



Forum explores what works in youth justice

A young man's journey from being "at risk" to becoming a regular offender threw the spotlight on youth justice issues at a forum held in Darwin earlier this year. The youth may have been fictitious, but the stages of his journey toward criminal behaviour were real.

The scenario was part of an interactive panel session that brought together all the pieces of the complex crime prevention picture. To show how a multitude of organisations interact, a panel of experts explained the parts they each played through the scenario. Panel members included Director of Public Prosecutions Rex Wild QC, Yilli Rreung Council Chair Kimberley Hunter, Director of Family and Children's Services Jenny Scott and Superintendent Peter Gordon from the Northern Territory Police.

This year's crime prevention forum, focusing on youth justice, was hosted by the Office of Crime Prevention in partnership with the Northern Territory Police and the Darwin Regional Crime Prevention Council. It was an opportunity for participants from as far apart as



Forum participants engage in interactive panel session

Ali Curung to Alyangula to share their experiences of what works in the Northern Territory as well as hearing directly from international and Territory experts in crime prevention.

Guest presenter was Peter Kennedy, from the Youth Justice area of the New Zealand Ministry of Justice. He spoke about New Zealand's experiences in dealing with youth offending and outlined the country's Youth Offending Teams initiative.

The forum also featured Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association presenting a series of dynamic community services announcements created by Central Australian youth, and two short performances by the talented members of the Corrugated Iron Youth Theatre.

Forum papers are available online at www.crimeprevention.nt.gov.au or call the Office of Crime Prevention on 8999 6274 for more information.

Crime prevention funding pool swells by \$350,000

The Northern Territory Government has allocated \$350,000 for a new Community Safety Plan Implementation Grant Program. The program is separate from the \$400,000 Crime Prevention Grant Scheme and is specifically aimed at Regional and Indigenous Crime Prevention Councils throughout the Territory.

The Office of Crime Prevention administers both grant programs.

The new program is part of the government's Building Safer Communities framework for crime prevention and community safety, specifically, the commitment to build partnerships with the community to continue to reduce crime.

Crime prevention councils will be contacted soon with information about the guidelines and operating procedures for the new Community Safety Plan Implementation Grant Program.

IN THIS ISSUE

Crime Prevention Checklist

Use the checklist to help make your home safer or copy it for members of your crime prevention council, local committee, neighbourhood watch or other community groups





Message from the Minister

Hello again – it’s great to be back as Attorney-General and Minister for Justice.

There are so many projects and so much more work to be done in this vital area and I am pleased to be once again involved in crime prevention and community safety at a ministerial level.

I would like to acknowledge everyone involved in crime prevention – from the police officers at the frontline to the public servants overseeing the various and many

relevant programs and policies, to general members of the community.

It is this “team” effort by all that I believe is one of the keys to reducing crime and helping prevent it.

In this second edition of the Building Safer Communities newsletter, you’ll find home safety tips, updates from our Regional and Indigenous Crime Prevention Councils and stories on various



crime prevention initiatives as well as other informative articles.

These are just a taste of what’s on offer in the Northern Territory in the crime prevention and community safety area.

Peter Toyne

Minister for Justice and Attorney-General

What’s new for your Regional Crime Prevention Council (RCPC)

Darwin and East Arnhem

The Darwin Regional Crime Prevention Council Inc and the East Arnhem Harmony Mäwaya Mala Inc recently became incorporated – the first of the seven urban-based Regional Crime Prevention Councils to take this step.

Acting chairperson of the Darwin council Richard Bowman sees incorporation as a positive move because it makes the council a separate legal entity that can apply for and manage grant funding. The council can now initiate and drive its own community safety projects.

Being incorporated means more work to comply with the Northern Territory *Associations Act*, but the members of both groups have embraced their new status and are forging ahead with new ideas and bolstered confidence.

The Darwin council is looking at developing a website to showcase organisations involved in the council, current initiatives and links to other websites and resources. The East Arnhem council is focusing on initiatives to support a special care centre, with a particular focus on night patrols.

Palmerston

Although it is the most recent Regional Crime Prevention Council to be established, the Palmerston group has already had lots of experience in crime prevention projects because it evolved from an existing committee operating out of the Palmerston City Council.

The group developed a community safety plan, which the Palmerston City Council has used to guide its

community safety projects. In 2004-05 Palmerston City Council successfully applied for funding from the NT Crime Prevention Grant Scheme for the Culture, Space, Pride Initiative.

The Palmerston Culture, Space, Pride Initiative is an innovative and exciting community development and art project involving Indigenous elders working with young people to create a range of attractive banners to be installed around the Palmerston town centre by the end of the year.

Barkly

The Barkly Region Safer Communities Committee, in partnership with government and non-government organisations based in Tennant Creek, hosted a youth forum from 7 to 9 June 2005. There was considerable consultation with young people in Tennant Creek in the lead-up to the event.

The forum involved workshops and information services about issues relating to health, employment and education. Having fun was also high on the agenda! Sporting events, recreational opportunities and performing arts workshops as well as performances were all part of the three-day forum.

The oldest Regional Crime Prevention Council in the Territory, the Barkly Region Safer Communities Committee is a key forum for communication and community activity in the region. Members have reviewed their work in recent months and have created a number of sub committees, including one specifically for crime prevention.

The committee is planning to take the event out bush so other youth in the Barkly region can share this opportunity. Cont...



RCPC (cont.)

Alice Springs

A youth-friendly information card on violence has resulted from a joint effort by the Central Australian Safer Communities Committee and the Child and Youth Safety Subcommittee.

The central message of the Youth Safety Card is to encourage Centralian youth to do something about violence. The cards have been released to local

primary and high schools, Centrelink, medical clinics, legal services and youth services in Alice Springs.

The cards carry slogans about the negative effects of violence, the emotions people feel and where to go for help. The slogans were developed by the committees. With help from the Office of Crime Prevention, Alice Springs Youth Accommodation Support Services was commissioned to work with young people to develop cartoons to accompany the slogans.



A part of the Youth Safety Card

Please call the Office of Crime Prevention on 8999 6274 for individual contact details for Regional and Indigenous Crime Prevention Councils.

Indigenous Crime Prevention Councils

Creating safer remote communities means bringing together a range of activities, such as Safe House programs, night patrols, diversionary programs for young offenders, input to court sentencing processes, drug and substance abuse education, and law and justice planning.

Indigenous Crime Prevention Councils (ICPCs) have an important role in creating safer remote communities and may do these or other activities to help weave all the threads together. The NT Crime Prevention Grant Scheme has proved to be a useful source of funds for some of the councils' community safety initiatives. The Office of Crime Prevention supports the councils to implement, monitor and evaluate their crime prevention projects.

Here are some examples of Indigenous Crime Prevention Councils and their projects:

- **Mutitjulu and Docker River communities in partnership with the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council**

This group identified violence against Aboriginal women and children as a priority. A \$22,380 NT Crime

Prevention Grant was allocated in 2003-04 for advocacy and support services to victims of family and domestic violence from Mutitjulu and Docker River attending the Magistrate's Court when it sits in Mutitjulu.

- **Western Aranda Relekha Aboriginal Corporation on behalf of Ntaria, Wallace Rockhole and Tjuwampa Resource Centre**

The group received \$15,000 in 2003-04 through the NT Crime Prevention Grant Scheme for a range of community safety and crime prevention projects in the region.

- **Kurduju Committee**

This committee is made up of the Law and Justice Strategy committees of Ali Curung, Lajamanu, Yuendumu and Willowra. They have developed protocols to guide non-Indigenous organisations in engaging with communities and are often called upon to share their experience with community safety issues. These communities effectively generate a pre-court sentencing arrangement with Community Corrections.



Working for the man



Concreting for the Riding for the Disabled

Prison work parties are nothing new but in the Territory they're an integral part of community reparation.

The parties are usually made up of six inmates and undertake community work like garden tidying, mowing, picking-up rubbish, poster removal and graffiti removal.

"The inmates seem to get a bit out of it," acting coordinator of the Darwin work parties Lisa Anderson said, "and they seem to like doing it.

"They get satisfied about a job well done plus often they're learning a new skill.

"We're rarely short of volunteers for the parties."

Work parties in the Territory have been in operation for about 10 years. They involve low security prisoners and prison officers.

In Darwin, the work parties are out every week day and sometimes do weekend work if requested like cleaning up after the AFL clashes at Marrara.

"The parties help out organisations like the RSPCA, Mission Australia, Riding for the Disabled and other non-profit organisations," Lisa said.

"We also provide a general service for the elderly and disabled.

"The feedback from those we help is very positive and it's a good community service."

For offenders, being on a work party also often gives them exposure to community minded people that may have a positive effect.

For the organisations and individuals, the work parties offer a service they may not be able to afford normally.

Crime Prevention Grants making our community safer

It's now even easier to apply for a grant to help you with a project to promote community safety and prevent crime. The closing date for the current round of NT Crime Prevention Grants is 23 September, but now is a good time to start planning your application for next year's project.

A number of changes were made to the scheme this year based on feedback from the public:

- the guidelines are more comprehensive and provide better advice on creating a quality application;
- the application form is easier to use; and
- the process and criteria are clearer.

Funding is no longer offered in categories (small, targeted and regional). Applicants just apply for the amount of funding appropriate for their project.

Project officers from the Office of Crime Prevention are always available to provide support and advice to potential applicants, even outside of the grant scheme funding cycle. It is also a good idea to contact your local Regional or Indigenous Crime Prevention Council for advice, support and/or insight about what is happening in the region.

To obtain the guidelines and application form, or for further information about the grant scheme, contact the Office of Crime Prevention on 8999 6274, or visit www.crimeprevention.nt.gov.au

Young consumers stay cool

New responsibilities, like getting a job and managing money, are a big part of adolescence – but those who aren't able to meet the challenges can often end up in debt and distress.

Preventing this ultimately helps to prevent crime, diminishing the risks and enhancing the protective factors that lie on the path from youth to adulthood.

The Consumer Affairs newsletter *The Cool Consumer* is packed with information to help young consumers manage issues like credit card debt, ATM charges, mobile phone costs and sharing houses – issues that can be challenging even for experienced adults.

Visit www.caba.nt.gov.au or contact Consumer Affairs on 8999 1999 to obtain a copy of the newsletter.

Did you know...?

The Office of Crime Prevention has administered the NT Crime Prevention Grant Scheme since 2002. The scheme is an important mechanism by which the Northern Territory Government supports community safety initiatives. Funds provided through the Scheme help organisations and community groups throughout the Territory to act on their local ideas, test projects in the field, add components to existing activities or undertake planning and research.

The 2005–2006 round of the \$400,000 NT Crime Prevention Grant Scheme was formally launched by the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, the Hon Dr Peter Toyne MLA, on 15 August 2005.



Palmerston kids go bush!

Going bush could be just the thing to get “at risk” young people back on track and re-engaged with the education system. That’s the aim of the Bush Trips project being managed by the Alternative Education Unit in the Department of Employment, Education and Training.

The project involves a series of three camps, with the second and third camps building on the outcomes achieved in the previous stages. The immediate goal is for participants to develop life skills and resilience to cope with the challenges that life can sometimes present.

The NT Crime Prevention Grant Scheme contributes funding to Bush Trips which is a partnership between youth agencies, Office of Crime Prevention, Palmerston High School and the Alternative Education Unit.

School Liaison Officer Evelyn Myatt said the project is designed to build self-esteem and confidence and re-engage young people in a positive and non-threatening way.

The first of the bush trips saw a group of young women on a three-day trip to Buley Rock Hole and was a great success.

“We are all really looking forward to continuing to work together to build on what we achieved,” Evelyn said.

Watch this space for updates on this exciting project.

Have you seen the Shopsafe Kit?

If you work in retail, you may have wondered what you would do if confronted by an armed robber. The Shop Distributive and Allied Employees Association (SDA) developed the popular Shopsafe Kit for that very reason.

Funded through a grant through the NT Crime Prevention Grant Scheme, the kits help retail workers respond appropriately to an armed hold-up, including a height indicator to help workers determine the height of an offender.

About 3,000 kits were distributed to people in various areas of the retail industry in all the Territory’s major centres. Follow up visits indicated the kits have been well received, especially by young workers.

If you do not have the Shopsafe Kit in your workplace, contact the SDA on 8948 0566.

Wagaman works to address safety

Sometimes getting together with other residents can be a great starting point to begin addressing local concerns. The Wagaman Residents Group, a Local Crime Prevention Committee, is an excellent example of this.

The group formed several years ago to address community safety issues in laneways and a local park. They have been able to minimise the antisocial behaviour that was affecting the quality of life for people living in Wagaman’s Amsterdam Circuit, obtained funds for lighting and a mural, and worked with the Darwin City Council to have problem laneways closed at night.

It’s been hard work, but has resulted in many positive outcomes including good friendships and the creation of an effective support network.

Would you like to find out more about getting involved in addressing local community safety issues? The Office of Crime Prevention has a role to support and advise Local Crime Prevention Committees, and the Neighbourhood Watch network is also a great way to get involved. Your local council is also a good point of contact to address local issues.

Contact the Office of Crime Prevention on 8999 6274.

www.safercommunities.nt.gov.au

Want to know how you can make your home or business safer?

Visit the Building Safer Communities website for some easy to follow tips and handy information.

The Northern Territory Government and You. Building Safer Communities.





What is the Community Justice Centre?



Mediation – a way to work it out

Let's face it – disputes are a part of life. But sometimes they can lead to costly and time consuming litigation.

Established in 2003, the Community Justice Centre (CJC) provides mediation services to help people resolve their own disputes without legal action. The service is free, confidential, voluntary, timely, and easy to use.

"Mediation is about people coming together to discuss the issues in dispute," CJC coordinator Karen Dey said.

"It allows all those involved to have a say in the outcome and come up with their own solutions. It is a safe and informal environment where people can sort out their disputes with the help of trained mediators."

In most cases mediations are arranged quickly and take about two to four hours. Mediators are impartial and do not take sides or give legal advice. More than 85% of mediations result in an agreement being reached.

The CJC can assist in a wide range of disputes including:

- local community/neighbourhood disputes
- workplace communication
- clubs and organisations whose members are in conflict
- small and local court claims
- post court conferencing.

The Community Justice Centre can be contacted on 1800 000 473,

email: communityjusticecentre.doj@nt.gov.au.

or go to www.communityjusticecentre.nt.gov.au

Breaking through the language barrier

Have you ever realised in mid-conversation that you just don't understand the other person, or that they have missed what you said? Have you ever been misunderstood because of a language barrier?

Many Indigenous people in the Northern Territory and the people who need to communicate with them have experienced this situation – and the Aboriginal Interpreter Service can help.

The service was set up to meet the needs of non-English-speaking Indigenous people and those wishing to communicate with them, at no cost to Indigenous people. More than 70 per cent of Indigenous people in the Northern Territory speak languages other than English.

Established in 2000 with joint funding from the Australian and Northern Territory Governments, the service has completed more than 9,500 jobs for a range of organisations. They include the Department of Justice, the Department of Health and Community Services, Anyinginyi Congress in Tennant Creek, De Silva Hebron Solicitors, Dawn House, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, and Marthakal Homeland Resource Centre.

The service has 103 accredited interpreters, who are able to translate 104 Aboriginal languages and can

travel as required. Bookings should be made one week ahead as many interpreters live in remote communities.

Understanding each other is critical to building real partnerships to reduce crime and make our communities safer; and partnership is a key plank in the Building Safer Communities framework.

If you think an interpreter could help, contact the Aboriginal Interpreter Service. In Darwin, call Leeanne or Bernadette on 8999 8353. In Alice Springs, speak to Vicki, Donna or Tanith on 8951 5576 between 8am and 4:30pm or 8999 8353 after hours.



*Bernadette Wombo, Community Liason Officer,
Aboriginal Interpreter Service*



Making headway against violent crime

Early data from the introduction of the Violent Crime Reduction Strategy by NT Police shows encouraging results in the battle against such crimes. The clear-up rate for domestic violence assault offences has increased significantly, according to initial figures for February and March.

Under the strategy, launched in November last year, a project team was established to implement a number of initiatives to reduce the incidence of domestic and personal violence.

This includes the creation of Personal and Domestic Violence Protection Units in Darwin, Katherine, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek. The units have carried on from the good work by the Domestic Violence Units in Darwin and Alice Springs.

The strategy is one part of the intelligence-led approach adopted by NT Police. Commissioner of Police Paul White said the introduction of an intelligence-led approach to property crimes such as house break-ins and motor vehicle thefts had contributed significantly to reducing crime in the Territory, as evidenced by crime statistics from the Office of Crime Prevention.

He said offences against the person, such as assaults, dropped 4 per cent in the 12 months leading up to the introduction of the Violent Crime Reduction Strategy.

“But we believed police, in partnership with other agencies, could make an even greater impact on the figures,” he said.

The initiatives introduced under the Violent Crime Reduction Strategy include:

- existing Domestic Violence Units in Darwin and Alice Springs renamed and staffed by additional police who will be provided with specialist training;
- two lawyers in the process of being recruited to conduct domestic violence and related offences advocacy work in Darwin and Alice Springs to free up police for investigations;
- a review of policy relating to the police response to domestic violence resulting in a “formal action” approach to reports of violence;
- quality assurance processes on every domestic violence incident occurring across the Territory; and
- a successful application to the Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services to start an integrated family violence service in Katherine, staffed by police and members of the NT’s Family and Community Services.

The strategy is due for review in November.

24-hour help at hand for Territory victims of crime



Victims of Crime NT
supporting victims of crime

Anyone who has been assaulted or robbed will understand the impact such events can have, particularly if you feel that justice hasn’t been served. You might be at home alone one night terrified to go to sleep because of a recent break-in. You

might want to confide in someone about an assault, or maybe just want someone to sit with you during a court proceeding.

Victims of Crime NT, formerly VOCAL, has professionally trained volunteers on standby 24 hours a day. It provides guidance and support through its Territory-wide 24-hour phone help line (1800 672 242), as well as an advocacy service for clients nervous about dealing with police, courts, solicitors or other agencies.

If you live in the Darwin, Palmerston and Darwin rural areas, you can arrange for a face-to-face meeting. Victims of Crime NT can refer you for specialist help such as legal advice or ongoing counseling.

The NT Government contributes funds to Victims of Crime NT as well as providing up to \$250 for people anywhere in the Territory to clean up and temporarily secure their homes after a break-in. To be eligible, you must have reported the crime to police, and must have a report number before phoning Victims of Crime NT for further assessment.

staysafe for SENIORS

The Office of Senior Territorians in the Department of the Chief Minister has launched the StaySafe for Seniors initiative, providing practical information, suggestions and tips for senior Territorians on how to make their homes safer, how to feel more secure and how to stay healthy.

A website (www.staysafe.nt.gov.au) has been set-up with easy, interactive checklists to assess your own situation and to find out whether and how you could make any improvements.

For a copy of the StaySafe booklet or more information, visit the website or call the Office of Senior Territorians on free call 1800 777 704.



Safety first for your wallet

It might be obvious to associate crime prevention with stopping someone actually stealing your wallet, but there are a dozen far more subtle ways your money can be taken.

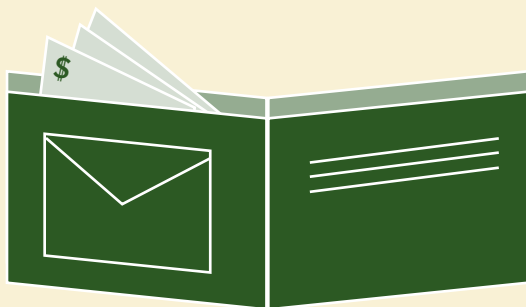
Many of us are now aware of the dodgy email asking for bank details or the fake lottery, but we might be tempted by the latest four-day diet scam. These issues are just the tip of the iceberg for the team at Consumer and Business Affairs in the Department of Justice.

If you need advice or information about your consumer rights or where to turn to, the team at Consumer Affairs can help.

The Consumer Affairs website has information on everything from door-to-door trading and product safety to Indigenous Consumer Justice fact sheets on PIN numbers and buying used cars. There is also advice for community groups on managing grant funds and becoming incorporated.

A free enquiry service is available on 8999 1999 seven days a week (8am to 4.30pm weekdays and 9am to 4pm weekends) to help with consumer and fair trading issues. The toll free number for calls within the Northern Territory is 1800 019 319.

To find out more, go to www.nt.gov.au/ntg/caft.shtml or give Consumer Affairs a call.



Pilot project helps put things right

In a Territory first, a court has been created where offenders can express their shame and remorse and where victims can hear that remorse and start to heal.

The Darwin Community Court pilot project held its first case on Friday 29 April 2005. The court is based on restoring justice and has a strong focus on the victim and putting things right.

The victim sits beside the Magistrate, and is encouraged to have a family member or support person with them. The offender sits across the table from the victim, with a lawyer, and a family or support person as well.

The community court may be used whether the offender is adult or juvenile, as long as the offence has been finalised in the Magistrate's Court. Sexual assault cases are excluded.

The Magistrate ultimately determines the sentence, although community representatives have a critical role.

Interstate courts and programs of this type appear to have succeeded in drastically lowering the rates of re-offending. The Northern Territory pilot grew out of discussions between the Chief Magistrate and the Yilli Rreung Council in 2004, although both Indigenous and non-Indigenous defendants can access the court.

Acknowledgements

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- Aboriginal Interpreter Service;
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- Local Crime Prevention Committees.

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Check out this DVD for tips on how to make your home safer.

Contact the Office of Crime Prevention for your free copy.

A Building Safer Communities initiative of the Department of Justice in partnership with the Northern Territory Police.