



Fair go for young people

Invest in young people because
the consequences aren't minor

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INTRODUCTION

In listening to young people who were in conflict with the law they often stated that they wanted help earlier and proper supports after they left detention. While there is a lot of focus on the conditions of young people in detention, as there should be, we clearly need to be doing more to stop young people going into detention and of course providing the supports and services they need to get them focused on their goals and reconnected with their family and community.

This report looks at young people in conflict with the law' which refers to young people who come into contact with the justice system as a result of being suspected or accused of committing an offence. This report will look further into what needs to happen to stop young people coming into conflict with the law in the first place and what supports and services young people need once they are in conflict with the law.

Too often, prejudice related to race, ethnicity or social and economic status may bring a young person into conflict with the law even when no crime has been committed. Youth Action urges the NSW Government to significantly reduce incarceration while at the same time provide young people who experience violence, abuse, and exploitation the services they have a right to. Central to the approach should be rehabilitation that involves families and communities and connection to culture as a safer, more appropriate, and effective approach than punitive measures.

Youth Action strongly advocates for the NSW Government to double down on diversion (directing children away from judicial proceedings and towards community solutions), restorative justice (promoting reconciliation, restitution, and responsibility through the involvement of the young person, family members, victims, and communities), and alternatives to custodial sentencing (counselling, probation and community service).

According to Articles 37 and 40 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), young people in conflict with the law have the right to treatment that promotes their sense of dignity and worth, considers their age and aims at their reintegration into society. Further, the rights of First Nations young people must be realized in access to culture and language before during and after detention.

Youth Action strongly affirms that placing young people in conflict with the law in a closed facility should be a measure of last resort, to be avoided whenever possible.

This report will outline recommendations relating to achievable changes in policy and increased strategic investments in services and supports that are needed to ensure young people can thrive and not be in contact with the law. Most importantly, the report then covers what young people have said in Youth Action's consultations and examine what other consultations have also heard from young people in conflict with the law. It will then examine what others have been saying about the juvenile justice system in NSW. The report quickly outlines major issues in youth employment and the impacts of financial and social exclusion. The report ends with a summary of the outcomes of the Government Roundtable processes that Youth Action conducted with Government Departments and Agencies, Youth Sector organisations and feedback from young people themselves.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Allocate at least an additional \$52 million to expand youth service delivery in early intervention and youth development programs and services aimed at increasing engagement, confidence, and participation of young people.
2. Investment in setting up 5 new youth hubs and give further support to an additional 10 current hubs.
3. Aboriginal owned and controlled solutions must be a matter of first principle in working with Aboriginal young people and any increase in investment must prioritise Aboriginal young people and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.
4. Fund the establishment of a state-wide interdepartmental and non-government organisations working group on young people doing it tough, particularly those made vulnerable by poverty, the out of home care system, conflict with the law and homelessness.

Legal Reform

- Raise the age of criminal responsibility for young people in NSW from 10 years to 14 years.
- Implement waiver system for COVID and other fines imposed on young people under 25 years.
- Amend the Bail Act to prohibit the refusal of bail due to a young person experiencing homelessness.
- Fund Aboriginal-specific bail accommodation to prevent adolescents from entering and staying in detention because they are homeless.
- Expanding the Bail Assistance Support Service to become an all-hours service that assists NSW Police and Youth Justice caseworkers.

Connection to Aboriginal culture in the community

- As first principle, services targeted to Aboriginal children and young people should be designed and delivered by Aboriginal Community Owned and Controlled Organisations.
- Introduction of an Aboriginal Owned and Controlled rehabilitation healing centre.
- Provide a range of cultural support initiatives and programs that improve positive connections to culture for Aboriginal children and young people.

Youth services and supports in community

- Allocate at least an additional \$52 million to expand youth service delivery in early intervention and youth development programs and services aimed at increasing engagement, confidence, and participation of young people.
- Investment in setting up 5 new youth hubs and give further support to an additional 10 current hubs.
- Greater investment drug and alcohol support options for young people, particularly in regional areas, including intensive residential rehabilitation and inpatient programs, counselling, therapeutic groups, and health education and information provision.
- Increased provision of after-hours and weekend programs to engage children and young people in meaningful activities. Activities should be free of cost, conveniently located,

accessible to all children and young people and linked with opportunities to learn about and access support services.

- All children and young people should be screened for disability and health issues from early childhood and routinely thereafter in health, educational and justice settings and connected with appropriate support to address their needs and potential risk factors for coming into conflict with the law.
- More life skills programs geared toward children and young people tackling complex challenges should be developed and delivered in schools and through community-based support programs to prepare children and young people for independent living and adulthood.
- Increase availability of intensive one on one casework support targeted towards young people identified as being at risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system to assist them to successfully navigate the service system.
- Explore opportunities for mentoring programs for young people tackling complex challenges to be delivered by community members, Elders, and other respected people with similar lived experiences to share knowledge and life experience.
- Services for children and young people should be centrally located and where possible be co-located, have extended opening hours at times when young people are able to attend, and be linked with transport support.
- Fund the establishment of a state-wide interdepartmental and non-government organisations working group on young people doing it tough, particularly those made vulnerable by poverty, the out of home care system, and in conflict with the law and homelessness.
- Frontline staff in youth and community services be provided with training in child rights approaches, meaningful engagement, cultural competence, and trauma informed practice to enhance the quality of their work with children and young people tackling multiple, complex challenges.

Education

- School disciplinary procedures should be reformed and alternatives to long suspension should be introduced, including the expansion of suspension centres which link behaviour management strategies with the provision of learning support and expansion of programs.
- Greater investment in and use of Small Group Tuition (SGT). SGT provides short-term support for students Needing Additional Support (NAS) as identified by the new NAPLAN standards or department, and school-based assessments.
- Invest \$10 million to embed and expand respectful relationships and consent education in school, TAFE/University, and community-based settings. Importantly, this should educate young people on law reform around affirmative consent and coercive control.
- \$600,000 to fund schools together with the Youth Sector to map the resources in their areas so they can better refer and work collaboratively to support young people as well as undertake a study that determines the key tenets of programs that increase young people's engagement with schools and training.
- Young people at risk of disengaging from school should be identified earlier and provided with tailored learning support, opportunities to receive counselling, referrals to appropriate support services, information about career pathways and assistance identifying and enrolling in courses and programs relevant to their goals as well as increasing access to and investment in alternative education options to keep young people who have disengaged from mainstream education connected to learning and career pathways.

- Enhance teacher training in meaningful engagement, cultural competence, and trauma informed practice to improve capacity of teachers to respond to young people displaying challenging behaviours in school environments.
- Expand the current youth participation and student voice activities, including training of teachers in participatory approaches. Develop programs that involve all students in activities both at a school level and statewide including events that bring students together regionally and state-wide.

Youth Voice and Participation

- Invest in training on how to work better with young people and ensure that all contracts with NSW Government embed youth participation and leadership into the design, implementation and monitoring of all NSW Government funded youth programs and policy development.
- Ensure that the role of regulation of child safety policy and participation of young people continue to remain separate and independent bodies.
- Invest in rights-based training for young people and the services that support them.

Health and Wellbeing

- Invest in capacity of youth services through \$15 million funding increase to provide non-clinical prevention and early intervention mental health support programs in 75 sites across NSW including 30 in regional areas. This funding would increase the provision of additional staff to meet increased demand as well as provision of a diverse range of early intervention programs that can act as soft-entry points for accessing mental health support including outreach, drop-in, peer support, arts and recreation, and youth development models.
- Increased investment through \$5 million to increase the capacity of the Youth Arts Sector to provide services and programs to improve the wellbeing of young people in NSW.
- Investment of \$5 million in the capacity of youth sector to respond to young people tackling mental health challenges through the rollout of skills based, early intervention training such as mental health first aid or accidental counsellor training to the youth sector and identified youth peer support roles.

Employment and training in the community

- Develop a comprehensive, whole of Government Youth Employment Strategy, including a Steering Committee for oversight and monitoring, with young people's voices and lived experience placed at the centre of the Strategy. Such a strategy should identify a diverse range of education and employment pathways as well as promote secure work and training opportunities for all young people in NSW.
- Increase resourcing to expand the availability of specialist youth employment programs with a particular focus on study-to-work transitions and young people from socially excluded groups and those with limited education and employment experiences.
- Expand existing number of places in traineeships and graduate programs within NSW Public Service for young people both with and without tertiary education. Prioritise places for young people from socially excluded groups.
- Development of targeted employment support programs with expertise in working with young people tackling complex issues to assist them to transition into the workforce through opportunities to obtain work experience, apprentice and traineeships, certifications, and training in life skills.

- Increase the availability of vocational and industry training courses for children and young people who are at risk or have disengaged from education to assist in development of pre-employment skills.
- Youth Job Guarantee aimed to ensure that young people are offered either a job, a paid internship or a training opportunity within a short time after registering as unemployed.

THROUGH CARE INITIATIVE

Young people have told Youth Action that they wanted help before and after entering detention. This initiative looks to improve support and services for young people in conflict with the law i.e. young people who come into contact with the justice system as a result of being suspected or accused of committing an offence. While there is a lot of focus on the conditions for young people in detention and minimum age of responsibility, we clearly need to be doing more to stop young people going into detention and providing the supports and services they need to get them back on track.

This initiative looks to improve supports and services for young people before, during and after detention, with a focus on looking further into what needs to happen to stop young people coming into conflict with the law in the first place.

Key Successes thus far...

- Youth Action's Strategic Plan prioritising through care based on consultations with the Sector and young people.
- Invited people to join the Steering Committee to assist Youth Action in its work in this area.
- Held meetings with the Steering Committee and developed a core set of actions for the two phases of the initiative.
- Organized two NGO forums of over 60 NGOs focusing on good forms of collaboration and increasing outcomes for young people in the education sector.
- Two Roundtables with key Government representatives, including from the Department of Communities and Justice, NSW Police, NSW Ombudsman's office, the Department of Education, the Advocate for Children and Young People's office, Regional NSW, and President of the Children's Court, Judge Skinner, the Inspector for Custodial Services, Fiona Rafter, together with representatives from the Youth Justice Throughcare Committee and NGO sector, including CEOs of YFoundations, PCYC and Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA).
- Conducted consultations with young people about what they suggested would assist them.
- Partnership with Australian Theatre for Young People (ATYP) to develop a play based on the voices of young people and the first read through of the script was performed in front of the Minister for Juvenile Justice and representatives from several Government departments and NGOs leaders.
- Two Youth Action conferences with key sessions with Government departments about how to progress better through care.
- Regular meetings with Ministers and key Government departments about recommendations and progress of the initiative.
- Key outcome of the Roundtable process was the commissioning of a report on the key tenants of youth work - DCJ funded the report and it will be release early in 2024

Committee's key agreements and approaches

- There was broad agreement that there needed to be coordinated responses to improve supports and services for young people in through care.
- It was agreed that the initiative would need to focus on Aboriginal young people as well as young people living in regional NSW.
- It was agreed that young people with lived experience need to be involved in determining suggested solutions.
- It was agreed that co-ordination of messages and information sharing was important and what has been missing in the current environment.
- Need to do things differently and involve the non-usual suspects.

First Three Phases of the initiative

Phase one

- Consultations with young people
- Information gathering and setting up processes
- Meeting with key decision makers

Phase two

- Running of workshops
- Preparing options paper
- Conducting messaging research

Phase three

- Engage the general public and community sector
- Publish recommendations paper
- Launch website and public facing activities
- Round of meeting with key policy makers

We have been very pleased with the success of the initiative thus far and are now entering phase three of the campaign, this could not have been achieved without the support of the Youth Sector and of course young people themselves. This phase of the campaign will be public facing and looks to garner public support for the investment in services for young people so that they do not enter into the justice system. With the enormous opportunity of the Saplings being part of the Sydney Festival, we will launch the public engagement phase of the campaign in 2024.

BACKGROUND – What others have said about the Juvenile Justice System and young people in conflict with the law

In the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) report *Youth Justice in Australia 2019–20*, they outlined the following: about 1 in 607 young people aged 10–17 was under supervision on an average day, the majority of young people in detention were unsentenced, young people spent an average of 6 months under supervision, and young people in remote areas were more likely to be under supervision. Young people from lower socioeconomic areas were more likely to be under supervision and Indigenous Australians were younger when they entered supervision than their non-Indigenous counterparts. Further, the report found that among the states and territories, the more populous states (Queensland and New South Wales) accounted for more than half of all young people under supervision on an average day, regardless of supervision type.

According to the same AIHW report, young people in New South Wales made up: 24% of all young people under supervision (1,296 of 5,323), 23% of all young people under community-based supervision (1,045 of 4,490 and 30% of all young people under detention (258 out of 863). The report outlined that the majority of young people under supervision on an average day in 2019–20 were male (80%). Although only about 6% of young people aged 10–17 in Australia are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, half (2,017 or 50%) of the young people aged 10–17 under supervision on an average day in 2019–20 were Indigenous Australians. About half (49%) of those aged 10–17 under community-based supervision were Indigenous, while just over half (53%) of those in detention were Indigenous.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child makes it very clear that that young people should be placed in detention only as a last resort. While there have been recent and important steps in NSW and other States to increase diversion, more still needs to be done. A glaring issue is the difference in how diversion is applied to First Nation’s young people compared to others in their generation.

While diversion is promoted in youth justice legislation in each state and territory as stated earlier, in upholding the rights of young people they should be deprived of liberty only as a last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time.

When young people have been charged and are waiting for the court to meet or are awaiting sentencing, supervision may take place while young people are unsentenced. It is important to understand the implication of the Bail law, see below Y Foundation’s report, and that supervision can take place in the community or in detention. In Youth Acton’s consultations First Nations young people are coming under greater scrutiny from police and even in circumstances when they have not committed any offence.

The Y Foundations Report in NSW in 2019/20, outlined the following key issues, that 17,710 adolescents who offended were apprehended by NSW Police. Most were accused of non-violent offences such as fare evasion, theft, drug offences and disorderly conduct (ABS, 2021). They outlined that the NSW Government has made considerable efforts to divert low-level offenders away from the court system in recent times. The Youth Offenders Act 1997 (NSW) enshrined police warnings, cautions and referrals to restorative Youth Justice conferences as alternatives to formal prosecution (Wan, Moore, & Moffatt, 2013). Automatic referrals to youth offender interventions, should be expanded, such as Youth on Track program.

These diversionary laws meant that, in 2018/19, a majority (53%) of young people who offended in NSW were diverted from court (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision

[SCRGSP], 2020 a pre-court diversion isn't an option if the young person doesn't admit to the offence, has received three cautions already or has been charged with certain crimes, including most sexual offences, serious drug offences or family and domestic violence. As outlined above from the AIHW report Aboriginal young people are also less likely to be diverted from court than the general population (SCRGSP, 2020). While NSW Police are encouraged to serve these adolescents with an 'on the stop' summons or notice to appear in court, when possible, they may be entitled to arrest them depending on the seriousness of the crime, the risk of repeat offences, or concerns about the welfare of the alleged offender and doubts about whether they will turn up to court.

If the NSW Police decide to keep a young person in custody, they must bring them before the Children's Court magistrate as soon as possible for a bail determination. The NSW Police and the Children's Court may refuse bail for criminal and non-criminal reasons, including concerns about accommodation and parental supervision (discussed in more detail in Section 6). On an average day in 2019/20, 144 unsentenced adolescents were remanded in custody in NSW (DCJ,2020). This is a majority (57%) of the total population of young people in detention. These adolescents stayed 16.6 days on average while awaiting.

In Centre for Policy Development's (CPD) report they found that each stage of the of the Criminal Justice System — arrest, remand, court, imprisonment, and community release — traps more Australian families and communities in cycles of disadvantage. Contact can be brief, whether it is a period in remand or because a parent is in prison, but it is nevertheless associated with poorer outcome. They state that the incarceration rate is now above the global average in every state and territory except the ACT and Victoria and that our criminal justice systems are also enormously expensive. In 2018—19, total net operating expenditure on prisons in Australia was \$3.4 billion, rising to \$4 billion when community corrections are included. Further CPD, argues that our criminal justice systems are themselves a cause of disadvantage and exacerbate vulnerability. They reported that a survey of prisoners showed over a third of prison entrants said they were homeless in the month before prison, but over half expected to be homeless on release. More than half of prison entrants were unemployed in the 30 days before prison, yet less than a quarter had employment organised on release.

In the 2021 report *Our Youth, Our Way*, by the Commission for Children and Young People in Victoria examined the lived experiences of Aboriginal children and young people in Victoria and the factors contributing to their over-representation in the youth justice system. It presented the findings and recommendations of the Koori Youth Justice Taskforce and the Commission's systemic inquiry. The Koori Youth Justice Taskforce considered all Aboriginal children and young people in contact with Youth Justice from October 2018 to March 2019.

The major findings included but were not limited to:

- Services designed, controlled and delivered by the Aboriginal community have the greatest potential to produce the best outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people.
- Current collection and reporting of data on the experiences of, and outcomes for, Aboriginal children and young people in the youth justice system are inadequate.
- The youth justice system is disproportionately focused on late, crisis-driven, punitive responses to offending behaviour, at the expense of effective early interventions and supports that meet the individual needs and reflect the unique experiences of Aboriginal children and young people and keep them in the community and out of the system.
- Current laws allowing children to be remanded in, or sentenced to, youth justice custody disproportionately harm Aboriginal children.

- Government agencies often fail to act in a collaborative, coordinated and integrated way to provide support to Aboriginal children and young people involved in the youth justice system. This limits positive outcomes and compounds disadvantage.
- Aboriginal children and young people are able to receive better support and feel more connected to services when they have a trusted, reliable adult in their lives who is able to advocate for their needs. In many cases, this will be an Aboriginal worker.
- Youth Justice fails to meaningfully involve the families of many Aboriginal children and young people under community supervision in planning, decision-making, programs and supports.

More recently an article entitled *Inspections, Reviews, Inquiries, and Recommendations Pertaining to Youth Justice Centres in New South Wales between 2015 and 2021* by Garner Clancey and Laura Metcalfe Sydney Law School, Faculty of Law, The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia looks at gaps of reviews of policy making.

The article sought to partially address the gap of reviews of policy making in the area of criminal justice, this article focused on reviews, inquiries and findings of oversight bodies between 2015 and 2021 relevant to youth detention in New South Wales (NSW). They estimated that reports arising from these inquiries and reviews have generated approximately 1040 recommendations (approximately 590 relevant to Youth Justice NSW (YJNSW) broadly and 284 relevant to youth justice centres more specifically).

They suggest that for the best outcomes for young people in custody, there might be greater merit in having fewer inquiries that deal with parts of youth detention and a coordinated and prioritised response to recommendations to address issues of youth detention.

In its 2010 Report, *Family Violence—A National Legal Response*, the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) noted: There is a strong correlation between juvenile participation in crime and rates of reported neglect or abuse. Research indicates that an offending child or young person is likely to have a history of abuse or neglect, and to have been in out-of-home care. In Victoria, a study of young people sentenced to imprisonment by the children’s court over a period of eight months in 2001 found that 88% had been subject to an average of 4.6 notifications to the child protection agency. Almost one-third had been the subject of six or more notifications, and 86% had been in out-of-home care. Over half of these had had five or more care placements.

Kath McFarlane’s research in the New South Wales criminal justice system of a cohort of children in out-of-home care over a four-year research project that investigated the relationship between the child welfare and justice systems as experienced by a cohort of children in the New South Wales Children’s Court criminal jurisdiction. Analysis of 160 case files identified that children in out-of-home care appeared before the Children’s Court on criminal charges at disproportionate rates compared to children who were not in out-of-home care. The out-of-home care cohort had a different and negative experience of the justice system, entering it at a significantly younger age and being more likely to experience custodial remand, than children who had not been in out-of-home care.

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE SAID

In consultations with over 250 young people held by Youth Action as part of the through care initiative and in setting up the content for the new play “Saplings” the following observations and recommendations were made by young people.

What's working for young people

When asked what's working for young people, they often mentioned outreach centres, caseworkers, youth centres and sports. It was clear that soft entry points for young people were incredibly important.

Mental health

Accessing mental health supports was seen as a difficulty, young people talked about wanting to be able to talk to more people they could trust with their issues. Young people talked about the troubles that COVID presented to the community at large but particularly for young people. Young people thought COVID was a contributing factor to an increase in the numbers of suicidal ideations. Young people talked about the need to train the community, including young people themselves, in being able to have supportive conversations with young people who are experiencing troubles or a mental health issue.

“ You need to bring the resource to the young person not the young person to the resource”

Young people spoke about that difficulty of having to look after their friends and family members experiencing mental health issues. They talked about how many people they knew who were struggling and that there was not enough support.

“It's hard to sit and watch people who are close to you..... And then there's no one to help them when they decide they want help”.

Young people were clear that there was a strong link between a young person experiencing mental health issues and ending up in trouble. They suggested that police and health professionals needed training to support young people in crisis and prevent situations from escalating.

“One of the times I was having a psychotic episode the police were just feeding into it”.

Young people with experience of the mental health system stated that psych wards for young people were like prisons. More needed to be done to make these more “youth friendly” so that young people could feel safe. A good example of this was Saunders Unit at Randwick Children's Hospital.

Young people stated that they wanted adults to be aware that telehealth doesn't work for everyone.

“I barely like talking about my problems, anyway, let alone over the phone”

Getting health appointments was raised as being very difficult, some young people talked about a two to three month wait, and if a young person missed their appointment, they could have to wait up to six months, similar issues were raised with drug and alcohol support.

Many of the different groups raised the issue of suicidal ideations of young people. They thought that workers and community members should receive more suicide awareness training to support young people. Some young people talked about the issue of getting on the right medication in small communities when access to doctors is only a couple of times a month.

An issue was raised that when a young person goes into custody often their medication gets changed but when they get out again, they do not have a new script and have to wait to get an appointment with the doctor, so they have periods of time without medication.

Education

In relation to education, young people talked about having greater access to counsellors in schools and for those counsellors to be better equipped to deal with young people and their issues. Some young people suggested that there should be at least two counsellors and two Student Support Officers (SSO's) in schools, young people thought that these positions were more approachable than teachers.

Young people also talked about the fact that teachers needed to be more aware of each student's personal circumstance. They stated that if young people were receiving support, it was often experienced as singling a young person out, and was counterproductive. Young people also raised the issue of detention and that some young people we're getting frequent suspensions.

Young people stated that they needed to receive more guidance and support early in school, let young people know about who they can talk to, and not wait until they get into trouble. They thought schools were a good place to introduce the idea of mental health and help adults understand that it is normal.

Young people talked about the need to access training to help young people become an adult, life skills training often came up in conversations.

Cultural safety

Young people raised the issue of not enough cultural support in schools. They thought that non-Aboriginal teachers should not be teaching cultural safety in schools. They recommended this should be done by Aboriginal teachers and Elders. Youth workers for Aboriginal young people said they were concerned about how many times fellow Aboriginal young people were being referred to non-Aboriginal organisations.

Drug and alcohol

Young people stated that drugs and alcohol were becoming too normal.

“Drugs don't do anything but bring you down, take you to a bad place”

Young people also raised the issue of vaping and thought that the Government should be doing more to educate young people to reduce the use of vaping. Young people spoke about the impact of drugs and alcohol on young people attending programmes, in addition, they stated that the impacts of COVID got young people out of the habit of engaging with programmes.

Employment

Young people spoke about the difficulty of obtaining a licence and the flow on effect of not having a proper ID. They also spoke about employers having negative stereotypes about young people and how that affected their chances in getting a job.

Young people spoke about the need for tailored engagement, one on one conversations with support workers, and the need to be flexible around goals and monitoring compliance to allow for what is happening in the young person's life.

Juvenile justice system and police

For those young people that had been incarcerated they spoke about the boredom they experienced while in detention. They spoke about experiences of being locked up for 23 hours a day. They also raised the issues of strip searching and how that made them feel about themselves.

Many of the groups raised the issue of being hassled by police in their towns.

Programs and support

Young people talked about the need for more programmes in places that were dedicated to young people themselves. Some young people talked with hope of dedicated centres on vacant land for the use by young people. They recommended that they would like to create a Wellness Centre where young people would have free access to gym and other programmes, access to computers so that they could do their L's, apply for birth certificates and interact with Centrelink with support. They also suggested a quiet room with no technology where young people could just chill out.

Young people spoke about the importance of centres being opened for extended periods. They stated that the hardest time for young people was after hours when nothing is opened as many young people do not have access to a computer to contact help lines.

" That times when our friends are down or being hurt, it's 3:00 AM and there's no one"

"(That well-being centre) It would be a safe place where someone can go until they feel safer, or their friends come home, all people are awake..... People working at the centre could check in with young people the next day."

Importantly, when centres are established for young people, it is vital that they are involved in the design.

Young people spoke about the difficulty of dealing with so many bureaucracies and services to sort things out. They talked about the need for support with Centrelink, housing, schools, education, health services and emergency assistance.

Young people living in regional NSW spoke about the issue of satellite programmes where workers visited smaller communities as they were concerned that if you missed one session it could be a month until that worker comes again.

Young people raised the issue of the gap in drug and alcohol services specifically rehabilitation.

Other consultations with young people.

The Koori Youth Council's (KYC) Ngaga-dji (hear me) project, voices the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Victoria's youth justice system and the NSW Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People's (ACYP) report What Children and Young People in Juvenile Justice Centres Have to Say documented very similar recommendations that rose from young people themselves.

KYC engaged with four community sites (including rural, regional and metro) and two youth justice custodial centres to meet 42 children and young people who were currently or previously under youth justice supervision. The Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People report was from face-to-face consultations with 260 children and young people from all Juvenile Justice Centres in NSW.

The two reports came up with very similar recommendations: more individualized services for young people and at all stages, connection to culture and use of ACCOs, reform the use of suspensions, better programming while in detention, greater access to activities outside school hours particularly in regional areas and increased use of diversion and the end of STMP.

When asked what would help them stay out of trouble, children and young people agreed that the environment a young person is in has a significant impact on the path they take. They would like to see a greater focus on building strong communities with support networks and programs that provide alternatives to involvement in crime. They want connection to meaningful activities such as education and employment and to have their personal and emotional development supported.

Young people said that a positive relationship with a consistent caseworker, support worker, or counsellor who understood their life experiences and could help them navigate complex support systems has a significant impact on their quality of life. This was especially true for young people in the Out of Home Care system who spoke about the negative consequences resulting from experiences of multiple caseworkers and placements throughout their lives.

Young people value workers who display professionalism and competence in their work and who also played a role of a trusted adult by listening and responding to them with kindness, empathy and respect. Young people, particularly those in regional areas, said their Juvenile Justice Officers provided specialised support because they had a good understanding of the local community context and factors that lead to young people's offending behaviour as well as knowledge about the Juvenile Justice system.

Young people said they wanted connection to trusted adults in the community such as mentoring by community members, Elders, and other respected people with similar lived experiences to themselves so they could share knowledge and life experience. Mainstream youth services play an important role in engaging young people through activities and interests and provide a soft entry point for young people to connect to support services such as mental health, counselling, or drug and alcohol services and can help reduce the stigma and shame associated with seeking help. Young people from regional communities identified mental health difficulties and substance use issues, in particular use of methamphetamines and cannabis, as key factors in contributing to their offending behaviour. Young people suggested that having a condition to connect to services, supports, and programs as a requirement for participation in diversionary programs, Work Development Orders, bail conditions or post release supervision conditions can be helpful.

Aboriginal young people spoke about the impact of systemic issues such as poverty, substance use, mental health difficulties, family violence, and intergenerational trauma on their communities.

Aboriginal young people said connection to culture is central to their sense of identity and crucial to their emotional, social, and spiritual wellbeing. They spoke about how cultural programs engage young people in constructive activities, build their confidence, and connect them to strong Elders, mentors, and other cultural role models in their community who provide guidance and share knowledge. Aboriginal young people said that they prefer these programs to be presented by Aboriginal workers as they have content involving traditional wisdom and cultural practices.

EMPLOYMENT

We know that young people were significantly affected by COVID-19. Young people told Youth Action that: *"..security and stability was "massive" in the context of COVID. The majority of young people are casual and have been hit so hard through COVID. ... I think that it really emphasises what precarious work is like when a pandemic hits. What stability do you have? You don't "*

As outlined in the report commissioned by Youth Action, young people are much more likely to be employed on a casual basis compared to older workers. In 2019, just over half (54.3%) of all young people were employed in casual or "gig" based jobs and had no access to sick leave, paid leave or other entitlements. This compares to only 18.2% of workers over 24 being employed in casual positions.

Mass job losses for young people led to an increase in disengagement. Just over one in ten (11%) young people in NSW were not doing any work or study in May 2020, up from 6.8% in 2019. This suggests that pandemic conditions have disrupted many young people's trajectories between study and work. This has come up in consultations with young people feeling disempowered and feeling like they have been left behind.

While the unemployment rate continues to fall youth unemployment rate remains double that of the rest of the population. With the worst hit areas in NSW being Western Sydney and regional NSW. Greater Sydney, 35% of youth jobs were lost in the Outer West, 33% in the South West and 29% Blacktown, all regions in Western Sydney. Within regional and rural NSW, pre-pandemic unemployment rates were highest in the Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven (24%), Mid North Coast Taree area (14%) and Illawarra (13%).

The report reminded us that poor employment outcomes have huge impact on young people, they not only lose income, but it can affect their job prospects, mental health and social integration in both the short and long-term. Economic downturns increase the likelihood of young people spending additional time out of employment.

The rise of new technologies, globalisation and the growth of insecure and non-standard work arrangements impacted young people and their chances of decent, stable, and meaningful employment. – think about supermarkets and service stations and the jobs lost there.

Employment growth has been stronger in higher skilled occupations, with a growing proportion of jobs requiring a bachelor's degree or higher. There has been a trend towards employers requiring previous work experience; now approximately three-quarters of employers require work experience, which young people often lack. Increases in labour market participation over recent decades from a rise in female participation, growth in immigration and international students, and older workers delaying retirement have increased the competition for jobs.

It has been well documented that high youth unemployment often persists for years after an economic downturn. It is estimated that, after the Global Financial Crisis of the late 2000s, extreme competition in the labour market reduced the proportion of young Australians engaged in

employment by 4.3%. In fact, even when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, young Australians were still suffering the consequences of the GFC, including increased long-term unemployment and longer, more difficult paths to full-time employment.

POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

In 2020, research by the Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS), after taking account of housing costs, more than one in eight people (13.6%) live below 50% of the median income poverty line. While the poverty rate among young people is 13.9%, the poverty rate among children is much higher, more than one in six (17.7%), In total, there are 3.24 million people in poverty in Australia, including 774,000 children and 424,800 young people. In Australia this translates to a single adult living on less than \$426.30 a week. For a couple with 2 children, it was \$895.22 a week.

Far too often policy settings and programs are not co-ordinated or take into account the issue of poverty faced by young people. In our consultations the issue of poverty of young people has come up particularly the level of the youth payment. Youth Allowance is paid \$168 below the poverty line this is the largest gap in all social security payments for any other population group. Given the levels of housing cost particularly in Sydney this makes for very difficult position for young people doing it tough.

ROUND TABLE PROCESS

The purpose of the roundtable process was to bring the Youth Sector, the experiences of young people and decision makers together to discuss, test and determine solutions that improve the situation for young people and provide the support and services they need to thrive and avoid conflict with law.

The process of roundtables discussed the key issues that were identified during our work thus far on the through care initiative. The process began from the feedback we received from sector wide consultations, and young people themselves. This was then brought to key decision-makers to refine and hone and to ultimately provide clear common-sense recommendations for moving forward.

Collaboration

Collaboration was seen as an important component in improving services for young people in several consultations with service providers and Government representatives. There were key issues identified including: different case-workers in different fields, with an opportunity to meet together and discuss, and face-to-face engagement with a range of organisations leads to better outcomes.

It was discussed that better information flow between different players, Government and NGOs at all levels should be increased and that young people should be involved in how that that information spreads. was considered important and having a case-management model, which ensures key players work together and young people are of the focus of that process. Importance of consistency was raised and the changing of support requirements due to change in funding requirements of change of workers and in turn loss of momentum. When funding bodies are able to participate consistently in interagency to address issues this builds relationships and allows for more openness on all sides to explore solutions. The Multicultural NSW COMPACT Alliance was raised as a good example of engagement between a funding body and NGOs. It was agreed that good collaboration and networking requires resourcing.

When Government agencies and NGOs came together, they identified several recommendations that could increase collaboration for better outcomes for young people. The recommendations were as follows:

- Greater use of written protocols between NGOs and Government
- State-wide and regional groups to meet and discuss ongoing issues with children in conflict with the law
- Greater resources for collaboration
- Extension of 16 Part A and model of Protocol for Residential care
- Given patchy knowledge about the two initiatives above, Youth Action to run ongoing information session about 16 Part A and Protocol and well as promote existing resources
- Dedicated NGO liaison person on through care

Y Foundation's report recommended similar solutions including that the NSW Government should routinely collect and publish detailed information about a) the housing status of adolescents entering and leaving detention, b) the number of homeless adolescents being detained under Section 28 of the Bail Act and c) the length of time young people were detained under this provision.

They rightly argue that this will increase the public and political attention paid to homeless adolescents in detention in NSW and improve understanding and resource allocation for this group.

We agree with Y Foundations recommendations that the NSW Government should bring Youth Justice, Child Protection, Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) providers, relevant NGOs, and peak bodies together to create an overarching policy for supporting homeless adolescents in sentenced and unsentenced detention, which delegates responsibilities based on accurate assessments of the capacity of each sector. In support to this we recommend that this group should have a state and regional presence and talk about issues of those children in conflict with the law or a risk of being in conflict with law.

Education and Disengagement

The issue of education consistently ranks in the top three issues for young people. Young people often talk about the need for greater flexibility and more relevant and relatable learning methods. They state that there should be greater support for young people with learning difficulties. The issue of suspensions is often raised particularly by those young people doing it tough.

NGOs also raised the issue of disengagement and the difficulty of engaging of young people particularly post- COVID. They felt that young people in low socioeconomic areas continue to fall behind due to no or limited access to the Internet and computers. Transport was raised as another issue for young people to get to appointments and was an important issue to resolve disengagement of young people from services and education.

Enrolment for young people in school post incarceration was raised as an issue that needed to be looked at. When young people were on remand it was very complicated to have a continual plan of education for those young people. Student Support Officers were largely seen as working well but could be further improved with greater interaction and engagement with the youth sector.

It was discussed that more needed to be done by schools to take into account what young people are experiencing in their home lives. While there were reports of schools being understanding there were reports that young people experiencing difficulties, especially homelessness, and return to school on Monday after becoming homeless on the weekend.

The issue of multiple service and Government obligations were raised by the sector. Going to Centrelink, getting medical certificates were difficult for many young people and even when some schools are informed the young person can still be penalised.

The issue of school suspensions were raised as a fundamental contributing factor for young people being disengaged from school. Young people were not supported through suspension and found it difficult to get back into schools, these young people are often moving from school to school to find a solution.

When Government agencies and NGOs came together, they identified several recommendations that could increase both collaboration and increase engagement with young people and schools. The recommendations were as follows:

- Fund schools together with the Youth Sector to map the resources in their areas so they can refer young people to support.
- Increase level of engagement between schools and youth sector - learn examples where this is working – i.e. youth conferencing, SSOs and Education Court liaison Officer

- Offer a broader range of activities for young people including arts and culture programs.
- Independent advocates for young people within the school systems.
- Make mentoring programs more available in schools.
- Conduct a review of programs that are working and determine the key tenants of these programs and approaches to be replicated across the state.
- State wide and regional working groups to look at vulnerable cohort of young people.

ANNEXURE

Roundtable process

NGO Forum on Education and disengagement: Key Elements of feedback

What we heard from young people about education

- In consultations with young people education always ranks in the top 3 issue for reform
- In recent consultations disengagement with school has been a major issue which has been compounded by the impacts of Covid-19
- The length and number of suspensions from school ranks high with young people in conflict with the law
- Greater flexibility and more relevant and relatable learning methods required
- More support for young people with learning difficulties
- Greater assistance with careers and career planning

What are the key issues affecting young people in education?

- **Disengagement from School**
 - Some NGOs delivering services before Covid are finding it difficult to get back into schools
 - Long term disengagement, OOHC YP, moved around so much that they disengaged, impossible for YP to engage with such instability
 - Young people in low SES areas felt that they fell behind, no access to internet and computers continue to be a significant issue
- **Transport**
 - Transport for young people who are disengaged was an issue in that they are finding it difficult to get to appointments
- **Co-ordination**
 - Communication with young people when incarcerated is difficult and engagement with family and the school. Needs to be more coordination with Education.
 - With enrolment on incarceration - they are then unenrolled from their regular school and they need to re-enrol in school when released from detention. Schools have a restorative practice framework which is good but not always trauma-informed, similarly with police, leading to additional charges.
 - When young people are on remand, in and out of custody, being passed around, it is complicated to have a continual education plan
 - SSO officers are largely seen a working well and could be improved with greater engagement with the Youth Sector
- **Mental Health**
 - Making access to mental health services available- particularly in regional NSW.

- **Lack of Educational Options**
 - Some schools are being resistant to the young people returning and there are not many options in regional NSW, previously some NGOs who provided alternative education programs cannot provide them due to loss of funding
- **Homelessness**
 - When YP become homeless on a weekend and are expected to return to school on the Monday for example. Some schools are understanding, and some are under capacity and don't have precedents for these situations.
- **Multiple Services and Obligations**
 - Many obligations on young people, going to Centrelink, getting medical certificates, etc. Even when the school is informed the student can be penalised. With refugees, they are often travelling long distances which makes it hard for them to remain engaged in education, especially given the trauma they are experiencing.
- **Court Services**
 - Not every children's court has a funded children's court support program, some services in the area support those gaps (which is unrecognised) but the actual court support program needs to be expanded
 - Education Court Liaison Officer - great and supportive, only in select locations, recommended these be expanded
- **Expulsions and Suspensions**
 - Expulsion and suspensions that are discriminatory, if the schools aren't able to support young people they are disengaging and not going back to school.
 - Young people not supported through suspension, difficult to get back into school. Schools move students to another school as a solution. Something should be done in the school before moving students and have conversations with family
- **Support Programs**
 - YP needing more support in schools, behavioural and pre/post release from custody
 - YP looking for employment opportunities if they don't want to go back into schools, difficulty finding employment opportunities so end up back on the street – throughcare – transitioning out of custody, needing schooling and employment support, programs
 - The need for a "quiet period" while services can assist YP to get their circumstances more settled, get a payment, get ID, get some counselling started before re-entering the systems in schools
- **Under utilisation of youth workers**
 - Youth Workers and their expertise are being overlooked. Some Student Support Officers have a youth work background and some do not. Youth Workers need to be in the room more.
- **Young refugees**
 - Language barrier and the trauma when they arrive
 - Having to contribute to the home/cultural responsibilities. Expected to financially contribute to family from about year 10

- **Lack of Human Rights Approach**

Feedback session on disengagement from school

- **Cohorts of young people disengaging**
 - Cohorts disengaging include: Aboriginal YP, YP in OOHC, YP from refugee and migrant backgrounds, YP with intellectual disabilities.
 - Rise in gang activity which is impacting in disengagement from schools
 - New cohort is the YP who studied from home and loved it, and prefer that and may also be experiencing mental health issues
 - Street based services reporting young people at ages 10 -12 engaging in at risk activities late at night or not at school
- **Programs and approaches**
 - First nations – culturally appropriate resources in schools and more engagement from the schools with parents and family
 - Importance of having community and elders connected with the school (community led connection)
 - Post-COVID cohort of young people returning to in-school learning have presented with increasing anxiety and challenges. There is a new cohort that were content with at-home learning and support to get them to attend would be welcomed.
 - Support with mental health and self-harm behaviours - issues are presenting younger and younger, so early intervention is important.
 - For YP accessing OOHC support is very challenging to engage with education due to lack of resources
 - Greater need for schools to reach out to NGOs for support with the young people.
 - Some schools do not expel or suspend students, have problem solving meetings and come together as staff to resolve the issue as soon as possible. Their YP are already disengaged so further suspension does not help. Some students are being suspended for not attending mainstream schools.
 - Those that fall through the gaps, some agencies do not have the resources to support young people. Some students might need 6 months support coming from a trauma informed approach. Some young people require more time and support than others.

Government Roundtable on Education

On 20 August 2022 Youth Action brought together member of the Steering Committee, key NGO partners, and NSW Government representatives for a roundtable on collaboration and information sharing in a hybrid environment of in-person and online. The group was updated on the ongoing work of the Steering Committee, the feedback from the NGO Forum, and then collectively discussed solutions for education and decrease disengagement.

Programs Identified through the process

- Connected Communities - <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/connected-communities>
- Student Behaviour Strategy - <https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/attendance-behaviour-and-engagement/behaviour-strategy>
- Inclusive, Engaging and Respectful Schools - <https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/whole-school-approach/inclusive--engaging-and-respectful-schools>
- Perfect Presence Pilot - <https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/attendance-behaviour-and-engagement/perfect-presence-program>
- Student Support Officers - <https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/counselling-and-psychology-services/student-support-officers>
- Education Court Liaison Officer (ECLOs) <https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/attendance-behaviour-and-engagement/education-court-liaison>
- Get Back in the Game - <https://education.nsw.gov.au/skills-nsw/students-and-job-seekers/low-cost-and-free-training-options/get-back-in-the-game>
- The Albury Project - <https://www.nswmentalhealthcommission.com.au/content/showcasing-albury-project>
- **School link** - The program supports the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in contact, or at risk of contact, with the NSW criminal justice system. Builds capacity & supports YP in the Justice System to re-engage with school.
- **Complex Case Consultation Project** -The focus of the project is on early intervention and targeting young people across the state from school grade 5 to 7 who are at risk of disengaging from education and who are at risk of entering the criminal justice system.
- **School Bags Project** -Provide back packs to services & YP including, stationary, personal hygiene, sensory equipment, MH information
- **Advantage Pilot Study** -A current study being implement is designed to test the feasibility of using Cognitive Remediation Therapy (CRT) and Social Cognitive Remediation Therapy (SCRT) as combined treatments for young people in custodial settings experiencing mental illness and cognitive difficulties. It is proposed that a number of key factors related to cognitive problems secondary to mental illness can be addressed in order to reduce recidivism, prevent further deterioration of quality of life and enhance development of life skills; that is to improve the young person's overall functioning.
- **TEEN GOT IT** -specifically for young people aged 12 to 17 years who display oppositional and conduct problems with the aim of intervening to change their trajectory and reduce the likelihood of entering the criminal justice system.
- **School based therapeutic group program based in Western Sydney Schools – 15 week** structured group therapy for young people and their parent/caregiver undertaken in schools selected in collaboration with Department of Education Network Specialist Facilitators. The group intervention is based on an evidence based program called Coping Power

- **Individualised telehealth therapeutic program which has a state-wide reach – 5 week individualised** telehealth program for YP and their parent was developed in response to Covid-19. This program is based on elements of Coping Power and another evidence based program targeting adolescent domestic violence called Step Up [15], these evidence based programs are based on cognitive behavioural therapy and emotion coaching principles. In the short time that the telehealth program has been running clinicians have noted that YP and their families referred to this program are often in crisis and requiring support at a critical time, when familial relationships are strained and/or the YP is at risk of school suspension/expulsion

Recommendations identified

- Fund schools together with the Youth Sector to map the resources in their areas so they can refer young people to support
- Increase level of engagement between schools and youth sector - learn examples where this is working – i.e. youth conferencing, SSOs and ECLOs
- Offer a broader range of activities for young people including arts and culture programs
- Independent advocates for young people within the school systems
- Make mentoring programs more available in schools
- Conduct review of programs that are working and determine the key tenants of these programs and approaches to be replicated across the state
- State wide and regional working groups to look at vulnerable cohort of young people

NGO Forum on Collaboration and information sharing: Key Elements of feedback

On 24 February 2022 Youth Action held an online NGO Forum of over 60 NGOs to focus on good forms of collaboration and information sharing. The group was updated on the ongoing work on the Sterring Committee, and the topic of collaboration and information sharing was presented and opened for discussion and feedback. The NGOs were split into facilitated breakout rooms to share solutions and examples to inform the larger discussion.

Feedback from the forum is categorized under the following:

1. Major issues affecting young people
2. Key tenants of collaboration
3. Examples of collaboration

Major issues affecting young people

- Issue of disengagement due to covid - young people have become used to not being chased up follow up by services. Only followed up by police
- Fines for young people - mostly related breaches of public health orders
- Increase in negative interaction between young people and police

- Many locally based youth services particularly in the regions, still have not returned postcovid
- A significant rise in young people needing mental health services and services can't meet demand
- Increasing issues around housing and homelessness, particularly YP who have experienced domestic and family violence
- The criminalization of young people through the use of Section 28 of the bail act
- Given service delivery changes it has been more difficult to engage young people back into education and employment services
- Lack of long-term, sustainable investment in early intervention programs and services offered by the youth sector to reduce young's contact with the justice system
- Over-servicing can be an issue in some areas, young people and communities feel overwhelmed and don't know who to go to and end up disengaging.

Key tenants of collaboration

- Different caseworkers in different fields, having opportunity to meet together and discuss
- Face-to-face engagement with a range of organisations leads to better outcomes. Better information flow between everyone, and young people having control of how that information spreads
- Having internal systems to centralise and have a case-management model, to ensure keyplayers are together and young people in control of that process
- Importance of consistency especially given the changing of support requirements and loss of momentum.
- When funding bodies are able to participate consistently in interagency processes to address issues, this build relationships and allows for more openness on all sides to explore solutions
- Recognition that good collaboration and networking requires resourcing.

Examples of collaboration

- Often examples were localised in various metro and regional locations, these could be replicated
- Youth network meetings – the role of youth development officers in Councils or NGO's can be an asset as they often coordinate various youth interagency networks, both NGO and govt reps
- Example of ACCO working with Government around WDOs for vaccinations
- Good examples of work with SSO at a local level - where NGOs hot desked in school (virtual during covid), SSOs are another asset that can be utilised to bring NGOs and Government together
- "A Place to Go" model in Penrith a collaboration with police, DCJ and NGOs regarding homelessness.

Government Roundtable on Collaboration and information sharing

On 15 March 2022 Youth Action brought together member of the Steering Committee, key NGO partners, and NSW Government representatives for a roundtable on collaboration and information sharing in a hybrid environment of in-person and online. The group was updated on the ongoing work of the Steering Committee, the feedback from the NGO Forum, and then collectively discussed solutions for greater collaboration and information sharing.

Feedback is categorized under the following:

- Known Programs and Initiatives
- Suggestions for greater collaboration

Known Programs and Initiatives

- Short Term Remand Program facilitated by Whole of Govt Initiatives (WOGIT) Team Youth Justice governance groups steering and working
- Place to Go – Penrith Children’s Court, Youth Justice, & Mackillop Family Services, traumainformed short term accommodation & support
- Broadmeadow Children’s Court pilot
- YAMS meetings – police and key stakeholder interagency meetings
- Residential Joint Protocol
- Education SSO interaction with NGOs
- Perfect Presence Pilot – DoE funding provided to NGOs to support young people to re-engage in education.
- Alternative Education sites offered by NGOs
- Education Court Liaison Officers (Parramatta, Port Kemble, Surrey Hills, Campbelltown, & Broadmeadow Children's Court)
- Inclusion Through School Community - Shoalhaven, school based health-hub Our Mia Mia Wellbeing Hub
- Youth on Track
- Education meeting about detention
- Various interagency DCJ-led pilots and place-based programs
- South West Sydney DJC initiatives: Miller project, Social Impact Investment Strategy, child and family working groups, WSU & DCJ Chld and Family PhD scholarship
- “Geelong project “ in Albury COSS model
- Humanity Matters 24/7 Hotline – collaboration with Bankstown Police
- CRAFT - Youth Justice, DCJ, & Taldemunde (North Sydney) accommodation & support for young people exiting custody or moving from bail bed to crisis bed accommodation
- Youth Justice Bail Assistance Line (BAL) liaison with NGO’s to secure Bail Assistance Line placements.

Suggestions for greater collaboration

- Greater use of written protocols between NGOs and between NGOs and Government
- State-wide and regional groups to meet and discuss ongoing issues with children in conflict with the law
- Greater resources for collaboration
- Extension of 16 Part A and model of Protocol for Residential care
- Dedicated NGO liaison person on through care
- Given patchy knowledge about these two initiatives Youth Action to run ongoing information session about 16 Part A and Protocol and well as promote existing resources