

News releases - John Rau

Reboot youth support program extended six months

John Rau

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A pilot program aimed at getting young offenders back on track has been extended for a further six months, following a positive evaluation report from the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC).

The not-for-profit organisation Helping Young People Achieve (HYPA), working with the Australian Red Cross, is delivering the program with referrals through the Adelaide Youth Court.

The trial targeted young people aged 14 to 18 years who had come into contact with the criminal justice system for a second or subsequent offence.

The AIC reported that over the two year trial period evaluated, 81 young people were referred, including 34 Aboriginal young people, and there were 63 males and 18 females. They were referred via family conferencing and the Youth Court and the most common charges were theft, criminal trespass and assault.

It found there are high levels of support for the program and clear evidence of need, with the program filling a gap in service provision for young offenders.

The evaluation notes the program was seen by service providers as a useful option in sentencing and family conference outcomes.

The AIC said their findings indicate the Reboot Program has altered the attitudes of young people and helped them consider what changes need to be made to their lives, an important outcome as changed attitudes are crucial for behaviour change.

But it acknowledges alterations to high-risk behaviours were less evident, and recommends specialised, targeted support to improve decision-making and change behaviour.

The further continuation of the program will be considered in 2018 as part of the overall approach to tackle youth offending and reduce reoffending rates.

The final evaluation report is available at: www.agd.sa.gov.au/sites/g/files/net2876/f/reboot_evaluation_final_report.pdf

Background

The Reboot Program delivered on a commitment to trial a two year intensive intervention trial for young offenders with a \$1 million allocation announced by the Attorney-General in April 2014.

Non-profit organisation Helping Young People Achieve (HYPA) was selected through a competitive process to deliver the trial with partners Australian Red Cross. Where suitable, young people also participated in the Operation Flinders Foundation wilderness camp.

The AIC was contracted to evaluate the trial. The evaluation covers the first two years of the trial, and does not include data since the two trial extensions to mid-2018.

During the first six month extension, more participants have been referred to the program, taking the number to 93 since the trial began.

Quotes attributable to Attorney-General John Rau

The evaluation of the program points to a solid positive impact on the young offenders who participated and gives a good indication we are on the right track by supporting a program of this type.

The independent evaluation provides analysis for areas of improvement in the implementation of the program. It clearly supports the continuation – and possible future expansion – of this type of program.

It is one of a number of strategies the State Government has introduced as part of our approach to reduce youth offending.

Quotes attributable to HYP A Director Janice Hoad

The program's success is in reconnecting young people with positive role models, changing attitudes of young people about offending and their future, and helping them to reconnect with education to employment.

It has been a privilege to work with the ReBoot participants and their families and to see them how capable they are in creating a new future for themselves.