



youth affairs network qld

MEDIA RELEASE

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Youth Prison slammed

Youth Affairs Network of Queensland (YANQ) is highly disappointed by the State Government's announcement of expanding Youth Prisons costing hundreds of millions of dollars.

The State Government is continuing the age-old strategy of placing most of its investment in Youth Prisons. At the same time the Minister for Youth is saying "We can't keep doing the same things and expect a different result".

The Palaszczuk Government has poured over \$.5 billion dollars into the Youth Justice System whilst total Government investment in preventative youth services has stagnated at around \$20 million dollars. "Prevention is the most logical approach but sadly the four pillars of Government's Youth Justice Strategy do not include prevention" said YANQ Director, Siyavsh Doostkhah.

Queensland 2019 Local Hero, Youth Advocate and Vice-President of YANQ, Elijah Buol OAM said "Every year we have been raising the need for investment in the youth sector but it seems that there are more pressing priorities for the Government than the wellbeing of our young people. For all intents and purposes, it seems young people have been forsaken".

"Neglecting children should ring warning bells for the Queensland Government and the broader community" said Debbie Kilroy OAM, prominent Human Rights Advocate and a committee member of YANQ. She went on to say, "Unless we invest in children's lives, we will end up paying a much higher price both in terms of social harmony as well as financial cost to the Government. Lack of support exacerbates the chances of these children becoming entrenched in homelessness, developing ongoing mental health issues, and ending up in the criminal justice system."

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