initiative.</td>
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<td>▪ <em>Child, Youth and Family Services Program</em> (CYFSP) continues to support children, young people and their families through a range of mechanisms including youth engagement, case management, intensive intervention, therapeutic services and specific services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and young people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background.</td>
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<td>▪ <em>Child Youth and Family Gateway</em> within CYFSP provides a single point of contact for information, initial support and engagement for children, young people and their families with a range of services throughout their local community.</td>
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<td>▪ <em>Youth Alcohol Diversion Program</em> (formerly the Early Intervention Prevention Program) continues to be funded by ACT Health and ACT Policing. The Program provides diversion to education for under-age drinkers (with a parent or guardian) who are intoxicated, in possession of, or consuming alcohol in a public place.</td>
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<td>▪ <em>Child and Family Centres</em> (CFCs), located at Gungahlin, Tuggeranong and West Belconnen, work with local children, families and community organisations to determine the service need, and the best way services might be provided to enable children to reach their potential and to strengthen families. Government and community organisations work in partnership with CFC staff to deliver universal, targeted and tailored services to the local community. Services are delivered in outreach settings such as the family home, the child’s school or a community setting, or directly at a CFC.</td>
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<td>1.2</td>
<td>▪ <em>National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transition</em> establishes targets to support the successful transition of young people to education, training and employment.</td>
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<td>▪ <em>ACT Youth Commitment</em> (the Commitment) establishes a shared responsibility between schools, Canberra Institute of Technology, Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), community organisations, employers and parents to ensure no young person is lost from education, training or employment.</td>
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<td>training or work (see also actions 4.1; 4.2; 5.1; 5.5, 7.5)</td>
<td><em>Priorities Support Program</em>, managed by the Education and Training Directorate, connects RTOs with community service providers that deliver wrap-around services, such as life skills training and mentoring to support training delivery. RTOs provide accredited training programs that maximise employment, career development or further training success for young people from disadvantaged groups who have experienced barriers to access and success in training.</td>
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<td><em>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Action Plan 2014-17</em> builds partnerships and provides new pathways to education and employment, and enhances choice and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</td>
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| | *Youth Engagement Services* are provided by Belconnen Community Services, Woden Community Services, YWCA of Canberra, Northside Community Services and Anglicare ACT under CYFSP to support young people who are disengaged or at risk of disengaging from family and other services. Youth engagement services are delivered through a range of strategies including drop-in, assertive engagement and street outreach. In 2014-15:  
   o 4,550 new young people accessed youth engagement services, and  
   o 741 youth engagement activities and events were held. | | |
| | *Murrumbidgee Education and Training Centre (METC)* works in partnership with the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) to provide a range of education and training options for young people in Bimberi. Students receive individual tutoring and participate in literacy and numeracy skills development, art, woodwork, music, computers, fitness and horticulture and the opportunity to complete their year 10 and year 12 certificates. Students can also participate in vocational certificates. Since 2011, a total of 127 young people have received nationally recognised qualifications through METC. | | |
| | External trainers also deliver a range of programs in Bimberi that include a barista course, hospitality, training in interview skills, résumé preparation and other industry ready courses such as a Certificate in Business. Additionally, young people have been able to engage in offsite work experience, such as in construction, to build their practical and theoretical skills to support them to transition to the workforce. | | |
| | *Improving Educational Outcomes Committee*, established in November 2014, works to improve educational outcomes for children and young people on care and protection or youth justice orders. | | |
| 1.3 Provide culturally appropriate mental health services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people (see also actions 3.1; 3.2) | *Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drug Services* are provided by ACT Health in a range of settings. Services include health assessments and care for young people in Bimberi, hospital-based specialist services, forensic mental health services, therapeutic rehabilitation, counselling, supported accommodation and other community-based services. | Complete |
| | *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health Service* employs a Mental Health Liaison Officer and Clinical Nurse Consultant to improve access to mental health services, and outcomes for members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Staff promote services that are sensitive to the cultural beliefs, values and practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. | | |
| | *Aboriginal Mental Health Liaison Officer*, located at Gugan Gulwan, provides consultation and liaison services to all mental health teams, Aboriginal youth services, adult health services and other stakeholders. The liaison officer also provides support to young people in Bimberi at the request of Forensic Mental Health services. | | |
| | *Clinical Nurse Consultant* position, established in 2012, is based at the Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service. The Consultant provides specialist mental | |
health consultation and liaison services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who access services at Winnunga and the surrounding community.

- **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)** implemented a number of improvements in 2014-15, including:
  - establishing a Bimberi CAMHS liaison role;
  - establishing a child early intervention program;
  - addressing comorbidity through training;
  - enhanced and routine screening;
  - establishing and strengthening liaison and consultation pathways with youth alcohol and drug services; and
  - providing secondary consultation.

- **Yarning Program**, facilitated by Relationships Australia, is delivered to young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young men at Bimberi, as needed. The program offers young men an opportunity to talk about issues that are affecting them in a culturally appropriate environment.

- **Case Management and Support (MPower) operational group** provides intensive, flexible support for young people involved with the youth justice system through interagency collaboration and a case management approach. The group works with community organisations to provide better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and high risk young people and their families, particularly when there are concerns about a young person’s mental health.

### 1.4 Establish coordinated actions across government and community to implement evidence-based programs to address behavioural disorders in children (5 to 12 years)

- **Child Development Service** has been established (commencing 2016) to support families with concerns about their child’s development. This may include concerns with speech and language, movement, hand skills, self care, social or emotional development. The new service will provide assessment and referral for children 0-6 years, as well as children up to 8 years with complex needs who have not had a previous diagnosis. An autism assessment is also available for children aged up to 12 years. Some initial therapy sessions for children who are not eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme will also be provided.

- Two trauma-informed services are being delivered to children who have experienced trauma, abuse and/or neglect:
  - **Melaleuca Place**, launched in 2014, is a trauma recovery centre that supports children recovering from abuse and neglect. The centre provides intensive trauma-informed therapeutic services to children (0-12) who have involvement with the child protection system.
  - **Child At Risk Health Unit (CARHU)** provides specialist health services to children, young people (0-18) and their families who have been affected by abuse and neglect. Specialist medical and therapeutic services delivered to children include paediatric and developmental assessments, nursing health and wellbeing screens, out of home care clinics, counselling, therapeutic interventions, in-patient and emergency department consultations, education and training.

- Ricky Stuart Foundation, in partnership with the ACT Government and Marymead, is constructing an innovative respite centre for children with disability aged 5–12 years, which will also address behavioural disorders. The ACT Government committed $1.075m plus land to the project in the 2014–15 budget, and the Ricky Stuart Foundation has partnered with the local business community to deliver this project, featuring innovative physical and sensory design, including recreational spaces. The plans include a six-bedroom home that will provide short term respite for families with children with disability.
### Action | Initiative | Status
--- | --- | ---
1.5 | Further develop care and protection services to improve outcomes for children and young people who are involved in out of home care (see also actions 4.1; 5.1; 6.2; 7.7) | Complete

- **A Step Up for Our Kids** *(Out of Home Care Strategy 2015-20)* aims to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people and their families who have contact with the child protection and out of home care systems. It strengthens existing child protection and out of home care services by introducing new services and reforms to ensure children and young people receive protection when needed. The strategy aims to create a therapeutic and trauma-informed system, extend the continuum of care to care leavers up to the age of 21 years and strengthen high risk families.

- Key achievements to date include:
  - Commencement of training in trauma-informed care;
  - Establishment of a *Birth Parent Advocacy Support Service*;
  - Commencement of a new carer subsidy structure and therapeutic assessments for all children and young people entering care;
  - Progression of three sets of legislative amendments to the *Children and Young People Act 2008*;
  - Establishment of the interim *Children and Youth Services Ministerial Advisory Council*; and
  - Expansion of the Mother and Baby Unit operated by Karinya House.

- **Integrated Statutory Services project** combined the functions of child protection and youth justice services to progress

- **Human Services Blueprint and A Step Up for Our Kids.** This work has supported the establishment of a new service delivery model known as *Child and Youth Protection Services*.

- **Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS),** commenced 1 July 2015, work to provide a better service response to children, young people and families requiring a care, protection or youth justice response. CYPS will deliver better client outcomes by providing a trauma-informed response that focuses on diversion, protection, restoration, transition, and permanency. His new service will improve information sharing and provide continuity of case management removing duplication and barriers to effective service delivery.

- **Cultural Services Team** has been established in Child and Youth Protection Services to deliver the best possible life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. The team provides cultural support to case workers, promotes cultural planning in case management, and engages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and their families.

1.6 | Improve access and better target alcohol and other drugs (AOD) services for children and young people (see also action 1.5) | Complete

- **Alcohol and Other Drugs Diversion Program** *(formerly the Early Intervention Prevention Program)* operates under a partnership agreement with ACT Policing and ACT Health. Under the program, alcohol and other drug offenders are diverted away from the criminal justice system and referred to assessment and education programs. The:
  - **Youth Alcohol Diversion** component provides diversion to education for under-age drinkers who are intoxicated, in possession of, or consuming alcohol in a public place. In 2014-15, 46 young people were diverted to a health assessment and information session.
  - **Illicit Drug Diversion** component provides diversion to education for people who are found in possession of illicit drugs for personal use alone. In 2014-15, 77 young people were diverted to the program.

- **ACT Policing Crime Reduction Education and Diversion** *(CRED) team continues to offer education and awareness presentations in relation to drugs and alcohol in*
### Action

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<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
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<tr>
<td>ACT secondary schools. In 2014-15, the CRED team delivered drug and alcohol presentations to over 3,170 school students in 16 secondary schools.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (eASSIST),</em> Child and Youth Protection Services implemented this electronic tool in 2015. eASSIST is designed to identify the presence and extent of risky alcohol and drug use, as well as brief interventions to support affected persons. The tool has been endorsed by the Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Association.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Alcohol and Drug Services,</em> provided by ACT Health, continue to provide counselling and psychotherapy services to young people aged 12-25 years. Treatment occurs in a range of settings including the community, in Bimberi and other in-patient settings.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Court Alcohol and Drug Assessment Service (CADAS)</em> continues to engage young people in alcohol and drug treatment plans during Court proceedings and as part of their Court orders. Young people are referred by a Magistrate for case management and support, or further referral to a specialised treatment service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.7 Improve mental health outcomes for young people and access to mental health services (see also action 1.3)</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ACT Health Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Model of Care</em> provides a framework designed to enhance service provision, ensure better service transition and provide developmentally-appropriate mental health services for 0-25 year olds. In 2014-15, ACT Health provided 64,933 community occasions of service to young people aged 0-17.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
| Recommendations implemented in 2014-15 from a recent review of the Model of Care include:  
  o establishing a Bimberi CAMHS liaison role;  
  o establishing a child early intervention program;  
  o addressing comorbidity through training;  
  o enhanced and routine screening;  
  o establishing and strengthening liaison and consultation pathways with youth alcohol and drug services; and  
  o providing secondary consultation. |  |
| *Bungee Program,* delivered in Belconnen and Tuggeranong, and promotes social and emotional wellbeing, and increased resilience of young people identified as being at risk of mental illness, through the provision of early intervention strategies. |  |
| *Step Up-Step Down service,* developed in 2013 by ACT Health in partnership with the Mental Illness Fellowship of Victoria, provides a six-bed facility as an alternative to hospitalisation for young people aged 18-25 years who are experiencing moderate to severe mental health issues. This service complements another *Step Up-Step Down service (STEPS),* previously established in 2008, that caters to young people aged 13 to 17 years. |  |
| Young people are followed up by clinicians at Bimberi seven days after release into the community. Clinicians liaise with community mental health teams, Child and Youth Protection Services, community organisations and families for a continuation of care. |  |
| *Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drug Services* are provided by ACT Health in a range of settings including adult and youth correctional facilities. This support includes health assessments and care for young people in Bimberi, hospital-based specialist services, therapeutic rehabilitation, counselling, supported accommodation and other community-based services. In 2014-15, 94 per cent of all young people admitted to Bimberi had a health assessment completed within 24 hours of detention. |  |
Strategy 2 - Diverting children and young people from the formal justice system

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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Increase restorative justice options for children and young people (see also action 2.2).</td>
<td><strong>Restorative Justice</strong> (group conferencing) has progressed from a trial phase to regular practice for all eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and first time offenders. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are supported in this process by an Indigenous Guidance Partner. In 2014-15, 147 young people were referred to restorative justice, including 43 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. Seventy-three (49%) young people participated in the conferencing process. Restorative justice is a voluntary process and the young person may or may not decide to proceed. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people may choose the restorative justice process as an alternative to Galambany Court. Restorative justice is continued through the <em>ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Partnership 2015–18 Action Plan</em>, which will report on initiatives to reduce the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the youth justice system.</td>
<td>Complete</td>
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</table>

| 2.2 Deliver ACT Policing diversionary measures that meet or exceed targets (see also actions 1.6; 2.1). | **ACT Policing** use three key performance measures (since 2013-14) designed to increase support for early intervention and diversion of eligible offenders, including young people:  
- **Restorative Justice** referral targets for eligible young people of 110 or more and 95 per cent of all eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people  
- **SupportLink** service referral target of 5,500 or more persons (including young people) to provide general, victim, mental health and road trauma support to community members affected by crime  
- **Drug diversion program** referral target of 80 or more referrals for persons (including young people) to allow early intervention and diversion from the criminal justice system, where appropriate. | Complete |

| 2.3 Strengthen Galambany Court processes and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people | **Galambany Court** (Circle Sentencing) comprises a panel of Elders and provides culturally relevant sentencing options in the ACT Magistrates Court for eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders. Panel members were assisted by the Dhunlung Yarra Service to strengthen the work of the Galambany Court. In 2014-15, two young people were referred to the Galambany Court, which is | Complete |

### 2013-14 vs. 2014-15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>2014-15</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Restorative justice referrals – young people</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of young people referred</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (%)</td>
<td>98.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community support agency referrals – including young people</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of persons referred to SupportLink</td>
<td>5,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drug diversion program referrals – including young people</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of referrals to drug diversion programs</td>
<td>155</td>
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</table>

ACT Policing have consistently met set minimum targets, with the exception of the proportion of eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people referred to Restorative justice (92.3 per cent in 2014-15). Set diversionary targets continue to operate and form part of ACT Policing’s service agreement with ACT Government in 2015-16.
## Action | Initiative | Status
--- | --- | ---
Torres Strait Islander young people | consistent with the previous year. This result reflects ACT Policing’s continued commitment to refer all eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to restorative justice. |  
2.4 Develop the After Hours Bail Support Service and better integrate the service (see also action 2.5) | **After Hours Bail Support Service** (AHBSS) assists young people who have come into contact with police, or are subject to bail order conditions. AHBSS works with ACT Policing to divert young people in police custody away from remand in detention while young people are waiting for a court appearance. In 2014-15, AHBSS responded to over 1,411 client-related matters and diverted 16 young people in police custody away from remand in detention. On 1 July 2015, AHBSS transitioned into the **After Hours Crisis Service** extending support for children and young people who are involved in the youth justice and child protection systems. The service has extended its operating hours and continues to provide support to young people in police custody, including by diverting young people from detention. | Complete  
2.5 Strengthen initiatives to assist young people to adhere to their bail conditions (see also action 2.4) | **After Hours Crisis Service** assists child and young people who are involved in the child protection and youth justice systems. This includes working directly with young people, their support networks and ACT Policing to assist young people to adhere to their bail conditions. The service also continues to engage in ongoing training and consultation with ACT Policing to investigate alternative bail options for young people who come to the attention of ACT Policing. **Front Up program**, delivered in partnership by the Aboriginal Justice Centre and ACT Policing, provided Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people with a way to voluntarily attend Court without involvement of the ACT Watch House. This program was operational during the life of the Blueprint, but ceased operation at the end of July 2014 with the closure of the Aboriginal Justice Centre. | Complete  
2.6 Strengthen therapeutic programs for young people on community and detention orders (see also action 1.4) | **Melaleuca Place** (a trauma recovery centre) continues to provide support to children who are recovering from abuse and neglect. The centre provides trauma-informed therapeutic services to children (0-12) who are involved in the child protection system. **Mental Health Act 2015** will replace the **Mental Health (Treatment and Care) Amendment Act 2014** and comes into effect in March 2016. The Act provides statutory options, entitlements and protections for people who use mental health services in the ACT. The Act will provide for the involuntary treatment of mental illness, where needed, and aims to ensure that people make their own treatment decisions, or participate in decisions where they have capacity. Specific clauses apply for care and support of young people. The Act will align the ACT’s mental health legislation with the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities** and the **ACT Human Rights Act 2008**. Specific forensic provisions are included to support the operation of the Secure Mental Health Unit and ensure human rights are upheld. In July 2015, over twenty Notifiable Instruments under the **Children and Young People Act 2008** were revised to improve the delivery of, and access to, health care services and health and wellbeing services and programs. | Work underway  
2.7 Enhance diversionary accommodation options for children and young people | **Narrabundah House Indigenous Service Residential Facility** (NHISRF) continues to provide short to mid-term residential and crisis accommodation and intensive case management primarily for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young men aged 15 to 18 years who are on community-based justice orders. Referrals to NHISRF come from family members, community service providers and Child and Youth Protection Services. Staff support young people to develop | Complete
and implement case plans. Outcomes include restoration with family, gaining employment, addressing health issues, undertaking restorative justice processes, and social and life skills development.

- In 2014-15, there were 14 admissions of 10 young men to NHISRF (some young men were admitted more than once). Young men exiting custody are prioritised for admission to support their transition and reintegration into their communities.

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<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Implement supported recommendations from the ACT Drug Diversion Program Evaluation (see also actions 1.6; 2.2)</td>
<td>Evaluation of Australian Capital Territory Drug Diversion Programs (2013), identified strengths and challenges of the ACT police and court drug diversion system, and identified opportunities for improved effectiveness. Ten recommendations were made and the majority were agreed or agreed-in-principle by ACT Government. Resulting actions include:</td>
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<td>o ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Strategy 2016-2020 development. The draft strategy, led by ACT Health, underwent public consultation at the end of 2015. The strategy aims to prevent the uptake and delay the onset of harmful drug use, disrupt its production and supply, and reduce drug-related harm.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o Alcohol and Other Drugs Diversion Program delivered in partnership by ACT Policing and ACT Health to divert alcohol and drug offenders (including young people) away from the criminal justice system to assessment and education programs, where appropriate.</td>
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</table>

| 2.9    | Progress the development and implementation of an evaluation framework for the Youth Drug and Alcohol Court (see also actions 1.6; 2.8) | Youth Drug and Alcohol Court (YDAC) operates on an as needs basis, to provide an intensive and holistic diversionary option for young people with a drug or alcohol problem who are at high-risk of being sentenced to a period of imprisonment. |
|        |            | Complete |
|        |            | YDAC was evaluated as part of the broader Evaluation of Australian Capital Territory Drug Diversion Programs and recommendations made took into consideration the operation of the YDAC |

### Strategy 3 - Engaging and encouraging the participation of children, young people and their families

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>INITIATIVE</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to contribute to the effective development and implementation of case management plans (see also actions 4.1; 5.1; 7.5)</td>
<td>Cultural Services Team supports Child and Youth Protection Services to deliver the best possible life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. The team provides cultural support to case workers, promotes cultural planning in case management, and engages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and their families.</td>
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<td>Cultural planning continues to be embedded in case management. This approach has been informed by broad consultation with government and community organisations, with a focus on supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to develop, or retain and strengthen connection to family, community and culture. A practice guide on cultural planning assists staff to provide case management support for young people in contact with the youth justice system.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Partnership 2015-18 includes</td>
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### Actions

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<th>ACTION</th>
<th>INITIATIVE</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>actions to establish a formal agreement between youth justice and community organisations to support case management outreach and other services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Single case management continues to provide coordinated case management that focuses on a young person’s needs through the continuity of a case manager for a young person who is in Bimberi or supervised in the community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Develop a Family Engagement Plan</td>
<td>Complete</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Strengthening Families</strong>, a ‘Better Services’ initiative, continues to deliver a new way of working with families who have complex needs and are involved with multiple services. The initiative delivers an intensive cross-government support package to a family that is led by a single worker and family plan. In 2014-15, 30 families (154 family members) were involved in this initiative. Expansion of the program to 50 families is anticipated in 2015-16.</td>
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<td>In 2015-16, the program will be expanded to support 65 families, including 15 families experiencing mental illness through a new partnership with Capital Health Network’s <em>Partners in Recovery Program</em>. A training package for workers supporting children living with parents who have a mental illness has also been developed.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>In 2014, the Community Services Directorate developed a <em>Family Engagement Strategy</em> to engage families and natural supports of young people who have come into contact with the youth justice system. It also aims to reduce risk factors and strengthen protective factors associated with youth offending through a framework that embeds family engagement into case management practice. Strategy implementation is supported by the development of a practice guide for staff about exploring family relationships in case planning.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A <em>Family Engagement Officer</em> continues to assist families of young people by promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the day-to-day functions of Bimberi, and providing a point of contact seeking to engage and support young people in custody. The role is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identified position that was co-designed with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Unit and members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Progressing Parental Engagement in the ACT</em> project is a cross sectoral partnership between ACT Education and Training, the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, Catholic Education, Independent Schools and Parenting Associations that provides evidence-based understanding about what parental engagement is, how best to foster it and why it matters. The project has delivered print and online resources for families, schools and communities to strengthen existing partnerships.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Positively engage children, young people and their families at Court</td>
<td>Work underway</td>
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<td>In 2015, a range of information pamphlets for young people involved in the ACT youth justice system was developed. The pamphlets provide young people and their families information to better understand and engage with processes and services associated with the Court and broader ACT youth justice system. Topics covered include things young people and their families need to know about: being on bail, going to court, court reports, case management after court, and good behaviour orders. The pamphlets are available on the Community Services Directorate website.</td>
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<td><em>Bimberi induction DVD</em> has been developed to support young people entering Bimberi by providing information about rights and rules, learning opportunities and ways of accessing help and support.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Develop collaborative</td>
<td>Complete</td>
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<td><em>Multicultural Youth Affairs Network</em>, in 2012, was engaged by the Child, Youth and Family Support Program (CYFSP) to survey services across the ACT, to</td>
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</table>
identify training or other supports needed to assist services and workers to improve services for young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Feedback from the survey has informed the training and support needs of CYFSP services and workers to improve service delivery.

- **Case Management and Support (MPower) operational group** provides intensive, flexible support for young people involved with the youth justice system through interagency collaboration and a case management approach. The group works with community organisations to provide better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and high risk young people and their families, particularly when there are concerns about a young person’s mental health.

- **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Youth Engagement Services** are delivered to migrant and refugee young people by Companion House and the Multicultural Youth Service, through CYFSP. The services strengthen family and social relationships, address intergenerational conflict and promote engagement with mainstream services through outreach, case management and group programs. Services are also being delivered to community service providers to promote culturally competent practice across the service system.

- **Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services** delivers the After School Studies (PASS) program to provide volunteer tutors to 8-25 year olds students from non-English speaking backgrounds in two locations. Students can be in primary school, high school, college, CIT or university. Students are matched with appropriate tutors based on the subjects they require assistance with, and the expertise of the tutor. These are one-to-one tutoring sessions.

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### Strategy 4 - Providing intensive individualised support to children and young people

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<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Provide intensive support to children, young people and families when they come in contact with the youth justice system (see also actions 1.5;</td>
<td><strong>Single case management</strong> continues to provide coordinated case management that focuses on a young person’s needs through the continuity of a case manager for young people involved in the youth justice system who are in Bimberi or supervised in the community. In 2014-15, 170 young people were supported under the single case management model.</td>
<td>Complete</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Intensive Intervention Service</strong> works in partnership with the Child and Youth Protection Service, to transition and keep children, young people and their families out of tertiary or court mandated services. Delivered by a community service provider, this service delivers intensive assistance for significantly at-risk children young people and families through a range of case management services and group interventions, including outreach and home visiting. The service aims to achieve sustainable attitudinal and/or behavioural change in</td>
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<td>ACTION</td>
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<td>3.1; 5.1; 7.5)</td>
<td>children, young people and their families and engage them with less intensive services that will meet their longer term needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Youth Services Case Management Integrated Management System, introduced in 2014–15, supports the single case management model with standard documents and procedures for all core youth services case management activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS), commenced 1 July 2015, work to provide a better service response to children, young people and families requiring a care, protection or youth justice response. CYPS will deliver better client outcomes by providing a trauma-informed response that focuses on diversion, protection, restoration, transition, and permanency. This new service will improve information sharing and provide continuity of case management removing duplication and barriers to effective service delivery.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Murrumbidgee Education and Training Centre (METC) works in partnership with the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) to provide a range of education and training options for young people in Bimberi. Students receive individual tutoring and participate in literacy and numeracy skills development, art, woodwork, music, computers, fitness and horticulture and the opportunity to complete their year 10 and year 12 certificates. Students can also participate in vocational certificates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Giving Garden at Bimberi Youth Justice Centre. In 2014, young people in Bimberi constructed a ceremonial garden known as the ‘Giving Garden’. The ceremonial garden was designed around a Circle of Courage totem based on the principles of Belonging, Mastery, Independence and Generosity to assist young people to develop qualities to support their personal growth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Melaleuca Place provides a high quality trauma-informed therapeutic program to children aged 0 to 12 years who have experienced abuse and neglect and who are, or have been, clients of Child and Youth Protection Services. The work undertaken with children is done in the context of their care and support networks. Melaleuca Place also provides trauma-specific training and education for carers and those working with children who have experienced abuse and neglect.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Child, Youth and Family Services Program provides funding and works closely with community organisations and key government agencies to coordinate and provide services to vulnerable children, young people and their families.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.2 Develop effective initiatives to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and their families to explore their own cultural identify, family history and sense of belonging (see also actions 3.1; 4.3; 5.6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Youth Justice Programs and Services Coordination Committee continues to provide oversight of programs and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and engage with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to reduce the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the youth justice system.</td>
<td>Complete</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Gulanga Program, a CYFSP-funded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Service, aims to improve the cultural competence of services and promote the access and engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and their families with mainstream services. The program develops tools and resources to assist services to better respond to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, provides direct consultancy support in implementing organisational change, supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers in the sector and delivers cultural awareness training for community workers.</td>
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| • ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Partnership 2015-18 sets out a commitment to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander peoples in the ACT justice system. This includes ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people under youth justice orders have a case plan that includes cultural care planning.

- **ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2015-18** sets out a shared vision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples towards the development of opportunities, knowledge and skills to build an empowered, resilient and sustainable future. The central focus is on strong families, with connecting to the community and cultural identity as key areas of focus.

**4.3 Develop targeted family support programs including identifying siblings of children and young people in custody to assist them (see also actions 1.1; 3.2; 3.3)**

- **Strengthening Families**, a ‘Better Services’ initiative, is an integrated service response for families with multiple needs. Strengthening Families is a new way of working with families who have complex needs and multiple service involvement. Families are linked with a lead worker who works with them to access tailored supports to achieve their goals.
- **Intensive Intervention Service** delivers intensive assistance for significantly at-risk children young people and families through a range of case management services and group interventions, including outreach and home visiting.
- **Family Engagement Strategy**, developed in 2014, engages families and natural supports of young people who have come into contact with the youth justice system.
- **Family Engagement Officer** assists families of young people, to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the day-to-day functions of Bimberi, and to provide a point of contact and communication for services seeking to engage and support young people in custody.

**Complete**

**4.4 Enhance the ACT Youth Commitment to support young people through key life transition points (see also actions 1.1; 5.3; 5.5)**

- **ACT Youth Commitment** ‘Flexible Learning Options’ support and engage young people in quality vocational learning to assist young people to reach their learning goals. Partnerships are encouraged between schools, community groups, Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and business and industry. Future actions planned include:
  - Expanding the delivery of Flexible Learning Options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
  - Conducting research to identify barriers to accessing and successfully completing training by young people facing disadvantage.
  - Seeking advice from an expert panel on best practice responses to students with complex needs and challenging behaviours in ACT schools.

**Complete**

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**Strategy 5 - Connecting and reintegrating children and young people into a home and community through effective throughcare**

**5.1 Strengthen the existing throughcare model and enhance the youth justice single case management model**

- **Bendora Through Care Unit** continues to assist young people to transition from the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre. Young people in Bendora may attend work placements or recreation activities in the community as part of the transition process. Young people build life skills including doing laundry and preparing and cooking meals. Nutrition Australia delivers “Project Dinnertime” as part of the ACT Government’s Healthy Weight Initiative to improve young people’s cooking skills and knowledge.
- **Single case management model** provides coordinated case management that
### ACTION | INITIATIVE | STATUS
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(see also actions 3.1; 4.1; 4.2; 4.4; 5.1; 7.5) | focuses on the needs of young people with continuity of a case manager for young people in Bimberi or supervised in the community. The model has been embedded across Youth Services and is central to the Youth Services Integrated Management System. |  
- **Youth Services Case Management Integrated Management System, introduced in 2014–15**, supports the single case management model with standard documents and procedures for all core youth services case management activities.  
- **Murrumbidgee Education and Training Centre (MTEC)** provides education and skills development at Bimberi including training and vocational opportunities to learn new skills and knowledge to help young people reintegrate into the community.  
- **Youth Transitioning from Care Program**, begun 1 July 2014, supports young people aged 16–18 years to build living skills and promote independence. The program is for young people who are in out of home care (and who may also be involved with youth justice, including in Bimberi) who are at risk of an unsuccessful transition to independence.  

#### 5.2 Develop a formal process for coordination of youth justice case management and youth homelessness services (see also action 2.7)  
- **Youth Services Case Management Integrated Management System, introduced in 2014–15**, outlines procedures for all core youth services case management activities. Case managers support young people on justice orders who are experiencing (or at risk of) homelessness to access short, medium and long term accommodation options. Support is delivered through:  
  - **First Point Accommodation Service**, a single point of access to the ACT’s network of over 40 homelessness services, supports and information. First Point is jointly funded by the ACT and Australian Governments and provides the ACT Government with data and information on young people and their experience of housing and homelessness in the ACT.  
  - **ACT Youth Housing and Homelessness Services**, which provide a range of services across prevention, early intervention crisis, stabilisation and maintenance. These services provide a range of accommodation options and other interventions that support young people to transition to independent housing, employment or education.  
  - **Housing ACT Youth Housing Program**, which supports young people (16 to 25 years) who are transitioning from the youth justice and care and protection systems, or homelessness services. The program assists young people to sustain a long term tenancy and to engage with education, employment and the community. Three youth housing managers work with young people from their initial contact with Housing ACT, through the application and allocation process and on to tenancy management. In 2014–15, 160 youth tenancies were managed under this program.  
- **Narrabundah House Indigenous Service Residential Facility (NHISRF)** continues to provide short to mid-term residential and crisis accommodation and intensive case management primarily for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young men aged 15 to 18 years who are on community-based justice orders.  

#### 5.3 Develop flexible learning options as determined by the Student Engagement Framework  
- **Flexible Learning Options (FLOs)** provide vocational learning opportunities for Year 9 to 12 students who are experiencing difficulty in a classroom or traditional school setting. FLOs tailor learning by providing access to extra-curricular activities, targeted career advice, mentoring and work experience. FLOs help young people build confidence and networks to improve employment prospects.  
- In 2014, FLOs provided opportunities for 458 students who successfully obtained a skill set or nationally recognised vocational qualification, participated in
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<td>(see also action 4.4)</td>
<td>additional work experience, enrolled in further education or training, or engaged in an apprenticeship.</td>
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<td><strong>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Job Ready Program</strong> funds nationally recognised training in work preparation and community services. The program is designed to prepare Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for employment or further training opportunities.</td>
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<td><strong>Engaging Schools Framework</strong> ensures that every ACT public school has access to a qualified and registered psychologist who is able to make assessments of the mental health status of students and provide support or refer students to external support agencies. This includes referrals to General Practitioners, Canberra Adolescent Mental Health Service and Headspace. Staff are also supported to manage their approach to assisting students with mental health.</td>
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<td>5.4 Explore and develop conditional release options (see also actions 5.1; 5.3)</td>
<td><strong>Bendora Through Care Unit</strong> continues to assist young people to transition from the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre. Young people in Bendora may attend work placements or recreation activities in the community as part of the transition process.</td>
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<td>Policy work on conditional release options was undertaken. Issues considered included administrative and legal mechanisms, monitoring of children or young people exiting detention and support for the transition of children and young people from a custodial setting to the community.</td>
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<td>5.5 Provide structured engagement opportunities for businesses, as prospective employers, to become involved with young people in detention (see also actions 4.4; 5.3)</td>
<td><strong>Murrumbidgee Education and Training Centre</strong> (METC) engages external trainers to deliver a range of programs including a Barista course and Certificate in Business. These courses are supported by training opportunities in interview skills, résumé preparation and industry ready courses. Young people are provided opportunities to engage in offsite work experience to build their practical and theoretical skills.</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td><strong>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Job Ready Program</strong> funds nationally recognised training in work preparation and community services. The program is designed to prepare Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for employment or further training opportunities.</td>
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<td>5.6 Develop formal partnerships with the community sector to flexibly coordinate services for children and young people (see also actions 1.1; 1.5; 3.1)</td>
<td><strong>West Belconnen Local Services Network</strong> (the Network), a ‘Better Services’ initiative, is a new way of providing services relating to health and wellbeing, education, family support, housing and justice so that they meet the needs of people in the local area. The Network Leadership Group is guiding the development of the Network in West Belconnen. This group has membership from Belconnen Community Service, UnitingCare Kippax, the National Health Cooperative, Inanna, Red Cross and ACT Government Directorates of Community Services, Health, Education and Training. The Network has progressed work to identify key areas of focus including employment pathways for young people.</td>
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<td><strong>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Partnership 2015-18</strong> includes actions to establish a formal agreement between youth justice and community organisations to support case management outreach and other services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.</td>
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<td><strong>A Step Up for Our Kids</strong> (Out of Home Care Strategy 2015-20) aims to improve outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and their families who have contact with the child protection and out of home care systems. Under the strategy, new reforms are taking place to build partnerships with community agencies and transfer areas of service delivery to the community sector to strengthening high-risk families, building a continuum of care for children and</td>
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young people, and delivering a therapeutic trauma-informed care system. This shift in focus will improve Child and Youth Protection Services’ capacity to prevent children and young people from entering care or the youth justice system.

### Strategy 6 – Creating an integrated whole of government and community system to support children and young people

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| 6.1    | Develop and implement a multi-agency statutory mechanism for shared accountability and timely response to improve outcomes for at risk young people | Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPs), established in 2015, combines the functions of care and protection and youth justice services to deliver a single statutory service focused on a trauma-informed response to diversion, protection, restoration and permanency for children and young people. The service will continue to work with its cross-government and community partners to deliver the priorities of A Step Up for Our Kids (Out of Home Care Strategy 2015-20).

- **Youth Services Case Management Integrated Management System**, introduced in 2014–15, outlines procedures for all core youth services case management activities. As part of this process, formal procedures were established to guide staff and better coordinate the transfer of services between youth justice and adult corrections.

- **A Step Up for Our Kids (Out of Home Care Strategy 2015-20)** has seen the commencement of legislative reforms to strengthen existing child protection and out of home care services for children and young people. Such legislative reforms aim to give effect to the Strategy, a core component of which is strengthening accountability and ensuring a high-functioning care system in the best interests of children and young people.

- **ACT Children and Young People’s Commitment 2015–2025** sets a whole-of-government and whole-of-community commitment to promote the rights of children and young people and provide guidance to the Canberra community on how to assist children and young people to reach their potential, participate in decision making, make a contribution, and share the benefits of our community.

- **National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)** assists young people with disability in the ACT to participate in the community, and access education, training and employment. The NDIS funds individualised support for young people with disability providing choice and control and a lifetime approach to meeting a young person’s support needs.

- **INVOLVE—Canberra Disability Commitment** (INVOLVE) is the ACT Government’s commitment to deliver a localised response to the National Disability Strategy 2010–20. INVOLVE provides a framework to promote and achieve positive social and economic outcomes for people with disability through the collaborative action of government, business and community from June 2015 to December 2017. In 2016–17 the priorities will be justice, health and accessible communities.

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<td>6.2</td>
<td>Develop across government early intervention strategies</td>
<td>ACT Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children Strategy 2011-17 is the ACT Government’s commitment to end violence against women and children. Now under its Second Implementation Plan, a key priority of the Strategy is supporting innovative services and joined up service systems, by properly integrating the service delivery system.</td>
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<td>(see also actions 1.3; 1.5; 4.1; 5.1; 6.2; 7.7)</td>
<td><strong>A Step Up for Our Kids</strong> (Out of Home Care Strategy 2015-20) aims to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people and their families who have contact with the child protection and out of home care systems. An aim of the Strategy is to create a therapeutic and trauma-informed system, extend the continuum of care to care leavers up to the age of 21 years and strengthen high risk families.</td>
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<td><strong>ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2015-18</strong> sets out a shared vision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples towards the development of opportunities, knowledge and skills to build an empowered, resilient and sustainable future. The central focus is on strong families, with connecting to the community and cultural identity as key areas of focus.</td>
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<td><strong>ACT Property Crime Reduction Strategy 2012-2015</strong> is a whole-of-government strategy developed to provide a safer environment for young people and the ACT community. The strategy is focused on reducing incidences of burglary and motor vehicle theft. A key objective is to engage the disengaged through early intervention. Actions under this objective are focused on diverting young property crime offenders from the justice system and keeping ‘at risk’ youth engaged in education, training and employment.</td>
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<td><strong>ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Strategy 2010-2014</strong> delivered a range of drug and alcohol support initiatives for young people. A new Strategy (2016-2020) is currently being developed. The new strategy will aim to prevent the uptake and delay the onset of harmful drug use, disrupt its production and supply, and reduce drug-related harms – including through diversionary measures.</td>
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<td><strong>Strengthening Families</strong>, a ‘Better Services’ initiative, continues to deliver a new way of working with families who have complex needs and are involved with multiple services. The initiative delivers an intensive cross-government support package to a family that is led by a single worker and family plan. In 2014-15, 30 families (154 family members) were involved in this initiative. Expansion of the program to 50 families is anticipated in 2015-16.</td>
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<td><strong>Child, Youth and Family Gateway</strong> (the Gateway) provides an initial assessment and referral service under the CYFSP. The Gateway provides a single point of contact for the ACT community. Children, young people and families can access information, receive initial support, complete an initial needs assessment and engage with a service. Reportable outcome measures have been implemented to provide improved referral mechanisms for children, young people and families.</td>
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<td>6.3 Better coordinate youth justice and adult corrections services (see also action 1.3)</td>
<td><strong>Youth Justice and Corrective Services Coordination Committee</strong> (ceased in 2015) improved the coordination of youth justice and adult corrections services. Linkages between youth justice and community corrections were strengthened, including in relation to establishing procedures for transferring young adults from youth justice to community-based supervision with adult corrective services.</td>
<td>Complete</td>
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<td><strong>Youth Services Case Management Integrated Management System</strong>, introduced in 2014–15, outlines procedures for all core youth services case management activities. As part of this process, formal procedures were established to guide staff and better coordinate the transfer of services between youth justice and adult corrections.</td>
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| 6.4 Better coordinate youth justice and police services (see also actions 2.2; 2.4; 2.5) | ▪ *After Hours Crisis Service* (formerly the After Hours Bail Support Service) works together with ACT Policing to support young people who have come into contact with police, or are subject to bail order conditions. The services work collaboratively to divert young people in police custody away from short-term remand in detention while they are awaiting their court appearance.  
▪ *ACT Watch House* provides a charging and custodial facility operating 24 hours a day. Watch House staff notify the *After Hours Crisis Service* when a young person on bail arrives at the Watch House after hours. *After Hours Crisis Service* staff arrange accommodation and other support services for the young person, as needed. *After Hours Crisis Service* staff deliver training to new recruits within ACT Policing about the service. | Complete |
| 6.5 Develop a performance and evaluation framework for the Blueprint, including the ability to evaluate programs and services | ▪ A performance and evaluation framework has been developed in partnership with the *Australian Institute of Criminology* and will ensure that a common evaluation process is used across the 10 year lifespan of the Blueprint. An evaluation of the first three years of the *Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT 2012-22* will be undertaken in 2016. | Complete |
| 6.6 Create or strengthen existing information systems to support a whole-of-government approach to information sharing (see also actions 7.2; 7.3; 7.4) | ▪ *Bimberi Knowledge Portal* allows Child and Youth Protection Services staff to access all relevant policies, procedures, guidelines and forms which ensure consistency in undertaking their roles.  
▪ *Youth Services Case Management Integrated Management System*, completed in 2014-15, provides standard documentation and processes for all core youth services case management activities. A number of system improvements were undertaken as part of this project, including the integration and utilisation of the Youth Justice Support and Intervention Framework and enhanced cultural support practices into case management.  
▪ Information Sharing Protocols have been developed for ‘Better Services’ Initiatives to ensure appropriate and timely sharing of personal information to support integrated service responses. The protocols will be tested throughout the ‘Better Services’ initiatives and are being considered for implementation across Human Services Directorates.  
▪ ‘Better Services’ website ([www.betterservices.act.gov.au](http://www.betterservices.act.gov.au)) is being developed over time to support self-help for individuals, families and services. This work includes:  
  ▪ Information and latest news on the ‘Better Services’ reforms (currently available);  
  ▪ Guidelines and tools for service providers to support sharing of information on how to embed innovative and effective service design (coming soon);  
  ▪ An online ‘Information Portal’ to enable individuals and families to find the services and supports they need (anticipate delivery in mid 2016); and  
  ▪ An online ‘Information Profile’ to empower individuals and families to record and share their personal stories, circumstances, needs and family plans (anticipate delivery in late 2016). | Complete |
### Strategy 7 - Building a strong and smart workforce

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<td>7.1</td>
<td>Build on the workforce development and reform strategy (see also actions 7.2; 7.3; 7.4; 7.5; 7.7; 7.8)</td>
<td>Complete</td>
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<td>▪ Workforce Development Strategy supports the Community Services Directorate’s strategic goal to develop a leading organisation. Strategic planning for human resources, streamlining of recruitment processes, strengthening of reward and recognition initiatives, and regular monitoring and review of Individual Performance Management Plans all contribute to a workforce that is appropriately skilled and managed.</td>
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<td>▪ During 2014–15, multiple principal and senior practitioner positions were recruited to support the development of clinical career pathways in Child and Youth Protection Services. The positions were designed to assist the retention of quality staff, place value on practice, and provide development and career opportunities for staff who wish to remain in direct service delivery positions but seek promotion within the organisation. These positions work across care and protection and youth justice to:</td>
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<td>o support caseworkers;</td>
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<td>o role model best practice;</td>
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<td>o provide live supervision for staff;</td>
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<td>o mentor staff; and</td>
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<td>o reinforce quality practice.</td>
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<td>7.2</td>
<td>Enhance cultural awareness and competence training (see also action 3.1)</td>
<td>Complete</td>
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<td>▪ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Service promotes the development of tools and resources to assist services to adapt their organisation to better respond to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Direct consultancy support, delivery of training and cultural awareness workshops are available to services funded by the Child, Youth and Family Services Program (CYFSP) and National Affordable Housing Agreement.</td>
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<td>▪ ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2015-18 incorporates a statement of commitment to reconciliation and the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This includes a commitment to recognise the importance of local knowledge, expertise and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, services and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body in meeting the diverse needs of the community.</td>
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<td>▪ Cultural Services Team has been established to support Child and Youth Protection Services to deliver the best possible life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. The team provides cultural support to case workers, promotes cultural planning in case management, and engages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and their families.</td>
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<td>▪ Cultural Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children in Care, commenced in November 2014, is a trial of independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural advisors within the care and protection system. Four community members were recruited to a cultural advisors panel and undertook training in the role. In June 2015, the model was reviewed and system improvements identified during a workshop attended by the cultural advisors and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body.</td>
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<td>▪ Youth Services Case Management Integrated Management System, introduced in 2014–15, outlines procedures for all core youth services case management activities. As part of this process, formal practice guidelines were established to guide staff in cultural planning during case plan</td>
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development with young people on justice orders.

- **Child and Family Centres** continue to deliver direct services and programs to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families and to partner with relevant government and community organisations to connect families to responsive services in order to improve outcomes.

7.3 Provide staff with training and professional development in trauma and its impact on children and young people (see also actions 7.5; 7.7)

- **Melaleuca Place**, opened in 2014, provides training and professional development opportunities that assist staff to develop trauma-informed practices to better support young people whose lives have been impacted by abuse and neglect or family violence.

- Trauma-informed practice training is provided to Community Services Directorate staff who work with children and young people across the ACT. Training has included the delivery of ‘Working with Indigenous children and families at risk’, ‘Mad, Bad or Sad? A Pathway to Healing’ and delivery of 2014 Trauma Recovery Centre Symposium.

- **Graduate Certificate in Developmental Trauma**, commenced in 2014 by the Australian Childhood Foundation. In its first round, 19 professionals from across the ACT took up this opportunity to further develop skills and understanding in responding to trauma related issues.

- **A Step Up for Our Kids** (Out of Home Care Strategy 2015-20) received an additional $16 million in funding in 2015-16. From July 2015, training in understanding therapeutic trauma-informed care is being rolled out to carers, government and non-government staff who work with vulnerable children and young people.


7.4 Develop and implement training plans for staff in youth justice services (see also action 7.3)

- **Bimberi Annual Training Plan** ensures workforce capability requirements for staff in a youth justice setting are met and identifies current and future training needs. The training plan continues to be updated as required. Individual Performance Management Plans assist with identifying further and individual training needs.

- **Induction and orientation at Bimberi** is a seven-week program that provides new staff with entry level knowledge and skills required to perform their duties. The program is administered and managed in partnership with the Community Services Directorate’s Learning and Community Education unit. The program is supplemented by Bimberi workplace learning involving on the job training and development through ‘buddy shifts’.

- **Forensic Mental Health Services** (ACT Health) continues to provide mental health awareness and education training to Bimberi youth workers as part of their induction training.

- **Bimberi Knowledge Portal, Child and Youth Protection Services** allows staff working with young people in a youth justice context to access standardised, best practice policies, procedures and guidelines for their work with young people. The knowledge portal sits alongside the **Youth Services Case Management Integrated Management System**. This Integrated Management System, completed in 2014-15, provides standard documentation and processes for all core youth services case management activities.

7.5 Partner with the community sector in

- **Strengthening Families**, a ‘Better Services’ initiative, continues to deliver a new way of working with families who have complex needs and are involved with multiple services. A central component of **Strengthening Families** is the
Lead Worker Model where one officer acts as the sole point of contact for a family for their needs across different services. Under the initiative, families identify the ‘lead worker’ (from government or community) who are trained in the delivery of co-designed family led practice. Currently, the initiative has the capacity to provide training for up to 45 lead workers.

- **ACT Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children Strategy 2011-2017** is the ACT Government’s commitment to end violence against women and children. Under the Strategy, the ACT Government has facilitated joint training initiatives with community sector partners to improve awareness of domestic violence related issues, e.g. technology safety training.

- **Training and vocational programs for young people in custody.** Community Services and Education and Training Directorates have worked in partnership to engage young people in Bimberi in courses to improve their training and vocational experience. External trainers are employed to deliver a range of programs such as the Barista Course and Certificate in Business. Young people are also engaged in offsite work experience, where appropriate, to build their practical skills and promote community reintegration.

- **A Step Up for Our Kids (Out of Home Care Strategy 2015-20) received an additional $16 million in funding in 2015-16.** From July 2015, training in understanding therapeutic trauma-informed care is being rolled out to carers, government and non-government staff who work with vulnerable children and young people. This is in addition to the trauma-specific training and education for carers and those working with children who have experienced abuse and neglect already being provided by Melaleuca Place and the broader Community Services Directorate.

### 7.6 Actively recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in youth justice services (see also actions 1.5; 3.2)

- Work to attract and retain staff who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in areas related to youth justice has been ongoing throughout the life of the Blueprint. Several positions that are identified or require specialist cultural knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and culture have been established during this period. This includes the establishment of a Family Engagement Officer and a cultural services team of up to six staff to guide practice.

- **ACT Public Service 2016 Graduate Program** has 19 identified positions to support the placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people living with disability to attract and re-train Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

- **Indigenous Employment Pathways Program (ACT Government)** focuses on coordinating traineeships, cadetships and school-based work experience programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

- In June 2015, 3.9% of Community Services Directorate staff identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. This is an increase from 2.7% (June 2012) when the Blueprint commenced.

### 7.7 Implement core skills building for care and protection workers to more effectively respond to children and young people who are at greater risk of

- **Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS), commenced 1 July 2015, work to provide a better service response to children, young people and families requiring a care, protection or youth justice response.** This new service will improve information sharing and continuity of case management across the child protection and youth justice areas. It will also allow earlier identification and support to be offered to families for children and young people who are at risk of entering the youth justice system.

- **Strengthening Families,** a ‘Better Services’ initiative, continues to deliver a new way of working with families who have multiple or complex needs. The service adopts a ‘Lead Worker Model’ by training staff to deliver effective
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<td>youth justice involvement (see also actions 7.3; 7.5; 7.7)</td>
<td>co-designed support to families where there is multiple service engagement.</td>
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<td>7.8</td>
<td>Host a conference biennially to showcase best practice and innovative approaches in youth justice (see also action 7.5)</td>
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<td>The inaugural Australasian Youth Justice Conference, <em>Changing Trajectories of Offending and Reoffending</em>, was held in 2013 in Canberra. The Australian Juvenile Justice Administrators (AJJA) has commenced work to identify a suitable partner to deliver a second youth justice conference for young people, practitioners, non-government and government organisations, and youth justice academics. The second conference will be held in 2016 in Brisbane. The theme for the conference will be based on the Principles of Youth Justice in Australia that were endorsed by all states and territories and released in October 2014.</td>
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