

TOWARDS A BLUEPRINT FOR YOUTH JUSTICE IN THE ACT

**Consultation Report
December 2011 - March 2012**

August 2012

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of a consultation process conducted by the Youth Justice Implementation Task Force (the Taskforce) to inform the development of the Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT (the Blueprint). The Blueprint will be a strategic plan that sets the agenda for the youth justice system in the ACT for the next five to ten years. It will clearly identify priority areas for change in the youth justice system and actions under each priority area.

The consultation process was conducted from 19 December 2011 to 30 March 2012 and was designed to seek feedback from young people, community groups and organisations, and people closely working with young people about the content and proposed direction of the Blueprint. Feedback was sought through:

- a consultation paper released by the Taskforce in December 2011;
- public meetings;
- discussions with targeted groups;
- written submissions; and
- ACT Government's "Time to Talk" website.

More than 300 people participated in the consultation process. More than half of all people worked with young people or were involved with issues affecting children and young people. Sixty people were from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Responses and submissions were also received from the youth sector, community organisations and individuals.

Engaging the input of the community builds on previous consultation exercises conducted around youth justice issues including:

- *The ACT Youth Justice System 2011: A Report to the ACT Legislative Assembly by the Human Rights Commission* (HRC Report);
- ACT Human Rights Commission, *Outcomes of the Youth Justice Forum 2011*; and
- ACT Government's 2011 Discussion Paper, *Towards a Diversionary Framework for the ACT*.

The following key themes emerged from the consultation process:

- Early intervention and prevention should be a priority for children, young people and their families at the first signs of difficulty or adversity.
- Children and young people should be kept out of the formal justice system as much as possible.

- Children and young people should be supported to connect with their family and community in their transition from custody.
- Children, young people and their families should be engaged and encouraged to participate in decisions concerning their lives.
- Children, young people and their families should be provided intensive, targeted support to address offending-related behaviour.
- Services to children, young people and their families should be better coordinated with a shared responsibility across government and the community.
- The youth justice system requires a highly skilled and competent workforce to work effectively with children, young people and their families.

These key themes will inform the development of the Blueprint. The feedback from the consultation process is evidence of a committed and engaged ACT community that cares strongly about its young people.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

On 29 July 2011, the Minister for Community Services announced the ACT Government's commitment to develop a Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT (the Blueprint). The Blueprint would implement a number of recommendations made by the Human Rights Commission in its report *The ACT Youth Justice System 2011: A Report to the ACT Legislative Assembly*.

The Minister announced the establishment of a Youth Justice Implementation Taskforce (the Taskforce) to develop the Blueprint and monitor its implementation over the first 12 months. The Taskforce comprises representatives from the Government and community sector, namely:

- Christine Nolan, Executive Director, Office for Children, Youth and Family Support, Community Services Directorate (Chair).
- Katrina Bracher, Executive Director, Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drug Service, Health Directorate (also represented by Vera Van De Velde, Director, Alcohol and Drug Service, Health Directorate).
- Stephen Gniel, Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Student Engagement, Education and Training Directorate (until May 2012).
- Julie Field, Executive Director, Legislation and Policy Branch, Justice and Community Safety Directorate (also represented by Andrew McIntosh, Senior Manager, Justice and Community Safety Directorate).
- Brett Kidner, Superintendent, ACT Policing (Ex Officio).
- Rod Little, Chairperson, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body.
- Adrian Makeham-Kirchner, Director, Social Policy and Implementation, Chief Minister and Cabinet Directorate (until April 2012).
- Beth Mitchell, Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Student Engagement, Education and Training Directorate (from May 2012) (also represented by David Bromhead, Manager, Education and Training Directorate).
- Peter Murphy, Chief Executive, Noetic Solutions Pty Ltd.
- Danny O'Neil, Director, Richmond Fellowship.
- Emma Robertson, Director, Youth Coalition of the ACT.
- Geoffrey Rutledge, Director, Social Policy and Implementation, Chief Minister and Cabinet Directorate (from April 2012) (also represented by Melanie Saballa, Senior Manager, Chief Minister and Cabinet Directorate).
- Peter Sandeman, Chief Executive, Anglicare Canberra.

The Blueprint will be a strategic plan to reform the youth justice system over the next five to 10 years. Its long-term aim is to reduce the number of young people who come into contact with the youth justice system and to provide a quality youth justice system. The Blueprint will contain the key elements of a quality youth justice system identified by the Human Rights Commission in its review of the ACT Youth Justice system.

As a step in developing the Blueprint, the Taskforce released a consultation paper in December 2011 to collect the views and opinions of a wide range of groups and individuals on what the Blueprint should contain and what it should look like. Feedback was sought on developing a vision and set of principles for the ACT youth justice system, identifying what works well with the current system and exploring strategies to improve the system and outcomes for young people. Consultation occurred from 19 December 2011 to 30 March 2012.

1.2 Aim

This report provides a summary of feedback received from public meetings, discussions with young people, community groups and organisations, and written submissions on the proposal to develop the Blueprint that will deliver a quality youth justice system in the ACT.

1.3 Scope of consultation

To ensure the needs and views of the ACT community are adequately reflected in the Blueprint, a consultation process was designed to seek input from a broad cross-section of relevant stakeholders. People consulted included young people, individuals, the youth sector, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups, community organisations and individuals, and agencies across the ACT Government.

1.3.1 Community consultation

Five public meetings were held in community settings. Meetings occurred in March 2012 and were led by an external facilitator. In total, 35 individuals attended the meetings, including representatives from community organisations. Six written submissions were also received from individuals and community organisations.

Community members were asked their views on how to prevent young people from offending and re-offending, and how families and communities can be best supported to help young people at-risk. Ideas were sought to identify gaps in services and supports, and the actions needed to best support people working with young people, including young offenders. Feedback was also sought on how to support and maintain the community's ongoing role in the implementation of the Blueprint.

1.3.2 Stakeholder consultation

Facilitated discussions were held with young people and their families, the youth sector and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups. These discussions were facilitated by community organisations relevant to the stakeholder groups. In total, 118 individuals participated in these discussions; 58 individuals including young people and representatives from the community youth sector; and 60 individuals from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups.

Young people, youth sector workers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups were asked the following questions:

1. What should be the purpose of a youth justice system?
2. What works well?
3. What would they change about the current system?
4. What programs would they like to be delivered to young people, both in the system and in terms of early intervention and prevention?

Facilitated discussions were also held with government agencies. Over 170 government staff participated including people working in children's policy, care and protection, youth policy, court services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services, health, disability, housing and the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre.

Government stakeholders were asked the following questions:

1. How to better respond to the needs of young people in the youth justice system?
2. What needs to be changed to improve the youth justice system?
3. How to better achieve outcomes for young people?
4. How could the suggested changes be implemented?

The following consultation meetings occurred:

Consultation group	Facilitating organisation	Consultation format
Young people	Youth Coalition of the ACT	Facilitated discussions
Youth sector	Youth Coalition of the ACT	Facilitated discussions
Families who engage community services	Families ACT	Facilitated discussions
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups	Aboriginal Justice Centre	Facilitated discussions
General Community	Youth Justice Implementation Taskforce	Facilitated discussions

2 CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Several key themes for the development of the Blueprint were identified from the consultation process. The main findings to emerge from consultation are summarised below.

2.1 A Vision for Youth Justice

People were asked their views about a proposed vision and set of key principles that would underpin a quality youth justice system. Overall, people reported that the ACT youth justice system should be a leading system within Australia, and should provide young people with the support structure and services to achieve positive outcomes in their lives. People agreed that a clear and shared vision should be developed for youth justice services in the ACT.

The people who commented on the inclusion of a vision indicated that they agreed with the three broad themes as suggested in the consultation paper, namely that:

1. A vision should articulate the purpose of the youth justice system.
2. A vision should underpin all policies and services delivered to young people.
3. A vision should be supported by government and the community to ensure a quality youth justice system.

The following examples were provided as possible vision statements for the Blueprint:

“Safe and strong children and young people today – tomorrow’s strong and nurturing leaders and parents.”

“Young people are hopeful of the future, inspired and trusted.”

“A system that builds a future for young people and families who are in danger of losing their young people.”

“Children and young people are placed at the front and centre of the system.”

“Supporting young people as active players in their community, with the right to have a say in decisions which affect their future.”

2.2 Principles for Youth Justice

People generally supported the set of principles as outlined in the consultation paper to support the vision that will guide the activities and actions to deliver a high quality youth justice system. Those principles were:

1. The best interests of children and young people always inform actions.
2. The voices of children and young people will be heard.
3. The families of children and young people involved in the youth justice system are important.
4. Approaches are grounded in data, evidence and principles of adolescent development to produce positive outcomes for children and young people.
5. Whilst custody is a measure of last resort, children and young people who are detained will be provided with similar opportunities as those afforded to children and young people in the community.

Most people stated the set of principles should be shared and clearly communicated across government agencies and the community.

The importance of early intervention as a principle for youth justice was emphasised by people. People who supported this view stated that there is strong evidence to show early intervention models are more cost-effective in reducing crime and lowering recidivism.

A number of participants identified the need for early intervention to commence in early childhood or even earlier, through supporting vulnerable pregnant women to ensure, to ensure that all children get a positive start in life.

Several people felt strongly that diverting young people from the formal justice system wherever possible should be included as a principle. Some people gave specific support to the principle that “custody is a measure of last resort”, and in cases where detention is unavoidable a holistic approach to the treatment of young people should be adopted.

People suggested the following examples:

“Diverting young people from detention wherever possible and using custody as a last resort should be a guiding principle for the youth justice system.”

“Include ‘custody as a measure of last resort’ as a principle adding ‘wherever feasible and reasonable.’”

People suggested that the needs of victims of young offenders should be acknowledged to balance the offender’s rights with the level of harm caused:

“The victims of offences committed by children and young people are important.”

“Participation by victims in restorative justice activities with young offenders is valuable, and the effort this requires of victims needs to be acknowledged.”

One respondent noted the importance of ensuring community safety:

“Public safety and the need to deal appropriately with serious crime are of paramount importance.”

2.3 Key themes for a quality youth justice system

People presented their views on what outcomes (or changes) should be achieved for children and young people and their families at-risk or involved in the youth justice system. Views were provided on what is needed to achieve change and how can these changes occur in the youth justice system. A set of key themes emerged from the consultation on the key components of the Blueprint.

Seven key themes were identified:

- Early intervention and prevention should be a priority for children, young people and their families at the first signs of difficulty or adversity.
- Children and young people should be kept out of the formal justice system as much as possible.
- Children and young people should be supported to connect with their family and community in their transition from custody.
- Children, young people and their families should be engaged and encouraged to participate in decisions concerning their lives.
- Children, young people and their families should be provided intensive, targeted support to address offending-related behaviour.
- Services to children, young people and their families should be better coordinated with a shared responsibility across government and the community.
- The youth justice system requires a highly skilled and competent workforce to work effectively with children, young people and their families.

2.3.1 Early intervention and prevention should be the first course of action for children, young people and their families at the first signs of difficulty or adversity

When people were asked about what outcomes or changes should be achieved for children, young people and their families at-risk or involved in the youth justice system, most people emphasised the importance of early intervention and prevention. People advocated interventions that identified difficulties and problems early in the lives of children and young people, including the early diagnosis of conduct and behavioural problems. People felt that there is an important need to ensure that the right form of support is provided at the earliest possible time for children, young people and their families.

The causes of offending by young people were often linked to some of the most difficult problems in our society today - stemming from risk factors within family, community and educational environments. People recognised that certain circumstances of young people's lives are associated with a greater likelihood of offending and victimisation.

“Our collective experience points to the fact that many young people interacting with the corrective service system come from challenging home environments and significant supports are needed for not just the young people but the families as well”.

People also noted that intervention and prevention initiatives should be culturally appropriate to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people achieve positive outcomes in ways that support their cultural identity. Initiatives should aim to reduce the over-representation of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the justice system and engage early with hard-to-reach families who may be at-risk of criminal offending. Initiatives should be developed in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Suggestions to better promote early intervention and prevention included:

- address the underlying drivers of criminal behaviour by focusing on educational achievement, positive mental health, stable accommodation and skills development;
- address key risk factors occurring at prenatal and perinatal stages, and strengthen programs that provide a multidisciplinary coordination of services for families with complex needs, mental health and substance issues;
- develop and implement programs that treat and manage conduct and behavioural problems as early as possible, as these are among the most important predictors of later antisocial behaviour;

- provide intensive family support at the first signs of difficulty such as disengagement and alienation from school, and improve educational engagement and achievement for at-risk children and young people;
- address the effects of intergenerational trauma, disadvantage and vulnerability, including the acceptance of unemployment, poor educational achievement, violence and substance abuse;
- develop initiatives that recognise mental health as a significant issue affecting young people – focus on healing, culture, emotional wellbeing and reconnection with family; and
- reduce the harm from alcohol and drug problems and improve the availability and accessibility of treatment programs and services, including the Court Alcohol and Drug Assessment Service (CADAS).

2.3.2 Children and young people should be kept out of the formal justice system as much as possible

People emphasised the importance of diverting young people away from the youth justice system as early as possible. For many, this meant making sure that young people do not come into contact with the youth justice system, or that young people who come into the youth justice system are supported so they do not progress further along the justice system.

Many people supported diversionary practices that avoided the stigma associated with prosecution and the negative impact of further contact with the criminal justice system. When speaking about diversion, individuals stated that restorative justice should be a key feature in minimising any harm or negative contact that young people might have with the youth justice system. It was felt that the process worked well to redirect young people away from further involvement in the criminal justice system and that it provided the young offender with the opportunity to understand the harm caused and to apologise to the victim.

Other suggestions to help keep children and young people from coming into contact, or having further involvement, with the formal justice system included:

- implement restorative justice practices consistently across the ACT and increase access to restorative justice practices in schools;
- expand the use of circle courts or other mediation methods;
- work together with community organisations to identify gaps in supports to reduce breaches of bail and provide effective support to children and young people to help them comply with their conditions;

- increase alcohol and other drug treatment services for young people including residential based treatment; divert minor drug users to drug education, assessment and treatment; and use the Youth Drug and Alcohol Court in preference to custodial sentencing;
- improve the availability of alternative education programs in the ACT, including for young people in the youth justice system and those recently released from Bimberi; and
- resource appropriate accommodation options including safe houses, hostel-style accommodation (in partnership with Aboriginal Hostels), foster and respite care, emergency refuge accommodation.

2.3.3 Children and young people should be supported to connect with their family and community in their transition from custody

Many people commented that a leading youth justice service should work to ensure that young people and their families who have contact with the formal justice system are supported by effective reintegration, throughcare and aftercare services. Young people should be individually managed throughout the criminal justice process to help them cease offending and reintegrate successfully. Many people emphasised that planning for a young person's release back into the community should start as soon as they enter the system and have a strong focus on addressing their accommodation, educational and vocational needs.

A range of measures were cited to improve reintegration and throughcare services by:

- developing diverse programs and opportunities for young people in custody including independent living and life skills, resiliency and self-esteem building, relationships, parenting, work-readiness skills, certificate level courses, literacy and numeracy, nutrition, first aid, talent and skill development, recreation and mentoring;
- providing opportunities to build and strengthen links between young people and the community, such as encouraging sporting bodies, performing arts organisations and businesses to become involved with young people in detention;
- ensuring intensive support services and plans remain in place for a period after a young person leaves custody;
- providing mentoring/peer coaching to at-risk young people before, during and after custody from members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community who have had similar experiences and are succeeding;

- ensuring young people have appropriate and stable accommodation in place before their release from custody to reduce the risk of young person failing to comply with conditions or committing further offending; and
- providing appropriate and effective support to assist young people meet their release conditions. As one young person described the difficulty they faced:

"They hit me with so many conditions when I get out that between the shock of going from a small place like Bimberi to the busy outside world on a heap of conditions ruling my life, I stress out hard and just want to go back to Bimberi".

2.3.4 Children, young people and their families should be engaged and encouraged to participate in decisions concerning their lives

A consistent message that emerged from the consultation process was that children and young people should be placed at the centre of processes and decisions that affect their future. A number of people recommended that young people should be provided the opportunity to express their views on decisions that affect them and for their views to be taken into account in the decision-making process. People believed that specifically targeted programs and services, including Indigenous cultural care plans, were necessary to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and their families.

Suggestions to better engage and encourage children, young people and their families to improve their participation in decisions concerning their lives included:

- employ a case management process that empowers children and young people and their families to contribute to plans and decisions concerning their lives;
- use strategies that place the young person at the centre of the support circle;
- ensure that the young person is aware of what is happening to them, they are informed of every step and of what is expected of them, and ensure they have incentives to comply;
- provide opportunities for young people to be key contributors to youth justice policy and reform;
- ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are represented on all ACT justice-related boards and committees, and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and their families contribute to the development and implementation of case management plans and Indigenous cultural care plans; and
- provide services that engage and connect with young people and their families to encourage ownership of their own care and justice plans, and increase compliance with conditions.

2.3.5 Children, young people and their families should be provided intensive, targeted support to address offending-related behaviour

People commented that young people who come into contact with the formal justice system should be provided with access to holistic case management, intensive, wrap-around support services that are age, gender and culturally appropriate and that involve their families or important people in their lives. Several people felt that the needs of individuals and families should be met with a tailored response, rather than a 'one size fits all' approach.

Intensive and tailored support means having an effective single case management system where multiple interactions with various youth justice workers and service providers are minimised. Young people who enter the justice system should be individually managed by a dedicated case manager. Treatment and services should be focused on the young person's needs and the causes of offending. The negative effect of multiple interactions was highlighted by one young person's experience:

"I have so many workers and even though most are all right, some have no idea. When I tell them I'm doing it hard and struggling and just feel like running away from it all, they threatened to breach me. I wish I had one or two workers who really cared to deal with everything."

A variety of suggestions for better targeted services to address the specific needs of young people were put forward by people, including:

- provide practical support and services for children, young people and their families through a single case management model and at key points including the first signs of difficulty or disengagement from school, initial offending, on remand, bail or in custody, and in transitioning from custody;
- develop initiatives to enable young people and their families to explore their own cultural identity, family history and sense of belonging;
- explore multi-systemic therapy (MST)/multi-disciplinary model as an intervention as a holistic response to persistent offenders and their families;
- improve access to therapeutic and holistic services for young people that address a range of problems, including difficulties with adaptive functioning, low intellectual ability, intellectual disability, violent and sexual offending;
- recognise the diverse needs of young people, including the needs of young people with intellectual disabilities, gender-specific issues, mental health issues and parenting responsibilities; and
- enable recreational, sporting and social activities to be available to the most disadvantaged children – minimise cost as a barrier to these activities and reduce the stigma associated with applying for funding support.

2.3.6 Services to children, young people and their families should be better coordinated with a shared responsibility across government and the community

Providing better coordinated services and programs across government and the community sector emerged as a priority in delivering timely, effective services to children, young people and their families. People reported that collaborative and joined-up services between government agencies in the youth justice system and community organisations were needed. This requires a shared responsibility across government agencies and the community sector to provide effective services that meet the needs of children, young people and their families.

Suggestions to provide more coordinated services in a shared way included:

- implement a single case management model throughout the youth justice system that aligns with services provided in the community. This model would have increased links with GPs, health services, schools, Child and Family Centres, Community Centres and other services that have key roles in supporting families;
- require a high level of communication, coordination and cooperation between all government and non-government services, focusing on improving childhood experiences and outcomes for each young person;
- guarantee whole-of-government support to ensure the commitment of other government agencies outside the Community Services Directorate, for example the Police, Education and Training Directorate, Health Directorate, Justice and Community Safety, and the Victims of Crime Commission;
- partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups to develop and implement initiatives that realise sustainable improvements in community development and safety within the ACT; and
- work more collaboratively with the adult justice system to ensure continuity of interventions and support for young people to effectively address persistent offending.

A final issue raised in the consultation process was that there needs to be better understanding within the youth justice sector and the community of the services and programs available to children, young people and their families. It became clear that many existing programs and services for young people are not well known or understood. Better information and communication about programs and services is required.

2.3.7 The youth justice system requires a highly skilled and competent workforce to work effectively with children, young people and their families

People emphasised the importance that people working with young people should be skilled, supported and culturally competent. People said that staff should be motivated and professionally trained. Several people expressed a view that more training and professional development opportunities were needed to build the skills and cultural awareness of people working in youth justice. People suggested that training and professional development was needed to focus on engaging and working with children and young people at-risk; understanding trauma and working with traumatised children, young people and their families; working with vulnerable families as a whole unit; and using specialised therapies and interventions, including action plans and therapeutic crisis intervention.

People suggested that people working with young people and in the youth justice system could be better supported by:

- developing a strong and comprehensive workforce development strategy;
- developing and implementing cultural awareness and competence training for government and community workers;
- adequately resourcing community organisations to provide the best possible supports;
- developing and/or improving partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services and stakeholders;
- increasing the employment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers across the government and community sector;
- providing more support and professional development opportunities for teachers and carers to increase their confidence and skills in working with at-risk children and young people, particularly with trauma-related issues;
- developing staff to attain specialised skills to work effectively with young people who present a high risk to community safety;
- providing 'safe spaces' where effective relationships with young people, including young people on parole, can be built on their terms, such as youth centres.

3 CONCLUSION

The feedback provided is a valuable resource for the Taskforce to use in the development of a Blueprint. Importantly, it provides an understanding of what the community expects from a quality youth justice system.

The key themes that emerged from the consultation show that a quality youth justice system should prioritise early intervention and prevention strategies, focus on diverting young people from the formal justice system, and ensure the best possible outcomes for children, young people and their families.

The findings also indicate that more needs to be done in relation to: ensuring that services are better targeted to meet the needs of young people; providing improved training and skills development for staff who work with young people; delivering better services to young people in a unified way; sharing the responsibility for young people across government and the community; and developing stronger links between government agencies and community organisations.

4 NEXT STEPS

The key messages from the consultation will be considered by the Taskforce in the development of the Blueprint. The Blueprint will provide strategic direction to inform change in the youth justice system over the next five to 10 years. It takes time to achieve significant change – that is why the ACT Government and Taskforce are committed to developing a long-term plan for the youth justice system.

The Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT is due to be released in mid-2012. It will have a ten-year life span with a review after the first three-year period. Monitoring the progress of the Blueprint will be important to ensure that meaningful and lasting change is achieved.

APPENDIX A: CONSULTATION TARGET GROUPS

Consultations on the development of the Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT were held with the following target groups:

ACT Government Directorates

Education and Training Directorate (Murrumbidgee Education and Training Centre)

Health Directorate (Justice Health Service)

Justice and Community Services Directorate

Community Services Directorate

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services
- Adoptions and Permanent Care / Centralised Intake (Care and Protection Services)
- Bimberi Youth Justice Centre
- Care Case Conferences (Youth Support and Transition Team)
- Care Orders (Care and Protection Services)
- Children's Policy and Regulation Unit (Early Intervention and Prevention Services)
- Community Services Directorate Executive
- Community Services Directorate Senior Managers
- Community Youth Justice
- Gungahlin Child and Family Centre
- Integrated Court Services (Care and Protection Services)
- Office for Children, Youth and Family Support Managers
- Office for Multicultural, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services
- Response and Intervention (Care and Protection Services)
- Social Housing and Homelessness Services (Housing ACT)
- Strategic Policy and Community Development (Disability ACT)
- Strategy and Purchasing
- Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre
- Turnaround
- West Belconnen Child and Family Centre
- Youth Connection
- Youth Engagement and Policy

Non-Government agencies

The Youth Coalition of the ACT consulted with groups in the youth sector.

Children and Young People

The Youth Coalition of the ACT consulted with young people who were:

- Participating in the Youth Housing and Homeless Service.
- Participating in the Youth Education Program.
- Participating in Galilee School.
- Participating in the Youth Justice Reference Group.

Families

Families ACT consulted with families in the ACT.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community

The Aboriginal Justice Centre consulted with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community in the ACT.

General ACT community members

Five public forums were held across the ACT in:

- Tuggeranong
- West Belconnen
- Civic
- Weston Creek
- Gungahlin

These forums were widely advertised in *The Canberra Times* and *The Chronicle*.

Additionally, a letter of invitation was provided directly from the Chair of the Youth Justice Implementation Taskforce to key community organisations to participate in the forums.