

Northern Territory Government response to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Inquiry into the Impact of Violence on Young Australians

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1. BACKGROUND

Young people, community members and government policy makers alike are increasingly concerned with the prevalence of violent acts being committed by young people and/or against young people in Australia. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd recently stated in an online forum with young Australians that *young males and females aged between 15 and 24 [have] the highest rate of being victims of assaultⁱ*. This statement is supported by information and data collected by the Australian Institute of Criminology in 2009ⁱⁱ.

It should be noted though, that as well as being victims of assault, young people can also be the perpetrators. The rate of youth participation in violent acts is alarming in the Northern Territory, as statistics (below) will demonstrate. Statistics will further demonstrate that, in line with data provided by the Australian Institute of Criminology, a *disproportionately high number of Indigenous juveniles come into contact with the policeⁱⁱ*.

2. SUBMISSION

This submission is a Northern Territory whole-of-government response to the Inquiry, drawing together information and statistics from the arms of the Northern Territory Government that deal with violence and/or young people as their core business, including the Departments of Health and Families, Justice, Planning and Infrastructure, Education and Training and the Northern Territory Police.

Information in this submission specifically focuses on strategies that have been introduced by the Northern Territory Government to reduce the impact of violence on young people in the Territory.

3. STATISTICS ON YOUNG PEOPLE AND VIOLENCE IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

The following tables provide statistics on the number and rates of young people apprehended and detained in the Northern Territory for violent offences.

Number of Juvenile (10-17) Apprehensions by Most Serious Offence: 2008-09

	<i>Indigenous</i>	<i>non-Indigenous</i>	Total
Attempted Murder	2	0	2
Assaults	169	27	196
Sexual Assaults	27	9	36
Abduction and related offences	1	0	1
Robbery	32	3	35
Total	231	39	270

Source: Extract from IJIS on 11/11/2009

Number of Juveniles Commenced an Episode in Detention Facilities: 2008-09

	<i>10-14 yrs</i>	<i>15-16 yrs</i>	<i>17 yrs</i>	Total
Juveniles detainees	94	92	49	235

Of detainees, approximately half were incarcerated for violent offences at any one time.

Source: Derived from NT Correctional Services Annual Statistics 2008-09

More recent statistics from the NT Police show that 109 young people were arrested or summonsed to appear for offences of violence against another person between 1 July 2009 and 30 September 2009.

Number of Juveniles arrested or summonsed for 'offences against person': July - Sept 09

	<i>10-14 yrs</i>	<i>15-19 yrs</i>	Total
Offenders	13	96	109

Source: NT Police 12 November 2009

During the same time period, there were 251 youths reported as victims of violent offences.

Number of Juveniles who were victims of 'offences against person': July - Sept 09

	<i>Under 10</i>	<i>10-14 yrs</i>	<i>15-19 yrs</i>	Total
Victims	32	40	179	251

Source: NT Police 12 November 2009

Anecdotal evidence suggests that young people are often victims of violence perpetrated by other young people, yet they are also victims of violence at the hands of adults, specifically in relation to sexual, domestic and family violence. Violent episodes can be triggered by many things, including alcohol and drug use or mental health issues and can occur in many settings including the home, at school or in the community. These triggers and settings will be analysed in this submission by giving examples of the strategies employed by the Northern Territory Government to reduce the occurrence and impact of violence.

4. STRATEGIES TARGETED AT ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG-RELATED VIOLENCE

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd recently said that *we're all concerned about street violence – often the result of one drink too many*^j and the Australian Institute of Criminology affirms that *the role of alcohol and other drugs in youth violence has been well established*ⁱⁱ.

With this in mind, the following strategies may be focused specifically on drug and alcohol consumption and abuse, yet have a direct flow on effect to the prevention and lessening impact of violence on young people by treating and educating current offenders.

SOBERING UP SHELTER PROGRAM

The sobering up shelter (SUS) program has an immediate effect of reducing violence in the community. In Darwin, Katherine, Nhulunbuy, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs police and community patrols deliver intoxicated adults (over 18) to SUS so they can sleep to 'sober up', receive a simple nutritious meal, and if appropriate, receive referrals to alcohol/other drug or other health services. Remaining in the SUS for around six hours while clients are most at risk protects them and the broader community from harm (including violence). Each year there are some 20, 000 SUS admissions in the Northern Territory.

COMMUNITY PATROLS

The Alcohol and Other Drug Program (AODP), within the Department of Health and Families, funds community patrols in Alice Springs, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Nhulunbuy. Patrols prevent and reduce the seriousness of anti-social behaviour which is often related to alcohol or other drug use. These patrols work closely with police and sobering up shelters.

TREATMENT SERVICES

The AODP provides, and funds other agencies to deliver, various treatment and related programs. Over 30 services Territory-wide provide alcohol and other drug education, counseling, treatment or outreach/follow-up services – some of which are tailored specifically for the needs of young people.

The AODP's clinical services in the Top End provide information, brief interventions, education, referrals, assessment, counseling, pharmacotherapies, withdrawal services and case management. Similar services are provided from Alcohol and Other Drug Services Central Australia – based in Alice Springs.

There is also a range of services in other parts of the Territory. In Central Australia, agencies include the Barkly Region Alcohol and Drug Abuse Advisory Group and the Drug and Alcohol Services Association which accepts clients under the 25 years. Holyoake also offers various programs for clients up to 25 years.

Bushmob in Alice Springs aims to improve the life situation and outcomes for disadvantaged and disengaged young people living in Central Australia through participation in capacity and resilience-building activities with the theme of 'back to country'. It targets young people who may reside in Alice Springs' town camps and/or remote communities. Bushmob provides outreach case management and volatile substance misuse programs.

VOLATILE SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Under the *Volatile Substance Abuse Prevention Act*, prevention and intervention strategies are available at the individual and community levels. Communities may elect to declare particular places as management areas with enforceable management plans to control the availability, use, storage or supply of specific volatile substances. At the individual level the Act provides for the court to order individuals who are at significant risk because of their 'sniffing' to participate in treatment programs.

There are also a number of services which have a particular focus on young clients with volatile substance abuse (VSA) problems. These include Ilpurla, Kintore and Mt Theo Substance Misuse Aboriginal Corporation.

The Council for Aboriginal Alcohol Program Services in Darwin also provides residential treatment for young people and families who have volatile substance misuse problems.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Many AODP community education and training staff are members of youth network groups such as the Palmerston and Rural Youth Services Network and the Darwin and Rural Workers With Youth Network among others.

Through these networks, staff manage and help agencies develop applications for incentive grants, many of which have a youth focus, and supply resources (in alcohol and other drug issues) to youth services. Staff also work with communities to develop local responses to volatile substance misuse problems.

Through the youth networks staff link with various agencies including: NT Families and Children regarding VSA clients; Anglicare youth services to provide education and training (eg in brief interventions); and shires to support sport and recreation programs.

Workforce development is a key role and staff from youth services, including Don Dale (juvenile correctional facility), and education providers are enrolled in the Cert II, III & IV alcohol and other drugs training courses.

DRUG PRE-COURT DIVERSION PROGRAM

The NT Illicit Drug Pre-Court Diversion Program enables first time illicit drug offenders to be referred to drug education, counselling and treatment services rather than face prosecution through the court system.

The program helps drug offenders to regain control over their lives and decreases the enormous social cost of illicit drug use on individuals, families and communities.

5. STRATEGIES TARGETED AT SEXUAL, DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Some young people in the Territory are unfortunately subject to sexual, domestic and family violence, mainly as a victim or a bystander. In either case, young people suffer a great deal because of their observations, home environment and other damaging results of the violence.

The following strategies assist young people to deal with violence committed against them or to reduce the impact of observed violence in a number of ways.

SEXUAL ASSAULT MOBILE OUTREACH SERVICE

On 1 July 2008, the Northern Territory Government introduced Sexual Assault Mobile Outreach Service (MOS). MOS is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, OATSIH for a 4 year period and aims to:

- a) provide therapeutic counselling services to children in remote communities who have experienced the trauma of sexual assault
- b) prevent child sexual abuse through information, education and training and increasing community capacity to prevent child sexual abuse.

Young people benefit from this program because of the visiting therapeutic counselling services for children and their families to remote communities who assist in reducing the effects of trauma associated with the experience of sexual violence. Furthermore, young people and the community benefit from the regular visitation by professionals to communities and their engagement with community members to assist in addressing the issue of sexual violence and educate them in the prevention of sexual violence.

To date this program has been effective because it has given children and young people access to services in their home communities and has assisted communities to address the trauma associated with sexual violence.

Due to its success, on 1 July 2009 this program was funded to expand the scope of its service provision to include children in remote communities who experienced trauma from all forms of child abuse and neglect, not just sexual abuse.

SEXUAL ASSAULT REFERRAL CENTRE

Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) services are located in Darwin, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs. SARC provides counselling and forensic medical services to children and young people (as well as adults) who have experienced sexual violence. SARC also undertakes prevention work with children and young people through delivering education in protective behaviours and a range of other relevant group programs to children and young people.

CHILD ABUSE TASK FORCE

The Child Abuse Task Force, a combined initiative between the NT Police and the Department of Health and Families continues to achieve positive results in urban and remote communities. The Taskforce initiative is consistent with the vision 'a Safe and Secure Northern Territory' and the NT Caring for Our Children reform agenda which recognises the need to develop a strategic approach towards the investigation of serious and systematic abuse of children.

Whilst the protection of children and young people is a major responsibility of both police and the Department of Health and Families, the Child Abuse Taskforce focuses on allegations of organised or multiple abuse, involving one or more abuser and a number of related or non-related maltreated children and young people. Other relevant agencies such as Education and Training are also engaged where relevant to contribute in a complex abuse investigation.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

On 12 March 2009, the Northern Territory Government introduced mandatory reporting of domestic and family violence. The Department of Health and Families has whole-of-government responsibility for addressing domestic and family violence and is leading the implementation of the legislation; \$15 million over three years starting in 2009/10 has been committed to roll out the legislation.

As part of this commitment, a significant domestic and family violence social marketing campaign will be designed specifically for NT audiences. One of the four key target groups is young people aged 15-25 years. This demographic will influence the design and feel of parts of the campaign that are focused on young people, and their role in reporting domestic and family violence by challenging attitudes and behaviours that encourage silence.

Young people involved as participants in Domestic Violence (DV) incidents are flagged on the police system as DV participants and notifications are sent through to the Child Protection intake team. In dealing with families affected by DV, police make referrals to appropriate agencies for support, should it be required.

6. STRATEGIES TARGETED AT MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Similar to alcohol and drugs, mental health issues are often linked with episodes of violence. In no way do all people who suffer from a mental illness display violent behaviours or tendencies. Their mental illness, however, could make them more vulnerable to violence (as victims or as perpetrators) and the impacts of violence could be even more detrimental to them than for others in the community.

Those who suffer from a mental health issue may not possess adequate skills to control anger, frustration or hurt, nor possess the skills to prevent or avoid violent environments. Initiatives that have been put in place to support people with a mental health issue in the Territory are detailed below.

EXPANDING SERVICES

Mental Health Services have expanded their existing services in rural and remote communities. In 2008-09, additional positions have been created in both the Top End and in Central Australia to further increase services to remote communities.

In the Top End, visiting services to Katherine and Nhulunbuy have now been expanded to include a number of remote communities and staff work collaboratively with local service providers to ensure that appropriate support is provided between visits.

In Central Australia, visiting child and adolescent psychiatrists provide services to some remote communities in Central Australia on a regular basis. A psychologist also visits Tennant Creek regularly and new child and adolescent positions will enable expansion of these services.

HEADSPACE

headspace Top End and *headspace* Central Australia are two of 30 Community of Youth Services (CYS) sites established across Australia with funding from the Australian Government. The Department of Health and Families is a consortium member in each of the NT sites.

The aim of CYSS is to improve access to health and wellbeing services for young people aged 12 to 15 years, by bringing together local youth mental health, drug and alcohol, primary care and education, training and support agencies. Each *headspace* service is being implemented by a consortium of local agencies, working in partnership to facilitate more coordinated, integrated and holistic care for young people.

- *headspace* Top End: Anglicare NT is the lead agency of the local consortium of organisations including the Department of Health and Families, the General Practice Network of the NT (GPNNT) and Danila Dilba Aboriginal Medical Service.
- *headspace* Central Australia: Central Australian Aboriginal Congress is the lead agency of the local consortium of organisations including The Department of Health and Families, the Mental Health Association of Central Australia, GPNNT and Alice Springs Youth Accommodation and Support Services.

The Department of Health and Families and *headspace* Top End have now established shared intake assessment processes whereby young people in the *headspace* target age group will undergo an initial assessment at *headspace* before a decision is made regarding any need for specialist treatment and care through Top End Mental Health Services (TEMHS). A consultant psychiatrist from TEMHS is also now attending fortnightly clinical case review meetings to provide consultation liaison advice to staff at *headspace* Top End.

A similar arrangement has been established in Central Australia, with a the Department of Health and Families visiting child and adolescent psychiatrist and a visiting child and adolescent psychologist providing consultation and liaison on a regular basis.

SECURE CARE

Funding has been committed for new secure care facilities to be established in Darwin and Alice Springs which will enhance the capacity of mental health inpatient units to provide care in a more appropriate environment for young people with a mental illness. They will also provide for treatment of young people who may not be mentally ill but are exhibiting very high risk behaviour.

FORENSIC MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Northern Territory Mental Health Services have two Forensic Mental Health Teams, the Central Australian Forensic Mental Health Team (CAFMHT) based at Alice Springs Correctional Centre and the Top End Forensic Mental Health Team (TEFMHT) based at the Royal Darwin Hospital Campus. The TEFMHT provides both community based and prison based services, whilst the CAFMHT services are prison based only.

Outside of episodes of acute illness, where a prisoner may be admitted to the 10 bed Joan Ridley Unit (JRU), located at Royal Darwin Hospital), the Forensic Mental Health Teams provide assessment and treatment services in either the community or via 'in-reach' services to the correctional facility at which the prisoner is detained.

The following services are provided to remanded and sentenced juvenile prisoners at the Don Dale Juvenile Detention Centre in Darwin:

- case management for all prisoners with a major mental illness
- intensive one on one psychological counselling and group-work for prisoners with mental health issues
- reports to the Court where required
- initial assessments of cases referred by the Prison Medical Service, with special attention to those placed “at risk” and those with histories of mental health treatment
- ongoing review of mental state and risk of self-harm, as required
- consultancy to Prison Medical Service on psychopharmacological treatment
- supportive counselling and other 1:1 therapies, as required
- consultancy to custodial personnel (eg. the Classification Committee) on accommodation and other aspects of prisoner management, as appropriate
- critical incident stress debriefing, as required.

7. STRATEGIES TARGETED AT SCHOOL-BASED VIOLENCE

The incidence of school-based violence has grown over recent years and is now a major concern for students, parents and staff members alike.

‘KEEPING SAFE’ CURRICULUM

In 2010, the Department of Education and Training (DET) is rolling out to 40 schools the South Australian ‘Keeping Safe’ Child Protection Curriculum. The rollout will largely be to remote schools and will involve implementation teams from each school (including community members) identifying local priorities and utilising local skill sets to assist with delivery.

NATIONAL SAFE SCHOOLS FRAMEWORK

The National Safe Schools Framework – (currently under review) underpins Safe Schools NT. Safe Schools NT is a framework incorporating policy, professional development and web-based resources relevant to the whole school community which assists in building safe, supportive schools, minimise bullying, harassment and violence and to help support teachers, staff and parents/caregivers on issues related to child abuse and neglect. A key element is the requirement for all schools to align their individual policies on behaviour and bullying to the DET Behaviour Policy and Guidelines.

SCHOOL STRATEGIES

DET will, in 2010, pilot the rollout of the internationally recognised School Wide Positive Behaviour whole school strategic approach in all regions of the NT.

DET is involved with national inter-jurisdictional Safe Supportive School Communities Working Group and it's creation, the "Bullying. No Way!" website. The Group is working collaboratively on the range of issues that intersect around bullying, harassment, violence and safe school environments.

Student Representative Council Forums in Term 4 2009 and 2010 will be held – where representatives attend a regional forum to discuss issues in their schools and brainstorm possible solutions.

SMART TRAINING

Training in the Australian Childhood Foundation initiative known as Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma (SMART) will be provided to school staff across the NT commencing in 2010.

SCHOOLS CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND MEDIATION PROGRAM (SCRAM)

On 3 April 2009 at the NT Supreme Court, the Community Justice Centre launched the SCRAM program as part of National Youth Week. SCRAM is an interactive role play competition for Year 9 and 10 high school students. The students are taught mediation principles, skills and process to develop peaceful dispute resolution awareness and skills. SCRAM aims to influence the school and the community through the skills the students learn. It provides an enjoyable and dynamic way of introducing students to the mediation process. In 2009, five Territory schools have embarked on the journey of exploring conflict by understanding difference through the use of mediation.

The SCRAM program serves a double purpose. While it is focused on creating a pleasant experience in which students can learn about conflict and mediation, it also offers mediators opportunities to practise and enhance their own mediation skills. Participation in SCRAM is a recognised Professional Development activity under the National Mediator Accreditation System.

SCHOOL BASED POLICE OFFICERS

There are currently 11 School Based Police Officers (SBPOs) in the greater Darwin Region and 19 SBPOs across the Northern Territory. SBPOs work closely with the school community and police in providing a positive, proactive policing resource to schools. SBPOs. In conjunction with the Department of Employment and Training, have produced a Drug and Personal Safety Awareness Program designed for delivery in conjunction with classroom teachers to students from years transition to nine.

SBPOs were invited by classroom teachers to deliver lessons on personal safety and drug awareness. The lessons are designed to increase students' knowledge, skills and understanding about drugs including medicines, and strategies that can be employed to enhance their safety.

8. STRATEGIES TARGETED AT GENERAL VIOLENCE AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY PROGRAM

In July 2008, the Northern Territory Government, through its Department of Health and Families, introduced the Family Responsibility Program. This program aims to:

- support families who are experiencing difficulties with their child, parenting skills, or other family issues
- provide direction to families who need assistance managing the anti-social or criminal behaviour of their child
- encourage positive developmental activities and support for at risk young people and their families.

These aims are achieved by placing families, which have been identified through a process of cross-agency information sharing as most in need, on voluntary Family Responsibility Agreements or court-ordered Family Responsibility Orders.

The way this program influences young people and their involvement with violence is to provide intensive support to both the young person and the family to engage them in positive and developmental activities whilst addressing the reasons behind the young person's anti-social and possibly violent behaviour. The program assists parents by providing services and therapies so that they can better manage their own behaviours and subsequently better manage the behaviours of their child/ren.

The program is proving to be successful, despite its relative infancy. An analysis of youth involvement with police between January and June 2009 comparing pre-Family Responsibility Program contact with post-Family Responsibility Program contact has shown the intensive case management delivered by the Department of Health and Families to be effective. When comparing pre and post test figures there is a 62% reduction in police involvement. Of the 15 young people involved in the sample data, there were only two whose involvement increased, one by 0.2 and the other 2.8 police involvements.

YOUTH CAMPS

In March 2008, the Northern Territory Government introduced Youth Rehabilitation Camps as part of its Youth Justice Strategy. The aim of Youth Camps is to:

- increase the self esteem, confidence, empowerment and respect of young people
- re-engage young people with education and youth services targeting improved life pathways and the cessation of anti-social and criminal activities
- build community considerate young people who have greater life and employment opportunities
- build the emotional resilience, and cultural spirituality and wellbeing of Indigenous young people.

This is achieved through the provision of youth camps that:

- operate from a holistic approach, reconnecting young people to their identify, dealing with underlying issues and equipping young people with tools, skills and supports to make strong choices
- promote the development of positive relationships and encourage young people to 'slow down' and reflect on their lives without the distractions of modern life
- provide structure, routine, consistency and predictability for young people
- focus on young people's strengths and positive behaviour
- include participation in activities that reconnect young people with their culture, promote healthy lifestyles and facilitate skill/knowledge development
- teach young people new ways to express their needs and cope with their emotions and life experiences.

The ways in which Youth Camps influence young people and their experience with violence is to teach young people that violence is not an appropriate way to deal with frustration and anger, as either a victim or perpetrator, and to teach young people more appropriate ways to deal with their emotions and when confronted with potentially violent situations.

There is strong anecdotal evidence that suggests that participation in Youth Camps has been a catalyst for behaviour change and re-engagement with the community for some young people. A more formal evaluation and feedback process is currently being developed.

TRANSIT OFFICERS

The Northern Territory Government, through the Department of Planning and Infrastructure (DPI), introduced a new program in July 2008 employing Transit Officers to provide a safe travel environment for all members of the public.

The new officer has police-like powers to detain, search and arrest plus the powers to demand names, addresses and dates of birth. Seven staff patrol the Greater Darwin Bus Network. Patrolling staff numbers have been approved to increase in 2010 to 10, with a manager, team leader and administration officer.

Specifically in regards to youth issues and violence by youths against youths, two areas within Darwin were identified as having high reported numbers of assaults. These are the Palmerston and Casuarina Bus Interchanges, and the times of incidents were identified as being between 3 pm and 5.30 pm on school days.

To reduce these incidents the following actions were undertaken:

- Two Transit Officers now patrol the Palmerston Bus Interchange daily between 2.45 pm to 5 pm and have done so since 2 February 2009.
- At DPI's request, at least one School Based Police Officer supports the Transit Officers to provide a highly visible deterrent.
- Additional signage was placed in all buses and the interchanges to remind passengers of the number of CCTV cameras operating.

These actions have led to an almost total eradication of youth against youth violence and other anti-social behaviours. Similar actions and results have been observed at Casuarina Bus Interchange.

While there have been noted incidents of “displacement”, ie students fighting away from the interchanges, local police have been quick to act and have used DPI's CCTVs to good effect in identifying offenders.

CALD YOUTH

The NT Police Community Liaison Unit are working closely with service providers who are engaging youth from Cultural and Linguistically Diverse communities (CALD) to identify issues of bullying, intimidation and violence by other youth in the NT community at schools and shopping centres. There is reluctance by CALD youth to speak with police. Social functions and sporting activities are being held to engage these youths to develop positive relationships and open the lines of communication, to gather current and relevant information and implement strategies to reduce incidents occurring.

YOUTH DIVERSION

The NT Police Youth Diversion Program works primarily with youth who have entered the Justice system. The purpose of the scheme is to work with young offenders through formal assessment, youth justice conferences and referrals to diversion programs. NT Police manage and deliver the scheme and support the Youth Diversion Scheme community grants program.

9. STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED AT THE JUVENILE CORRECTIONAL CENTRE – DON DALE

CASE MANAGEMENT UNIT

Since 2004 the Northern Territory Government has established a Case Management Unit at the Don Dale Centre. The aim of the Case Management Unit is to provide assessments and programs to address the needs of detainees and to reduce the likelihood of further offending.

This is achieved by Case Management staff conducting assessments, including Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory, Massachusetts Adolescent Youth Screen (2nd version) and Alcohol and Other Drug Screening. The Case Management Unit refers detainees with identified needs to appropriate service providers, as well as providing brief one on one intervention. The Case Management Unit is supported by Clinical Services Branch within NTCS to build capacity to provide the range of interventions required to meet the need of detainees.

Young people's involvement/experience with violence is addressed through this strategy as staff are able to ensure that needs are identified and appropriate referrals and or interventions are carried out as early as possible during any custodial sentence.

PRISON IN REACH PROGRAM

In January 2009 the Northern Territory Government extended the Prison In Reach Program to the young people at the Don Dale Centre. This Program aims to provide standardised alcohol and other drug assessments and interventions to young people and to link young people to services within the community upon release. This is achieved by providing trained counsellors to carry out one to one interventions with young people referred through the Case Management Unit at the Don Dale Centre.

The way this Program influences young people and their involvement/experience with violence is to address the issue of drug and alcohol abuse and its connection to violent offending.

DOG ADOPTION PROGRAM

In August 2009 the Northern Territory Government introduced the Dog Adoption Program to the Don Dale Centre. This Program aims to teach detainees responsibilities associated with caring for others (including animals) and to build empathy.

This is achieved by involving the young people in the care of two dogs and the delivery of basic obedience training over a period of six weeks. The Program is supported and supervised by staff from the Animal Rescue Centre who attend weekly to provide instruction to the detainees.

This Program influences young people and their involvement/experience with violence by addressing the issue of learning to care for the welfare of others and to build empathy.

TEAM BUILDING AFTERNOONS

In October 2009 the Northern Territory Government introduced Team Building Afternoons at the Don Dale Centre. The Program aims to teach team building skills to detainees. This is achieved by the delivery of team building exercises and activities delivered by the Case Management staff at the Don Dale Centre with the support of Youth Worker staff.

Young people's involvement/experience with violence is addressed through these sessions in that they learn how to work together and to relate to others in a pro-social manner. It also provides opportunity for staff to model pro-social behaviour in a challenging situation.

10. CONCLUSION

All strategies detailed in this submission have been implemented, or are in the process of implementation, to address important issues currently affecting Territory youth. The impact of violence on young Territorians is indeed an issue of concern for all Territorians and through these strategies, the Northern Territory Government is working with young people, communities and service providers to deliver the best possible outcomes for young people in the Territory.

The Northern Territory Government looks forward to seeing the results of this Inquiry and the recommendations presented to the Australian Government.

References:

ⁱ Rudd, K., 2009, Helping young Australians build their own futures, online forum, http://www.pm.gov.au/PM_Connect/PMs_Blog/Youth_Blog [accessed 2 November 2009]

ⁱⁱ Australian Institute of Criminology, 2009, *Report to the Ministerial Council on Police and Emergency Management – Police*, Canberra