



**MEDIA RELEASE
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Budget fails to invest in addressing youth crime

Today's Budget does not invest in alternatives to prison that enhance community safety by addressing the causes of and reducing youth offending.

Rather the Coalition Government is continuing to deliver on its "law and order" election commitments to invest in more prison beds (\$131.5 million) and continue the rollout of Protective Services Officers at train stations (\$78 million).

"We know detention is not very effective in addressing crime. However diverting young people away from the criminal justice system early on gives them a second chance, enhances their chances of rehabilitation and often means they are less likely to reoffend", says Tiffany Overall, spokesperson for Smart Justice for Young People.

Diversion offers a far less costly option than more cases going before courts or detention. Community based diversion and support programs cost about one tenth of what having a young offender in a youth justice facility costs Government.

Over \$800 million is now spent on our prisons and corrections system annually.

"A much smarter response to youth crime would be redirecting a significant portion of these funds to a scheme that guarantees children better access to necessary support services and interventions at all stages of the youth justice system. This would help young people get on with their lives and ensure good safety outcomes for the community," said Ms Overall.

For further comment contact Tiffany Overall: 9611 2422, tiffany@youthlaw.asn.au

Smart Justice for Young People represents over 30 organisations from the youth, legal and community sectors advocating for smart, evidence-based approaches to youth justice.