

# Justice Reinvestment Portfolio Review

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# Introduction

PRF works for a future where people and places have what they need to thrive. Since 2021, PRF has funded for-purpose organisations working in justice reinvestment, an approach that redirects funding from prisons to preventative initiatives. Recognising that people experiencing disadvantage are more likely to end up in prison and that imprisonment will further compound their disadvantage, the approach aims to reduce contact with the justice system.

From 2021-2025, PRF invested a total \$53.1 million in 15 partnerships. Ten of these partnerships focus on site-level work spanning 34 communities across five jurisdictions, almost all of them First Nations communities. The five other partnerships work to influence federal and state level policies and practices affecting site-level outcomes, through justice-related advocacy. (See Appendix A for grant partners and Appendix B for sites).

In May 2025 we undertook a review of PRF's justice reinvestment grants, which assessed the outcomes generated and insights learned so far. It also established a baseline against which we can conduct subsequent reviews in future years.

PRF has three distinct investment areas in its justice reinvestment portfolio:

1. Invest in place-based, community-led initiatives
2. Influence the enabling environment
3. Build the research and evidence necessary to demonstrate the value of investing in these initiatives.

The review examined outcomes and insights across all three areas, drawing on baseline and outcome targets agreed with grant partners and qualitative learnings from the PRF team.

In this report we present the review's key findings.

It is important to note that much of the progress towards a justice reinvestment approach over the last few years reflects the long-term effort and commitment of our grant partners and the communities they work with. While PRF and others have framed the current work as 'justice reinvestment', the business of nurturing and protecting young people, supporting families, providing cultural safety and responding to community need has been the work of communities for generations; often in the context of a policy environment damaging to young people's health and safety. Justice reinvestment is an invitation to governments and others to support this work through meaningful structural change. We hope that the findings of this review will further these collective efforts.

## What is justice reinvestment?

Justice reinvestment is a community-led approach that seeks to invest in place-based initiatives aimed at preventing crime and addressing its underlying causes. The savings created from the reduction in costs within the criminal justice system, particularly prisons, are reinvested into community to fund these initiatives in a virtuous cycle. Justice reinvestment recognises that people who experience disadvantage are more likely to end up in prison, and that imprisonment can further compound their disadvantage. The aims of justice reinvestment therefore, are to reduce contact with the justice system and improve outcomes for people and their communities. While justice reinvestment approaches often focus on pathways for children and young people, they also recognise that stable families and communities are at the heart of better outcomes for everyone.

In Australia in 2025, the scope and operation of government funding under the banner of justice reinvestment differs depending on jurisdiction. For example, Commonwealth and NSW programs offer funding only to First Nations communities, whereas in the ACT justice reinvestment is a policy framework that applies to all members of the community.

While many communities across the country now enjoy government investment in community-led initiatives, the promise of justice reinvestment – that community-led prevention approaches can reduce demand for the criminal justice system and thereby create cost savings that fund a cycle of place-based investments – is yet to be fully realised by establishing appropriate reinvestment mechanisms.

However, there are promising approaches being developed, including the Victorian Government's Early Intervention Investment Framework, which seeks to capture the long-term savings of a range of early intervention initiatives, including but not limited to the justice portfolio. A reinvestment framework is also being developed by the Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research at the University of Technology Sydney.

# Background and context

## Link between disadvantage and contact with the justice system for Australia's children and young people

In Australia, a disproportionate number of children and young people experiencing pronounced disadvantage end up in prison. On an average day in 2023-24, children and young people from the lowest socioeconomic areas were about 6 times as likely to be under youth justice supervision as those from the highest economic areas.<sup>1</sup>

Social determinants of criminal justice contact include a history of out of home (foster) care, poor access to school education, unsupported mental health or cognitive disability, problematic alcohol and other drug use, unstable housing and early contact with police.<sup>2</sup> A person's likelihood of offending is also influenced by their background, life experience and where they live. Colonisation and its impacts have meant that First Nations peoples have been subject to reactive and punitive policies that impede the capacity of communities to drive long-term, positive change, and cause ongoing harm.<sup>3</sup>

Data over 15 years shows a decline in the overall number of children and young people involved in crime in Australia, yet reoffending rates continue to rise. This trend highlights the perpetuation of a cycle of reoffending that persists in part due to media coverage of 'youth crime waves' and the adoption of 'tough on crime' policies. While these are responses to genuine and legitimate concerns about community safety, particularly in some specific places, the evidence shows that more punitive measures are ultimately ineffective in reducing reoffending.<sup>4</sup> Among children and young people aged 10-17, who were under sentenced youth justice supervision between 2000-01 and 2021-22, 41% re-entered sentenced supervision before turning 18.<sup>5</sup> While the decline in overall numbers is a positive development, it indicates that the most under-resourced individuals are experiencing further disadvantage through

repeated imprisonment, and underscores the need for continued efforts to tackle the inequities in detention rates.

The financial cost of imprisonment is significant. In 2023-2024, the average cost per young person per year subject to detention-based supervision was more than \$1.2m, with some states and territories exceeding this figure, and far exceeding community-based alternatives.<sup>6</sup> Most detained children and young people are unsentenced (80%), meaning they are still awaiting trial or sentencing.<sup>7</sup>

## The justice reinvestment approach and PRF's investments

When PRF first considered the justice reinvestment approach, international evidence—particularly from the United States—suggested its effectiveness, but further testing in the Australian context was necessary. With growing support from the non-profit, legal, and advocacy sectors, and increasing government engagement, PRF was well positioned to help test the approach and build evidence of its efficacy for future government adoption.

In seeking to achieve this, PRF has used its three key investment levers as follows:

**1. Investing in place-based, community-led initiatives** – ten of PRF's 15 grant partners are working in communities to test a variety of justice reinvestment approaches. All are community-led, data-driven initiatives that address the root causes of incarceration. They employ justice-specific interventions (e.g. fine minimisation schemes and youth bail programs) alongside community designed early intervention and prevention initiatives, such as at-risk youth engagement programs and driver license programs.

**2. Influencing the enabling environment** – Law and policy reform is a change lever that can drastically affect desired outcomes, either positively or negatively, causing immediate, marked changes to existing incarceration trends. This is why we fund work to support evidence-based policy and legislative change. PRF also promotes collaboration between government, NGOs, philanthropy and the community sector through direct involvement in governance groups and financial support of community peaks. Our goals include creating infrastructure that enables community-level insights to inform systems-level decision-making. Other key areas that we seek to work with our grant partners to change are justice system practices, resource flows and cross-agency collaboration.

**3. Building the research and evidence** – PRF is funding evaluations of these investments to contribute to the evidence of what works, as well as to encourage continuous improvement and government investment and reform.

1. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Youth Justice in Australia 2023-4 (Web Report, 28 March 2025) [Youth justice in Australia 2023-24, Socioeconomic area - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#). 2. McCausland, R. and Baldry, E. (2023) "Who does Australia Lock Up? The Social Determinants of Justice", International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy, 12(3), pp. 37-53. 3. To learn more about the vast body of law and policies that have impacted First Nations people since 1788, see: [Towards Truth](#). 4. Weatherburn, D 2021, 'Imprisonment, reoffending and Australia's crime decline', Judicial Officers Bulletin, vol. 33, no. 8. 5. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2023, Young people returning to sentenced youth justice supervision 2021-22, AIHW, Canberra, viewed 17 March 2025, <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/youth-justice/young-people-returning-to-sentenced-supervision/summary>. 6. Productivity Commission (2025). Report on government services 2025: Youth justice services, table 17A.20. Note: Annual costs have been calculated by multiplying daily costs by 365. 7. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Youth Justice in Australia 2023-4 (Web Report, 28 March 2025): [Youth justice in Australia 2023-24, Unsentenced detention - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#).

## Case study: Mouny Yarns

Mount Druitt in Western Sydney is located on Darug country. It sits within the Blacktown City Council area and has the largest First Nations urban population per capita, both in NSW and the nation, with 8,195 people - 2.7% of the local population. The First Nations Community of Mount Druitt is very diverse and made up of families that originate from all over New South Wales.

Since its inception, PRF grant partner Just Reinvest NSW in Mount Druitt, has managed to build community consensus about what can help young First Nations people from the area who experience over-policing and disadvantage, to thrive. After consultation with young people, it now runs multiple programs informed by community need. OzTag is one of them.

In January 2024, the Just Reinvest NSW Mount Druitt team successfully won Youth Justice NSW's tender to deliver the evidence-based Youth on Track early engagement program, supporting 60 young people per year to avoid future criminal justice contact through a community co-designed program. The team also created Mouny Yarns, a youth-led creative storytelling and advocacy project. One part of the project is a powerful film that describes the impact criminalisation has had on young people and their families. They also developed an accompanying report, which includes youth stories and key policy and program recommendations that can support young First Nations people in Mount Druitt.

The project has had widespread success. The film has been watched more than 4,000 times, featured at TEDx Youth Sydney and presented at both the NSW Children's Magistrates and Registrars Conference and the NSW Justice Health Conference. Mouny Yarns has opened conversations for change with key stakeholders including PCYC and Youth Justice NSW. The Executive Director of Youth Justice, the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People, and several judges are now advocates for the report and its recommendations.

See further: [Mouny Yarns website](#)



**“Sometimes the best thing has been just being surrounded by the brothers, having a safe space to yarn.”**

*Participant of Oz Tag program run by Just Reinvest NSW Mount Druitt.*

## Findings: 1. Community-level impact

### Fewer young people are being imprisoned in the communities we support

Based on aggregated data from our partners' own reporting, they had collectively reached a minimum of 3,352 people (children, young people and adults) at the time this report was prepared. At least 480 children and young people had received intensive support, 114 of whom had previous contact with police or courts and had avoided further contact. Given our partners are mostly First Nations focused, and that 64% of First Nations young people return to sentenced youth justice supervision within 12 months, we can reasonably estimate that 64% of the 114 - or 73 children and young people - would likely have returned to detention were it not for the work of our grant partners. This represents 10.3% of the number of children and young people in detention (709 in total) on an average night in Australia.

**“I said to myself the day I got out of jail ‘I’m never going back’ and it’s been good ever since the day I’ve come. Felt like home walking in here, feels like you belong to something.”**

*Jaimun, Advocate,  
speaking about Tiraapendi Wodli in Port Adelaide.*

### More options for diverting people from the criminal justice system now exist

As a result of the work of our grant partners, more children and young people are being diverted from the justice system through police cautions, Youth Justice Conferences, and community-led programs. In addition, more First Nations-led, culturally safe services exist that provide mentoring, legal support, and family-based interventions, reducing court and custody contact. Children and young people also have more safe places to gather and access to more employment and education programs.

### Offending has decreased

At the time of reporting, in NSW, youth detention rates have been declining and are lower than in 2019 in all PRF-supported sites. This is likely to have been impacted by recent changes to bail laws. Not all jurisdictions have readily available site-level crime data, but in NSW this information is available from the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.

### Scaling too quickly can dilute impact

When organisations experience success, such as reducing crime in a community, there is often pressure to expand. Early success can attract attention and funding, which drives growth. If not managed carefully, however, this can lead to a loss of focus and overstretching of resources, making it harder to sustain the original success and maintain meaningful outcomes. Progress can only be made alongside community relationship building, and it takes time to build capacity, establish appropriate governance models and create sustainable functions that support the delivery of programs.

### Justice reinvestment is a long-term project: more diversions were seen in site-based projects after their third year

Looking at the aggregate data across sites, it is clear that the number of diversions increase over time. This is consistent with research from the United States, where outcomes such as sustained reductions in reoffending or improvements in public safety have taken five to 10 years or more to fully emerge. Investors need to stay the course to help realise the impact of this work.

### Each diversion demonstrates cost-effectiveness when compared to the cost of incarceration

Justice reinvestment is not only more effective at reducing reoffending, but also cheaper than youth detention. However, for governments to maximise savings, enough children and young people must be diverted to enable the reduction in the number of existing youth detention centres (because of the high fixed costs associated with maintaining a youth detention centre, even if there are less people in the centre). One of PRF's working hypotheses is that if we can work with partners to divert 10% of young people from prison, we can create a 'tipping point' to begin to generate a downward trend that would influence government budget and prison construction projections.

## Findings: 2. Community readiness

### Grant partners now have more robust governance structures and a greater proportion of them are First Nations-led

Our investments have enabled grant partners to strengthen their governance structures, ensuring sustainable leadership, self-determination, and the potential for long-term impact.

### Communities have access to more information about justice reinvestment, training to offset skills shortages, as well as increased access to workplace flexibility and corporate services

Grant partners have provided capability support, on-the-job training, IT, Finance and HR support and communications training to communities across Australia. As a result, a publicly accessible range of toolkits and resources now exists to support communities to launch or explore justice reinvestment initiatives.

### Community readiness increases opportunities for further investment

Once sites have a level of readiness and some clear measures of success, it is easier to attract further support. We have seen this in several communities where early support for community readiness building has enabled them to attract funding from additional sources including governments.

### Government readiness needs to match community readiness

While we talk a lot about community readiness for justice reinvestment, government readiness is also critical. For the justice reinvestment approach to reap long term benefits, governments need to work more effectively across agencies, align policy with evidence-based practice, shift resources towards community-led prevention and diversion

approaches which will over time reduce the costs of courts, police and prisons and avoid regressive law reform.

Governments also need to implement systems to track the outcomes and avoided costs generated across portfolios to ensure accountability and so that savings can be reinvested in communities through the regular budget processes.

### Regional and rural sites face staffing challenges not faced in metro locations

A key challenge for regional and rural grant partners is attracting and retaining qualified and skilled staff. This can result in unfilled positions and high turnover, and remaining staff bearing a greater burden, often leading to burnout.

### Centralised backbone teams can effectively support remote and regional place-based work

These teams can help support isolated staff, maintain project continuity, provide data expertise, help strengthen local governance, and coordinate work across multiple sites. They can also provide finance, payroll, HR, IT and administrative functions, ensuring good governance, accountability and solvency.

### Community divisions are a common challenge for site-level implementation

The Australian justice reinvestment model centres on local community leadership. However, there is often a live question about who comprises 'the community' and whether leadership groups are truly representative. It is not the job of government or funders to 'solve' community division, but it is important to listen meaningfully with entire communities and support community leadership-building early on to ensure an initiative's success.

### Case Study – Social Reinvestment WA (SRWA) Justice Reinvestment Summit

A WA-wide Justice Reinvestment Summit, an initiative of PRF grant partner SRWA, brings together justice reinvestment communities annually. 2023–2024 saw a combined 150 participants attending from more than 50 organisations across the state including 10 remote communities, to build common understanding, foster collaboration, and enhance skills in justice reinvestment.

Between Summits, SRWA undertakes regional visits and on the ground workshops and training in communities and provides a suite of 'getting started' and core justice reinvestment skill toolkits and resources.

The Summit's impact between its first and second year was evident in the mobilisation of community organisations, who actively developed tailored justice reinvestment plans for their respective communities. Six communities secured federal justice reinvestment grants, and seven more are working actively on justice reinvestment. 12 of these 13 sites had prior contact with SRWA before beginning their justice reinvestment initiatives. This shift demonstrates the Summit's success in empowering local communities to take ownership of justice reform, and the role of supporting bodies as a catalyst for changemaking.

**See: SRWA's Role in Supporting Justice Reinvestment – Social Reinvestment WA**

## Findings: 3. Growing the evidence base

Fundamental to the justice reinvestment approach is the ability to measure impact at a community level. By harnessing inclusive, ethical, and equitable data tools, communities are empowered to understand local trends and make informed decisions about the services they need.

### Sector data capability has improved

As a result of our investments, partners have better data capability and there are more First Nations community data experts. First Nations community members are being upskilled in data capture and curating community stories. Evaluation toolkits have been developed to help communities understand, communicate and measure what's happening in their communities and for their young people.

### Many communities have better access to local data and have greater data sovereignty

Local data dashboards exist for many NSW sites, and one NSW community has built an interactive platform using localised data.

### Government data collection and dissemination practices are improving to make localised data available

For example, the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research has changed how it counts and reports on crime statistics so that communities can access local data and make decisions based on that data. Localised data is critical if Indigenous Data Sovereignty is to be realised.

### An evidence base for justice reinvestment in Australia is in development

Several evaluations, including six funded by PRF, have been commissioned to demonstrate the impact of the justice reinvestment approach. The first final report is expected in 2026.<sup>11</sup> The data systems infrastructure built over the last three years ensures we can measure future impact.

### Building and embedding data capability needs to be ongoing

Even with the uptick in data capability, data staff – particularly those working in isolated communities – need ongoing training and support.

### Case study – Palimaa Interactive Platform – Maranguka, Bourke

In Bourke, justice reinvestment organisation Maranguka has developed the 'Palimaa' (Where the Sky Meets the Land) data platform as a mechanism for enacting Indigenous Data Sovereignty and enabling place-based, data-driven decision making. Bourke Tribal Council governs the data and the data itself is owned by the First Nations peoples whose life experience it reflects.

For example, one piece of data on Palimaa shows that the number of young males released from sentenced youth detention and who committed a new offence within 12 months has trended downwards over the 10 years since the work of Maranguka began.

Young males reoffending within 12 months - 10 year trend



**Source: NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research and Palimaa Interactive Platform – Maranguka**

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix D for further information about learning and evaluation activities.

## Findings: 4. Ecosystem collaboration

For broad change to occur, multiple players within the system need to work together to ensure changes are impactful and enduring. In justice reinvestment, governments need to be working towards the same outcomes as communities or there is the risk of them undermining the work. Collaboration provides the opportunity to build relationships, gain different perspectives, share knowledge and expertise, develop mutual goals, provide support, leverage the influence of different stakeholders and achieve consensus for collective impact.

### **A national community-controlled representative body for justice reinvestment is now resourced and active.**

The Justice Reinvestment Network Australia now supports a community of practice, research and advocacy for all Australian sites.

### **A measurement and evaluation community of practice is in place.**

It brings together data managers from across 14 organisations nationwide to share knowledge, network and access peer support.

### **Groups of funders, backbone organisations, universities, NGOs and communities collectively support justice reinvestment sites.**

Grant partners regularly bring together a range of stakeholders – for example, universities, charities, legal services and youth services – to work collectively to address criminalisation and overrepresentation in the criminal justice system.

### **Regular state-based justice reinvestment forums bring together government, NFPs, community and philanthropy.**

These occur in NSW and WA and are opportunities to share achievements, experiences, tools and knowledge to increase the capability of all participating sites, as well as to work towards consensus on key strategic goals.

### **Government and philanthropy strengthen impact when working together to support justice reinvestment**

For example, the funding partnership between PRF and the NSW Government has resulted in increased funding for justice reinvestment approaches, improved access to government resources, expertise and data for all stakeholders, and the opportunity to use government's convening power to bring stakeholders together.

### **Case study: TARGET ZERO**

TARGET ZERO is a collective impact initiative in Melbourne's West that brings together a coalition of actors to drive collaboration, develop shared goals and co-design activities and interventions to tackle the complex, intersecting root causes that lead to overrepresentation of First Nations and multicultural young people and young people in residential care in the criminal justice system. The goal is to reduce the overrepresentation and criminalisation of young people in the local government areas of Brimbank, Wyndham and Melton in Victoria to zero.

In their first demonstration project, Project 100, which aims for 100% school inclusion rates, TARGET ZERO entered into a signed collaboration agreement with Wyndham Central Secondary College and the Department of Education and have achieved an increase in coordination of services and activities at the school, as well as a decrease in baseline exclusion data. Specifically, expulsions are down from four in 2022 to zero in 2024, and consecutive five-day suspensions are down from 27 in 2022 to zero in 2024. This is largely due to the school leadership and the Department of Education's commitment to finding alternative means of addressing disruptive behaviour.

## Findings: 5. Influencing justice-related policies and practices

In the last three years we have seen some key negative shifts in legislation influencing site-level outcomes. For example, the NT, Queensland, NSW and Victoria have all tightened bail laws for children and young people in relation to particular offences, making it more difficult to obtain bail before a court hearing and increasing the likelihood that children and young people will be held in detention while they await a verdict, which has a direct impact on the number of young people incarcerated. While these changes reflect a response to legitimate community safety concerns, as highlighted earlier, the long term impact is likely to increase rates of recidivism and reduce the positive effects of justice reinvestment approaches.

### **The age of criminal responsibility has been (or will be) raised in three jurisdictions.**

Two of our partners have also been leading the national Raise the Age campaign. During the course of these partnerships, the ACT raised the age to 14 years. Victoria raised it to 12 years. Tasmania committed to raising it to 14 years by 2029 (and has also committed to raising the age of detention to 16 years). All our partners, and young people themselves, recognise the importance of taking accountability for one's actions. However, increasing the age of criminal responsibility can deliver both social and economic benefits, with the potential to reduce reoffending rates if the opportunity is also taken to identify children at risk and enable engagement with appropriate early intervention services.

### **Potential prison infrastructure spending has been reduced in some jurisdictions**

In 2024, Tasmania discarded long-standing plans for a new prison in order to ensure a greater focus on early intervention and prevention measures; an outcome that our partners had been advocating for since 2020. However, other jurisdictions continue to invest in prisons.

### **Successful justice reinvestment initiatives have positively influenced government policy**

For example, the Youth Engagement Night Officers program, a successful initiative from Kimberley justice reinvestment site Olabud Doogethu, was incorporated into the Kimberley Juvenile Justice strategy, funded and rolled out across the entire region.

### **Changes to NSW Police practices have reduced criminal justice contact for some First Nations people**

NSW Police previously had a suspect targeting practice that led to a disproportionate increase in criminal justice contact for young First Nations people. Many of our grant partners shared the experiences of their communities to help highlight the problems the practice was causing and as a result of their work and many others the practice ceased in 2023.



Target Zero program, West Melbourne

## Findings: 6. Influencing funding flows

### **Governments have increased resourcing to justice reinvestment approaches**

The Commonwealth has committed \$69m across 30 sites, ongoing funding of \$20m per year from 2026-2027, and an additional \$10m over four years to expand justice reinvestment in the Central Australia region. It also committed \$12.5m over four years to design and establish an independent National Justice Reinvestment Unit. The NSW Government committed \$9.8m in 2022 until mid 2027.

These figures are small when we consider that Australia spends \$6.8 billion on prisons every year.<sup>12</sup> The challenge remains of encouraging government investment not just in local place-based programs but across the system.

### **Place-based, First Nations-led grant partners are attracting government funding that previously flowed to non-First Nations-led organisations**

Governments are beginning to recognise the importance of culturally safe, culturally appropriate, community-based interventions.

### **The design of a justice reinvestment mechanism is underway**

The promise of justice reinvestment is that community-led prevention approaches can reduce demand for the criminal justice system and create cost savings that fund a cycle of place-based investments. However, despite much community-based work and the expansion of justice reinvestment grant programs, a mechanism for reinvestment has not been fully developed or implemented at either the State or Federal level, although approaches like the Victorian Government's Early Intervention Investment Framework are similar.

In 2024 a team of academics and practitioners was awarded a James Martin Institute grant to develop a mechanism. The grant pairs the team with NSW Government ministers, departments, and other decision-makers who will provide input into design. The team aims to have some models and pathways for reinvestment implementation in NSW later in 2026.

### **Bipartisan agreement on a reinvestment mechanism is critical to achieving positive and sustained changes and wider justice reform**

A reinvestment mechanism will rely on government to give effect to it. Historically, justice reinvestment has received support from parties across the political spectrum, although support has shifted over time with changes of Minister or government.

Similarly, international evidence shows that the best chance for lasting positive systems reform in criminal justice is to de-politicise the issue through genuine multi-partisan support.



Tiraapendi Wodli, Port Adelaide (South Australia)

## Findings: 7. Influencing the public narrative

### There is more media coverage of evidence-based alternatives to incarceration

Law and order politics continue to dominate the electoral cycle of some jurisdictions, but even in jurisdictions where the ‘tough on crime’ narrative and policy approach are prevailing features, we are beginning to see ‘tough on crime’ measures routinely packaged with discussions, and even funding promises, around evidence-based alternatives to incarceration.

Additionally, because of thorough media monitoring by our partners, we know that the media has been more persistent in scrutinising government policies and actions to address the drivers of crime. The evidence-based counter narrative not only “exists”, but it is far more sustained than it has ever been. There are now daily mentions of the urgent need for evidence-based justice policies in all jurisdictions.

### More people in NSW support raising the age of criminal responsibility

At a population level, at the end of 2024, we saw that the percentage of people who believe that the legal age of criminal responsibility should be raised, increased to 54%, up from 33% in early 2024.

### Advocacy partners have achieved engagement across the political spectrum

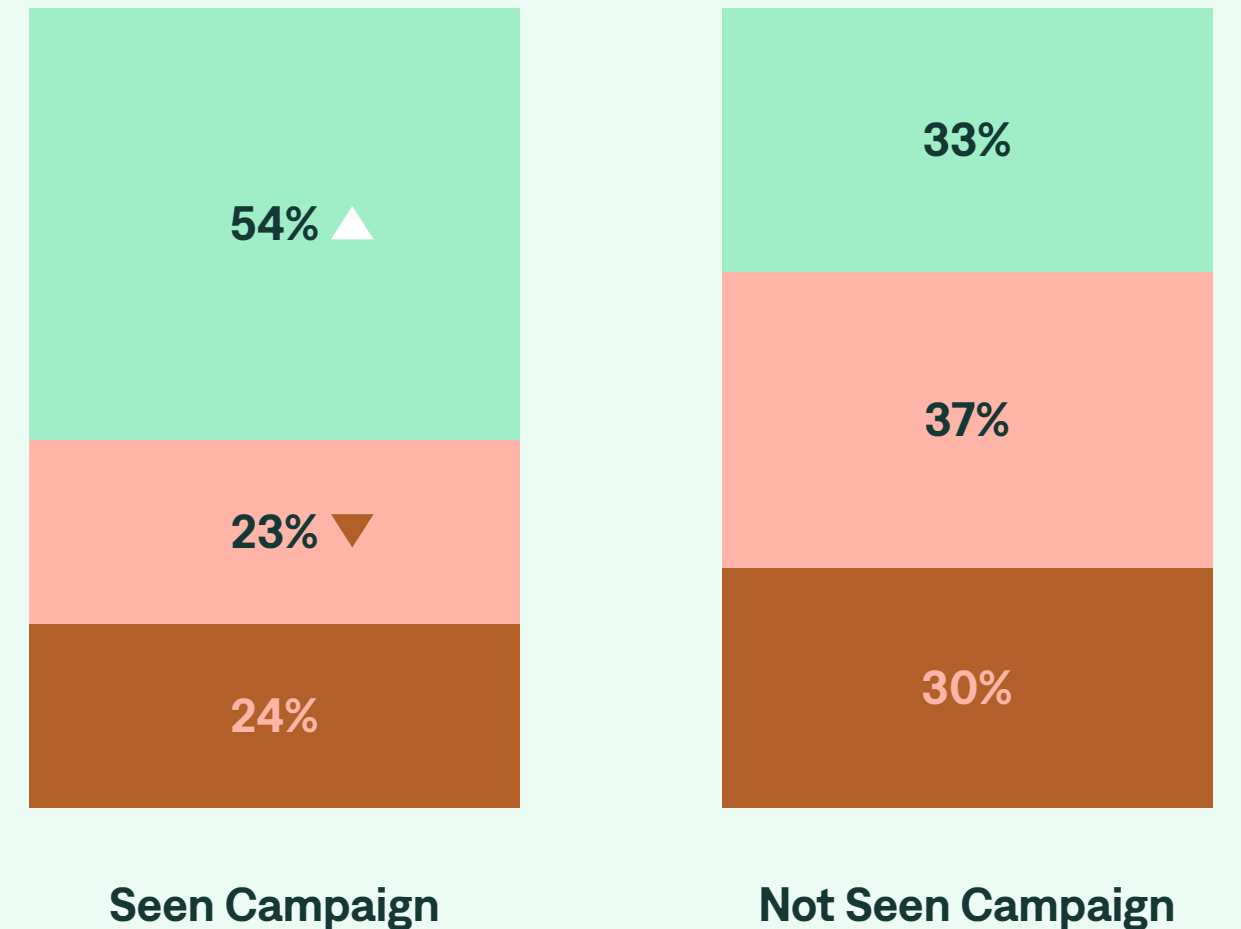
Politicians across all major parties routinely contact our justice advocacy partners for advice after a campaign or prior to their own announcements. It is significant that, after such engagement, in WA’s 2025 election all major parties made youth justice commitments that included on-country alternatives to detention and evidence-based early intervention and prevention.

### Stakeholders now regularly join forces to advocate for better criminal justice approaches

In jurisdictions where justice advocacy efforts were previously highly fragmented, there is now real and sustained cohesiveness and collaboration. Several funded PRF partners have played a pivotal role in nourishing the conditions to allow this sense of trust and connection to be built and sustained amongst diverse groups, and we applaud these considerable efforts. Such coalitions are a critical enabling feature for systems change work. This has taken time, but the impact is now starting to be realised (for example, the speed with which joint statements and events can now be created and publicised).

### How much do you agree that the legal age of criminal responsibility should be increased?

● Agree (8-10) ● Neutral (5-7) ● Disagree (0-4)



Results of NSW Raise the Age Campaign, 2024.

## Conclusion

The justice reinvestment work we support is in its initial stages and progressing well. Much enabling work has been done and systems infrastructure built, including community data capability. We are already seeing children and young people avoiding contact with the criminal justice system through engagement with more cost-effective, community-designed interventions.

Ongoing support for effective community leadership and community data capability are both critical. Future support should recognise the challenge of finding qualified staff in regional and rural sites and supporting existing staff. Justice reinvestment is a long-term project, and it is important that we invest long term in communities for impact.

It is promising to see governments investing more in First Nations led, place-based initiatives. Improved cross-agency approaches, a shift in resource flows and progressive law reform will be critical to future success. Only when the justice reinvestment approach is embedded in government practice will we see the true potential of justice reinvestment realised – safer, happier, healthier children and young people and communities determining their own futures.

**“When you get out of detention, especially for a young person, if they have no one around to support them, they’re just going to go back to the same stuff... I was able to get that support from a lot of people. And that really helped me turn my life around.”**

*Maw, beneficiary of the Target Zero program.*

# Appendicies

## Appendix A: Grants within the scope of this review

Organisation	Type	Funded Location
Aboriginal Legal Services (NSW/ACT)	Site-Level/Enabling	Bourke, NSW   Kempsey, NSW   Moree, NSW   Mount Druitt, NSW   Nowra, NSW
Anindilyakwa Royalties Aboriginal Corporation	Site-Level	Groote Eylandt, NT
Change the Record	Site-Level	National
Human Rights Law Centre	Site-Level	National
Justice and Equity Centre	Site-Level	NSW
Justice Reform Initiative	Site-Level	National
Justice Reinvestment Network Australia	Advocacy	National
Just Reinvest NSW	Site-Level/Enabling	Kempsey, NSW   Moree, NSW   Mount Druitt, NSW   Nowra, NSW
Maranguka	Site-Level	Bourke, NSW
NTCOSS	Enabling	NT
Olabud Doogethu	Site-Level	Kimberley WA
Social Reinvestment WA	Site-Level/Enabling	Several developing community sites across WA
Tiraapendi Wodli / Australian Red Cross	Site-Level	Port Adelaide, SA
WEstJustice / CMY (Target Zero)	Site-Level	West Melbourne, Victoria
Yuwaya Ngarra-li / UNSW	Site-Level	Walgett, NSW

## Appendix B: Australian justice reinvestment sites

Number of sites as of 2020 – 7 / 2024 – 37 | ✓ PRF funded

State	Organisation	Specific location	Other known funders
NSW	Cowra Information and Neighbourhood Centre	Cowra	Commonwealth JR program
	Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation	Sydney	Commonwealth JR program
✓	Just Reinvest NSW	Moree	NSW Premier's Department The Charitable Fund
✓	Just Reinvest NSW	Mount Druitt	NSW JR program Dusseldorp Forum Johnson Family Trust Ritchie Family Trust
✓	Dhina Durriti Aboriginal Corp (Learning the Macleay)	Kempsey	Stronger Places Stronger People NSW DCJ Dusseldorp Forum
	Jana Ngalee Local Aboriginal Land Council	Malabugilmah and Jubullum	NSW DCJ
✓	Maranguka	Bourke	Stronger Places Stronger People Minderoo Foundation Dusseldorp Forum
✓	South Coast Women's Health and Wellbeing Aboriginal Corporation (Waminda)	Nowra	NSW DCJ
	Toomelah Local Aboriginal Land Council	Toomelah	NSW DCJ
	Wahluu Health Aboriginal Corporation	Bathurst	NSW DCJ

State	Organisation	Specific location	Other known funders
NT	Alice Springs	Alice Springs	Commonwealth JR program
✓	Anindilyakwa Royalties Aboriginal Corporation	Groote Eylandt	Commonwealth JR program
	Kurdiji Aboriginal Corporation	Lajamanu	Commonwealth JR program
	Ngurratjuta/Pmara Ntjarra Aboriginal Corporation	Central Australia	Commonwealth JR program
	Nja-marleya Cultural Leaders and Justice Group	Maningrida	Commonwealth JR program
	NT Government Community Justice Centre partnership consortium with Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corp. and Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corp.	Alice Springs	Commonwealth JR program
	Savanna Solutions Business Services	Katherine	Commonwealth JR program
	South Coast Women's Health and Wellbeing Aboriginal Corporation (Waminda)	Nowra	NSW DCJ
	Toomelah Local Aboriginal Land Council	Toomelah	NSW DCJ
	Wahluu Health Aboriginal Corporation	Bathurst	NSW DCJ

## Appendix B: Australian justice reinvestment sites

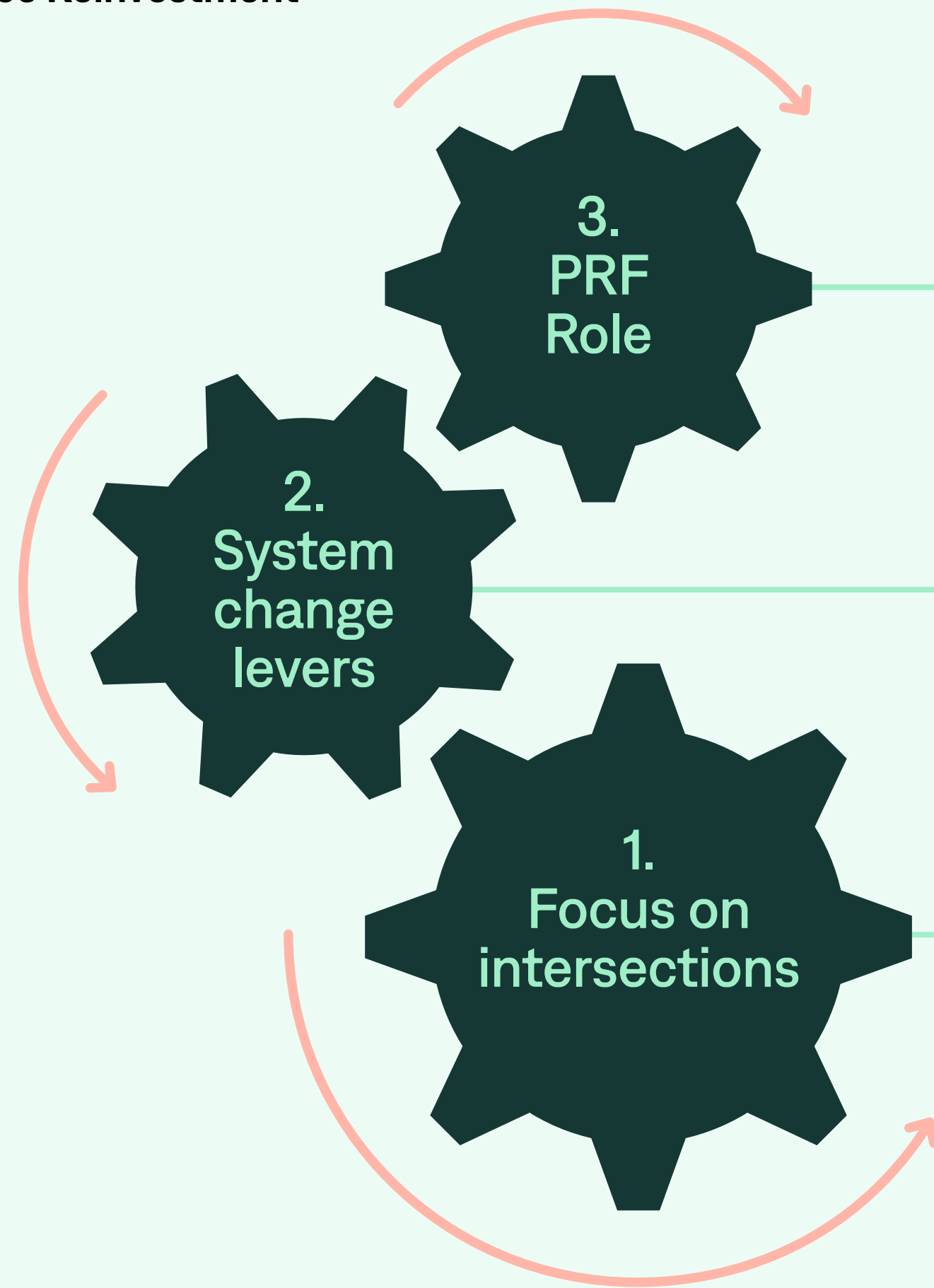
Number of sites as of 2020 – 7 / 2024 – 37 | ✓ PRF funded

State	Organisation	Specific location	Other known funders
QLD	Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation	Mossman	Commonwealth JR program
	Cape York Institute	Hope Vale	Commonwealth JR program
	Cherbourg Wellbeing Indigenous Corporation	Cherbourg	Commonwealth JR program
	Gindaja Treatment and Healing Indigenous Corporation	Yarrabah	Commonwealth JR program
	Gunawuna Jungai Limited	Doomadgee	Commonwealth JR program
	Jika Kangka Gununamanda Limited	Mornington Island	Commonwealth JR program
	Minjerribah Moorgumpin Aboriginal Corporation	North Stradbroke Island	Commonwealth JR program
	Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council	Napranum, west coast of Cape York	Commonwealth JR program
	Townsville Community Justice Group Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation	Townsville	Commonwealth JR program
SA	Healthy Dreaming	Port Augusta	Commonwealth JR program
	Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority	Meningie, Mid Murray, Murray Bridge, Murray Mallee and Raukkan	Commonwealth JR program
✓	Tiraapendi Wodli (Australian Red Cross)	Port Adelaide	SA government

State	Organisation	Specific location	Other known funders
VIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation FVPLS / Djirra	Melton, West Melbourne	Commonwealth JR program
✓	Target Zero (WestJustice and Centre for Multicultural Youth)	West Melbourne	
WA	Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia Ltd	Perth	Commonwealth JR program
	Aboriginal Male's Healing Centre Strong Spirit Strong Families	Newman, Port Hedland, Pilbara Region	Commonwealth JR program
	Ebenezer Aboriginal Corporation	Balga	Commonwealth JR program
	Emama Nguda Aboriginal Corporation	Derby	Commonwealth JR program
	Gascoyne Development Commission	Carnarvon	Commonwealth JR program
	Shire of Halls Creek	Halls Creek, Mulan, Kundat Djaru and Mindibungu	Commonwealth JR program

# Appendix C: PRF's 3x3 framework for applied systems thinking

## Justice Reinvestment



- 1. Invest** (grants support operation of backbone organisations and community sites)
- 2. Build** (our six evaluations are building evidence of what works; we are training First Nations people in data capability; we have enabled the formation of justice advocacy coalitions and have funded the national justice reinvestment network to support collaboration)
- 3. Influence** (we work closely with stakeholders on cross-sector working groups, assessment panels and partnership groups, and meet strategically with government politicians)

- 1. Technical** (diversionary programs, law reform, police practices, data collection and dissemination, breaking down government silos)
- 2. Resource flows** (design of a reinvestment mechanism)
- 3. Hearts & minds** (shifting public disclosure away from 'tough on crime' rhetoric towards early intervention and prevention responses)

- 1. People** (Children and young people, First Nations people)
- 2. Place** (34 communities across five jurisdictions)
- 3. Conditions** (social determinants of criminal justice contact)

# Appendix D: Learning and evaluation activities

