

'Towards a just NT – Designing the future together'

NTCOSS CONFERENCE 2011

“Seen, Heard, Safe”: Realising the Rights of Young People”

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**Held on Thursday 14 April, 2011
Q & A Minutes - NTCOSS**

Facilitator: Tess Reinsch, Youth Policy Officer, NTCOSS

Question: Is there a Juvenile Justice Board and Community Visitor's Scheme still operating?

Answer: There is a Youth Justice Advisory Committee operating but it appears to have some grey operating guidelines – we need to get back to best practice Juvenile Justice Standards. There is also a Register for Appropriate Support Persons but again there appears to be grey operating guidelines around this service.

Question: How old were the young people on the audio? And what types of post-release programs are available to them?

Answer: They were 14 and 15 years of age. There are very few post-release programs...Victim - Offender Conferencing very rarely happens. There are no specific Youth Community Corrections programs and very little capacity for case management.

Question: While in detention do they get schooling?

Answer: Yes, there is now an education component there but it isn't really adequate.

Question: Is there any plans for instigating “performance” with these young offenders...so that they can get there stories out?

Answer: I am aware the Julalikari may be doing some work in this area – it would be great if they are.

Question: Why is it that nothing happens in the NT until there is a crisis?

Answer: The revised Youth Justice Act came into effect in 2006, there seems to be a lean towards punitive measures for youth. We need to get the broader community onboard to change attitudes for preventative measures e.g. restorative justice

Question: What kind of success have you had in lobbying government for post-release programs and re-integration programs for youth offenders?

Answer: Well as already mentioned, education programs have recently started but the young people re-engage with their old ways when they return to their communities.

Other initiatives need to be resourced. We also need inter-agency support for young people and their families when they return to their communities.

Question: Does the NT have Youth Justice Conferencing as they do in Queensland?

Answer: No we do not – we do have Victim - Offender Conferencing in the NT but as mentioned it very rarely happens. In fact, in the Youth Justice Act of 2006 (s64) there is specific provision for Victim – Offender Conferencing.