

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Justice Reinvestment - Giving kids a life not life in prison

ANTaR, national advocacy organisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights, today called on all governments to listen to First Peoples in order to address crisis levels of incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

National Campaigns Manager, Ms Jane Powles said that “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders have been calling for the implementation of Justice Reinvestment since 2009 to address high incarceration rates.”

“It’s about time governments started to listen,” she said.

Last night’s episode of ABC’s Four Corners featuring one of the first Justice Reinvestment trial sites in Australia, highlighted the common sense approach that Justice Reinvestment supports.

“Driver licence programs that keep young people and the roads in Bourke safe make a lot of sense,” said Ms Powles

In NSW, over half the children in jail are Aboriginal. This costs \$800 per child per day. In 2014 NSW taxpayers spent an average of \$293,200 on each child in custody.

“Bourke is showing us that there is a much better way to invest tax payers money that will create stronger and safer communities.”

Despite multiple reports and inquiries into the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the justice system incarceration rates continue to rise. It’s time to think differently to address this crisis and create sustainable solutions.

“Last night we saw a whole community stepping up and collectively developing practical solutions that address the drivers of crime.”

Ms Powles said “With youth detention on the next Council of Australian Governments agenda, the Prime Minister has the opportunity to take the lead on developing a nationally co-ordinated approach to addressing the incarceration crisis and forging a collective commitment to Justice Reinvestment.”

“It’s time for governments to act, and start listening to and working with First Peoples so we don't lose another generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to the justice system.”

ANTaR is the only non-Indigenous incorporated organisation dedicated solely to supporting the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and working to educate the wider community, shape public opinion, and speak up for justice, rights and respect for Australia’s First Peoples.
www.antar.org.au

