Community Youth Response and Diversion Evaluation – Final Findings Report

5 December 2023

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1 Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community Youth Response and Diversion (CYRD) Program has positively impacted at-risk young people. CYRD has improved outcomes across a range of protective factors and positively influenced the offending trajectory of young people.

CYRD is a multi-faceted, community-led and culturally responsive program that has evolved to meet local need

CYRD is as an early intervention and diversion youth justice initiative. It targets young people aged 10 to 15 years who are at higher risk of offending or reoffending but generally not involved in statutory youth justice interventions. It consists of four complementary components that community-based organisations deliver. The components engage young people across various touchpoints to reduce offending or reoffending likelihood. The components include:

Diversion
Culturally appropriate, alternative intervention to police charging and/or remanding young people in custody.

Cultural mentoring
Adult mentor helps young people develop their cultural identity and influence non-offending lifestyle.

Intensive case management
Intensive support to young people and their families to improve behaviour and reduce offending.

Bridging to education
Positively engage young people to build their capacity to re-engage with appropriate education services.

CYRD has supported 1,400 young people across six locations. The six locations include Cairns; Townsville; Brisbane CBD and South; Logan; Ipswich; and Gold Coast. CYRD participants are primarily Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males with a range of complex needs that universal youth services cannot address.

CYRD has filled important gaps in each location and evolved to meet specific community needs. The place-based approach has resulted in different program models tailored to benefit young people in their respective communities. However, across each location the program has filled an important need by engaging young people early, limiting unnecessary involvement with the justice system, coordinating community responses, and promoting collaboration.

CYRD has contributed to a range of positive outcomes for young people

The evaluation identified through interviews and engagement with CYRD participants that CYRD is achieving positive outcomes across several domains:

- **CYRD has increased access for the target cohort to prosocial activities and other services**, including health, education and employment-related services and programs. Appropriate supports are provided to young people who may not otherwise engage with them.

- **CYRD has also supported young people to stay safe.** This is especially evident for the diversion services, which identify, support and then transport young people who are in potentially dangerous and unsafe situations.

- **CYRD has led to positive shifts in young peoples' sense of belonging, their cultural connectedness and orientation towards the future.** This was strongly supported through the evaluation's consultations with young people and analysis of outcomes data reported by providers.

- **CYRD service providers support young people to comply with their bail and orders while diverting young people from remand.** They achieve this through the combination of afterhours outreach, case management, transport services and consistent engagement.

However, some young people found it challenging to access local services and supports due to ageing out of services; visa status (especially for New Zealanders); service operating hours, location and capacity.

Quantitative analysis confirms CYRD's positive impact on young people

The evaluation completed quantitative analysis of provider reported outcomes in the form of outcome ratings in the SRS system, YLS/CMI risk ratings data and ICMS data on days in custody and offending. The analysis found that:

- **Eighty-five per cent of CYRD participants either improved or maintained their assessed outcome rating.** 48 per cent of young people experienced an increase in their average rating from pre-to-post, including 21 per cent who achieved the highest rating. Across various domains, CYRD young people were more likely to receive the highest rating for cultural connectedness, family relationships, learning participation, employment engagement, community connectedness, and mental health outcomes.

- **Young people had increased likelihood of receiving improved outcome ratings for CYRD components providing high intensity support.** Young people who engaged with Case Management and Cultural Mentoring saw improvements across the eight youth justice outcome areas most relevant to the CYRD program.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Compared with a control group, the CYRD group showed less escalation in risk ratings across relevant YLS/CMI risk factors.** For 'Overall Assessed Risk', a greater proportion of the control group were rated at a higher risk of reoffending level following the intervention compared with the CYRD cohort. The CYRD cohort also saw comparatively significant increases in the proportion of 'Low Risk' ratings and reductions in 'High Risk' ratings between pre and post for 'Attitudes and Orientation'.

- **Both the CYRD group and the control group saw no significant change in the number of days in custody within a one-year period.** Although the comparison group had a 2.3 per cent increase and the CYRD group had a 1.8 per cent increase, statistical tests revealed no significant difference between the two groups. This suggests that the changes in the number of days spent in custody were similar for both groups.

- **The CYRD cohort showed significant reductions in the number of offences committed compared to the control group.** The average number of offences committed by CYRD young people decreased relative to the control group, including an average 14 per cent reduction in offences such as arson of building, dangerous driving, and non-aggravated sexual assault, compared to the average 2 per cent reduction for these offences in the control group.

CYRD has contributed to improving the service system response to at-risk young people

CYRD has stimulated responses that strengthen the broader service system by improving coordination among service providers. They have established strong links with other community organisations and government agencies, enabling integrated service responses and enhanced information sharing about young people of interest.

Additionally, CYRD has encouraged new partnerships and service models, such as a collaboration between a diversion service and a local youth service provider in Logan. This has strengthened the ecosystem of non-government providers who can effectively support youth justice cohorts, promoting a holistic approach to reducing offending within the community and connecting community providers with Youth Justice programs.

Cost-effectiveness analysis shows that CYRD is a value for money investment

Nous believes CYRD represents a value for money investment given the calculated direct avoided costs and likely unquantified avoided costs and benefits. **CYRD creates between $7.4 million to $10.6 million in avoided costs** due to reduced offending alone. This includes:

- **$4.5 million estimated gross savings from reduction in offending behaviour and days spent in custody,** in the immediate 12 months following CYRD. Nous assessed the monetary benefit of the change in reoffending outcomes of CYRD relative to the control. This included direct police and court cost savings alongside wider social cost savings.

- **Between $2.9 and $6.1 million estimated gross savings from diverting high-risk youth with no existing offences from offending,** in the 12 months following CYRD[1]. Since this analysis only accounts for the 12-months post program engagement, it does not estimate the contribution of CYRD to longer-term diversion from offending, which can cost as much as $110,000 per year for each adult offender.

CYRD likely creates economic benefits from non-justice outcomes and broader system outcomes. Due to the scope of the evaluation, Nous could not quantify a broader range of benefits beyond the avoided cost of reduced offending. Nonetheless, Nous is confident that CYRD delivers additional benefits through:

- **Re-engagement of young people with education** that can improve employment and incomes for CYRD young people

- **Improved mental health and wellbeing** that can reduce health system costs

- **Strengthened connection to culture** that can lead to significant wellbeing benefits for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

CYRD implementation has been largely successful in the face of challenges

CYRD implementation has been flexible and responsive, with service providers adapting to local needs. For example, diversion services may vary in operating hours and activities across locations, affecting the integration of CYRD components. Integration between CYRD elements is most evident between diversion and case management. It is strongest when multiple components are delivered by a single provider or through a formal partnership. Integration between components delivered across service providers in similar areas is evident but could improve. The successful implementation of CYRD is attributed to highly skilled and qualified staff who have the experience and skills to work effectively with the CYRD cohort.

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[1] Nous has used defensible assumptions based on youth justice data available for reasonably similar cohorts to determine likely proportion of young people with no offending history who would have offended in the absence of the CYRD. The uncertainty in the assumptions is reflected in the broad range of potential avoided costs. More detail is provided in Section 4.3.

Alongside the integration of CYRD components, the introduction of CYRD components, particularly diversion, has improved coordination across locations. This has been achieved through:

- Representation on formal governance panels such as the Multi-Agency Collaborative Panels (MACPs, formerly known as SMART panels).
- Strong connections between CYRD components and Youth Justice as well as other government and non-government agencies.
- Internal referrals between different services delivered through CYRD service providers.

CYRD implementation has faced several challenges including workforce challenges, constrained capacity to deliver the right services at the right time, COVID-19 and slow or poor access to necessary support services for young people. Despite these, CYRD coordinators have played a critical role in facilitating integration and coordination. They liaise between CYRD providers and the broader service system, particularly in South-East Queensland. CYRD coordinators have coordinated services between Ipswich, Brisbane CBD and South, Logan, and Gold Coast providers, and have integrated CYRD components into the broader service system.

Implementation has demonstrated several success factors for CYRD

A key focus for this evaluation is to identify the critical success factors of the CYRD program model. These can inform the future directions of the program, noting the potential expansion of the program or specific components across additional communities and locations. The report identifies five success factors and provides corresponding recommendations for program success:

SUCCESS FACTOR 1: **MAKE A CLEAR STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE, GOALS AND ROLE OF CYRD WITHIN A LOCAL SERVICE SYSTEM.**
This evaluation has found that effective service delivery relies on clearly stated goals and roles that positions CYRD and its components as complementary to each other and other services. Stakeholders highlighted the need for clarity on who the target cohort is for each component, the outcomes each component should achieve, the communities that will

benefit most from each component and the combination of services and supports that will be most effective. Stakeholders argued that much of this should be co-designed with community.

RECOMMENDATION 1

a. Establish clear mechanisms for partners to share resources, data, knowledge, and best practices in alignment with defined specifications for the nature and role of CYRD. This includes clarifying the target cohort for each component and determining the most effective combination of components, including how they should interact.

b. When considering new communities for CYRD, analyse community profile and capability/capacity of existing supports in the local service system to understand the communities that will benefit most from each component.

SUCCESS FACTOR 2: **DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT THE SERVICE MODEL WITH THE COMMUNITY.**
Implementation has reinforced the critical role community plays in delivering a place-based intervention like CYRD. Stakeholders shared that co-design may lead to better long-term outcomes. They argued that engaging all the relevant stakeholders (including community organisations, government agencies and other key stakeholders, such as shopping centres and transport providers) in the design of a CYRD-like program would foster innovative service models and partnerships that can meet the specific needs of each location.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Facilitate meaningful community engagement throughout the program's planning, implementation, and evaluation stages.

SUCCESS FACTOR 3: **ALIGN EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACHES ACROSS SERVICE PROVIDERS AND THE DEPARTMENT.**
The Department has a clear commitment to evidence-based interventions,

including the use of Risk, Needs, and Responsivity principles, and meta-analysis of evidence that is effective in reducing reoffending.

Similarly, service providers shared that they use evidence-based frameworks that identify and assess risk factors, protective factors and vulnerability through slightly different lenses than the Department. This slight difference in approach means that *service providers and the Department may have different perspectives on the assessed risk of the target cohort of young people for CYRD*. Several Department staff and service providers saw value in working with each other to develop a tailored CYRD assessment framework that draws from evidence-based approaches from both Youth Justice and the community organisations.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Align evidence-based approaches between service providers and the Department to inform a tailored end-to-end assessment framework for the prevention and early intervention target cohort of CYRD.

SUCCESS FACTOR 4: EMBED THE COMPONENTS WITHIN A HOLISTIC, INTEGRATED RESPONSE NETWORK.

The literature review identified the need to foster a holistic, integrated response network that facilitates a wide range of individualised services and support networks within the community. This evaluation has demonstrated system-level outcomes that have supported CYRD service providers to connect the components that they deliver into a holistic, integrated network. All stakeholders identified this as critical to the success of CYRD.

A holistic, integrated response network must also engage the families, siblings and peers of young people to support long-term sustainable change. Many CYRD providers have extended their CYRD program model to engage families. However, there is an opportunity to better integrate youth supports from CYRD with intensive family supports.

RECOMMENDATION 4

a. Expand/fund coordination roles to support the coordination of services and supports around diversion services, take ownership and drive its implementation. The coordinator role can be Department-led or service provider-led.

b. Connect CYRD services with intensive family support programs

c. Embed CYRD components into multi-agency coordination panels and promote diversion services as mechanisms for service system coordination.

SUCCESS FACTOR 5. ENSURE PROVIDERS HAVE THE FOLLOWING FOUR CHARACTERISTICS: STRONG CULTURAL CAPABILITY, A COLLABORATION FIRST MENTALITY, MATURE SERVICE MODELS AND HIGHLY CAPABLE WORKERS.

Department staff across all regions consistently emphasised the importance of engaging suitable providers to deliver CYRD components. They stressed the critical need for strong cultural capability, ensuring that the program is culturally appropriate and responsive to the over-represented cohort of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. It was also noted that adopting a collaboration-first mentality would support coordination and communication, particularly for diversion service providers. Department staff also highlighted the effectiveness of providers with prior experience in delivering complementary services to the target cohort and their families. Lastly, the success of the implementation relied on highly capable workers who can establish strong rapport and lasting relationships with the target cohort.

RECOMMENDATION 5

a. Create profiles of service provider attributes critical to the delivery of prevention and early intervention programs like CYRD.

b. Embed service provider expectations into procurement specifications that promote these identified characteristics.

2 Introduction

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2.1 Overview of the evaluation

The Department of Youth Justice, Employment, Small Business and Training (the Department) engaged Nous Group (Nous) to conduct an evaluation of the Community Youth Response and Diversion (CYRD) Program.

Purpose and scope of the evaluation

The CYRD program evaluation meets the following purposes:

- Defining if and how the CYRD programs are appropriate for achieving the intended outcomes.

- Illustrating what has been delivered through the different program components and across the different locations.

- Assessing the effectiveness of the programs in achieving the intended outcomes and other outcomes influenced by the program.

- Investigating the types of impacts that are being observed and how they relate to critical success factors for CYRD and similar programs.

- Demonstrating the cost effectiveness of the program.

- Identifying where changes to the program can be made to support better outcomes.

- Informing an understanding of how to commission and support efforts to achieve prevention and early support outcomes.

To achieve these purposes the evaluation investigated the appropriateness; implementation; effectiveness; efficiency; and improvements and opportunities of CYRD. Detailed key evaluation questions are provided in Appendix A.

The Final Findings report

This document provides final evaluation findings. It follows from a preliminary findings report that contained findings from the start of the evaluation to November 2022.

This report draws on insights gained through the first and second waves of data collection activities (outlined below).

Qualitative data collection activities focused mostly on the appropriateness, implementation and effectiveness evaluation areas. Our quantitative data analysis has focused mostly on the effectiveness evaluation area. This report also includes suggestions for improvements and opportunities.

Data collection and analysis activities to date have included:

- A literature review into effective service models or best practice approaches for intervention responses that relate directly to the four CYRD components.

- Analysis of SRS and ICMS data from initiation of the program in each location to April 2023.

- Two waves of interviews with Department staff and CYRD service providers.

- Interviews with young people.

- Site visits to eight of the nine CYRD service providers (details on providers that were engaged is in Appendix B).

Data limitations

This evaluation suffers from data limitations due to several reasons – the most prominent of which was a shift in reporting systems during the evaluation period. These limitations are highlighted in relevant parts of the report to qualify certain findings. The evaluation methods are outlined in Appendix C.

Evaluation project constraints

The constraints on the CYRD evaluation scope, and quality of available data, present several limitations. These limitations, which are outlined below, should be kept in mind when reviewing the insights of this evaluation:

- **There is inconsistent data from service providers due to variable data collection and reporting practices.** This was particularly evident for the diversion element of the CYRD program. Service providers noted in interviews that SRS did not allow them to capture the full breadth of interactions with young people. This means the data available to the evaluation underreports the diversion activities, particularly for young people with no prior history of offending as providers were highly unlikely to include their details in SRS.

- **Changes in SRS reporting during the evaluation may have affected the consistency of activity and outcomes reporting.** The Department completed a significant upgrade to SRS that impacted how CYRD providers reported their activity and outcomes data. This was again especially impactful for the diversion services.

- **Ratings against outcomes in SRS, while numericised, are subject to user judgement.** There are likely to be slight biases across service providers in the way ratings are attributed. This limitation is addressed in the evaluation through the triangulation of multiple data sources to validate the shifts in outcomes reported in SRS.

- **There was limited access to data that could demonstrate non-justice outcomes.** The evaluation did not have access to data that would inform broader outcomes that the CYRD program aims to achieve beyond justice outcomes – for example, data on whether the young person entered employment or attained educational certificates. Further, there was no data on referral from CYRD through to other services. This is especially important for the diversion and case management elements, which have as one of their primary aims connecting young people to appropriate services. This limited the ability to calculate the broader benefits of the intervention.

- **Due to the impact of Covid-19 it is harder to discern long-term benefits.** The extent to which social distancing and lock-down restrictions impacted project activity and subsequently outcomes for young people varied across locations. For example, many diversion services had to reduce their activity or implement strategies and processes that reduced the scope of their activity.

Further detail on the technical methodology and specific limitations and assumptions are outlined in Appendix C.

# 2.2 CYRD is a multi-faceted, community-led and culturally responsive program

The Queensland Community Youth Response and Diversion (CYRD) initiative aims to provide an alternative intervention to police charging and/or remanding young people in custody. It forms part of the Youth Justice Strategy that aims to increase capacity for early intervention in the community and alternative pathways that create better lives, brighter futures and give young people a great start.

CYRD is positioned as an early intervention and youth diversion youth justice initiative. CYRD targets young people aged 10 to 15 years who are at high risk of offending or reoffending. The young people on CYRD have a range of needs that are too complex for universal youth services. Young people on CYRD are also generally not involved in statutory youth justice interventions.

CYRD comprises of four complementary components - diversion, cultural mentoring, case management and bridging to education. The four components engage with young people across various touchpoints to reduce the likelihood of offending or reoffending (see the diagram on the right for more detail).

The investment in CYRD was scheduled to be $18.3 million over three years.

Figure 1 | Overview of CYRD

OBJECTIVE	To provide a culturally appropriate, alternative intervention to police charging and/or remanding young people in custody, with the aim of reducing the numbers of young people in watchhouses and detention.		
PLACE-BASED APPROACH	Each CYRD will be locally driven.	Each CYRD will integrate into and leverage the service system.	Each CYRD will be responsive to place-based need and deliver the right mix of service components.

OFFERING	FOUR COMPONENTS	INTENDED IMPACT

Diversion services that aim to work with police to provide a culturally appropriate, alternative intervention to police charging and/or remanding young people in custody.

Intensive case management that aims to lead case coordination and support planning for young people and their families (except where young people are under a youth justice and/or child protection order).

Cultural mentoring that aims to provide appropriate cultural mentoring support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people via a trusted adult mentor who can influence a non-offending lifestyle.

Bridging to education that aims to positively engage young people to build their capacity to re-engage with an appropriate education service.

INTENDED IMPACT

Decrease youth offending.

Break entrenched criminal behaviour.

Improve young people's connection to their family, kinship and culture.

Address the concerns of community and victims of crime.

Create positive narratives about young people in the community.

**CYRD HAS TOUCHPOINTS ACROSS THE YOUTH JUSTICE SYSTEM**

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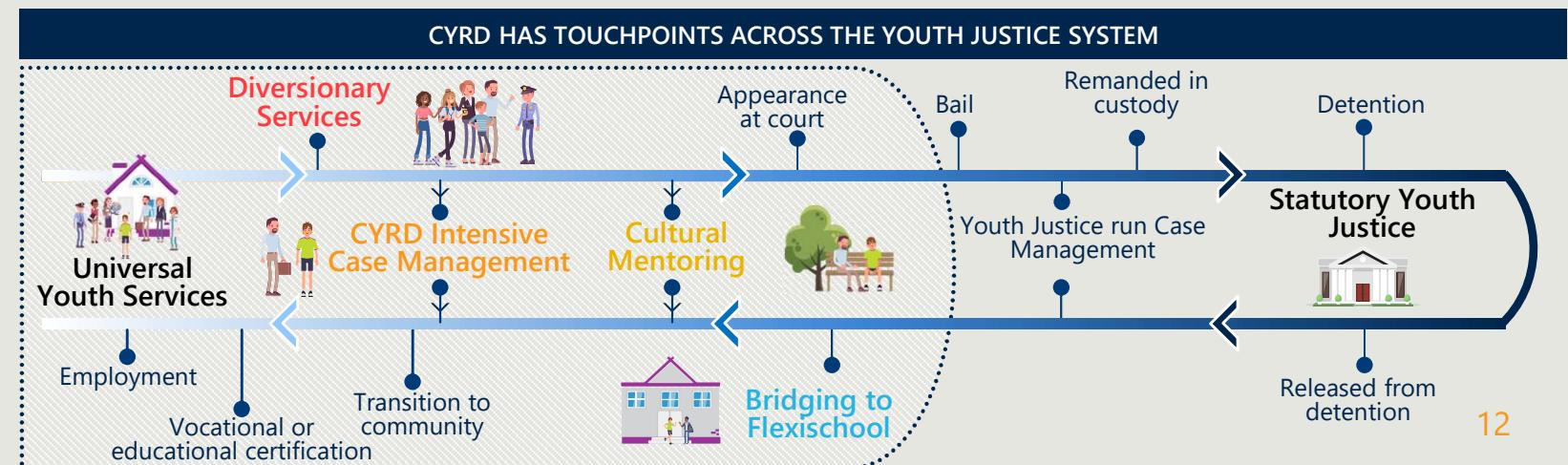
2.3 CYRD is delivered across six locations through locally adapted models

The CYRD program is designed to be locally driven and to leverage the service system in delivering the right mix of components, with an emphasis on after hours diversion services. As such, each CYRD location includes a diversion service and different component services dependent on local service providers and community needs.

Central to this model is the need for effective coordination and collaboration in each CYRD location. This includes coordination between CYRD services and non-CYRD services. Figure 2 below shows a map of the different program locations and component services offered at each location.

Figure 2 | Map of program locations and component services

	Diversionary Services	Intensive Case Management	Cultural Mentoring	Bridging to education
Cairns	●		●	
Townsville	●	●	●	●
Brisbane CBD and South	●	●		
Logan	●	●		
Ipswich	●	●	●	●
Gold Coast	●			

The nature and intensity of coordination differs between locations due to the different combinations of CYRD components and the local service system. The unique local context at each location also impacts implementation of the CYRD model. A summary of the specific local context for each location is provided below. Appendix B provides a list of all CYRD providers and those that were engaged as part of the evaluation.

Location	Context
Cairns	Diversion and Cultural Mentoring started in December 2019. Cairns is geographically dispersed with a busy city centre. Cairns has a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This includes a mobile population that travel into Cairns from surrounding communities.
Townsville	Diversion, case management and bridging to education started in July 2019 and are a continuation of components funded under the Townsville Community Youth Response. Cultural mentoring started in October 2019. Townsville has a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and is well known for its strong policing and vigilante groups.
Brisbane CBD and South	Diversion and case management started in February 2020. Brisbane CBD attracts young people from all over Brisbane and other parts of south-east Queensland. The cohort of young people tend to be highly transient.
Logan	Diversion and case management started in February 2020. This location is a notably low socio-economic area resulting in a large proportion of at-risk families and young people. Logan is also the focus of several prominent collective impact initiatives (e.g. Logan Together).
Ipswich	The diversion, case management and bridging to education started in January 2020 while the cultural mentoring started in June 2020. Ipswich is a notably low socio-economic area. It is well known for its Safe City Program and Public Safety Surveillance Cameras.
Gold Coast	Diversion started in July 2019. Project Street Cred was previously funded through philanthropic funding. The Gold Coast location has a large cohort of New Zealand and Pacific Islander young people and families who have been typically unable to access social support services.

2.4 CYRD has collectively supported over 1,400 distinct young people of whom 15 per cent have accessed multiple components

Queensland government was scheduled to invest $18.3 million in CYRD across four components over three years from 2020 to 2023

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Mentoring: $3.3 million
- Bridging to Flexischool: $1.1 million
- Diversion: $10.1 million
- Intensive Case Management: $3.8 million

Service usage has been substantial

Average time on CYRD components:

- Cultural Mentoring: 142 days
- Bridging to Flexischool: 216 days
- Diversion: 234 days
- Intensive Case Management: 199 days

15 per cent have engaged with multiple CYRD components.

Data on referrals from CYRD to other services is not recorded which limits this measure.

CYRD has supported 1435 distinct young people across all components

- 78% are Indigenous
- 63% are male
- Median age is 14.6 years

This breakdown varies across locations.

These young people have a diverse range of needs

- Unstable housing
- Homelessness
- Poverty
- Isolation
- Domestic Family Violence
- Limited family support
- Education and employment concerns
- Transport problems
- Substance misuse

CYRD targets a specific cohort

The CYRD cohort predominantly sits on the lower end of the SROI index[2] (less than 6) or without an SROI[3]
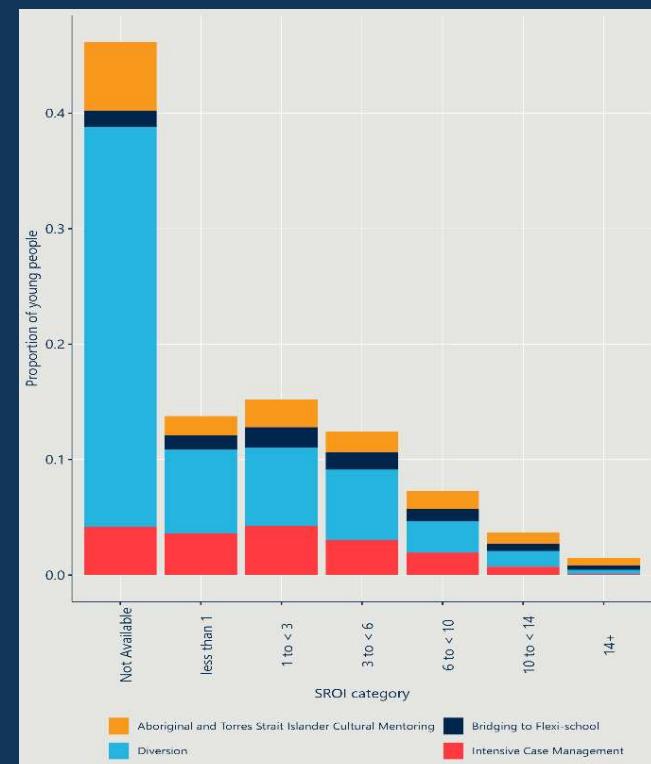
[2] The SROI index is the Serious Repeat Offender Index. The SROI index is a measure of a young person's offending. It considers frequency and seriousness among other factors. A SROI of six or more reflects a high risk and serious offender

[3] A young person will not have a SROI score if they do not have any YJ offences recorded in ICMS in the past year, or Nous was unable to match ICMS data with SRS data. A young person without a SROI also suggests that they are at-risk rather than active offenders.

3 Appropriateness

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3.1 The CYRD program has filled an important need in each location

The CYRD program has received strong support from all stakeholders as it fills important gaps in the service system. Stakeholders identified several ways in which CYRD helps to fill gaps in the service system. CYRD:

- engages young people early and often to **limit unnecessary engagement with police** and the justice system

- engages young people and families who **may not otherwise engage with supports and services**

- helps to **coordinate community responses** and promotes collaboration over competitiveness.

The above means that young people are more likely to receive support and, more importantly, the most appropriate support for their needs.

The place-based community-led model continues to be an appropriate response

All stakeholders commented on the importance of engaging placed-based community service providers to deliver CYRD. This was especially important regarding Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

Stakeholders highlighted that community-based organisations know and understand their community. This means that they can more effectively build a rapport with the young people and their families, engage young people and families who may be resistant to mainstream services and activate the community to provide wrap around support for the young people.

Each program component responds to specific gaps in the current system

Each of the CYRD components play a unique role to address the various needs and fill the different gaps highlighted above. A brief description is provided below. More detail on the role CYRD plays in each location is provided overleaf.

Most stakeholders highlighted that the after-hours diversion service was a key touch point for the CYRD model. They also highlighted the importance of coupling diversion services with activities, services and supports that can effectively divert young people from anti-social or criminal behaviour. This varied from organised diversion activities through to community-led case management.

DIVERSION	CASE MANAGEMENT	CULTURAL MENTORING	BRIDGING TO EDUCATION
• Diversion and outreach offers a soft touchpoint to services for young people and their families. • After hours outreach provides visibility of young people at times other services do not. • Diversionary programs provide opportunities to engage young people in constructive activities and coordinate connection to appropriate supports.	• CYRD case management provides the individualised support the cohort of young people and their families need. • Community led case management provides the necessary context and trust to link young people and their families to their community.	• Cultural mentoring provides pro-social activities for young people to develop necessary life skills • This service builds the connection to culture and promotes constructive development these young people may otherwise not have access to.	• The bridging to education provides the initial re-engagement with education and access to further educational and employment supports. • The specific cohort of young people in the bridging to education service have no other avenues of education or constructive development easily accessible to them.

3.2 The CYRD program has evolved in each location to meet community needs

How CYRD responds to community needs	Cairns	Townsville	Brisbane CBD and South	Logan	Ipswich	Gold Coast
Fills regional gaps in the service system	●	●	●	●		●
Plays a coordinating role in the service system			●	●	●	●
Offers a soft touch point for young people and their families	●	●	●	●	●	●
Connects young people to constructive development	●	●			●	
Provides the individualised support for everyday life	●	●	●	●	●	

How CYRD has evolved to meet changing needs

Cairns
- Collaboration with the local community has provided the visibility to respond to local needs. This includes providing training to the community to handle complex issues identified through diversion services.
- Multiple service providers with their own areas of focus have contributed to a service system capable of referring young people to providers that can support specific needs.

Townsville
- The large demand in Townsville has resulted in services targeting the highest need and adapting services to complex needs such as youth work in the Flexischool.
- Collaboration is building, with the different service providers becoming more involved with each other to share information thus providing a more holistic support.

Brisbane CBD and South
- The focus has become transportation and diversion for the large amount of transient young people coming into the city from outside.
- The development of positive relationships with other providers and government agencies in Brisbane is allowing the diversion service to share the value gained through the after-hours service.

Logan
- Moving the outreach hours to finish later to better fit with young people's needs including transport home.
- Through collaboration with Street Cred, Logan has reached out and collaborated with Queensland Rail to divert young people travelling to the Gold Coast.

Ipswich
- The program has expanded to include at-risk younger siblings in the support to intervene before they are involved with the justice system.
- Wider collaboration in the region including the Department of Education bolstering opportunities for young people in Bridging to Education to step down from the program.

Gold Coast
- The highly collaborative partner model brings in a range of services and gives each key information they would be lacking otherwise.
- Gold Coast Youth Services launched a pilot program to provide accommodation support for New Zealand young people facing homelessness encountered through Street Cred.

4 Outcomes and impact

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4.1 CYRD has contributed to positive outcomes for young people

The CYRD program aims to support several outcomes for young people. The outcomes range from greater access to prosocial activities and support services through to improved compliance and completion of orders. This evaluation has found that:

- CYRD has supported a range of positive outcomes for young people.

- Each component contributes to specific outcomes.

Each of these findings are outlined on in this section.

4.1.1 CYRD has supported a range of positive outcomes for young people

The evaluation finds that CYRD is achieving positive outcomes for young people. Service providers (n=8) and young people (n=51) shared stories of how CYRD components have had positive impact on access to services and their lives. These qualitative outcomes have been categorised into the eight areas outlined on this page and the next. Pages 20 to 25 summarise what the evaluation heard directly from young people in each CYRD location.

1. ACCESS TO PROSOCIAL ACTIVITIES

The CYRD program has provided constructive activities in an environment that supports young people's level of risk and needs. This has helped them to build prosocial skills and develop emotional and behavioural regulation in a safe social setting. Several of the diversion services facilitate access to activities provided by service providers or others providing prosocial youth activities. Young people said that cultural mentoring has developed necessary life skills through cultural activities and interactions with supportive and positive role models. Bridging to flexi-school and diversion create opportunities to build connections with positive peers.

2. ACCESS TO SERVICES

CYRD has supported young people to access critical services that they may otherwise not have had access to. This includes diversion services supporting young people who were otherwise not known to government or non-government agencies into services. It also includes bridging to Flexischool services that support young people to start enjoying learning and re-engage with the education system. Young people told their stories about how connection to CYRD through the four components had facilitated their access to other services such as job-finding, pregnancy support groups, or access to housing. Service providers have provided documented success stories.

3. PERSONAL SAFETY

CYRD has supported young people to stay safe. This is especially evident for the diversion services, which identify, support and then transport young people who are in dangerous and unsafe situations. For example, in Cairns, young people said they would call the diversion service when they are stuck as the next bus service doesn't start until morning. In these instances, CYRD transport provides the only safe transport for young people late at night. In Brisbane and the Gold Coast, the diversion service often engages with young people who are homeless and who without support can find themselves in compromising situations.

4. SENSE OF BELONGING

The CYRD program has connected young people to positive environments to build a sense of belonging. The community-led services have built trust and rapport with this cohort and increased their knowledge of and trust in other services, so they feel supported by their community. The Intensive Case Management and diversion services have developed this same rapport with the families. This has involved helping to improve family functioning by building their capability and providing access to much needed supports helping young people, both on CYRD and their younger siblings feel safe and connected with their family. This has resulted in many young people remaining in their communities instead of travelling to other regions such as between Logan and the Gold Coast. Cultural mentoring has in many instances improved sense of belonging through connection to culture (see next outcome).

5. CONNECTION TO CULTURE

All components of the program have been delivered with a cultural lens due to the high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in CYRD. The use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff across all components has supported stronger connection to culture. Several components, most notably the cultural mentoring component, include cultural activities delivered on country. Young people involved with this component said they had learned about culture and connected to their broader 'family' through CYRD.

6. VIEW OF THE FUTURE

CYRD opened doors for young people to divert away from the justice system. Connecting young people with education, employment, their culture and their community has increased young people's confidence in a positive future. Many young people said they were thinking about their future for the first time.

7. SUPPORT TO COMPLY WITH BAIL AND ORDERS

The continuous interaction of CYRD services with young people and ongoing communication with each other has increased young people's understanding of their order/bail conditions and facilitated compliance. After hours outreach combined with case management has increased the visibility of young people of interest. Consistent engagement and practical support, such as transport, has played a critical role to influence young people to comply with the conditions of their bail agreement or sentenced orders.

8. DIVERSION FROM REMAND

CYRD's collaboration with Youth Co-Responder Teams has established an alternative to custodial remand of young people by providing avenues for bail support, which was previously the only option available. After hours outreach with transport ensures that young people can safely return home, and the prosocial activities offered by the services provide a secure environment for them, reducing their likelihood of engaging in further offending.

4.1.2 Each component contributes to specific outcomes

The outcomes reflect the broad impact of the various components delivered across each location. A closer look shows that there is a systematic relationship between the CYRD components and the relevant primary outcomes. This is reflected in **Table 1** to the right. Most notably:

Diversion plays a primary role to connect young people to prosocial activities, other support services (including CYRD case management) improve personal safety and support compliance with orders.

Case management plays a primary role to support most outcomes due to the correspondent more intensive nature of the component.

Cultural mentoring has the most impact on a sense of belonging, connection to culture and a positive view of the future. This is tightly connected with the prosocial activities that are delivered through the component.

Bridging to education has a primary role to support education outcomes, that are tightly linked with outcomes related to a sense of belonging, connection to culture and a positive view of the future.

Table 1 | Map of qualitative outcomes against CYRD components

	Diversion	Community case management	Cultural Mentoring	Bridging to Flexischool
Greater access to prosocial activities	●		●	●
Increased personal safety	●			
Improved access to services	●	●		
Improved sense of belonging	●	●	●	●
Stronger connection to culture		●	●	●
More positive view of the future		●	●	●
Supported to comply with bail & orders	●	●		
Diverted from remand	●	●	●	

TOWNSVILLE

88% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

14yrs Median age group

12% Participated in multiple CYRD components

⊿ DIVERSION

📊 CULTURAL MENTORING

👥 BRIDGING TO FLEXISCHOOL

Outcomes observed

✓ Greater access to prosocial activities

✓ Increased personal safety

Improved access to services

✓ Improved sense of belonging

✓ Stronger connection to culture

✓ More positive view of the future

Supported to comply with bail with orders

✓ Diverted from remand

Service providers in Townsville are providing strong cultural connections for Aboriginal young people; giving new meaning to their lives

We spoke to eleven young people, seven male and four female, engaged with Burragah, Yalga and The Lighthouse. The Burragah program, run by the Townsville Flexible Learning Centre, offers additional support to young people who may not be ready to attend the main Centre. Yalga is a cultural mentoring program addressing personal, developmental, and cultural needs of young people on court orders. Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service (TAIHS) runs a cultural mentoring program and diversion service called The Lighthouse, offering more diversionary options for police out of hours and case management during business hours.

ACCESS TO PROSOCIAL ACTIVITIES
The Lighthouse provides several young people interviewed with access to prosocial activities. One said he came because it's fun, he played pool and basketball and watched movies. Some young people were also attracted to the service because they provided food or dinner to take back home.

PERSONAL SAFETY
One young person said they go to the Lighthouse service because it's safe there. Other's lives had changed through connection to Yalga and they were no longer living on the streets.

ACCESS TO SERVICES
Burragah's flexible and intensive approach was enabling the two young people we interviewed to engage with their education. The young people enjoyed the structure and routine, but also had lots of fun and felt safe. One boy had progressed in his reading, and said he felt good from that accomplishment. A participant from Yalga

wanted the program to move from The Lighthouse to Townsville city centre for easier and more convenient access.

SENSE OF BELONGING
Involvement with Yalga gave young people we interviewed a new sense of belonging. One said, "It makes me happy; this is the family I never had before".

CONNECTION TO CULTURE
Young people said that connection to culture through their engagement with Yalga was a powerful influence on their lives. One boy said he liked learning about everyone else's places and what their mob does compared to his own mob. Another said Yalga was the only program that kept him off the streets – that learning more about the culture gave him the answers and the feeling of doing what he's supposed to do. Similarly, the two young people we interviewed attending Burragah were able to connect with education through connection to culture – they were learning to fish and about the local environment.

VIEW OF THE FUTURE
The young people engaged in Burragah has a more positive view of their future. One said it had made him think differently about education, and another said he was thinking about working in the mines or becoming a footy player. A young person engaged with Yalga told us "I used to steal from the shops and get into a lot of fights. In the future I want to be a boxer. I want to go school next year; I want to graduate."

❝ It feels good to get out of the house. We're picking up rubbish and cleaning beaches. I learned about a tree that's for making spears and has a love heart shape. ❞

❝ I like the routine, doing the same stuff every day. ❞

❝ I felt relaxed, to get away from the stuff in town and Townsville, I just feel like myself out there. ❞

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CAIRNS

96% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

15yrs Median age group

20% Participated in multiple CYRD components

DIVERSION

CULTURAL MENTORING*

We were unable to directly engage young people from the cultural mentoring program due to scheduling challenges

Outcomes observed

✓ Greater access to prosocial activities

✓ Increased personal safety

✓ Improved access to services

✓ Improved sense of belonging

Stronger connection to culture

✓ More positive view of the future

Supported to comply with bail with orders

Diverted from remand

The Cairns diversion service engages young people on the street and allows them to understand and meet their needs in a timely and effective way

We spoke to ten young people; eight male and two female. The young people we spoke to had started with Youth Empowered Towards Independence (YETI) in different ways – some were referred through friends, others said they had been 'doing crime and sniffing', others met YETI coming out of court. YETI provides a range of programs beyond its diversion service, and the young people we interviewed were involved with YETI across more than its diversionary program. All young people we interviewed said they were happy or very happy with YETI. A number had referred friends and family (siblings and cousins).

ACCESS TO PROSOCIAL ACTIVITIES
Young people were drawn to YETI's diversion activities such as fishing and going out for food. One said it: 'gives me something to do other than stay home – otherwise I'd start stealing again'.

PERSONAL SAFETY
The bus operated by YETI is a common way of coming across young people in need of support, while also linking them to a place of safety such as the drop-in centre or back home. In one instance YETI provided a bike so the young person could get more safely to his cousin's house when the environment at home became violent.

ACCESS TO SERVICES
YETI's one-stop shop approach seemed to be a good model for providing integrated wrap-around services for the young people it engages. Due to its multi-disciplinary nature and wide range of programs, YETI staff were aware of and able to connect young people with the service system and available supports. Several of the young people YETI works with are disengaged from school. YETI is helping through small amounts of financial support such as giving young people phone credit, or purchasing new uniforms so they are ready to attend school.

Some commented that they were receiving good support with school - one young person said he now likes maths and english. Others were being helped to write their curriculum vitae and find a job – 'it makes me think, I'm set'. One young person commented that YETI staff were busy and were not able to help them with what they wanted (help with writing their CV) in a timely manner.

SENSE OF BELONGING
It was evident from conversations that YETI was effectively building rapport with young people – such as 'going for a cruise and having a yarn'. This was building a strong foundation of trust for future engagement and support and creating networks with other peers. Young people like coming into the drop-in centre and feel safe there.

VIEW OF THE FUTURE
As demonstrated in the below quotes from young people, engagement and support from YETI had started them thinking more positively about their future – something that many had not given much thought to before.

YOUNG PERSON QUOTES

"(It) helped me feel different about my future. I was negative before this."

"(YETI has) been changing my life, making me change from stealing and stuff. Before I was in cars, always in hoodies and freshies. Once I got into it, it helped make me change."

"Before we weren't worrying about the future, but now we are."

IPSWICH

63% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

15yrs Median age group

42% Participated in multiple CYRD components

DIVERSION

CASE MANAGEMENT

CULTURAL MENTORING

BRIDGING TO FLEXISCHOOL

Outcomes observed

✓ Greater access to prosocial activities

Increased personal safety

✓ Improved access to services

Improved sense of belonging

✓ Stronger connection to culture

✓ More positive view of the future

✓ Supported to comply with bail with orders

Diverted from remand

Ipswich CYRD provides a variety of prosocial opportunities for young people to engage in activities and access services

Ipswich Community Youth Services (ICYS) has a hub in central Ipswich, which allows them to run flexi-school, drop-in and outreach services from a central location. We spoke to seven males and six females through ICYS case management and outreach services. The outreach visited hot spots and provided transport for young people to wherever they need to go. Transporting young people in the bus gives the youth workers an opportunity to touch base and check-in, ask them what is happening at home, with their case workers, court etc.

Kambu Health provides flexible cultural mentoring for young people at risk or involved in youth justice. Unfortunately, we only engaged one male at Kambu Health due to lack of availability. Currently, the case management capacity is around six-eight young people, providing individual case management and group sessions/activities. Kambu works with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations like Youth Justice and ICYS to bring young people together in group sessions. Elders from the community usually facilitate the group sessions.

ACCESS TO PROSOCIAL ACTIVITIES
Young people said they participated in various activities through the outreach, the drop-in hub and flexi-school. Other activities included art sessions, competitions, BBQs, sport and other recreation activities.

ACCESS TO SERVICES
Through outreach and case management, young people said they were supported to access services like Centrelink, employment, transport and food. Some young people would like to get a job but felt like they were not ready yet.

There were also young people who said they relied on the bus to transport them home and if ICYS could not do so, they would stay out. They commented that there should be more than one bus so that ICYS can also take groups to different places.

CONNECTION TO CULTURE
The young person we engaged at Kambu cultural mentoring wanted to explore his tribal history. He has been missing a father figure growing up - his father is in prison. He said the program enabled him to connect with others and connect to culture and country.

VIEW OF THE FUTURE
One of the young people interviewed was currently attending flexi-school and engaged with learning – he was previously not engaged with any schooling. Other young people interviewed said they were thinking about finding work in hospitality and retail.

SUPPORT TO COMPLY WITH BAIL AND ORDERS
One of the young people that we spoke with was on curfew – he stayed with the ICYS outreach for the evening until he was dropped home. There was a young person on outreach that had to attend court the next day and ICYS checked-in and transported them home.

"When I'm stressed, I ring them so I can talk to someone. My life has changed – it's a bit better."

"Outreach helps. They pick me up in the afternoon and we go out for programs, art. They make my life easier."

BRISBANE CBD, SOUTH & LOGAN

Brisbane South

93% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

16yrs Median age group

Logan

63% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

15yrs Median age group

5% Participated in multiple CYRD components
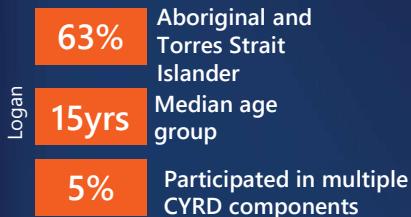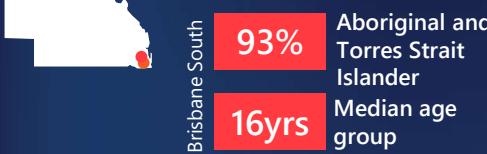
DIVERSION

CASE MANAGEMENT

Outcomes observed

Greater access to prosocial activities

Increased personal safety

✓ Improved access to services

Improved sense of belonging

Stronger connection to culture

✓ More positive view of the future

✓ Supported to comply with bail with orders

Diverted from remand

In Brisbane South and Logan there remains high levels of unaddressed need. The service provider is focussed on young people who are already in the justice system.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service (ATSICHS) partners with Logan YFS to offer ongoing case management for young people who have been involved in the youth justice system and outreach on the streets of Logan every Thursday night.

We spoke to seven young people; four male and three female. The Logan CYRD is slightly different from others; almost all the young people under their case management have been referred from Youth Justice and have been involved the youth justice system. None are attending school. ATSICHS provides culturally appropriate support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. The main issues faced by their cohort range from family instability and violence to misuse of alcohol and other drugs. The service manages 20 young people at a time, limiting the number of young people who can be supported – with very high unmet demand.

ACCESS TO SERVICES
The young people we interviewed said they were able to access a range of services. The service provider offers a range of services through other programs, so they can connect young people internally for support e.g. case management support for young mothers. This appeared to be a good model for providing integrated wrap-around services for the young people it engages. Due to its multi-disciplinary nature and wide range of programs, case managers were aware of and able to connect young people with the service system and available supports.

However, there were instances where young people aged out of the service system and were unable to continue their supports.

Other services young people interviewed accessed include:
- Having their basic needs met e.g. getting food, clothes, school supplies etc.
- Help to enrol in school
- Transport to and from appointments
- Applying for documentation and services such as Centrelink and housing
- Employment and education support e.g. handing out curriculum vitae, enrolment in different schools

VIEW OF THE FUTURE
The young people we interviewed had been helped to re-enrol in school, with mixed success. Some were hopeful about getting a job or starting their own business; one is involved with another program, Transition to Success, and has said that "it feels like I actually have something to do". Two young people had recently entered casual and full-time employment. They had a positive view of the future – "looking forward to working, having a house and driving a car".

SUPPORT TO COMPLY WITH BAIL AND ORDERS
Logan CYRD case managers had helped young people understand what they had to do at court, and supported them by taking them to lawyers, programs and probation.

YOUNG PERSON QUOTES

"She [youth worker] helped me buy everything I needed, she would take me to and from appointments and get my favourite food."

"[The youth worker] would give us food and he took an interest in me as I was different – I wasn't too much into it [crime] like others. He helped me out a lot... When I needed somebody, he was always there."

"I feel like there should be more programs, more kids to be engaged, so it's not boring. I like sports, football, netball and things, practicing make-up, making art and craft"

GOLD COAST

34% Pacific Islander

17yrs Median age group

DIVERSION

Outcomes observed

✓ Greater access to prosocial activities

Increased personal safety

✓ Improved access to services

Improved sense of belonging

Stronger connection to culture

✓ More positive view of the future

✓ Supported to comply bail with orders

✓ Diverted from remand

The Gold Coast youth service outreach takes a multi-agency approach to working with young people, many of whom are homeless

Street CRED operates every Thursday night by Gold Coast Youth Services (GCYS), offering assistance to vulnerable young people on the street. We spoke to seven young people; five males and two females. Most of them were initially engaged through outreach; some were referred through friends. All of them appreciated the service, but only saw slight improvements in their situation.

The challenges faced by older young people were homelessness and drug misuse, with rising levels of homelessness driven by increasing rental prices and housing shortages. Street CRED found it challenging to provide ongoing support for some of these young people facing homelessness as their visa status does not entitle them to Centrelink support. This meant that crisis accommodation services were less willing to accommodate them as they would not have the opportunity to move them on to longer-term housing. The younger people were known to outreach mostly due to disruptive behaviours such as getting into fights, trespassing into restricted areas (shopping mall roofs). Some of these young people come from stable families.

ACCESS TO PROSOCIAL ACTIVITIES
Some young people mentioned that it was good to have someone familiar to talk to at least once a week through the outreach service. One young person said it was "keeping them out of trouble". The outreach service was conscious about building rapport with young people who they identified as being at risk of escalating patterns of offending and encouraging then to think about the consequences of their actions.

ACCESS TO SERVICES
The young people were able to access a range of services such as:
• Applying for documentation and services such as passport, drivers' licence and opening a bank account
• Through linkages to accommodation services, having something to eat and somewhere to shower and wash their clothes
• Support to find accommodation.

Street CRED offer outreach once a week, so the support they can provide on the street is limited to Thursday nights. However, GCYS does provide other youth services and case management.

VIEW OF THE FUTURE
Some of the young people who we engaged deal with drug issues; despite issues with other aspects of their life e.g. homelessness, they reported that their drug problems had improved.

SUPPORT TO COMPLY WITH BAIL AND ORDERS
The young people who had been arrested were provided with support to access legal services such as: court support, including transport, meetings with legal representatives and explanation of court processes

DIVERSION FROM REMAND
One young person mentioned that they did not go to court and was referred by Street CRED to a restorative justice program instead. Nous also witnessed on outreach how a Gold Coast Youth Service worker worked with private security to find a non-police solution for a young person caught shoplifting.

YOUNG PERSON QUOTES

" I'm still homeless but my drug use is much better. I appreciate it [Street CRED] and makes me want to change. "

" They helped us out with accommodation, helped us get back on our feet.

4.1.3 Quantitative analysis reinforces CYRD's positive impact on young people

Nous completed advanced quantitative analysis of CYRD performance using outcomes reported in SRS (reported by service providers) and ICMS (held by the Department) datasets. We used these two datasets to help address four lines of enquiry:

1. Is engagement with CYRD associated with an **increase in outcomes ratings in** SRS pre to post and how does this differ between the four components?

2. Is engagement with CYRD associated with a **decrease in YLS/CMI risk scores from** pre to post relative to a matched sample control group?

3. Is engagement with CYRD associated with a decrease in the **number of days spent in custody** from pre to post relative to a matched sample control group?

4. Is the engagement with CYRD associated with a **decrease in seriousness of offences** committed from pre to post relative to a matched sample control group?

Each line of enquiry is presented in turn on pages 27-31.

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1. CHANGE IN OUTCOMES AS REPORTED BY SERVICE PROVIDERS

Young people had increased likelihood of receiving improved outcome ratings for CYRD components providing high intensity support.

2. CHANGE IN REOFFENDING RISH RATINGS

For relevant YLS/CMI risk ratings, CYRD young people's risk ratings did not escalate compared with the control group.

3. CHANGE IN NUMBER OF DAYS IN CUSTODY USING ICMS DATA

The number of days in custody in a twelve-month period remained constant from pre to post for both cohorts.

4. CHANGE IN SERIOUSNESS OF OFFENCES USING ICMS DATA

The CYRD cohort saw significant reductions in the number of offences committed from pre to post for several constructed bands from the National Offence Index compared to the control.

A note on the method

A consistent approach was implemented to analyse each of the different outcome areas, with adjustment made depending on covariates, outcome domains and datasets.

Analysis of outcomes 2, 3 and 4 used a subset of the CYRD cohort. Outcome 2 used a subset of 574 of the 1,435 young people, outcome 3 a subset of 718, and outcome 4 a subset of 876. Subsets were used because not all CYRD young people proceed into ICMS. They also reflect the product of data cleaning.

A matched dataset was created for each outcome area using matching on a range of demographic factors as well as region. Suitable alternatives to the CYRD components were identified through consultations with the Department data and program experts.

For the count variable outcomes (e.g. offence counts, days in custody), Poisson mixed effects models were used. For the ordinal variable outcomes (e.g. YLS/CMI risk ratings), ordinal mixed effects regression models and generalised additive models were used. These flexible statistical models enabled appropriate handling of data complexity (e.g. longitudinal data with multiple instances of service engagement for individual young people) and quantification of uncertainty that could be propagated through to all inferences regarding potential impact of CYRD.

The full technical methodology is provided in Appendix C.

Young people had increased likelihood of receiving improved outcome ratings for CYRD components providing high intensity support .

CYRD young people saw significant improvements in outcome ratings (based on analysis of 2,069 SRS assessments). 48 per cent of young people increased their average rating from pre-to-post. This included 21 per cent who saw their ratings increase to the highest rating at completion of their engagement. A further 37 per cent of young people's outcome ratings stayed the same, meaning only 15 per cent decreased.

The figure below (**Figure 3**) displays the change in outcome rating by youth justice outcome for each CYRD component. Green and blue colours indicate the improvement in outcome ratings between Post and Pre, with lighter green shades representing greater improvement. Grey cells indicate no statistical change. More detailed quantitative analysis and findings are presented in the panel to the right. As anticipated, Diversion and Bridging to Flexischool achieved change in fewer outcome areas, consistent with their more limited engagement with young people.

Figure 3 | Change in youth justice outcome ratings as reported by service providers in SRS
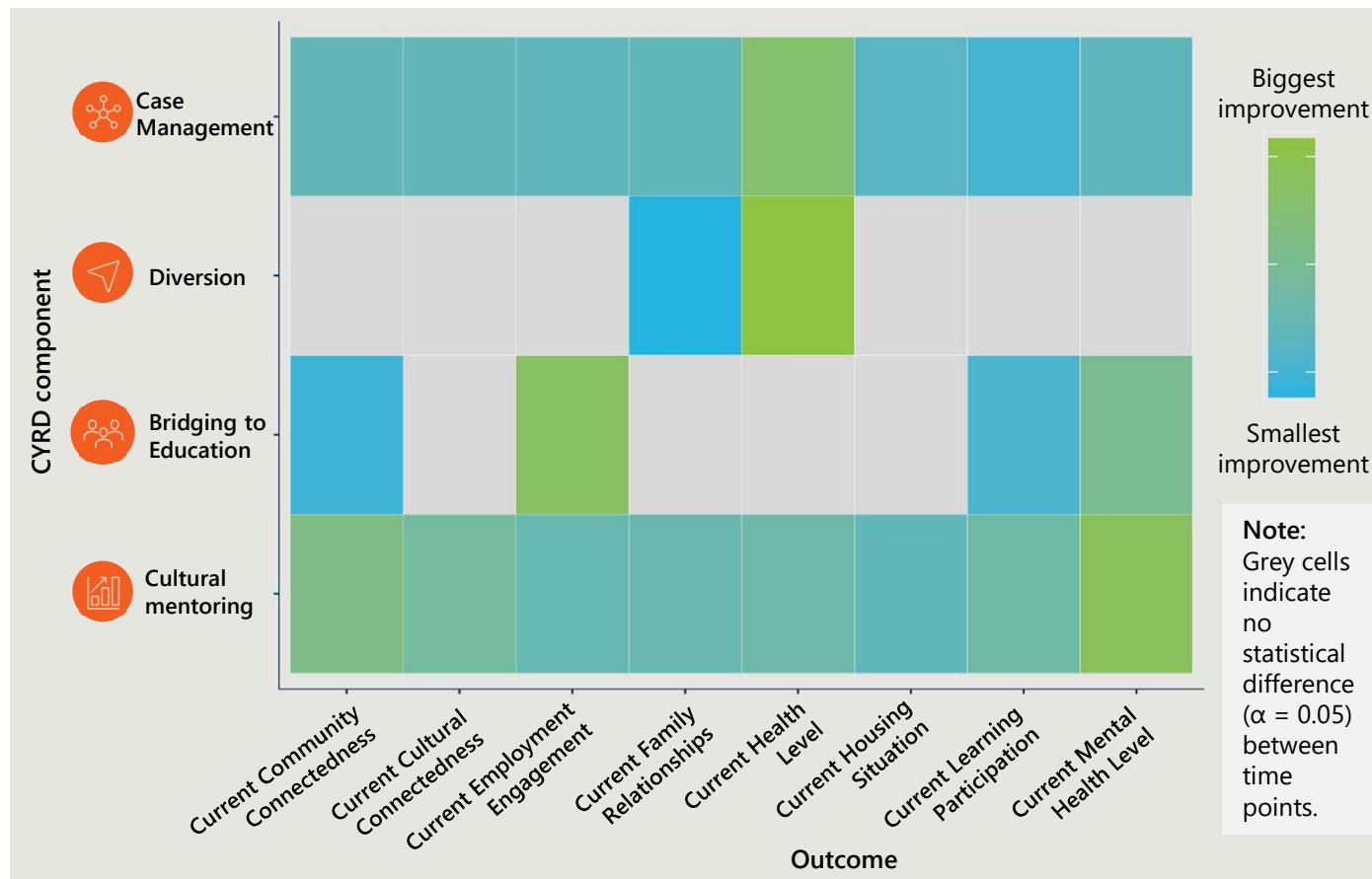
A note on the method

Across all CYRD components, meaningful improvements were noted from pre-engagement with CYRD to post engagement. This was applied to a subset of youth justice outcomes deemed most relevant to the program. Young people were substantially less likely to receive a rating of "Could do a lot better" at post relative to pre, and for many outcomes and components, were more likely to receive a rating of "Doing great" or "Doing well".

The analysis shows that the greatest improvement to "health level" was through Diversion and Case management. The greatest improvement to "mental health level" was through Cultural Mentoring and Bridging to Education. Cultural Mentoring also saw the biggest improvement in "community connectedness". Bridging to Education also saw the greatest improvement in "employment engagement".

On the other hand, smaller improvements to "family relationships" was observed through Diversion and Cultural Mentoring. Case Management and Bridging to Education also observed smaller improvements in "learning participation". Cultural Mentoring also saw smaller improvements in "employment engagement" and "housing situation". Bridging to Education saw smaller improvements in "community connectedness" as well.

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For relevant YLS/CMI risk ratings, CYRD young people's risk ratings often did not escalate compared with the control.

CYRD young people's risk ratings often remained constant compared to the control group. For Overall Assessed Risk, the control saw significantly (at α = 0.05) larger reductions in the proportion of young people assessed as 'Low Risk' from pre to post, while also seeing significantly increased proportions of young people rated as 'High' risk. For Attitudes and Orientation, the CYRD cohort saw significant increases in the proportion of young people rated as 'Low Risk' from pre to post and a significant reduction in those rated as 'High Risk' from pre to post compared to the control, who saw significant decreases and increases, respectively. No statistical differences in pre-post changes between cohorts were noted for the Peer Relations and Personality and Behaviour YLS/CMI domains. The changes for Overall Assessed Risk are presented in Figure 4a below and overleaf in Figure 4b for Peer Relations, Personality and Behaviour, and Attitudes and Orientation.

Figure 4a | Shift in Overall Assessed Risk domain scores from pre to post averaged over all CYRD components
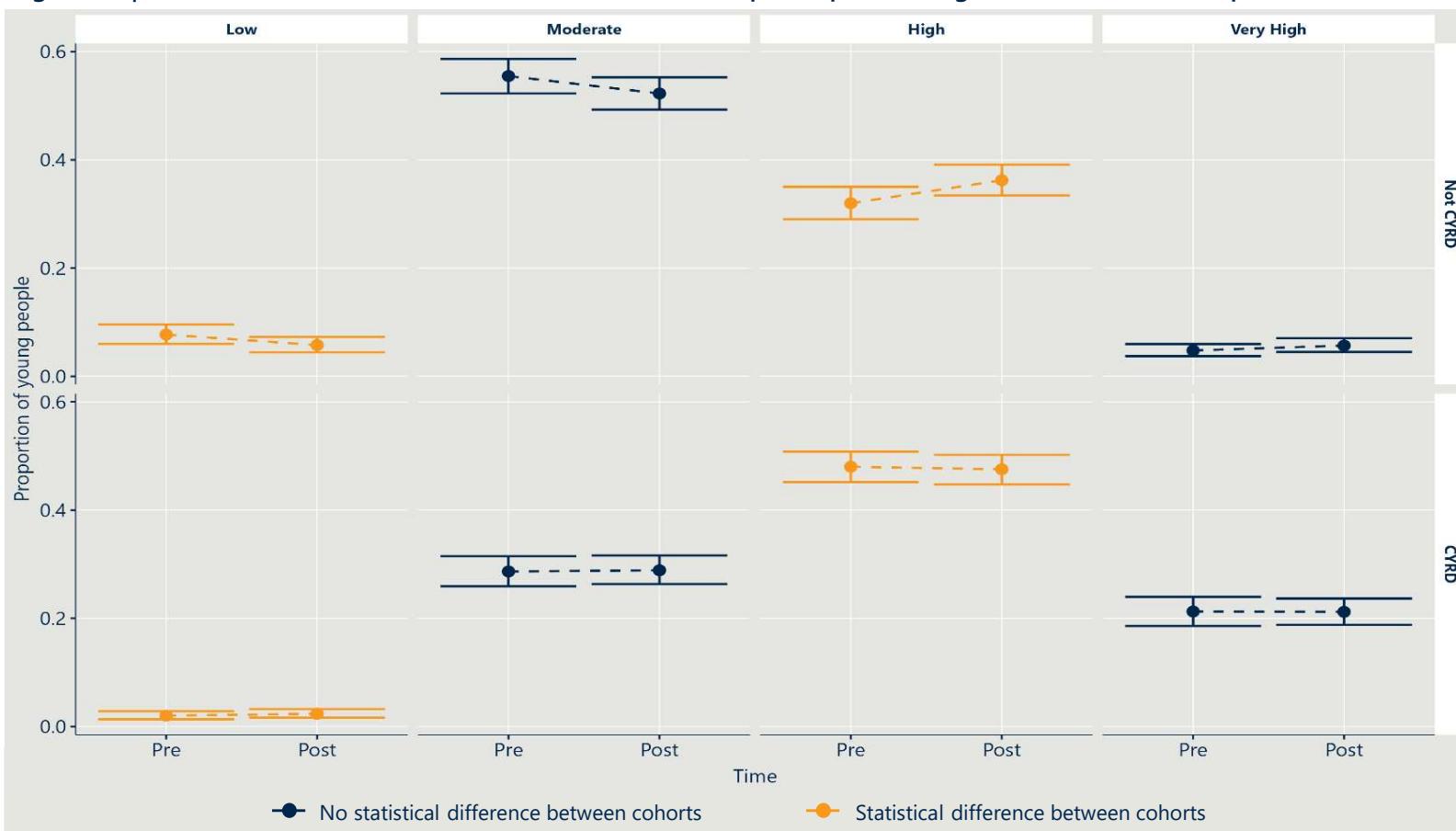
A note on the method

The quantitative analysis assessed changes in risk by analysing four YLS/CMI risk factor domains deemed most relevant to the CYRD program for both CYRD and non-CYRD cohorts. These areas are:

• Overall Assessed Risk

• Peer Relations

• Personality and Behaviour

• Attitudes and Orientations.

Figure 4a shows the results for Overall Assessed Risk averaged over all CYRD components. It shows the difference in the median posterior estimate of the proportion of young people who receive a certain risk rating in the YLS/CMI domain for both CYRD and non-CYRD cohorts. Points indicate posterior medians and bars indicate 95% credible intervals.

Statistical differences were obtained through hypothesis testing of pre-post change magnitudes between the cohorts using differences-in-differences from average marginal effects with a *p*-value threshold of α = 0.05. See Appendix C for technical details.

Figure 4b | Shift in three YLS/CMI domain scores from pre to post averaged over all CYRD components
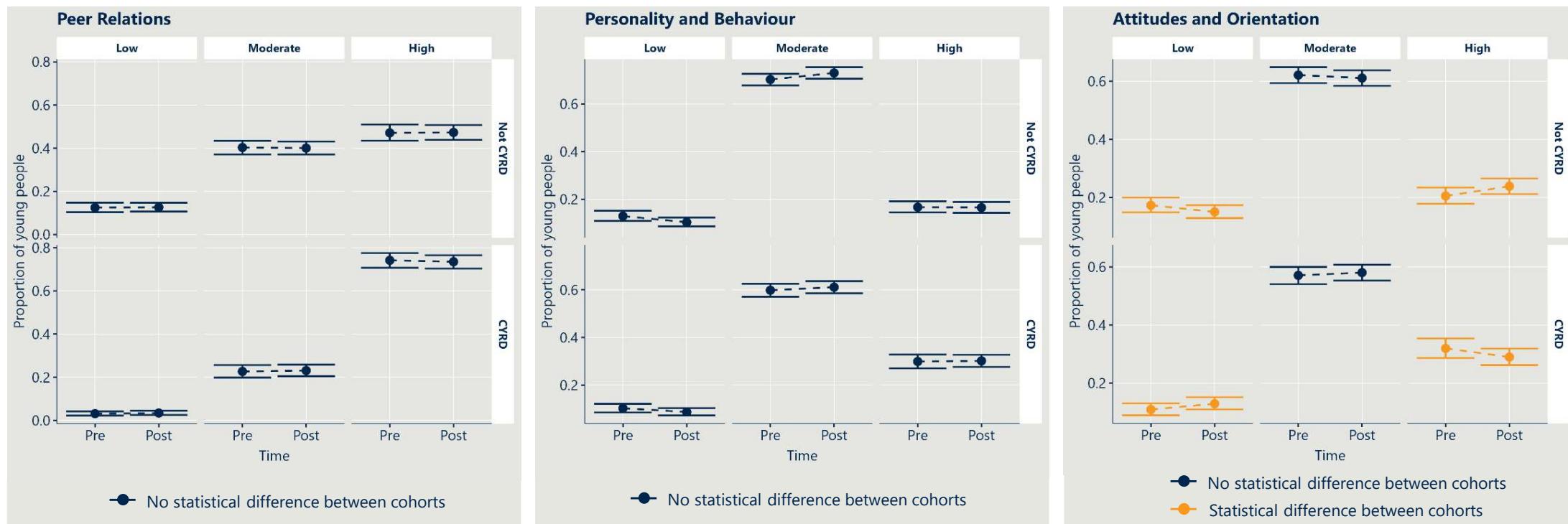
A note on the method

Figure 4b shows the results for the Peer Relations, Personality and Behaviour, and Attitudes and Orientation domains of the YLS/CMI averaged over all CYRD components. It shows the difference in the median posterior estimate of the proportion of young people who receive a certain risk rating in the YLS/CMI domain for both CYRD and non-CYRD cohorts. Points indicate posterior medians and bars indicate 90% credible intervals.

Statistical differences were obtained through hypothesis testing of pre-post change magnitudes between the cohorts using differences-in-differences from average marginal effects. See Appendix C for technical details.

3. CHANGE IN NUMBER OF DAYS IN CUSTODY

The number of days in custody in a twelve-month period remained constant from pre to post for both cohorts. ⊖

Both the CYRD and control cohorts saw no material change in the number of days spent in custody in a twelve-month window before and after support. The control saw a 2.3 per cent increase in the average days spent in custody, while the CYRD young people saw a 1.8 per cent increase – though the uncertainty bounds around these estimates are wide and should not be interpreted as an actual increase. A statistical hypothesis test of the magnitude of these pre-post changes between the cohorts also revealed no difference at a *p*-value threshold of α = 0.05.

Average adjusted predictions computed over all model covariates (see Appendix C for details) is shown in Figure 5. Points indicate posterior means and bars indicate 95% credible intervals. The non-CYRD cohort exhibited marginally higher averages at both time points. Both the pre- and post- periods were defined as twelve months from program engagement and closure, respectively.

Figure 5 | Shift in the number of days in custody in the twelve months before and after engaging with a support
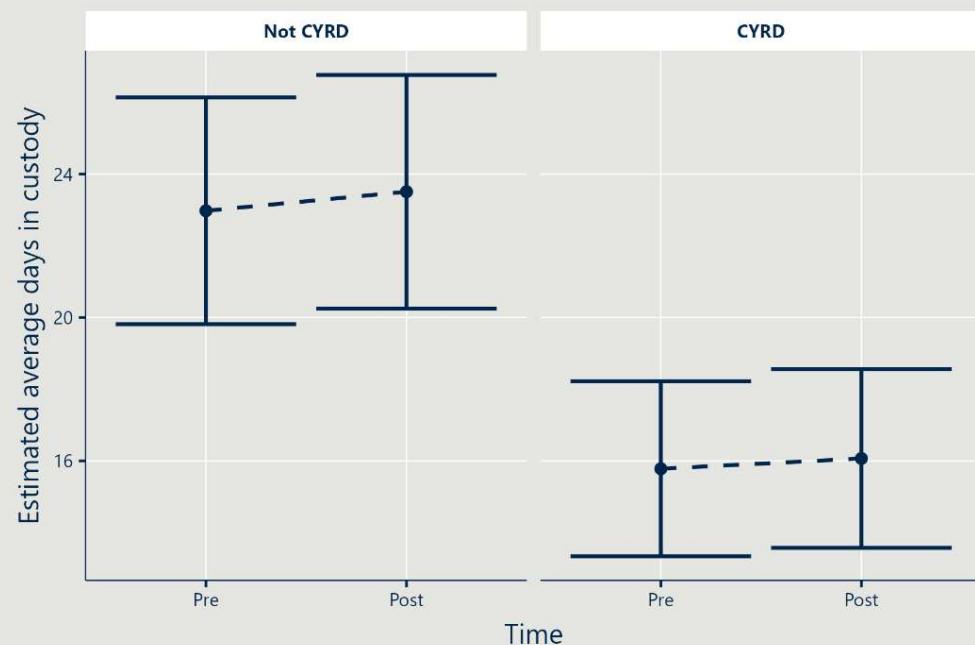
4. CHANGE IN SERIOUSNESS OF OFFENCES

The CYRD cohort saw significant reductions in the number of offences committed from pre to post for several constructed bands from the National Offence Index compared to the control.

The average number of offences committed by CYRD young people largely decreased from pre to post relative to the control. Significant reductions (at α = 0.05) relative to the change exhibited by the control in the average number of more serious offences were noted for NOI Band 1 (which includes offences such as arson of building), NOI Band 2 (which includes offences such as dangerous driving), and NOI Band 3 (which includes offences such as non-aggravated sexual assault). Note that the control exhibited a lack of Band 0 offences in the post period – prohibiting statistical hypothesis testing for this band. NOI Band 4 offences were also omitted from the data used for modelling after the filtering and matching procedure.

Figure 6 | Change in average number of offences by National Offence Index band from pre to post for each cohort

4.2 CYRD has contributed to improving the service system response to at-risk young people

CYRD also aims to achieve system level outcomes. This includes improved service coordination, a more responsive service system and a stronger and more accountable system for the cohort of young people that are the focus of CYRD. This evaluation has found that CYRD has stimulated responses that have strengthened the broader system, namely, CYRD has:

- Improved service system coordination
- Encouraged new partnerships and service models
- Strengthened the capability of service providers to work with the target cohort.

Each of these findings are outlined on the right.

4.2.1 CYRD has improved service system coordination

The CYRD service providers have developed strong links with other community organisations and government agencies that work with similar cohorts. Information sharing through these networks increases coordination between services. This leads to better targeted support for young people.

CYRD coordinators have played a critical role to support system coordination outcomes. The CYRD coordinators often facilitated collaboration between CYRD providers and linked those providers into the broader service system (see Section 5.1.5 for more detail on the role of CYRD coordinators).

In many locations, non-CYRD services work closely with the after-hours outreach and diversion. This service creates the opportunity to find and engage young people that could not otherwise be found. Diversion services often share this information back to relevant services looking to provide support.

The collaboration that developed through CYRD has also aided new services to better integrate into the service system and provide their service to the young people that need it.

4.2.2 CYRD has encouraged new partnerships and service models

The CYRD program components when run by different service providers in a location have worked hard to collaborate where it was not evident before, allowing young people to not only access the CYRD services at each provider but also other support offered by each. The CYRD providers have also partnered with other non-CYRD providers to bolster their capacity and improve service delivery. One example of this is in Townsville where Lighthouse partners with Community Grow to increase the capacity of diversion activities and limit mixing of different cohorts that could prove damaging.

New service models have also developed from the CYRD program to provide more holistic services. For example, the outreach service in Logan has partnered with Street Uni to set up an after-hours diversionary space. The outreach transport team drops young people to this space as an alternative to their home. This encourages young people to stay in their community rather than to travel to other regions.

4.2.3 CYRD has strengthened the ecosystem of non-government providers who can successfully support youth justice cohorts

CYRD has expanded the group of service providers with demonstrated experience working with young people that are the focus of the Department due to their specific level of risk and complexity of needs. CYRD has also stimulated learning and development for these providers and through them, other community providers that are motivated to work with this cohort. These providers support a more active approach to reducing offending from within the community by connecting the holistic supports they provide with the programs and services delivered through Youth Justice.

4.3 Cost-effectiveness analysis shows that CYRD creates direct and potential cost savings and benefits

Nous has completed a cost effectiveness analysis to calculate the economic impact of CYRD's effect on offending outcomes. Nous did not complete a cost-benefit analysis as there was not scope to complete a full economic appraisal of cost and benefits associated with the program.

Nous believes CYRD represents a value for money investment given the calculated direct avoided costs and likely but unquantified additional avoided costs and benefits.

This evaluation has found that CYRD creates between $7.4 million to $10.6 million in avoided costs due to reduced offending alone. CYRD is also likely to deliver additional benefits through improvements in protective factors that lead to:

- Stronger employment and incomes
- Reduced health system costs
- Significant wellbeing benefits

The rest of this section outlines how CYRD:

- Creates avoided costs from changes in reoffending outcomes
- Potentially delivers avoided costs from diverting high-risk youth from future offending
- Creates likely creates economic benefits from non-justice outcomes and broader system outcomes

4.3.1 CYRD creates avoided costs from changes in reoffending outcomes

Nous assessed the monetary benefit of the change in reoffending outcomes of CYRD relative to a control group. This included direct police and court cost savings alongside wider social cost savings from shifts in reoffending count, reoffending seriousness, and days in custody (see quantitative outcomes analysis in Section 4.1.3).

The estimated gross savings from reduction in offending behaviour and days spent in custody for young people with existing offences is $4.5 million. The timeframe of this monetary impact analysis considered only the immediate twelve months following engagement with CYRD. It is well documented that engagement with other similar youth justice initiatives produces lasting reductions in offending behaviour post program engagement. Therefore, it can be reasonably expected that some additional savings may accumulate over a longer time horizon but with diminishing returns as time since CYRD engagement increases.

As noted in Section 4.1.3, this analysis applied to a subset of CYRD young people who had committed an offence prior to engaging with CYRD and therefore had an ICMS record. Missing from this analysis are the CYRD young people who had no offending history prior to engagement with CYRD. The next Section explores potential cost savings achieved from this cohort.

4.3.2 CYRD potentially delivers avoided costs from diverting high-risk youth from future offending

Nous could not develop a robust baseline level of likely future offending for CYRD young people who had no existing offences given the available data. In place of robust data, Nous has used a 'logically constructed baseline' of how they would have offended (in the absence of the CYRD). The baseline was created using defensible assumptions based on analysis of other similar cohorts.

Over 62 per cent of CYRD participants who have no existing offences do not have an offence in the 12-month period post their engagement with CYRD. This means that approximately 38 per cent of this cohort did offend. Nous considered two scenarios to build baselines at the lower and higher end to compare CYRD effectiveness:

- **Low scenario:** 47 per cent of young people who have a finalised court appearance never return to the Youth Justice System in 2019/20[4] – this means 53 per cent do return. This is a 15-percentage point difference with CYRD young people who no offence pre- or post-CYRD engagement.

- **High scenario:** 31 per cent of young people with a proven finalised offence did not reoffend within 12 months in 2022[5] – this means that 69 per cent did. This is a 31-percentage point difference with CYRD young people who no offence pre- or post-CYRD engagement.

'Young people exiting court' is an appropriate comparison because, like the 'at-risk' group of young

[4] Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs, Youth Justice Pocket Stats 2019-20; [5]Youth Justice analysis.

people, the profile of young people exiting court represents a range of underlying risks of future offending.

The estimated gross savings from CYRD diverting high-risk youth with no existing offences from future offending is between $2.9 million and $6.1 million. This range represents the difference between the low and high baseline scenarios. It is important to note that these estimates are sensitive to changes in the final baseline rates. A five-percentage point change in the baseline rates results in approximately plus or minus $1 million in avoided costs. Table 2 below provides a sensitivity analysis of the two baseline scenarios.

Table 2 | Sensitivity analysis

	5 per cent decrease from baseline (-5)	5 per cent increase from baseline (+5)
Avoided costs - Low baseline scenario	$1.96m (-$0.95m)	$3.92m (+$1.01m)
High baseline scenario	$5.1m (-$0.99m)	7.06m (+0.97m)

This analysis only accounts for the 12-month period post program engagement. It is feasible to believe that CYRD may have played a role to divert some of the high-risk young people from a longer-term trajectory of offending. The cost savings of diversion from a longer-term trajectory of offending are substantial. For example, each young person that does not escalate into an offending trajectory compared to the comparison group represents up to, in the most severe cases of a trajectory of adult reoffending, $110,000 per year (for an adult prisoner). Nous has not estimated an amount for this as it is too speculative based on the available data.

4.3.3 CYRD likely creates economic benefits from non-justice outcomes and broader system outcomes

CYRD has a strong focus on not only changing the offending trajectory of young people but also creating better life trajectories. In addition to the quantifiable impact on reoffending and first-time offending rates, CYRD likely strengthens protective factors, including increased engagement in education and employment, improved mental health and well-being, and strengthened connection to culture, that not only contribute to improved offending outcomes but also improved wellbeing and life outcomes for individuals.

Three examples highlight the broader benefits CYRD likely achieved from creating better life trajectories:

- **Re-engagement with education can lead to stronger employment and incomes.** The evaluation evidenced several examples of young people re-engaging with education. It is well evidenced that educational attainment has a significant impact on employment and incomes that flows through to total lifetime earnings. For example, the annual difference in total median income between someone who does not finish Year 12 and someone who does is approximately $6,500.[6] Higher educational attainment can therefore lead to a significant improvement in lifetime earnings for the individual.

- **Improved mental health and wellbeing can reduce health system costs.** The evaluation heard of several providers that connected at-risk young people with a range of health and wellbeing services. It is well evidenced that preventative health check-ups are cost-effective and result in future savings to government.[7] These costs present themselves as reductions in chronic disease, fewer hospitalisations and an increase in the sustainability of certain healthcare services.

- **Strengthened connection to culture can lead to meaningful wellbeing benefits.** A substantial body of evidence demonstrates the connection between improved wellbeing and equivalent monetary values. For example, a one-point increase in life satisfaction on a 0-10 scale can result is equivalent to $25,000.[8] SRS analysis showed that cultural mentoring and case management both achieved positive shifts in cultural connection for some participants. The evaluation also heard from several young people who spoke about their improved life satisfaction due to this strengthened connection to culture.

This evaluation did not have the scope to quantify these benefits. The evaluation also did not have access to the relevant data (e.g. systematic health and employment data). The panel to the right provides a note on how youth justice and the Queensland government might approach measuring shifts in life trajectories and broader benefits from early intervention youth justice initiatives.

[6] Department of Education, Benefits of Educational Attainment, Australian Government Canberra, 2016;
[7] Howse, E, Crosland, P, Rychetnik, L, Wilson, A. The value of prevention: An Evidence Review. The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre, 2021;
[8] Social Impact Taskforce, Wellbeing discussion paper: monetisation of life satisfaction effect sizes, HM Treasury, UK, 2021.

5 Implementation

5.1 CYRD implementation has been largely successful in the face of significant challenges

The implementation of CYRD has required service providers and the Department to innovate, develop new ways of working and foster new relationships. Across all stakeholders there was a consistent theme that CYRD providers have experimented to find the right combination of activities, intensity and capabilities to deliver outcomes for the participants.

This has looked different across each location. Service providers have made locally-specific decisions on what to prioritise with the envelope of funding and other resources available to them.

Specifically:

- Implementation of CYRD has been flexible and responsive to local needs.

- Highly skilled and qualified staff are critical to the successful implementation of the model.

- Integration of CYRD components varies due to service model differences across locations.

- Over time, the CYRD components have become increasingly integrated into broader service system coordination.

- CYRD coordinators have played an integral role to support element integration and service system coordination

- Implementation challenges have impacted on service quality, consistency and availability.

The rest of this section explores each finding in more detail.

5.1.1 Implementation of CYRD has been flexible and responsive to local needs

Flexibility has been purposefully built into the model. This has allowed service providers to adapt the services and supports to better meet the needs of young people and address some gaps in the local service system. However, the specific funding envelope for services has resulted in trade-offs related to the delivery of the specific components. For example, diversion services are delivered with slight differences across the locations – such as different operating hours and different mixes of activities. These differences are based on local decisions to adapt the diversion service to the local context.

5.1.2 Highly skilled and qualified staff are critical to the successful implementation of the model

Staff need to have the necessary experience and demeanour for working with the target cohort of young people. For example, service providers shared that CYRD workers need both street smarts and the relevant skills and capabilities to work with a more complex and higher risk cohort. Culturally safe services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers were also seen as critical to the model due to the high number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people who access CYRD. This aligns with findings from the literature review. The evidence indicates that workers need to have strong cultural knowledge and specialised training to foster positive outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. This is most likely to come from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

5.1.3 Integration of CYRD components varies due to service model differences across locations

As outlined on page 12, CYRD has a different program model in each location. This is due to different combinations of CYRD components as well as different service provider arrangements. These differences have greatly influenced the degree of integration between CYRD components. More specifically:

- **Integration of CYRD components is most evident between the diversion and case management components.** This is true across Ipswich, Brisbane CBD and South and Logan. Service providers in these locations noted that these two services play a complementary role. For the diversion service, the case management service is an important referral pathway for the young people they engage who need intensive support. Many service providers highlighted that diversion and outreach is ineffective without access to services that can meet the immediate needs of the young people they engage. For case management, the diversion service acts as an extension of their service through out of hours engagement. Young people on CYRD are difficult to engage solely through a traditional case management model due to their transient and irregular life situations. Diversion services can play a linking role between the young person and the case management service.

Service providers also noted that the diversion service builds stronger rapport between the organisation and the young person as it introduces more 'friendly faces.' This allows the service provider to deliver wrap-around supports in the community.

- **Integration is most evident when multiple components are delivered through a single service provider or through a formal partnership.** In both cases information flows are stronger, opportunities for collective learning through debriefs increase and referral pathways can be more effective. In these cases, service providers have implemented different forms of a step-up and step-down model, that is, stepping young people up into more intense services when they need the support and the stepping them down into less intense services when they achieve their case management goals.

- **Integration between components delivered across service providers is evident but could improve.** Across all service providers there is a strong appetite for integration. In areas where components are delivered across service providers there have been strong examples of shared use of facilities, effective referral pathways between components and attempts to share information to support more effective supports for young people. However, the integration to date has been driven mostly through pre-existing relationships. There is an opportunity to leverage departmental coordination roles to better integrate components.

5.1.4 The CYRD components have become increasingly integrated into broader service system coordination

The introduction of CYRD components, most notably diversion, has contributed to more effective service system coordination across many locations. CYRD coordinators and service providers continue to play an important role to coordinate the most appropriate supports for each young person from government or non-government agencies. This has been achieved through three main mechanisms:

- **Representation on formal governance panels such as the Multi-Agency Collaborative Panels (MACPs, formerly known as SMART panels**). Service providers that deliver diversion services have enhanced the coordination of services for young people through these panels. This is due to the additional information they collect and their ability to immediately respond to young people presenting with serious needs.

- **Strong linkages between CYRD components and other non-government and government agencies.** CYRD in many locations has become an important point to facilitate collaboration between agencies, to increase communication and to focus on wrapping the right supports around young people. The after-hours service also offers a unique connection between young people and relevant agencies.

- **Internal referrals between different services delivered through CYRD service providers.** The CYRD service providers are established organisations offering a range of services that they refer the CYRD cohort into. This can support access to a greater breadth of services. Service providers also highlighted how they regularly refer CYRD young people to other community services they have established links with.

5.1.5 CYRD coordinators have played a critical role as a liaison that supports element integration and service system coordination

Across most locations, CYRD coordinators have played an integral role to support element integration and service system coordination. CYRD coordinators have often taken on a role to broker two-way engagement between CYRD providers and the broader service system. This has been most evident across the SE Queensland locations where CYRD coordinators have played an integral role to set up and manage governance mechanisms to support formal and ongoing coordination. Specifically:

- **CYRD coordinators spearheaded cross-coordination between Ipswich, Brisbane CBD and South, Logan and Gold Coast CYRD providers.** These four locations found that they often engaged with the same young people. For example, young people from Ipswich would travel into Brisbane or young people from Logan would travel to the Gold Coast. The CYRD coordinators in these locations helped these providers identify this trend and then facilitated greater collaboration between the relevant providers. This collaboration has reduced the flow of young people leaving specific regions. For example, the number of young people travelling to the Gold Coast from Logan halved between the May to July period in 2021 and 2022. Similarly, the diversion service in Brisbane CBD has collaborated effectively with the Logan service to divert young people from Brisbane back to Logan.

- **CYRD coordinators have facilitated the integration of CYRD components into the broader service system**. CYRD coordinators have advocated for CYRD provider representation on formal governance panels, proactively made connections between CYRD providers and relevant non-government and government agencies and played an important role to share information between relevant stakeholders to support a coordinated service system response.

5.1.6 Implementation challenges have impacted on service quality, consistency and availability

There have been four consistent challenges across each location that have constrained the delivery of the program:

1. **Workforce challenges have impacted service availability.** Staff shortages across all locations have in most cases resulted in reduced service provision. At worst, staff shortages have resulted in the total pause of specific services. Stakeholders also highlighted that high demand for the services compounded staffing challenges. Further, the need for a specific set of work experiences and skills, as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers, made recruiting for CYRD staff more difficult than other roles.

2. **Capacity has limited provider ability to deliver the right activities at the right time.** Due to limited capacity, trade-offs have had to be made in relation to delivery of services, choosing the most needed to support young people and reducing other highly needed services. One example is extending hours for after-hours outreach while reducing structured diversion activities.

3. **Covid-19 impacted service consistency and availability.** The pandemic has affected service delivery in several ways. Lockdowns have prevented in person delivery of all CYRD components with some able to adapt to online forms of delivery such as setting up cooking videos for young people and their families to follow. Mandatory isolation has further impacted staff capacity.

4. **Slow or poor access to necessary services.** Several service providers highlighted that there can be challenges referring young people to the right service due to long waitlists (e.g. for drug and alcohol or mental health services) or no after-hours availability.

5.1.7 Stakeholders have identified three areas to improve the design and delivery of the CYRD.

Provide more holistic support for young people. This should include more frequent diversionary activities, extended after-hours outreach, formal diversion programs at a location and individualised support to the families of young people.

Improving the way and what data is collected, particularly to track outreach services. CYRD providers are generally supportive of the recent changes to SRS but still see opportunities to tailor data collection more closely to the unique nature of some CYRD components.

Support more systematic approach to collaboration and communication. This is important both between CYRD services and more broadly with other local services. There is an opportunity to learn from and replicate successes across the locations.

Location specific opportunities are provided in the case studies (See Section 5.2). Further ideas on how to improve future versions of CYRD are provided in the next section.

5.2 Implementation of CYRD has varied across locations

As a place-based model, CYRD was designed to be locally driven, to integrate into and leverage the local service system and to be responsive to place-based need and deliver the right mix of service components. As outlined with the broad funding in section 5.1, CYRD has broadly achieved each of these objectives.

However, at a local level each configuration of CYRD has experienced a different implementation journey since inception. These local differences are important. This section presents snapshots of implementation-to-date, by location. Findings are aligned with the key evaluation questions related to implementation.

Specifically, this section includes a snapshot of:

- The risk profile of the cohort of young people that access CYRD in each location
- The Townsville CYRD
- The Cairns CYRD
- The Gold Coast CYRD
- The Ipswich CYRD
- The Brisbane CBD and South, and Logan CYRD
- The Gold Coast CYRD

5.2.1 The relative risk profile of CYRD young people is consistent across locations when considering data gaps for diversion services

CYRD young people generally have moderate to low offending behaviour across all locations as assessed by the SROI index (see Figure 8). It is important to note that the number or young people with SROI not available is likely under-reported in Brisbane South, Cairns, Gold Coast, Ipswich and Logan. This is due to different data collection practices with the diversion service in these locations compared with Townsville. Considering the data that service providers shared with Nous it is more likely that the five locations noted earlier have a similar profile of young people to Townsville, which has the most complete data collection for the diversion service.

Figure 8 | SROI index profile of CYRD participants by location and component

TOWNSVILLE

88% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

14yrs Median age group

12% Participated in multiple CYRD components

BRIDGING TO FLEXISCHOOL
Burragah Flexischool

$0.93 million funded since JUL 2019

- Transport to and from the school where two youth workers with teachers provide practical learning experiences in a safe environment.
- 28 participants
  488 days avg duration on program

CULTURAL MENTORING
Yalga

Structured traditional activities linking back to ancestral knowledge four days a week with transport.

$1.92 million funded since OCT 2019

82 participants
119 days avg duration on program

DIVERSION
The Lighthouse

$5.94 million funded since JUL 2019

- Transport young people to and from prosocial activities while outreach services provide welfare checks for families, gaining consent and completing hotspot checks.
- 501 participants
  285 days avg duration on program
  ~13,000 drop-ins per year

IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION FIDELITY

CYRD services have leveraged the flexibility of funding to adapt services to the cohort's needs. In addition to a teacher, Burragah Flexischool has employed an Aboriginal Psychologist and youth workers to work with the high-risk cohort because this support aids re-engagements with education. Through the Lighthouse diversion, a need arose to ensure the young people had access to food and have worked with Youth Justice to accommodate that in the funding. Yalga cultural mentoring has established a structured 4-term program but maintained flexibility of attendance to offer consistency but allow for challenges that affect attendance.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN CYRD COMPONENTS

There are positive instances of collaboration. Burragah Flexischool and Yalga cultural mentoring have actively collaborated through sharing of facilities and instances where YP are referred between the two programs (e.g. Burragah participants are referred to Yalga). There is also consistent communication between the Lighthouse and the other services when the diversion service engages with a young person of interest to either service.

A more structured and intentional collaboration strategy could support better outcomes. All service providers noted that the intensity of collaboration fluctuated due to resourcing constraints. A more systematic approach to collaboration may help to address the inconsistency.

COORDINATION WITH NON-CYRD SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

The CYRD services have strong links with other community organisations working with similar cohorts to CYRD. The Lighthouse partners with Community Grow to bolster the capacity of after-hours diversionary activities and offer a safe place for the outreach service to transport young people each night. The Yalga cultural mentoring activities join with other cultural mentoring programs to promote positive connections between different groups of young people and improve service delivery. Burragah flexi-school works closely with other education services such as in the Youth Detention Centre and Transition to Success to create pathways back to education and employment.

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

Finding the right staff and keeping them is a difficulty experienced by all CYRD components. Each CYRD service in Townsville noted that it is hard to find staff with the necessary experience and ability to build rapport with this specific cohort. This difficulty is exacerbated further by the challenging nature of the work making staff hard to retain. These challenges have made capacity a common issue which has been further stretched by COVID-19 with a high number of staff isolating. This is especially the case for female staff with the Cultural Mentoring unable to provide services to young women due to a lack of appropriate female mentors.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Capacity is stretched among CYRD services in Townsville. The Lighthouse is regularly having to turn young people away and prioritise based on who has the biggest need. Having a clear definition of what is a high-risk young person and the provision of other services for lower risk young people would reduce the strain. The Flexi school also noted that working with young people in pairs or individually may result in better outcomes to the current small group model however there is not enough capacity in the school to provide this.

STAKEHOLDER QUOTES

" Staffing issues are a real problem, finding and keeping qualified and experienced staff. "

" It's about breaking it down, figuring out the strengths and weaknesses of each young person and how we can improve them and hold onto that capacity. "

40

CAIRNS

96% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

15yrs Median age group

20% Participated in multiple CYRD components

CULTURAL MENTORING
Wuchopperen

$0.96 million

funded since DEC 2019

Individual and group activities to develop core life skills and cultural connection with added support and advocacy in daily life.

99 participants
135 days avg duration on program

DIVERSION
YETI

$1.15 million funded since DEC 2019

Outreach two nights each week and morning after includes welfare checks for young people and families, safe transport home and diversion from custody with warm referrals to appropriate services.

144 participants
153 days avg duration on program

IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION FIDELITY

The CYRD services adapt to fill the gaps in supports needed. In addition to the Wuchopperen cultural mentoring developing cultural connection, it provides advocacy and support in everyday activities such as going to the dentist and advocating for young people at school. The YETI outreach and diversion have tailored shifts to provide support and transport on the most important nights and follow-up the morning after as well, this includes wellbeing and watchhouse checks the mornings after to check in and report back to a caseworker or other relevant service.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN CYRD COMPONENTS

The two CYRD services work together to provide holistic support. Both services refer to the other where the other is better placed to provide support. An example of this is when a family member of the client works at one service, to avoid shame they will refer to the other service to provide the support. Young people will also transition from one service to the next as they progress through their programs, for example coming from the YETI Next Steps program into the Wuchopperen cultural mentoring.

COORDINATION WITH NON-CYRD SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

There are positive instances of collaboration with established services while new services have presented challenges. The YETI outreach service has established connections to other after-hours services such as Co-responder, working together to divert young people home. While newer services, without a clear understanding of the context and lack of communication with the established services, has sometimes resulted in negative unintended consequences.

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

Finding the right staff and keeping them is a challenge for all CYRD components. With the high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the services need to be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led. In addition to this, there's the challenge of looking for the right attributes in staff, with the skills required to do the case work.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

There is a mixed response to the use of SRS data collection. Some see an important role for SRS in the collection and sharing of information, helping to systematise this. While others note SRS does not allow for nuance or accurate reporting of outcomes resulting in some data not being captured.

The lack of after-hours programs for diversion is a key gap in the service system. The outreach service fills a much-needed gap for transportation and a soft touch point for young people, but there are limited after-hours programs for young people to be transported to.

STAKEHOLDER QUOTES

"It must be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led, it's at the core of what we do."

"On the busy days, you have to work with the other services to communicate exactly who needs to be where, when."

41

IPSWICH

63% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

15yrs Median age group

42% Participated in multiple CYRD components

CULTURAL MENTORING
Kambu

$0.45 million

funded since JUN 2020

A network of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders are connected with young people and provide positive activities to engage with culture.

42 participants
209 days avg duration on program

DIVERSION, CASE MANAGEMENT & BRIDGING TO FLEXISCHOOL
Ipswich Community Youth Service

$3.29 million funded since JAN 2020

Transport to and from the service locations for individual education with a teacher or case management. Outreach six nights a week to find and build rapport with at-risk young people and provide or refer to appropriate services, linking in with case management for updates.

Diversion 82 participants 217 days avg duration on program

Case Management 162 participants 201 days avg duration on program

Bridging to Flexischool 64 participants 195 days avg duration on program

IMPLEMENTATION FIDELITY

The CYRD program provides the community a touchpoint in the service system. The outreach service offers an after-hours and soft touchpoint for young people. The case management provides the stability and consistency of a responsible guiding adult. While the bridging to education component provides the individualised and intensive support to re-engage these young people into education and employment. These components of CYRD have all been delivered with strong cultural capability. The Cultural mentoring service has had challenges due to staffing constraints.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN CYRD COMPONENTS

One service provider delivering the CYRD components has fostered positive information sharing and connection. Having the Diversion, Case management and Bridging to education delivered by a single service provider has created a speed of information sharing and strong relationships built across supports.

Collaboration with the Cultural Mentoring service has been disjointed. With vacancies in the Cultural Mentoring service, it has been difficult for the two service providers to build relationships and establish ongoing collaboration.

COORDINATION WITH NON-CYRD SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

Non-CYRD services work closely with CYRD services to leverage its unique support. The relationships ICYS has built with other services including police, education and health has facilitated their involvement in the coordinated response to young people in the location. ICYS is regularly involved in multi-stakeholder panels to discuss with multiple services across locations young people of interest and provide an individualised response.

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

Finding the right staff and keeping them is a difficulty experienced by all CYRD components. Staff highlighted that working with such a specific program and target cohort it is a key success factor to have the most appropriate staff. The cultural mentoring service has had challenges employing enough of the right staff which has meant the program was not running for a period.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

There is a need for intensive family support. Staff highlighted the need to support the families of these young people including the younger siblings who don't qualify for the program.

STAKEHOLDER QUOTES

"Definitely filling gaps and unmet needs, for a lot of young people the case workers are it."

"There was work with the other funded services to show that we can work together for the young person and be clear about our role with the young people.

42

BRISBANE CBD, SOUTH & LOGAN

Brisbane South

93% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

16yrs Median age group

Logan

63% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

15yrs Median age group

5% Participated in multiple CYRD components

DIVERSION & CASE MANAGEMENT
ATSICHS
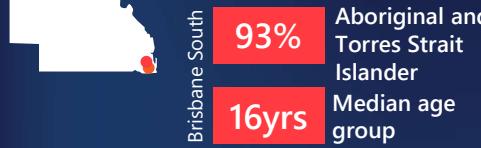
BRISBANE SOUTH   **LOGAN**

$2.22 million funded since FEB 2020

$0.97 million funded since FEB 2020

Outreach five nights a week in Brisbane and one night a week in Logan, conducting hotspot checks, locating young people and diverting from custody, building rapport to offer referrals for appropriate services. School holiday diversionary activities.
Early family intervention during family breakdowns for high-risk young people.

Diversion 5 participants 191 days avg duration on program

Case Management 51 participants 198 days avg duration on program

Diversion 4 participants 158 days avg duration on program

Case Management 62 participants 194 days avg duration on program

IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION FIDELITY

The proximity of the Brisbane and Logan locations warranted integration of CYRD components. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service (ATSICHS) has been funded to provide Case Management and Diversion for both Logan and Brisbane South. The same staff conduct outreach in both locations, with Logan outreach on Thursday nights and Brisbane outreach five nights a week Tuesday to Saturday. ATSICHS partners with Logan YFS for outreach and case management. The Outreach provides the soft touchpoint for at risk young people which the Case Management team can then follow up on and provide the support and referrals they need.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN CYRD COMPONENTS

One service provider delivering the CYRD components has fostered great information sharing and connection. The case management service provides the regular support the young people need while the outreach service bolsters the ability for case managers to keep in contact with these young people. The outreach service also provides a soft touchpoint for young people not yet getting the support they may need by engaging with outreach and subsequently being referred to case management or other relevant supports.

COORDINATION WITH NON-CYRD SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

Non-CYRD services work closely with outreach to leverage its unique support. The CYRD services have regular meetings with a range of other services in these locations and others such as Ipswich and Gold Coast to track and support the young people moving between areas and share learnings. The outreach service works closely with other services in the areas to promote and leverage the outreach service.

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

The collaboration with other services is strained due to capacity. The outreach service regularly refers young people to housing, food and other immediate supports but can't gain the support due to the service's full capacity.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

There is a gap in service provision to provide young people with after-hours diversionary programs. The outreach service fills a much-needed gap for transportation and a soft touch point for young people, but there are limited after hours programs for young people to be transported to. The outreach service does provide school holiday diversionary activities but with the high proportion of CYRD young people not attending school, there is a need for more regular programs and after-hours programs.

There is a need for intensive family support. Staff highlighted the need for more intentional engagement with the families of these young people.

STAKEHOLDER QUOTES

" We see things the rest of the team (case workers) and government agencies don't see. "

" We found they were staying out later and going out later so we changed our times to accommodate that. We're therefore getting more people home. "

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GOLD COAST

34% Pacific Islander

17yrs Median age group

DIVERSION
Gold Coast Youth Services

$0.48 million funded since JUL 2019

- Collaborative outreach with local services does hotspot checks to divert young people from custody and welfare checks for young people to locate and provide support, transport to diversion facilities of other local services.

- 102 recorded participants in SRS, 109 days avg duration on program

IMPLEMENTATION FIDELITY

CYRD on the Gold Coast has taken on a systems coordination function in addition to diversion. The service conducts outreach and diversion twice a week where a collaborative group of services conduct outreach and transport to after-hours programs working with CYRD. The second function CYRD has taken on is the coordination of services in the area, bringing partners together and deciding who should take the lead on particular young people and their families.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN CYRD COMPONENTS

Gold Coast, Brisbane and Logan work together on a regular basis. There are regular inter-regional meetings held in which the CYRD outreach services from multiple locations come together to discuss young people moving between regions and share learnings.

COORDINATION WITH NON-CYRD SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

The Gold Coast outreach is a highly collaborative model. Multiple services including Co-responder, Council and Child Safety attend the outreach service to identify the needs of each young person they encounter, determine a lead agency and then wrap the other services around that. Other services provide further support that Street Cred utilises such as Anglicare and Street Uni's after-hours locations and programs.

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

There is a lack of supports available for the high proportion of New Zealand and Pacific Islander young people. The collaborative effort provides a wraparound service system for young people in the area but there is a cohort of young people unable to access many of these services due to not having Australian citizenship. This has presented challenges for the outreach service to provide referrals to support these young people.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Outreach services suffer from poor data capture. Street CRED's unique partner model has challenged its implementation. A bottom-up approach to model design for this location would include a data system that meets these needs.

A dedicated coordinator would be highly leveraged. It was noted that having a dedicated coordinator position would improve system coordination and free up capacity of diversion workers to provide their unique support.

STAKEHOLDER QUOTES

" The outreach service is the main way that the list of at-risk youth is developed. Strong collaboration and presence on the ground is the primary referral in. "

" Effectiveness depends on the workers and the approach taken by those on the ground. The way we operate on the ground, constantly being in their faces works for some. "

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6 Critical success factors and future directions

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6.1 Implementation to date has confirmed several critical success factors and future directions for CYRD

Nous completed a literature review to inform the evaluation and the evaluation framework. The literature review identified seven program success factors for a program like CYRD. Broadly speaking, the success factors relate to the themes of design or implementation.

Nous has refined and consolidated the success factors based on the evaluation findings. These success factors offer lessons for the program's future.

The five updated success factors are:

- Make a clear statement of the purpose, goals and roles of CYRD within a local service system.

- Design and implement the service model with community.

- Align evidence-based frameworks and supports across service providers and the Department.

- Embed the components within a holistic, integrated response network.

- Ensure providers have the following four characteristics: strong cultural capability, a collaboration first mentality, mature service models and highly capable workers.

This section explores each success factor in turn.

6.1.1 Make a clear statement of the purpose, goals and roles of CYRD within a local service system

Stakeholders identified that a clear role in the service system that complements and connects with other services and supports was critical to the success of each CYRD component and the program more broadly. This success factor was not identified in the literature review but is specific to the unique context of the CYRD Program.

This evaluation has found that effective service delivery relies on a value proposition that clearly positions CYRD and its components as complementary to each other and other services. Stakeholders highlighted they found it hard to consider CYRD as a coherent 'program'. Many saw the components as prevention or early intervention programs funded through a common bucket. Service providers in Cairns and Townsville reflected they had not realised the full potential of the program because it was not clear how each component should interact. The service providers have only identified potentially complementary roles that allow for tighter integration through ongoing experimentation. Future iterations have an opportunity to learn from these lessons.

The need to clarify the shape and role of CYRD was especially important now as Youth Justice has shifted its focus towards serious repeat offenders since the launch of CYRD in 2019. As an early intervention program, future iterations of CYRD need to clearly demonstrate the role it plays to reduce the number of young people who escalate to more serious offending patterns. To do this, stakeholders highlighted the need for clarity on who the target cohort is for each component, the outcomes each component should achieve, the communities that will benefit most from each component and the combination of services and supports that will be most effective. Stakeholders argued that much of this should be co-designed with community (as outlined in the next critical success factor).

RECOMMENDATION 1

a. Establish clear mechanisms for partners to share resources, data, knowledge, and best practices in alignment with defined specifications for the nature and role of CYRD. This includes clarifying the target cohort for each component and determining the most effective combination of components, including how they should interact.

b. When considering new communities for CYRD, analyse community profile and capability/capacity of existing supports in the local service system to understand the communities that will benefit most from each component.

6.1.2 Design and implement the service model with community

The literature review identified that designing and implementing with community builds stakeholder ownership over both the process and outcomes of community-based programs. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, early and ongoing engagement is critical to enable programs that are culturally responsive and leverage the community context in which they operate.

Implementation to date has reinforced the critical role community plays to deliver a place-based intervention like CYRD. Place-based community organisations have enabled the flexible and responsive implementation of CYRD. They have led the adaptation of the service model and brought in new partners to enhance specific components. Department staff and service providers highlighted that engaging Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations was especially important when looking to expand the service model to support young people from specific communities.

However, many stakeholders shared that the initial design and roll-out of the program was rushed, top-down and did not effectively engage community nor other government agencies. Three Department staff from different regions each shared that a true co-design process may lead to better long-term outcomes. They argued that engaging all the relevant community organisations, government agencies and other key stakeholders, such as shopping centres and transport providers, in the design of a CYRD-like program would allow the program to meet the specific needs of the location while fostering potentially innovative partnership and service models.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Facilitate meaningful community engagement throughout the program's planning, implementation, and evaluation stages.

6.1.3 Align evidence-based approaches across service providers and the Department

The literature review identified three success factors that related to the design of CYRD. Each success factor supported the need to incorporate evidence-based approaches into the CYRD program. The three evidence-based approaches were the:

- **Risk, needs and responsivity (RNR) principles.** The risk principle relates to how the intensity and duration of services should increase as risk level increases. The needs principle relates to how interventions should aim to assess and target the young person's needs in treatment or through specific services and supports. The responsivity principle relates to the need to consider and account for individual characteristics in service delivery.

- **The Standard Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP).** The SPEP includes four characteristics that relate most strongly to reducing offending: youth level of risk, type of service, amount of service and quality of service delivery. It provides a standardised but flexible protocol that enables services to identify, measure and validate how effective their program or support is.

- **Positive youth development.** Evidence shows programs that support positive youth development can prevent risky behaviours and improve social and emotional outcomes for youth. A focus on strengths and solutions enables young people to engage positively with supports which both reduce risk factors and build protective factors. Central to positive youth development is a strengths-based approach that draws on the capabilities, knowledge, skills, and assets of at-risk youth, their family, their community, and key workers.

The RNR and SPEP frameworks have a strong focus on reducing the risk of offending or reoffending. Service providers shared that they use evidence-based frameworks that identify and assess risk factors, protective factors and vulnerability through slightly different lenses than a youth justice focused lens. This slight difference in approach means that service providers and the Department may have different perspectives on the assessed risk of the target cohort of young people for CYRD.

Several Department staff and service providers saw value in working with each other to develop a tailored CYRD assessment framework. The tailored assessment framework should draw from evidence-based approaches from both youth justice and the community organisations so it is relevant to the CYRD cohort. The evidence-based approaches should inform the co-design process outlined in the previous critical success factor as well as any adaptations to the current CYRD service models. This approach will also provide support for more consistent approaches across locations aligned with the evidence of what works.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Align evidence-based approaches between service providers and the Department to inform a tailored end-to-end assessment framework for the prevention and early intervention target cohort of CYRD.

6.1.4 Embed the components within a holistic, integrated response network

The literature review identified the need to foster a holistic, integrated response network that facilitates a comprehensive array of individualised services and support networks in the community. Integrated and collaborative program models support several positive program outcomes. This includes widening the range of services available, overcoming implementation barriers and increasing the reach of the program. It allows programs to identify and focus on how they can each best support the young person to achieve positive outcomes.

This evaluation has demonstrated system level outcomes that have supported CYRD service providers to connect the components that they deliver into a holistic, integrated network. This has been achieved through the integration of CYRD components and other CYRD service provider delivered services. The effective coordination and collaboration between service providers has also facilitated a more holistic, integrated response network. Young people said they were able to access various supports such as housing, help with employment and reconnection to education through their participation in a CYRD component.

In all cases, the integration of CYRD service providers into systematic collaboration and coordination mechanisms - such as location-specific governance panels and formal partnerships – has facilitated a more holistic and integrated response. The more agencies and other stakeholders that buy into the coordinated response the stronger the outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION 4

a. Expand/fund coordination roles to support the coordination of services and supports around diversion services, take ownership and drive its implementation. The coordination role can be Department-led (e.g. like the CYRD coordinators) or service provider-led (e.g. like the role Gold Coast Youth Services plays for Street Cred diversion on the Gold Coast).

b. Connect CYRD services with intensive family support programs.

c. Embed CYRD components into multi-agency coordination panels and promote diversion services as mechanisms for service system coordination.

6.1.5 Ensure providers have the following four characteristics: strong cultural capability, a collaboration first mentality, mature service models and highly capable workers

Department staff across all regions consistently highlighted the need to engage the right providers to deliver CYRD components. Four common characteristics were identified:

- **Strong cultural capability,** which is critical due to the high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people that engage with CYRD components. The engagement of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations was one way in which the Department enabled culturally competent service delivery. Non-community-controlled organisations employed identified workers in key frontline roles to strengthen their cultural capability.

- **A collaboration first mentality**, which was especially critical for diversion service providers. This was due to the important coordination and communication role that the diversion service plays across each location. Further, collaboration was critical to deliver a responsive service delivery model that filled gaps through new partnerships and complementary service delivery.

- **Mature service models,** which allow for a strong referral network from CYRD across other services critical to meet the complex needs of the target cohort. Department staff highlighted a strong provider that have experience delivering complementary services to the target cohort and their families supported more effective implementation.

- **Highly capable workers**, who play a crucial role to build strong rapport and lasting relationships with the target cohort. Interviews with young people demonstrated the extent to which building relationships with an adult they could trust positively impacted their lives. Highly capable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mentors were especially crucial to the success of the cultural mentoring component.

RECOMMENDATION 5

a. Create profiles of service provider attributes critical to the delivery of prevention and early intervention programs like CYRD.

b. Embed service provider expectations into procurement specifications that promote the identified characteristics.

Appendices

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Appendix A – Program Logic and KEQs

CYRD Program Logic

GAPS/NEEDS	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	SHORT TERM OUTCOMES	MEDIUM TERM OUTCOMES	LONG TERM OUTCOMES
Perception that the community is not safe Low community confidence in the legal system Some Young People have repeated involvement with youth justice	**$18 M in Queensland Government funding** to support CYRD services in six locations: • Townsville • Cairns • Ipswich • Brisbane CBD and Brisbane South • Logan • Gold Coast **NGO service providers**, their staff and their knowledge and relationships **YJ Staff** to support CYRD coordination and access to relevant YJ Services **Brokerage funds** to support young people **Partnerships** with existing youth supports and youth justice programs (some not all locations)	**Diversion Services (DS)** • Providers collaborate with police to provide a culturally appropriate, alternative intervention to police charging and/or remanding young people in custody • Providers deliver outreach to respond to high-risk periods, particularly after hours • Providers act to support immediate safety and reduce at risk behaviour • Providers facilitate referrals to other services **Intensive Case Management (ICM)** • Providers undertake case co-ordination and support planning for young people and their families • Providers convene case panels and collaborate with stakeholders in providing support **Bridging to Flexischool (B2F)** • Flexischools positively engage young people to build their capacity to re-engage with an appropriate education service • Flexischools provide behavioural and practical support, including educational programs where there are no existing options available **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Mentoring (CM)** • Providers deliver support via a trusted adult mentor who can influence a non-offending lifestyle **All programs** • Providers refer and engage clients to participate in CYRD services • Providers, Youth Justice and other stakeholders create partnerships	• Number of young people referred to each component and overall (by source of referral) • Number of young people participating per component and overall • Number of participants as proportion of total referrals per component and overall • Amount and type of services/activities that have been delivered through each program and overall • Number and proportion of brokerage funds expended by CYRD providers • Number of young people completing ICM, B2F and CM • Number of completions as proportion of total participants for ICM, B2f and CM • Number of distinct Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people receiving a service • Number of referrals from one CYRD component to another (by source and destination) • Number of referrals to non-CYRD services and supports (by type) • Number of partnerships developed	**YOUNG PERSON** • Increased participation in **prosocial activities** • Acquired **independent living skills** • Increased their **motivation** to address factors that contribute to offending • Improved their **understanding** of **triggers** • Complied with and completed **court/bail/YJ orders** • Improved their **knowledge** of and **trust** in **services** and **support people** • Improved feelings of **safety** and that their **primary needs are met** • Have **improved perceptions** of **procedural fairness** • Reengaged and participated in their **education** • Improved **positive cultural connection** • Improved their **cultural knowledge** • Diverted from **arrest** **FAMILIES** • Developed knowledge and skills to **appropriately supervise young people** • Improved their **engagement with young people** and supported them to **meet their obligations** • Developed their understanding of **family conflicts and dynamics** and have developed **adaptive coping strategies** **SYSTEM** • Improved **coordination** across key stakeholders to meet the needs of young people and their families	**YOUNG PERSON** • Engaged with and accessed community services and support people • Acquired **emotional/behavioural regulation** and **social skills** • Developed a **daptive coping strategies** • Improved relationships with **family, kin and community** • Maintained **independent living skills** (e.g. financial, housekeeping, hygiene) • Strengthened sense of **cultural identity** and **connection with community** • Maintained their **engagement with education** • Developed a **positive learner identity** **FAMILIES** • Improved **family functioning** • Improved **family relationships** **SYSTEM** • Improved **accountability** of service providers for YP outcomes • Improved ability to **identify and address gaps** in service delivery • More **integrated** and **connected** service system • Increased **diversion** from Criminal Justice System	**YOUNG PERSON** • Increased **confidence** and **leadership qualities** • Improved **psychological and physical wellbeing** • Decreased **offending**, **reoffending**, **young people in court** and **custody** • More young people have **strong positive connections with culture and family** • More young people **attain educational or vocational certificates** • More young people **live independently** **FAMILIES** • More families are **high functioning** • Less families have **intergenerational interactions** with the justice system **SYSTEM** • **Reduced costs** from less engagement with the justice system • More **effective service coordination and collaboration** • **Better targeted investment** • **Increased community confidence**

Key Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Theme	Research questions

Appropriateness	• How do the CYRD programs:
	   • respond to specific community needs?
	   • address YJ goals/priorities?
	• How have the CYRD programs evolved to respond to:
	   • changing community needs?
	   • changing YJ goals?
	• How were the service providers assessed as appropriate to deliver the program/component?

Implementation	• What outputs have been delivered at each locality? How does this vary by location? • How well have the programs been delivered at each locality? How does this vary by location? • To what extent are the CYRD components being implemented together? How does this vary by location? • To what extent are the CYRD components being coordinated with non-CYRD services and programs? How does this vary by location? • What is unique or similar about implementation between different locations? Why? • How and to what extent are the CYRD programs in each location connected with each other? To what extent do they share learnings? • How has the capability and capacity of service providers enabled or constrained the delivery of the programs? • What other factors have enabled or constrained the delivery of the program?

Effectiveness	• To what extent has the program achieved the intended outcomes for:
	   • young people?
	   • for families?
	   • for the system?
	• How does this differ across locations? How does this differ across client cohorts?
	• Were there any unintended outcomes for young people, families or the system?
	• To what extent:
	   • do the different components of the program contribute to the identified outcomes? How does this differ across locations? How does this differ across client cohorts?
	   • have programmatic factors (e.g. quality of implementation, service providers, service integration, program maturity) impacted the quality of outcomes?
	   • have external factors (e.g. policy change, other policies, local conditions) impacted the quality of outcomes?

Key Evaluation Questions (cont)

Evaluation Theme	Research questions
Efficiency	• How do the resources (funding, administration, people, and facilities) used to deliver the program compare with what was expected prior to implementation? • What factors have affected the use of resources in the program and what lessons does this present for future program planning? • What is the return on investment i.e. how do the costs of the program compare to the benefits achieved?
Improvements and opportunities	• How can program design and service delivery for each component and the whole program be improved for future CYRD programs? What does this look like for each location? • How well have data collection and analysis systems been setup to support a culture of critical reflection and continuous improvement? • To what extent is the program scalable and sustainable for future roll out? What changes can be made to improve the scalability and sustainability of the program? • What are the critical success factors and effective practices that support CYRD programs to achieve their intended outcomes?

Appendix B – List of Stakeholders

Stakeholder consultation is one evidence stream for this evaluation (1/3)

Over the course of the evaluation, we conducted two waves of interviews with representatives from the Department of Youth Justice across each of the CYRD locations. The Department stakeholders are outlined in the table below.

Youth Justice/CYRD location	Individual	Role
Far North Queensland, Cairns CYRD	Tracey Harding	Regional Director
	Megan Skelton	CYRD Coordinator (former)
	Aleks Chamberlain	CYRD Coordinator
North Queensland, Townsville CYRD	David Olsen	Regional Director
	Corinne Moore	Local Manager
	Nicole Erkkila	Local Manager
	Jacinta Wight	Local Manager
Brisbane and Moreton Bay, Brisbane CBD and South CYRD	Craig Jenkins	Regional Director
	Karyn Lawton	CYRD Coordinator
South East, Gold Coast CYRD and Logan CYRD	Joanne McKenzie	Regional Director
	Albert Ahkuoi	CYRD Coordinator, Logan
	Alex Smith	Local Manager, Gold Coast
South West, Ipswich CYRD	Nima Pulou	Regional Director
	Matthew Peacey	CYRD Coordinator

Stakeholder consultation is one evidence stream for this evaluation (2/3)

Over the course of the evaluation, we conducted two waves of interviews with representatives from most of the CYRD service providers. The service providers are outlined in the table below.

CYRD Region	Organisation	Funded services	Number of staff interviewed
Cairns	Youth Empowered Towards Independence (YETI)	YETI Diversion Service	4
	Wuchopperen Health Service	Connecting Youth Service	2
Townsville	Edmund Rice Education Australia Townsville Flexible Learning Centre	Burragah Program	3
	Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service (TAIHS)	The Lighthouse – Youth After Hours Diversion Service; Cultural Mentoring	3
Brisbane CBD, South and Logan	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service (ATSICHS)	CYRD Brisbane South and CBD, Logan (subcontracted to Youth and Family Services (YFS) Logan)	3
	Kurbingui Youth Development*	CYRD	0
Gold Coast	Gold Coast Youth Services	Project Street CRED	3
Ipswich	Ipswich Community Youth Service	Community Youth Response and Diversion – Ipswich Community Youth Service	4
	Kambu Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Health	Kambu Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Health	2

* Kurbingui was not included in the evaluation, as the Department of Youth Justice advised that they were operating under a different funding arrangement.

Stakeholder consultation is one evidence stream for this evaluation (3/3)

Over the course of the evaluation, we consulted with 48 young people (between the ages of 10 and 17) through individual and group interviews across each of the CYRD locations. The number of young people consulted by gender is outlined in the table below.

CYRD Region	Organisation	Funded services	Number of boys interviewed	Number of girls interviewed
Cairns	Youth Empowered Towards Independence (YETI)	YETI Diversion Service	6	2
	Wuchopperen Health Service	Connecting Youth Service	2	0
Townsville	Edmund Rice Education Australia Townsville Flexible Learning Centre	Burragah Program	2	0
	Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service (TAIHS)	The Lighthouse – Youth After Hours Diversion Service; Cultural Mentoring	6	4
Brisbane CBD, South and Logan	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service (ATSICHS)	CYRD Brisbane South and CBD, Logan (subcontracted to Youth and Family Services (YFS) Logan)	4	3
	Kurbingui Youth Development*	CYRD	0	0
Gold Coast	Gold Coast Youth Services	Project Street CRED	5	2
Ipswich	Ipswich Community Youth Service	Community Youth Response and Diversion – Ipswich Community Youth Service	8	6
	Kambu Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Health	Kambu Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Health	1	0
TOTAL			**34**	**17**

* Kurbingui was not included in the evaluation, as the Department of Youth Justice advised that they were operating under a different funding arrangement.

Appendix C – Technical methodology for the data analysis

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Technical Appendix – SRS statistical modelling

This analysis aimed to understand the association between CYRD component engagement and changes over time in the core youth justice outcomes

The following youth justice outcomes were analysed:

1. Current cultural connectedness
2. Current family relationships
3. Current learning participation
4. Current employment engagement
5. Current housing situation
6. Current community connectedness
7. Current health level
8. Current mental health level
9. Current disability support access

Nine different models were fitted – one for each outcome – using the same covariates and model structure for all

The following covariates were used:
1. Indigenous status
2. Sex
3. Age
4. Region
5. CYRD component
6. SROI index
7. Assessment type (Pre, During, Post)

Generalised additive models with an ordered category likelihood for ordinal regression models were used

An ordinal likelihood (cumulative model) was used as the youth justice outcomes were measured as ordered categories, consisting of the following ratings:

1. Could do a lot better
2. Can do better
3. Ok
4. Doing well
5. Doing great

In addition to the linear combination of the covariates listed on the left, one random effects term was also specified in the models:

• Smooth term for each young person to account for multiple presentations and individual-specific effects

Within the context of a generalised additive model (GAM), random effects are parameterised as smooth terms. Mathematically, these two are approximately equivalent – that is, you can use the machinery of one to estimate the other. Further, since a GAM utilises splines for continuous predictors, the models were able to flexibly able to handle non-linearities in the SROI index covariate.

Technical Appendix – ICMS statistical modelling (YLS/CMI)

This analysis aimed to understand the association between CYRD engagement and changes in YLS/CMI risk/protective factors and reoffending seriousness

The following YLS/CMI outcomes were analysed (where all are composite indices aggregated over sub-items):

1. Overall assessed risk
2. Prior and current offences and orders
3. Family circumstances and parenting
4. Education and employment
5. Peer relations
6. Substance abuse
7. Leisure and recreation
8. Personality and behaviour
9. Attitudes and orientation

Nine different models were fit – one for each outcome – using the same covariates and model structure for all

The following covariates were used:

1. Indigenous flag
2. Sex
3. Age
4. Diversion component flag
5. Intensive case management flag
6. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Mentoring flag
7. Bridging to Flexi-School flag
8. CYRD engagement (Yes, No) × Timepoint (Pre, Post) interaction and main effects of both

Bayesian mixed effects ordinal regression models were used

An ordinal likelihood (cumulative model) was used as the YLS/CMI and reoffending seriousness outcomes were measured as ordered categories. The YLS/CMI consisted of the following ratings:

1. Low
2. Moderate
3. High
4. Very High

In addition to the linear combination of the covariates listed on the left, one random effects term was also specified:

• Random intercept for each young person to account for multiple presentations and individual-specific effects

A cumulative model for ordinal outcomes was used as the cumulative model describes the data generating process well because it assumes the YLS/CMI risk rating originates from some (unobservable) latent continuous variable (which intuitively makes sense when discussing risk).

Priors from previous work using the YLS/CMI dataset were derived:

$$\beta_{intercept} \sim \mathcal{N}(0,1)$$

$$\beta_{covariate} \sim \mathcal{N}(0,1)$$

$$\sigma \sim Cauchy(0,2)$$

Technical Appendix – Offending analysis and days spent in custody

The outcomes analysis was comprised of two statistical models:

- A model for offending (i.e. the number of offences a young person commits); and
- A model for the number of days spent in custody.

Together, the outputs of these two models directly inform the cost-benefit analysis to appropriately capture the statistical uncertainty associated with estimates of benefits relative to the constructed comparison group. Prior to fitting models, a detailed data processing, filtering, and aggregation pipeline was employed for both models. These pipelines are discussed below.

Dataset construction – Offending analysis

For the offending model, the pipeline was concerned with mapping data pertaining to orders (i.e. offending) to the data pertaining to engagement with supports, using a twelve-month window before and after ('pre' and 'post'). For each unique engagement with a support, the number of offences (identified by NOI Offence Code Band using the banding supplied by the Department) in the six months before and after were identified and counted, and demographics were stored. A matched sample was then constructed using age, sex, Indigenous status, and location as matching criteria to create the final dataset used for statistical analysis. Since certain components of CYRD act as diversionary services, there were cases where support was provided to a young person who either: (i) may never have been known to YJ in the ICMS system (i.e, never offended); (ii) may not have offended prior to engagement with CYRD; or (iii) may not have offended after engagement with CYRD. Since the comparison cohort was drawn from the population of all young people known to YJ in ICMS (excluding CYRD participants), the extent of a young person's lack of offending only extended to cases (ii) and (iii). This means that despite the matching procedure, the two samples may be comprised of young people with differing offending profiles. However, there was no solution for this available for the evaluation.

Dataset construction – Custody analysis

For the custody model, the pipeline was concerned with mapping data pertaining to periods spent in custody the data pertaining to engagement with supports, using a six-month window before and after. For each unique engagement with a support, the total days spent in custody for any offences in the six months before and after were counted, and demographics were stored. A matched sample was then constructed using age, sex, and Indigenous status as matching criteria to create the final dataset used for statistical analysis.

Technical Appendix – Offending analysis and days spent in custody (cont.)

Covariate specification – Offending analysis

A Bayesian mixed-effects generalised linear model was used, with a Poisson distribution family. Both Poisson and negative binomial models (which account for overdispersion in the data) were fit as candidate options, but the limitations of the additional distributional assumptions of the negative binomial models did not outweigh any potential gains in model fit over the more parsimonious Poisson alternative. The covariate structure was as follows:

- Indigenous status (Indigenous, Not Indigenous)
- Age
- Sex (Male, Female, Other/Not Specified)
- NOI Offence Code Band (0, 1, 2, 3, 4), using the following bands supplied by the Department:
  - NOI Offence Code <= 6 ~ 4
  - NOI Offence Code >= 7 & NOI Offence Code <= 33 ~ 3
  - NOI Offence Code >= 34 & NOI Offence Code <= 42 ~ 2
  - NOI Offence Code >= 43 & NOI Offence Code <= 85 ~ 1
  - NOI Offence Code >= 86 ~ 0
- Cohort (CYRD, Not CYRD)
- Time (Pre, Post)
- Cohort * Time interaction
- CYRD component
- Random effects term for service ID (denoting what number engagement with support the offending data pertained to)
- Random effects term for each young person

Covariate specification – Custody analysis

A Bayesian mixed-effects generalised linear model, with a Poisson distribution family. Similar to the offending analysis case, the Poisson model was selected for parsimony. The covariate structure was as follows:

- Indigenous status (Indigenous, Not Indigenous)
- Age
- Sex (Male, Female, Other/Not Specified)
- Cohort (CYRD, Not CYRD)
- Time (Pre, Post)
- Cohort * Time interaction
- CYRD component
- Random effects term for each young person

Statistical priors

Subject matter expertise from previous evaluations of similar programs was used to derive the following prior distributions for the offending model[7]:

$$\beta_{intercept} \sim N(0,2)$$

$$\beta_{coefficients} \sim N(0,2)$$

And for the custody model:

$$\beta_{intercept} \sim N(0,3)$$

$$\beta_{coefficients} \sim N(0,2)$$

[7] Additional priors were specified for other parameters of the model, such as the error term. These have been omitted for space.

Technical Appendix – Cost-effectiveness analysis

Implications for cost-effectiveness analysis for CYRD young people with an offending history (i.e. one or more previous offences)

Following the outcomes analysis methodology, the benefits side of the cost-benefit analysis (CBA) for CYRD was comprised of two broad components: (i) offending; and (ii) custody. Since the CEA is principally concerned with estimating the savings to the justice system that can be realistically attributed to CYRD, the statistical models were directly used to generate estimates of cost reductions as they appropriately capture the inherent uncertainty in the data and the control. For each model, marginal effects and average adjusted predictions[8] were used to derive estimates associated with engagement with CYRD from pre to post. The difference between the observed outcomes between the time points between each group (CYRD, control) formed the basis of the benefits estimation against the comparison group. The difference in offences by offence type/seriousness were computed for each young person and then summed to the group level. The number of each offence type was then multiplied by the cost of that offence. Each offence cost is comprised of three components:

- Police cost

- Court cost

- Wider social cost (i.e, broader cost to society)

The difference in days spent in custody from pre to post between the CYRD and non CYRD cohorts was also calculated from the statistical model. The number of days was multiplied by the cost per custody day to monetise the quantity.

[8] Complex statistical models make interpretation of parameters difficult. Marginal effects and adjusted predictions enable inferences by accounting for values for all the variables in the model. This approach also means that results can be analysed by any aggregation of the model covariates. For example, granular predictions could be made for each young person, but average predictions could be made for any covariate values.

Technical Appendix – Cost-effectiveness analysis (cont.)

Cost-effectiveness analysis for CYRD young people with an offending history (i.e. one or more previous offences) – Cost of offending

The offending costs used in the CEA are presented in the table below in their FY 2022-23 adjusted values using CPI from the ABS. Police costs and court costs were adjusted from their 2016-17 values[9] and wider costs from 2011-12 values.[10] A fixed value of $2112 (adjusted to FY 2022-23 value from its original FY 2020-21 value) as the cost of custody per person per day was also used.[11]

QASOC Code	Offence type	Police cost	Court cost	Wider social cost
1	Homicide and related offences	$145,229	$20,661	$2,389,889
2	Acts intended to cause injury	$6,050	$1,223	$2,115
3	Sexual assault and related offences	$21,175	$6,871	$9,358
4	Dangerous or negligent acts	$4,704	$533	$256
5	Abduction, harassment and other	$9,969	$2,180	$1,026
6	Robbery, extortion and related	$13,955	$3,173	$2,870
7	Unlawful entry with intent/burglary, break and enter	$4,515	$1,134	$3,580
8	Theft and related offences	$2,699	$862	$1,549
9	Fraud, deception and related	$3,158	$1,217	$530
10	Illicit drug offences	$4,074	$815	$513
11	Prohibited and regulated weapons and explosives offences	$4,701	$799	$513
12	Property damage and environmental pollution	$3,020	$1,030	$4,189
13	Public order offences	$2,520	$584	$256
14	Traffic and vehicle regulatory offences	$1,715	$739	$256
15	Offences against justice procedures	$3,468	$633	$256
16	Miscellaneous offences	$1,715	$739	$256

[9] Australian Institute of Criminology. (2020). The costs of Indigenous and non-Indigenous offender trajectories.
[10] Allard, T., Stewart, A., Smith, C., Dennison, S., Chrzanowski, A., & Thompson, C. (2013). The monetary cost of offender trajectories: Findings from Queensland (Australia). Journal of Criminology, 47 (1).
[11] Productivity Commission. (2022). Report on Government Services 2022.

Technical Appendix – Cost-effectiveness analysis (cont.)

Cost-effectiveness analysis for CYRD young people with no offending history (i.e. high-risk young people)

Nous took five steps to develop a 'logically constructed counterfactual' of how CYRD participants who have no existing offences would have offended (in the absence of the CYRD). The five steps were as follows.

1. **Determine the cohort of CYRD participants that are diverted from future offending.** Nous analysis identified that just under 50 percent of CYRD participants (n=719) had no prior offence when they first engaged with CYRD. Of this cohort, Nous analysis identified that:

   • Over 62 per cent of CYRD participants (n=445) who had no existing offences did not have an offence in the 12-month period post their engagement with CYRD.

   • Approximately 38 per cent of this cohort (n=273) did offend in the 12-month period post their engagement with CYRD.

2. **Determine the counterfactual rate for diverting future offending.** Nous identified two plausible 'logically constructed counterfactuals' to act as baselines against which to compare with the CYRD rate for diverting future offending. Both scenarios used available youth justice data and analysis to identify comparable the cohorts. The two scenarios were:

   • **Low scenario:** This scenario used the proportion of young people who have a finalised court appearance and never return to the Youth Justice System in 2019/20. This data identifies that 47 percent of such young people do not return – this means 53 per cent do return. Compared with the CYRD rate of young people who do offend (38%), this represents a 15-percentage point difference. The 15-percentage point difference amounts to an additional 108 young people diverted from future offending through CYRD compared with the baseline.

   • **High scenario:** This scenario used the proportion of young people with a proven finalised offence who did not reoffend within 12 months in 2022[5]. This data identifies that 31 percent of such young people do not reoffend – this means 69 per cent do reoffend. Compared with the CYRD rate of young people who do offend (38%), this represents a 31-percentage point difference. The 31-percentage point difference amounts to an additional 223 young people diverted from future offending through CYRD compared with the baseline.

3. **Calculate cost per young person that offends for the first time.** Nous used two publicly available reports to determine an average cost per young person that offends for the first time: The Productivity Commission Report on Government Services 2023 Youth Justice chapter; and the Australian Institution for Health and Welfare, Youth Justice in Australia 2021-22 report. Using both sources Nous identified that in Queensland:

   • The average cost per day for community-based services was $245 and for detention-based services was $2,086.

   • The median days per episode for community-based services was 89 days and for detention-based services was 26 days.

   • Using the above two data points, the assumed total cost per episode for community based services was $21,763 and for detention-based services was $54,244

   Nous analysis also identified that the proportion of offences in 2021-22 that resulted in community-based services was 83 percent and for detention-based services was 17 percent. To be conservative, Nous used these proportions to apportion young people into one category or another.

[12] S Chen et al, The Transition from Juvenile to Adult Criminal Careers, Contemporary Issues in Crime and Justice No 86, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, 2005
[13] Australian Productivity Commission, Australia's Prison Dilemma, 2021

Technical Appendix – Cost-effectiveness analysis (cont.)

4. **Calculate the potential avoided costs.** Nous took three steps to calculate the avoided costs for both the low and high scenarios:

   - Calculate the number of additional diverted youth from CYRD compared with the baseline that would have otherwise ended up in community-based services (n=89 for low scenario and n=185 for high scenario) and then multiply that number by the assumed total cost per episode for community-based services ($1,936,922 for low scenario and $4,026,186 for high scenario).

   - Calculate the number of additional diverted youth from CYRD compared with the baseline that would have otherwise ended up in detention-based services (n=18 for low scenario and n=38 for high scenario) and then multiply that number by the assumed total cost per episode for detention-based services ($976,398 for low scenario and $2,061,284 for high scenario).

   - Add the estimated avoided costs for community-based services with those for detention-based services ($2,913,320 for low scenario and $6,087,471 for high scenario).

5. **Complete sensitivity analysis.** Due to the uncertainty of the baseline, Nous focused the sensitivity analysis on understanding the impact on any shifts in the proposed baselines. Nous analysis identified that the average change in the calculated avoided costs from a five percent change up or down from the baseline rate was $980,000.

[12] S Chen et al, The Transition from Juvenile to Adult Criminal Careers, Contemporary Issues in Crime and Justice No 86, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, 2005
[13] Australian Productivity Commission, Australia's Prison Dilemma, 2021

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About Nous

Nous Group is an international management consultancy with over 500 people working across Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Canada.

With our broad consulting capability, we can solve your most complex strategic challenges and partner with you through transformational change.

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PEOPLE

60
PRINCIPALS

5
COUNTRIES