

I am Charlie.
I didn't like failing at school.
But I got used to it.
By 14 I was living on the streets.
I got used to it.
Now I'm 19 and on parole.
I'm sorry.
I'm learning.
I've started an apprenticeship.
I am...

#WORTH ASECOND CHANCE

Fixing Youth Justice in Victoria

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Elle Jackson

Campaign Manager – Youth Justice



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About Jesuit Social Services

Our vision – Building a just society.

Our values – In all we do, we strive to be:

- *Welcoming* – forming strong, faithful relationships
- *Discerning* – being reflective and strategic in all we do
- *Courageous* – standing up boldly to effect change

Our purpose

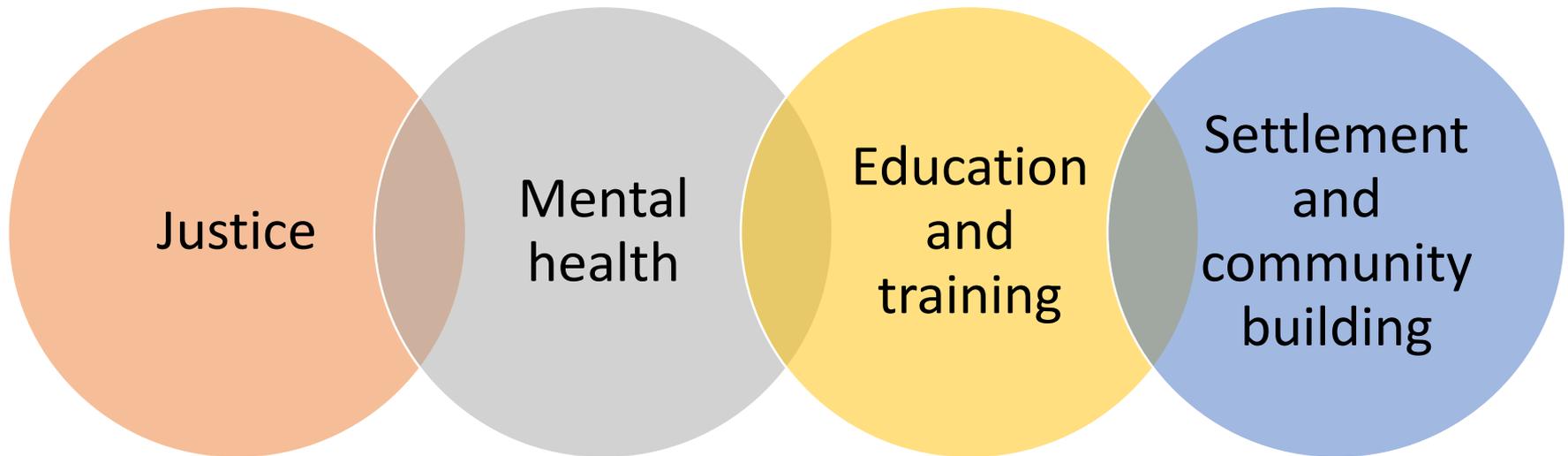
- We are a social change organisation working to build a just society where all people can live to their full potential
- We partner with community to support those most in need
- We work to change policies, practices, ideas and values that perpetuate inequality, prejudice and exclusion



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Areas of Focus



Advocacy underpins all we do. “**We DO and we INFLUENCE**”

Youth Justice in Victoria

- At a crossroads
- Youth crime trending down – ABS data show:
 - For the eighth year in a row, Victoria’s youth offender rate has dropped.
 - For the fifth year in a row, the number of youth offenders in Victoria has dropped.
 - 44% decrease in the number of young offenders from 2008/09 – 2016/17 (14,757 – 8,280)
- Media promoting stories of young ‘thugs’ and ‘gangs’
- Victorian Government and Opposition were united in their reliance on ‘tough on crime’ rhetoric in the lead up to the recent State election
- Previous successful programs at risk (e.g. dual track)
- New punitive approaches in favour (e.g. building Cherry Creek and tougher laws)
- In contrast to the direction the NT is taking following the Royal Commission
- In Victoria, an Aboriginal child is 14 times more likely to be incarcerated than a non-Aboriginal child

Youth Justice in Victoria

- 70 per cent were victims of abuse, trauma or neglect
- 65 per cent had previously been suspended or expelled from school
- 58 per cent had a history of alcohol or drug use
- 53 per cent presented with mental health issues
- 37 per cent had involvement with child protection at some time

Youth Parole Board Annual Report 2017-2018

Issues impacting Youth Justice

- Responsibility transferred from DHHS to DOJR
- Children transferred to adult prison (Barwon)
- Announcement of Cherry Creek
- Access to services – pre and post release
- Screening and assessment
- Lack of case planning
- Overuse of solitary confinement and lock downs
- High staff turnover and casualization of work force

Public narrative

Children moved to Grevillea unit and subsequent court case – December 2016 – July 2017

- “They are going to adult jail, where they belong. Those inmates will be going to adult prison and I make absolutely no apology” – Premier Daniel Andrews
- “Highly trained prison officers have been deployed to keep these facilities secure and Victorians safe. These thugs will be brought to order” – Premier Daniel Andrews

Public narrative

Announcement of new Cherry Creek prison – February 2017

- “It’ll be a high security facility with six-metre perimeter fencing, ram-proof gates, it’ll have internal perimeter fencing around each unit and there will be other [security] measures introduced” – Minister for CYF Jenny Mikakos
- “Isolation helps ensure the safety of young offenders, staff and the security of youth justice centres” – DJR spokesperson

Disadvantage and Crime

- Research undertaken over the past 20 years with Professor Tony Vincent to map locational webs of disadvantage
- 6% of postcodes account for 50% of prison admissions
- Dominant factors in these locations not only include criminal justice involvement, but also unemployment and low educational attainment.

#JusticeSolutions

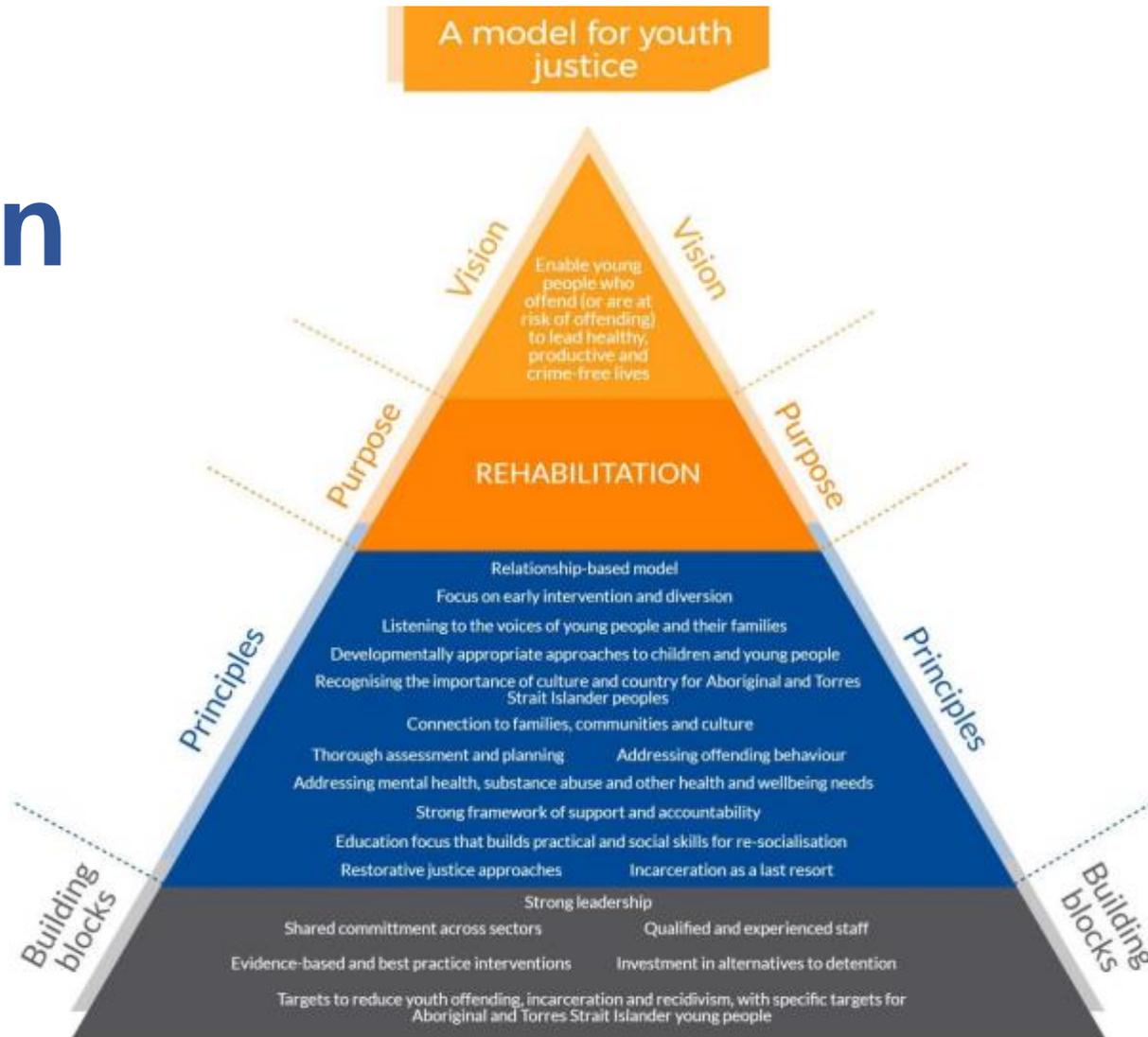
- USA
- Germany
- Norway
- United Kingdom
- Spain



Key principles of effective Youth Justice systems

- Overarching vision
- Design of facilities – small and home like
- Highly skilled staff and evidence based programs

Our vision



Youth Justice Advocacy Project

The context

The challenge of a changing political and communication environment.

Lessons from overseas

- Be bold, strengthen our collective voice
- Go beyond the base, engage the wider community
- Elevate the voice of young people and those most harmed by the system

Focus groups

- **Tough on crime** is established frame
- **Fear**, not fact, driving debate
- Cost argument is **morally weak** ground
- Therapeutic response can be **persuasive** but must focus on idea that social factors cause crime and social response prevents it.

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Fixing Youth Justice in Victoria

Engagement strategy

Channels

- Website, social, EDM channels
- Rich case studies (film, audio, written)
- Policy ask
- Stakeholder engagement
- Media
- Events

Strategy

- Broaden conversation
- Build power
- Use power

CAMPAIGN POLICY PLATFORM

Strengthen the foundations for real justice and safer communities.

Develop a ten year plan, backed up with investment for the Victorian youth justice system including:

- A rollback of regressive sentencing practices such as mandatory detention.
- Setting and monitoring targets to reduce the number of young people offending, reoffending, on remand and in prison.
- Through the better use of data and investment in research and evaluation, build a shared understanding of what is working and what else is needed to improve outcomes.

Get the foundations right:

- Raise the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 14.
- Restore access to the dual track system and extend age eligibility to 24 years old.
- Work alongside Aboriginal agencies and communities to reduce over-representation in the justice system.

Supporting kids and communities to prevent offending.

Start locally with long-term investment in place-based solutions to tackle disadvantage, including justice reinvestment.

Step in early to support kids in trouble, to keep them safe and connected to school, family, culture and community:

- Lower the age of eligibility for the successful Navigator Program from 12 to 10 years.
- Trial new programs that work with children from 8 years, at the first signs of anti-social behaviour and disengagement.
- Expand programs that provide culturally safe support for Aboriginal children and families.

Strengthen pathways to specialist training and employment programs to give young people purpose, stability and opportunity.

Giving kids the support they need to get back on track.

Continue to strengthen diversion opportunities with a focus on rehabilitation and restorative justice for all young people at each point in the justice system.

Avoid unnecessary detention through a focus on housing and alternatives to remand.

Break the cycle of crime with more intensive support for the small number of high-risk young offenders.

Strengthen in-prison and transition support to set kids up for success when they return to the community.

- Ensure education and therapeutic support are a priority in detention.
- Improve intensive support when young people exit prison to connect with housing, education, training and the community.
- Ensure the new children's prison is built according to the evidence of best-practice in the rehabilitation of young people, with transparent monitoring of numbers in detention.

Strengthen the capability of the workforce to address the complex needs of young offenders.

Introduce a minimum qualification standard for the workforce.

#WorthaSecondChance

- Campaign formally launched on Tuesday 24th July 2018
- Young people with lived experience were involved in the launch
- Launch was well attended by a number of representatives from the legal sector, government, non-government organisations, media and Jesuit Social Services staff base
- Positive feedback was received by many attendees and this was reflected in people signing up to support the campaign

Media



melbourncatholic.org.au

#WorthASecondChance: Youth justice campaign launched in Melbourne
Wednesday 25 July 2018

Media and Communications Office

On Tuesday 24 July 2018, Jesuit Social Services (JSS) launched the '#WorthASecondChance' campaign, an initiative aiming to raise public understanding of the causes of youth crime and highlight the positive changes associated with a restorative approach to justice.

A diverse audience made up of varying ages and backgrounds gathered in the warmth of the Melbourne Bowls Club as the winter sun poured in through large windows. The illuminated room reflected the optimistic and constructive attitude of the speakers, led by Master of Ceremonies, Sammy.

Herald Sun

Melbourne moves with Momentum Energy.

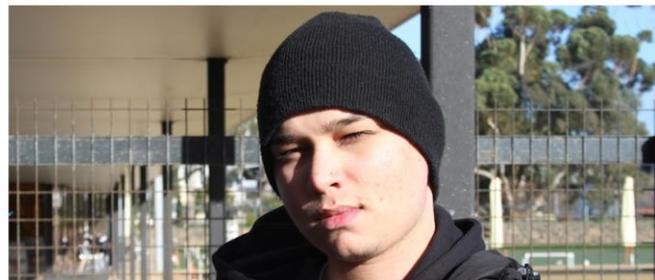
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NEWS BREAKING NEWS LOCAL VICTORIA EDUCATION LAW & ORDER



Vic campaign to end "vicious" youth justice circle

Jesuit Social Services chief executive Julie Edwards launching the Second Chance campaign which is part of a push for a better political



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Activity since launch



#WorthaSecondChance

- In the lead up to the launch, we compiled a number of Participant Voice video's with young people who have lived experience of the Youth Justice system
- <http://www.worthasecondchance.com.au/charles-story/>
- <http://www.worthasecondchance.com.au/harrys-story/>
- We continue to focus on building our Participant Voice group and engaging young people in different forms of advocacy to represent their experiences

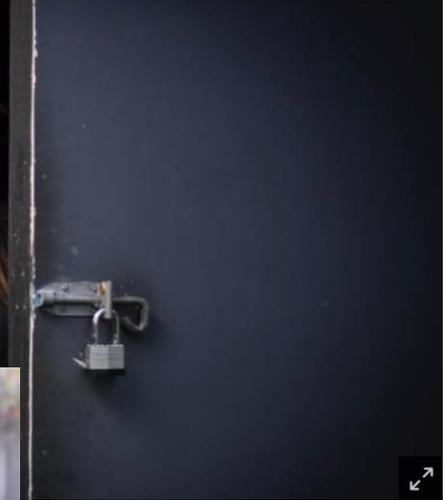
Diverse voices



Charles' Story

Ron's story

Diverse voices



Rosalinda
Registered nurse

Diverse voices

My highschool experience starting getting shaky around the end of year 8 to the start of Year 9. I had a lot of emotions running thru me due to personal reasons and that's when I started acting out in class becoming the "class clown" and not doing work not doing homework getting suspended & skipping school. Eventually they started to show interest in why I was doing what I was doing. but by that time it was too late I was too far down my own mental Rabbit. I didn't really care about anything so I basically blocked out ~~people~~ people trying to get in.

I BELIEVE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE WORTH
A SECOND CHANCE !!! ♡

My old man once told me that I wasn't broken, I didn't need fixing I just needed some love, support and guidance - He was right - Eventually I listened.

We arin't all lucky enough to have a role model close to us, someone who always believes in us no matter what - Without that the justice system can swallow you up - you become more lost - you have no-one - you are ALONE!

#Worthasecondchance has so much drive and compassion behind it that I'm hoping this will start people talking real solutions - not just giving up and sending people to jail. Maybe we can show the world we should never give up on anyone Especially our youth.

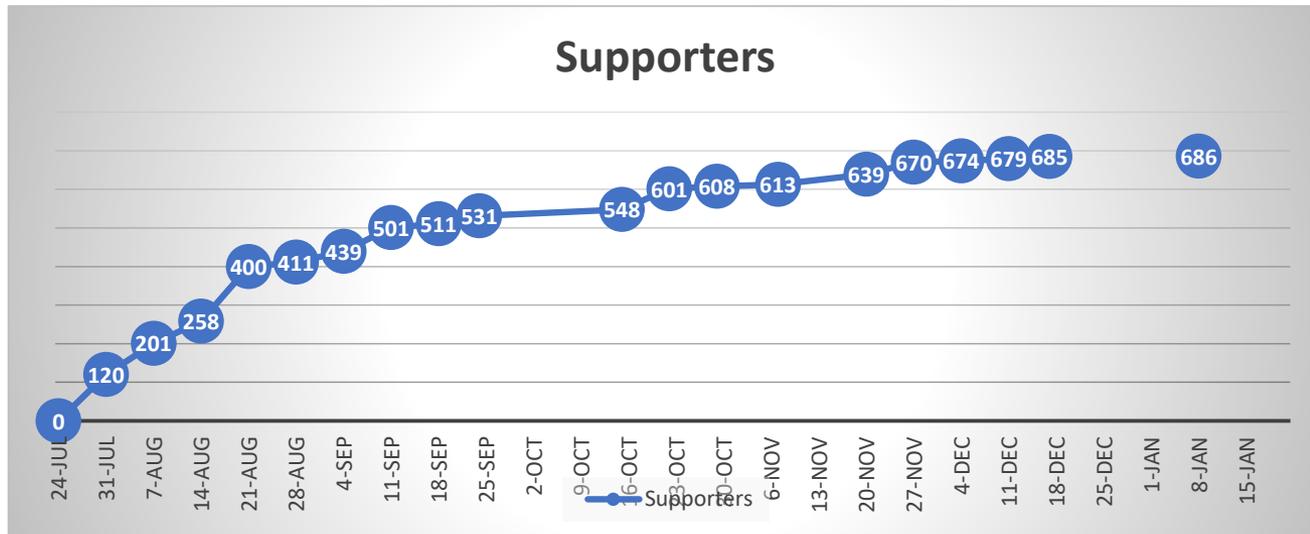
- Kylie 39-06

Sector support



Supporter growth

Steady growth in support for campaign since launch in July



Engaging our supporters

- Kitchen Table Conversations
- Calls to Action (eg: Letters to Attorney General/MPs)
- Events and social media
- Emails from family members

2019 Advocacy

Key areas for 2019 advocacy

- Raise the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 14 years and develop a Victorian blueprint of alternatives to incarceration for children aged 10 to 13 years
- Investment in early intervention and prevention (lower age of eligibility for Navigator from 12 years to 10 years)
- Influencing the design of Victoria's proposed Youth Justice centre at Cherry Creek

We need your support!

1. JOIN THE CAMPAIGN:

www.worthasecondchance.com.au

2. HOST A KITCHEN TABLE CONVERSATION:

www.worthasecondchance.com.au/take-action/register/

Thankyou for your support



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