

WHAT IS YOUTH COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS?

Youth Community Corrections is a way to manage, monitor and assess community based young offenders (aged 10 to 18 years) who have been given an order by the Court or Parole Board.

What orders do Youth Community Corrections manage?

Probation is the most common Order of the Youth Justice Court and requires the young offender to promise not to get into any more trouble for the time of the order and do whatever else the Court directs. A Probation Order can last from six months to two years.

A Community Work Order is an alternative to detention. Young offenders must take part in a project that gives something back to the community. Rehabilitation or counselling may also be part of the hours. The Court decides how long the order is for based on the seriousness of the offence, which can vary from 8 to 480 hours.

An Alternative Detention Order is another option available to the Court. This order is very restrictive and puts a 24 hour a day curfew on the young person, who must seek permission to leave the home, only for good reasons such as going to school or rehabilitation or other approved activities. The maximum length is 12 months.

What about Parole?

The Parole Board grants parole after a young offender has spent time in detention. The Parole Board decides whether or not the young person has been rehabilitated while in detention and if they have good release plans that will prevent re-offending.

Who is involved?

Youth Justice Officers work with young offenders to identify their needs and develop their strengths while making sure they complete whatever tasks they are required by law to do. Young offenders work with Youth Justice Officers to identify and address the issues that led to their offending to try and prevent further offending and anti-social behaviour.

Youth Justice Officers report to the Parole Board about the young offender's suitability for release to Parole. These officers have powers to direct young offenders to attend at counselling or rehabilitation or maybe to undertake drug tests or breath tests to make sure they are staying clean. Their role is to assist young offenders to become good members of their society, however they can return offenders to Court if they fail to comply with the Order of the Court or Parole Board.

The families of the young person can also be involved, if a strong support network is needed around the young person. This helps to prevent re-offending.

Youth Community Corrections is currently the responsibility of the Department of Justice; however the function will transfer to the Department of Health and Families from December 2009. As of this date, Youth Justice Officers will be based in the Family Support Centres in Alice Springs and Darwin and one position will be located Katherine.