

ACT Youth Justice Strategic Plan

2026-2031

Easy Read version



ACT Government

Acknowledgement of Country



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Peoples of Australia.

They have always looked after **Country**. Country means the land, water, sky and everything in them.



We respect the important connection they have with Country.

About Easy Read



Easy Read uses images and simple words to explain things.



We will **bold** and explain words that may be new or hard.



Easy Read has the main information.



You can find the full details on our website act.gov.au/open/youth-justice-strategic-plan



You can get someone to help you read this book.

About this book

This book is from the ACT Government. When the book says **we** it means the ACT Government.



This book is about the **ACT Youth Justice Strategic Plan**.



We will call it **the Plan** in this book.

ACT Youth Justice Strategic Plan



Youth is children and young people aged up to 21 years old. We will call them **young people** in this book.



The **youth justice system** is what happens when young people do crime. It includes

- community services



- police



- court

- Bimberi.



Bimberi is a Youth Justice Centre where some young people must stay after doing crime.



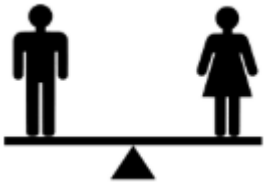
Human Rights

The Plan has a focus on **human rights**.

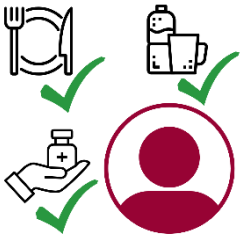


Human Rights are rules and ideas that protect everyone.

Human rights are about how all people deserve to



- be treated fairly



- have things they need, like enough food
- be safe from harm



- make their own choices.

Why the Plan is important



Some young people do crime because

- they need help



- their family needs help
- they have had **trauma**.



Trauma is when something bad happens to a person. It can



- change how they feel and act
- last for a long time.



The Plan says

- what areas of the youth justice system we want to improve



- what actions we will take to help young people.

Focus areas of the Plan

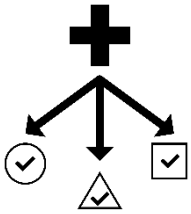


A **focus area** means something important that we want to work on first.

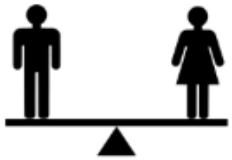


The Plan has 6 focus areas

1. Early support



2. **Divert** young people from youth justice
   Divert means a young person is not punished right away. Instead we give them help.



3. Get rid of **discrimination** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.
   Discrimination is when someone is treated unfairly because of something different about them



4. Use a caring and healing approach



5. Respect young people's rights



6. Help young people return home.

1 Early support



Early support means helping young people and their families as soon as we can.

Early support gives young people help so



- their problems do not get worse
- they are less likely to do crime.



Early support helps young people to

- heal from trauma



- feel like they belong
- do well in life.



Actions

We will continue services to help young people avoid doing crime. This means help with

- mental health problems



- **complex needs**

  Complex needs means a young person has many problems.



- sexual behaviours that could hurt others or themselves.



We will look at better ways to help young people stay in school.

We will review



- our services
- the way we report on how our services help



- changes to law to see if they work well.

2 Divert young people from youth justice



When a young person is punished they may

- be more likely to do crime again



- feel like their trauma is worse.



When we divert young people instead it can

- help them heal



- keep the community safer.



Actions

We will look at how services can help keep young people out of youth justice.



Services can include

- finding somewhere safe to live
- help to stay out of Bimberi



- help for young people who are accused of a crime



- help for young people who are waiting for court.

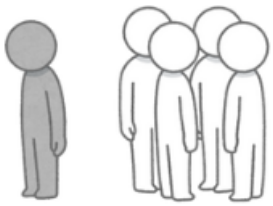


We will look at how services can help young people heal from trauma.



We will improve the way services work together to help young people.

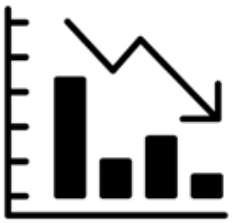
3 Get rid of discrimination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people



Discrimination is when someone is treated unfairly because of something different about them.



We know Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples often deal with discrimination.



We want to help reduce the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the youth justice system.



Actions

We will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services so they can help more people.



We will look at why Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are often not diverted from youth justice.



We will learn from reports that tell us how to best help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.



We will talk with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to help us understand.

We will continue mental health services for young people.

4 Use a caring and healing approach



A caring and healing approach means we will help young people to

- heal from trauma



- get the help they need
- go on to live a good life.

A caring and healing approach is for all young people. We want to help young people who



- are at risk of doing crime
- are already in Bimberi.



Actions

We will make a **model of care** for Bimberi.



A model of care means a plan for how we will help young people in Bimberi.



We will look at better ways to help young people stay in school.

We will look at the services for young people in Bimberi. This includes



- alcohol and drug services



- counselling



- health services.

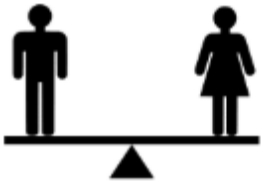
5 Respect young people's rights



Respect means listening to young people and caring about how they feel.



Rights are rules about how people should be treated.



For example, you have the right to

- be treated fairly



- be safe



- get help from a lawyer.



Actions

We will review the law to make sure it protects young people and their rights.



We will look at how courts could work faster for young people.



We will look at how we can use body scans instead of strip searches.



We will work with people who check on how we run Bimberi to make sure

- young people get services they need



- we protect the rights of young people.



We will check actions from other plans that tell us how to support people with disability.

6 Help young people return home



Some young people who do crime must spend time in Bimberi. Going home after Bimberi can feel scary.



We will help young people return home.

This means help with things like



- finding a job



- a safe place to live



- going to school

- support for good mental health.



Actions

We will help young people to find a safe place to live when they return home from Bimberi.



We will work with other services to help young people in Bimberi join in their community.



We will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services to help young people return home.

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