

Southern Gazette
 BELMONT
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Cost of lost youth

JUSTICE SYSTEM 'FLAWED' - REPORT

Jessica Warriner

FORTY-ONE per cent of high school students in Belmont miss more than one month of school per year.

The City of South Perth has the highest disproportion of Aboriginal young people detained in the region and the City of Victoria Park has 81 young people at severe educational risk.

They are just a few of the statistics in a new report from the Youth Partnership Program (YPP), which aims to connect at-risk youth with the right service at the right time.

While the City of Belmont has one of the smallest youth populations, the proportion of young people disengaged from education or in the justice system in Belmont ranks equal or a close second to Armadale, which has the highest rate in the area.

YPP research showed that a quarter of all receptions to Banksia Hill Detention Centre facility were from the southeastern corridor of Perth and despite high expenditure on corrective services, one in two of these detained young people returned to the justice system within two years.

"Just today, today alone, we've spent \$130,000 on locking up West Australian young people," Karina Chicote, YPP manager and manager of place-based strategies for Save the Children Australia, said at the report launch.

"And we will spend that tomorrow and the day after until by the end of this year we would have spent \$48 million just on locking up young people. What we are doing isn't quite working."

Ms Chicote said these figures indicated the current system was flawed but youth at risk could be identified and assisted.

"We know that we can predict



Burt MHR Matt Keogh and YPP manager Karina Chicote.

the next young people who are going to end up in our detention centres," she said.

"The fact that we can predict that is not good enough. If you can predict who they're going to be, then surely together we can actually prevent that path."

The YPP, steered by Save the Children Australia, established the Armadale Youth Intervention Partnership (AYIP) to assist young people at risk of offending in the area with early, targeted support.

Local brothers Jake and Brody participated in the 2016 AYIP January School Holiday Program. They have since been named the City of Armadale's Young Citizens of the Year and returned to the program to become mentors.

Burt MHR Matt Keogh said AYIP was a crucial proof of concept for similar programs.

"We can change the story of the results we're seeing, of too many young people going into juvenile detention again and again, instead of getting their lives on track," Mr Keogh said.

"I really hope that the impact of this report is that it provides government with the necessary evidence to say funding these programs, and indeed expanding these programs, is worthy and you'll get the benefit not just for the individual, not just for the community, but also to the budget bottom line."

BELMONT LOCATION BASED ANALYSIS

REDCLIFFE
BELMONT
KEWDALE

3,689 YOUNG PEOPLE
 AGED 10-19 YEARS

6.8% ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER

EDUCATION

41% OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS MISS MORE THAN ONE MONTH OF SCHOOL A YEAR

131 16-18 YEAR OLDS ARE DISENGAGED FROM EDUCATION

84 YOUNG PEOPLE AT SEVERE EDUCATIONAL RISK

JUSTICE

6 PROLIFIC PRIORITY OFFENDERS

22 YOUNG PEOPLE GIVEN COMMUNITY ORDERS

10 YOUNG PEOPLE IN JUVENILE DETENTION

IN THREE MONTHS

IN THREE MONTHS

Source: Change The Story Report.