

MEDIA RELEASE: 12TH MAY 2022.

SRWA RESPONDS TO JUSTICE ANNOUNCEMENTS IN STATE BUDGET

Key Budget Figures:

- \$40.4 million for Kimberley and Pilbara Youth Justice Responses
- \$11.1 million to expand Target 120 to 9 more sites across the state
- \$25 million to improve conditions at Banksia Hill Juvenile Detention Centre
- \$52 million to expand Casuarina Prison for an extra 344 beds
- \$16.4 million towards the 950 new police, \$2.5 million for Operation Regional Shield, and \$3.6 million for police recruitment.

Comments attributed to Sophie Stewart, Social Reinvestment WA, Manager:

“This Budget delivers some desperately needed funding for building safer communities and implementing smarter justice approaches that will save us money down the line.

An investment in early intervention and prevention in the Kimberley and Pilbara of \$16 million including night patrols, intensive family support, school programs, and a community action fund, and the expansion of Target 120 is to be celebrated.”

“SRWA are glad to see the State Government prioritising initiatives that keep children out of prison, including a Therapeutic Pilot at the Children’s Court.”

“With alarming reports coming out of Banksia Hill Detention Centre, the \$25 million announcement is urgently needed to maintain a basic standard of care for these young people.

However long term solutions aren’t to be found in the walls of the children’s prison. Ultimately, we need to raise the age of criminal responsibility to at least 14.”

Comments attributed to Glenda Kickett, Social Reinvestment WA Co-Chair:

“SRWA particularly welcome the \$15 million investment in an on country residential centre as an alternative to incarceration, which has long been called for by community.

We’d like to see this commitment pave the way for multiple culturally appropriate, therapeutic, on country alternatives across the state that build pathways for a better future.

To succeed the State Government must work in partnership with local communities and lived experience people in design and delivery. We hope to see Aboriginal people, and local organisations employed as first responders, leading solutions, and co-creating these youth justice initiatives.”

Comments attributed to Daniel Morrison, Social Reinvestment WA Co-Chair:

“The best way to address young offending is to respond to the underlying social causes, and support young people to build better futures.

The positive investments in today’s State Budget are a step towards healthier families and safer communities, but this Budget shows that our spending on punitive approaches like police and prisons still far outweighs the resourcing to the prevention and intervention space. We can still get smarter in our justice response.”

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