

PARTNERING FOR PREVENTION



Northern Territory Council of Government Schools and
Northern Territory Police

A framework for: SCHOOL BASED POLICING



Northern Territory
Police Force

NT COGSO
YOUR VOICE FOR NT PUBLIC EDUCATION

With sincere gratitude and appreciation for your work and support to implement an improved school-based policing model across the Northern Territory:

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Former Minister for Education, Eva Lawler

Minister for Police, Nicole Manison;

Former Minister for Police, Michael Gunner (Chief Minister)

Northern Territory Council of Government School Organisations President, Tabby Fudge

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SECTION 1

Introduction

The Northern Territory has an important history of school-based policing through the unique School Based Constable (SBC) program established in 1985. The program focused on proactive policing in schools and had a profound and lasting impact upon our youth. Highly regarded within Australia and overseas, the program was replicated throughout Australia and adopted by New Zealand.

The model was based on preventative policing, rather than relying solely on the financially and socially expensive model of reactive policing. Whilst it is important to resource reactive youth policing, a preventative policing program is equally important.

School communities across the Territory have instructed the Northern Territory Council of Government Schools Organisation (NTCOGSO) to lobby relevant Ministers and Departments for the reinstatement of a school-based policing program.

A new school-based policing model must lift the best parts of the previous SBC program and add new thinking to not only return a preventative school-based policing program, but increase safety and reduce victimisation and crime. Long term benefits may result in reducing the escalating numbers of students requiring re-engagement strategies and youth diversion programs.

A preventative policing approach with quality selection and training of officers and collaboration with schools, will strengthen school safety, respectful relationships and student success.

The School Based Policing Framework outlines the role for police in government schools and the clear distinction between diversion and re-engagement; and school-based policing.

The Northern Territory Council of Government School Organisations (NTCOGSO) and the Northern Territory Police Force (NTPF), are pleased to present the following School Based Policing Program.

We are committed to strengthening the capacity of students, parents, police and communities through school based policing.



SECTION 2

Youth Diversion vs School Based Policing

‘Youth Diversion’ – divert disengaged youth from youth detention by preventing reoffending and revictimisation of youth.

YOUTH DIVERSION OFFICERS

- Youth Diversion aims to prevent re-offending and re-victimisation of children and young people.

The Royal Commission into the Detention of Youth in the Northern Territory recommended at 25.1(2) that a "specialist highly trained Youth Division similar to New Zealand Police Youth Aid be established" and Recommendation 25.1(1) that the "position of Aboriginal Community Police Officers be expanded and include the position of Youth Diversion Officers."

Recommendation 25.1 specifically relates to Police and "the path into detention' for our youth who have disengaged from education and face the additional risk of entering the 'school to prison pipeline' without appropriate interventions.

Under the New Zealand model **Youth Division/ Diversion Officers** work with schools to prevent reoffending and revictimisation of children and young people.

We note NTPF's ongoing collaborative work with the NZ Police Force.

‘School-Based Policing’ – build positive relationships with students and deliver quality programs to assist students make good life decisions.

SCHOOL BASED POLICING

- School-based Policing aims to prevent offending and victimisation of children and young people.

It is important to note that in addition to **Youth Diversion Officers**, New Zealand also established **Police School Community Officers** who 'work in schools to prevent crime and victimisation by supporting schools to develop and implement safety education and shared interventions.'

'Their role is to take every opportunity to prevent harm in the school community, so that students not only are safe, but also feel safe.'

The school-based policing model this framework outlines aligns with New Zealand's model of **Police School Community Officers**.

SECTION 3

What is currently in place for Youth Diversion?

Department of Families: Youth Outreach and Re-engagement Officers (YOREOs) work with youth and their families, other government agencies and local NGO services to support young people seen to be at risk of offending. Their aim is to connect these young Territorians to relevant education, training, counselling and medical services so they can make positive life choices and contribute to their local community.

The YOREO team also include professional and operational support staff to assist frontline workers to connect with other NGO and government service providers such as counsellors, medical services and local education or training opportunities. The YOREO initiative is a one of program of reforms and improvements to the NT's youth justice system, and is based in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Palmerston/Darwin and Nhulunbuy.

They also support victims of youth crime, by encouraging them to take part in restorative justice sessions which provide a forum for young offenders to be faced with the consequences of their actions.

Department of Education: Engagement Officers and Compliance Officers operate within the 'Engagement and Partnerships' Division which includes the branches of the Transition Support Unit and the Student Engagement Unit. Officers case manage at risk and disengaged students and liaise with NTG agencies including NT Police and the Department of Territory Families.

Northern Territory Police: Youth Diversion Unit & Youth Engagement Police Officers (YEPO's) identify youth at risk within the school system and work with Department of Education and Training to ensure that appropriate programs are in place to assist these students.

They also assist in the Family Responsibility Agreement and order process by identifying youth and families that may benefit from intervention by way of an agreement or order and establishing initial contact with these families and maintaining contact with them during the term of the agreement.

Department of Education: 'Every Day Counts' School Attendance and Engagement Strategy 2016-2018 'operates in strong partnership with other school attendance initiatives in place across the Northern Territory such as the School Enrolment and Attendance Measure, the Remote School Attendance Strategy and measures under the Education Act. The Department of Education works with other government agencies to develop and respond to an evidence base about what impacts negatively on school attendance and what works to address it. The strategic plan covers a three-year timeframe, implementing from July 2016. *"Much is already in place but the strategy will strengthen coordination and efforts across and between agencies."*

In addition to each of the above is the joint Northern Territory and Australian Government initiative:

Remote School Attendance Strategy (RSAS)

SECTION 3

What is currently in place for Youth Diversion? (cont.)

Department of Education: School programs intended to maximise the attendance, participation and engagement of students:

Clontarf Foundation through school-based academies in 14 government schools, targeted at Aboriginal male students from Years 7 to 12.

Stars Foundation and Role Models and Leaders Australia aims to maintain engagement of female Aboriginal students in their education in 14 government schools. It provides mentoring and engagement support to students through to year 12.

Malak Re-engagement Centre, including an outreach program in Palmerston, plays an essential role in supporting disengaged and 'at risk' 12 to 18-year-olds by providing flexible learning pathways to assist them re-engage in schooling or transition to training or a job.

Mimik-ga Positive Learning Centre provides a range of support services to students in primary-years. Positive Learning Centre staff work with home schools, families and other stakeholders to guide and support students to reach desired behavioural outcomes.

The Healthy Life, Creative Life program is a commitment to youth engagement in the Katherine and Barkly regions. The aim of the program is to enable middle and senior years students to return to mainstream schooling or progress to a job or training.

Educators and families support the ongoing need for youth engagement strategies and agencies working together to create expert-driven, evidence-based strategies that will reduce detention and recidivism of youth offenders in the NT, and return children to their education.

Equally important to youth engagement and youth diversion, is preventative policing in schools.

SECTION 4

What is currently in place for School Based Policing?

There is currently no School Based Policing program in the Northern Territory.

Our proposed model relates to police officer/s based in a school to establish positive relationships between students and police and to prevent offending and victimisation of students.

As established in other states and internationally, school-based police contribute to safe and supportive learning environments for students; conduct crime prevention activities within school; investigate crime activities within school and the school community; provide a police resource in school; deliver lectures and provide information on law, police duties and other related topics which support the school curriculum; and may participate in student activities such as excursions and camps.

We hold the fundamental belief that children have a right to physical and psychological safety at all times, and that we, as individuals, parents, communities, police and governments, must play a part in protecting and guiding children.

Objectives

- An innovative and understood partnership between police and schools which assists every student to feel safe physically, socially, emotionally and academically.
- Safe and supportive learning environments.
- Positive relationships between school-based police officers, students, families, schools and school communities.
- Assist children traumatised by family violence and other adverse childhood experiences to succeed in school.
- Prevent victimisation.
- Reduce youth crime.
- Develop positive attitudes in students and families toward police and the school.



The primary aim of the program is to provide the safest possible learning environment, relying on strong school-police partnerships.

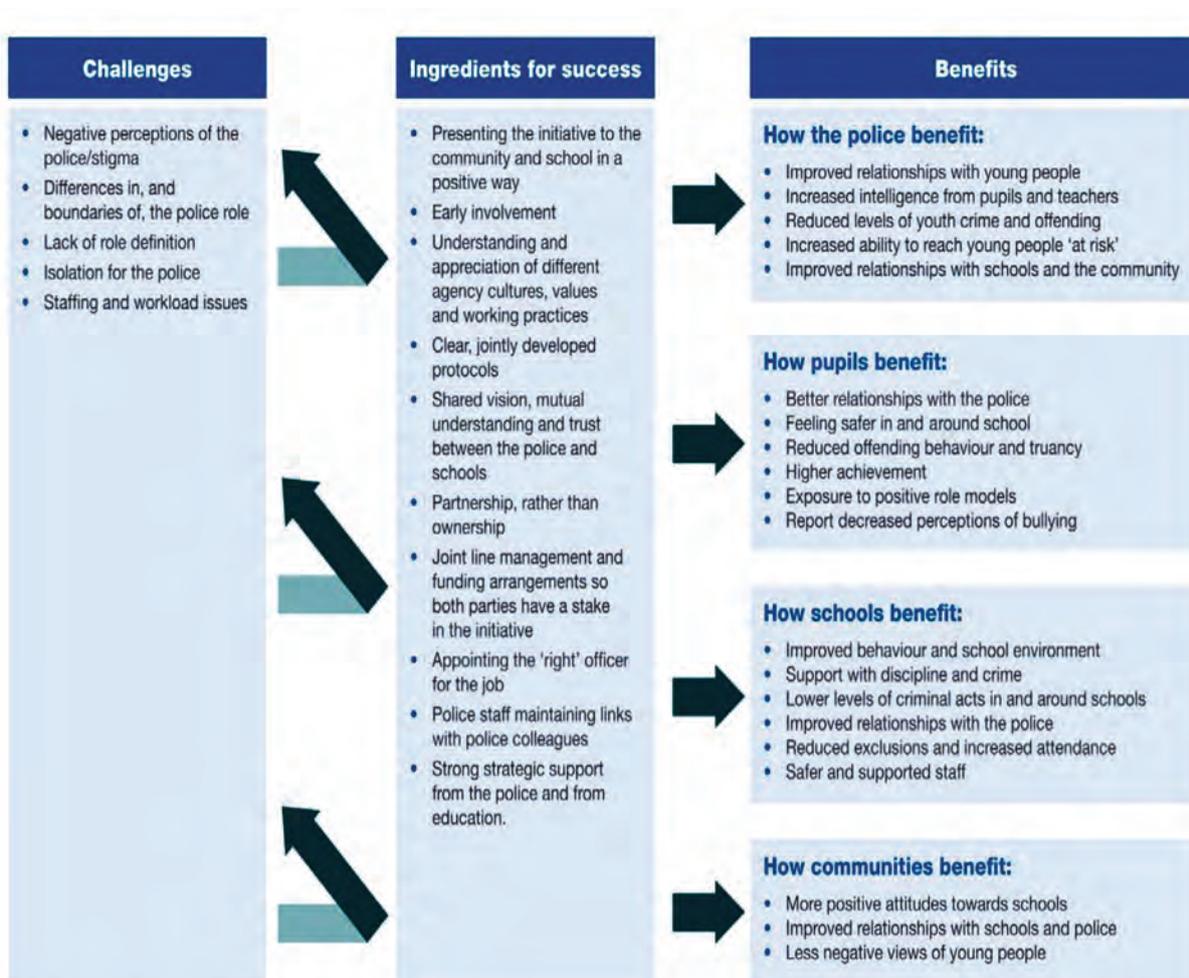
SECTION 5

What are the Challenges, Ingredients for Success and Benefits?

CHALLENGES

SUCCESS

BENEFITS



Credit: Police Officers in Schools: A Scoping Study Lamont, MacLeod, Wilkin 2011

SECTION 6

What is the role of a School Based Police Officer?

A police officer in a school setting would have the expertise and experience to respond to a range of issues and be a resource for the school community.

Their primary role would be to develop positive relationships with students, teachers, staff and the community to foster school-police partnerships.

School-based police officers would serve a vital role in the school system and can have many positive impacts on the students with whom they are involved.

School-based police officers would be in a position to identify students within the school who are vulnerable or at risk.

What Activities do School-based Police Officers take on?

A police officer role in a school may comprise any number of activities. Research on successful models identifies three broad areas of activity:

Enforcement and Safety of students and staff.

Educator and Mentor delivering programs to support awareness and knowledge.

Strategic Community Liaison and multi-agency prevention work.

Enforcement and Safety

School-based police officers would be responsible for public safety within the established school boundaries, which they perform by:

- Regular liaison with lead school contact and school leaders to agree on response protocols and procedures with a priority on prevention activities.

- Holding primary responsibility for handling calls for service from the school and in coordinating the response of other police resources.
- Liaising between the school, police and the surrounding community.
- Addressing crime and safety in school and ensuring the school is safe from intruders.
- Monitoring alcohol and drug-related activities occurring in or around school property.



Educator and Mentor

School-based police officers co-ordinate and deliver programs to support improvements in student knowledge.

Developing positive relationships with students, teachers, staff and the community in a school-police partnership would be facilitated by developing programs and activities that involve increasing students understanding of the law, police role and their responsibilities to the community.

SECTION 6

What is the role of a School Based Police Officer? (cont.)

In many jurisdictions, school-based police officers provide general justice and policing information and education to students. Presentations also designed for parents, carers, teachers, schools and community groups would further immerse police in community.

Topics would include or relate with, but not limited to:

- Role of the police in the community
- Law and personal safety
- 'Think U Know' (cyber awareness)
- 'Love Bites' (respectful relationships)
- Cyberbullying
- Sexting
- Abuse and Violence
- Road Safety.

Policing information and education will assist schools and the community to:

- identify needs within the school community
- identify opportunities to present education programs as a crime prevention strategy
- help teachers develop and present curriculum material to meet police and school community needs
- co-ordinate external providers to deliver presentations; NO MORE Campaign; programs on bullying, anger management and resilience.

Strategic Community Liaison

Sharing intelligence, working with other agencies; police presence and profile in the school community.

When issues from the community follow students to the classroom and the school, school-based police officers are a valuable resource for school leaders and teachers through collaborative problem-solving and assisting to resolve issues. In addition, they are in a position to respond to off-school criminal activity involving students.

School-based police officers would support students at risk of offending while encouraging school communities to adopt approaches that aid in crime prevention and proactive policing.

Disengagement from school is a process that occurs over a long period of time. Early indicators of disengagement include lack of participation in class or other school activities, increased absenteeism, disruptive behaviour and low achievement.

An effective school-based policing program would act as the first response to early indications for potential student disengagement with the intention of maintaining the student at school.

Where a student has disengaged from schooling the school-based police officer would bring this to the attention of an appropriate Youth Engagement team in one or more of the agencies.

- Provide support and referrals for at risk youth in partnership with schools
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with schools
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with youth and community organisations
- Develop and maintain partnerships with Youth organisations and Youth Program providers

Early development of non-cognitive skills e.g. motivation, perseverance and self-control) impacts more on later offending than cognitive skills

(Reynolds et al 2010)

SECTION 7

Specialised Skills & Training for School Based Officers

It is critical school-based police officers understand youth and adults interpret and react to situations, social cues, and interpersonal communications differently.

Given the complex issues that teachers and school leaders face with their student populations, ranging from special education needs; physical and mental health needs; child welfare to name a few, it is important that police officers who are assigned to schools also receive specialised training.

The Royal Commission into the Detention of Youth in the Northern Territory recommended at 25.1(5) *"all Northern Territory Police receive training in youth justice which contains components about childhood and adolescent brain development, the impact of cognitive and intellectual disabilities including FASD and the effects of trauma, including generational trauma"*.

As part of a school-police partnership, the Department of Education and NT Police will identify and make available specialised training to police officers assigned to schools.

Intensive training would focus on key issues:

- Child and adolescent development, with an emphasis on the impact of trauma on student behaviour, health and learning.
- Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD).
- Crisis intervention for youth.
- Youth Mental Health First Aid.
- Restorative practices, working with young people with complex behavioural and emotional issues and engagement techniques.

- Hearing loss (otitis media).
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD)
- Oppositional Defiance Disorder (ODD)
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Specific Learning Disorder (SLD)
- Subconscious (or implicit) bias (that all people experience) which can disproportionately impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth and youth with disabilities or poor mental health.

The Department of Families Youth Outreach and Re-engagement Officers (YOREOs) underwent three weeks of intensive training prior to commencing May 2017. Training included case management, restorative practices, working with young people with complex behavioural and emotional issues and engagement techniques. There may be an opportunity for interagency collaboration to include cross-training.

STATEMENTS OF SKILL

- 1. Comprehensive understanding of youth engagement principles and practice, as well as issues facing young Territorians.**
- 2. Strong communication skills and ability to communicate effectively with a diverse range of youth and adults.**
- 3. Demonstrated ability to work effectively and sensitively with young people from varying cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds.**

Youth Engagement and School Based Policing Working Together



A broken teddy bear is the central focus of the image. The bear is light-colored with visible cracks and damage across its body. Its eyes are replaced with small, bright red circles. A red mark, resembling a wound or a stain, is visible on its chest. The bear is set against a dark, textured background that looks like a wall with peeling paint or a similar surface. The overall mood is somber and evocative.

**It is easier to build a
strong child than it is to
repair a broken adult.**





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