

Central West CLSD Meeting Minutes

14 September 2023 at Connecting Community Services Dubbo

MINUTES

Present: Brodie Prudon (Legal Aid), Luke Taylor (Mission Australia), Amelia Menouhof (Mission Australia), Dominic Holles (ALS), Tia Hollis (ALS), Joh Leader (LeaderLife), Patrick O’Callaghan (Western NSW Community Legal Centre), Gargi Ganguly (Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet), Tori Mines (Western Women’s Legal Support), Rachael Robertson (Western Women’s Legal Support), Jarah Maraschio (Western NSW Community Legal Centre), Jackson Bayliss (Connecting Community Services), Scott Fox (Legal Aid), Kate Halliday (Legal Aid NSW), Sharon Tomas (ALS)

Apologies: Josh Harvey (Youth Justice), Grace Toomey (NSW Aboriginal Land Council), Jimmy Forrest (Connecting Community Services), Donna Bruce (ALS), Bill Dickens (Legal Aid NSW), Jenny Bevan (Disability Advocacy NSW), Lindy Grady (NEWTAAS), Kendy Beasley (Mission Australia), Bobbie- Jane Jackson (Youth Koori Court)

Agenda item	Discussion	Action/Outcome
1. Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country	<p>The meeting was opened with an Acknowledgement of Country by Sharon Tomas.</p> <p>Purpose of meeting is to:</p> <p>Continue working on the project from our action plan regarding better informing young people and their families about their obligations in relation to bail.</p> <p>In this meeting, we will consider some new information and set some clear intentions regarding where we want to put our efforts, considering the following options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a bail resource for young people and their families.• Do service mapping to identify services available for youth in Dubbo.• Work together to improve better bail conditions for young people.	

<p>2. Introductions and Ice breaker</p>	<p>General welcome and ice-breaker: CLSD partners introduced themselves and answered What is one great thing about working with young people?</p>	
<p>3. Exploring the issue</p>	<p>Recap of what has been done. Kate took us through the May meeting minutes, so partners understood how we had progressed from talking about developing a bail resource for young people and their families to the current options for consideration today.</p> <p>Background information was provided on the issue including how young people coming through the Children’s Court due to allegations of a technical breach of their bail, such as a residential condition or a curfew condition. The wording of bail conditions is also very challenging and young people do not know or understand their bail conditions. In many cases their parents or carers do not understand the bail conditions.</p> <p>Kate shared local and state-wide data on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police proceedings against young people for breach of bail (January to December 2022) • Young people proceeded to court by initial bail status (January to December 2022) <p>It was noted that our region had significantly higher rates than corresponding metro places.</p> <p>An overview of the Short-term Remand Project in Sutherland and Wagga was provided. The aim of this project is to reduce the volume of children and young people aged 10-17 years experiencing avoidable short-term remand. It is being tested in the Riverina Police District and South Sydney Police Area Command.</p> <p>Tia shared information on the ALS NSWACT Bail Advocacy Program (BAP) for youth. There will be a separate diversion line for Penrith, Nepean, Mascot and Wagga police stations to call when young people are in custody.</p> <p>Kate shared information on research being conducted by a partnership between Youth Justice and Sydney University. The focus is on young people’s understanding of bail and AVO conditions. Research was being done in 2020 and it included a literature survey. The</p>	

recommendation is for more research and a consultant has been engaged to do more work. The research is not looking at systemic issues.

Discussion of the bail condition to engage with Youth on Track and other similar programs. The issue is that these programs are voluntary. The condition potentially sets young people up to fail. Magistrates are keen to put conditions on that encourages kids to engage with programs. Also discussed was the use of paternalistic bail conditions for young people. There is advocacy happening on this.

Question: Why does a child have to report?

Considering the negative impacts of young people continually reporting to police, better bail conditions such as to go to school instead of reporting was discussed. The need for specialised Children's Court in Dubbo was raised and how do we advocate for this?

Brodie raised the issue of carers who have called the police on the kids they care for, then acted as support people for the kids at the police station immediately afterwards. This is conflict of interest and was raised with DCJ recently. DCJ agreed but didn't know who should be called instead where the kids have no family in Dubbo and have no known disabilities.

Gargi shared information on the Australian Child Welfare Association (ACWA), which is the peak body in out of home care. There is project caseworker, and it might be helpful to contact them.

Judge Skinner was involved in a Māori project. It could be valuable to learn more about this.

Question to partners: What is one small thing that we could do to make a difference here?

- Training aimed at local out of home care providers and community sector organisations supporting young people in custody.
- Design a resource aimed at young people and their parents/ carers to help understand bail conditions. Explore whether this could be designed with Elders and young people engaged in Youth Koori Court?
- Develop a quick reference guide on support services for young people for Custody Managers to use.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An event where youth services engage with police to let them know youth services available. • Advocacy for specialised Children’s Court in Dubbo <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold free training for out of home care providers and community sector organisations supporting young people in custody. • Kate to ask Legal Aid to approach NT /WA regarding adapting the Blurred Boundaries resource. 	
<p>4. Next meeting</p>	<p>Topic: The Voice Referendum Thursday 5 October 2023, 11am at Dubbo Local Aboriginal Land Council 2pm at Connecting Community Services</p>	