



YOUR VOICE FOR NT PUBLIC EDUCATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Urgent Need to Return School-Based Police Program

Tabby Fudge, President of the NT Council of Government School Organisations, explains the important history of our School-Based Police; “In the early 1980's the Northern Territory introduced a School-Based Police Program which was so highly regarded within Australia and overseas, it was replicated throughout Australia and adopted overseas, notably in New Zealand.”

“The program revolved around proactive and preventative policing through the building of relationships rather than the financially and socially expensive, traditional model of punitive measures. The program was incredibly beneficial to our children and consequently to the wider community.”

“After a decision by the Giles government to cut the School-Based Police Program in 2013, NTCOGSO finally had the program returned for term 4 2018 and school year 2019, with a total of thirteen officers in ten schools with middle years students.”

“Following 2019 the School-Based Police were once again removed. This time to Operations in Alice Springs from the start of school 2020. They were then placed on border control for the remainder of the 2020 school year.”

“As we are now halfway through term 1, 2021 we are deeply concerned at the lack of progress in returning School-Based Police to schools.”

“The ramifications of their absence from our schools are the affects on the important relationships school-based police had built with our children. They were a positive presence in our schools and in 2019 were gaining knowledge in understanding adolescents through trauma informed practice with the Department of Education. This has all stopped.”

“The Chief Minister, on ABC radio Darwin recently stated his understanding was School-Based Police would now be back in schools.”

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NT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOL ORGANISATIONS

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MEDIA RELEASE



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Current Situation

“Very recently, only four of the thirteen School-Based Police (SBP) have returned, with one School-Based Police Officer working across both Palmerston and Taminmin Colleges with more than 2,300 students. Previously there were four SBP Officers based at these two Colleges.”

“We are a long way from a properly resourced and effective School-Based Police Program.”

“Schools now find themselves back to the very beginning of advocating for the police program instead of reaping the rewards of a schools-police partnership to assist our children make positive life choices and have trusted police in their lives.”

“During the February sittings in Parliament the Police Minister, Nicole Manison confirmed her commitment to expanding the program and said having qualified police officers was very important.”

“NTCOGSO is calling for the return of SBP Officers based at ten middle schools and for an expansion of additional resources into those primary schools who have requested the program.”

“School-Based Police are trusted adults, advisers and confidants for our children. The NT once led the way in crime prevention and positive relationship building between our young people, police, schools and communities.”

“It is time to return the program and expand. An ounce of prevention, is worth a pound of cure.”

The Northern Territory Council of Government School Organisations (NTCOGSO) represents: more than 19,000 NT families; their 34000 children; and our 154 government schools who support them.

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