

Youth Co-Responder Team – Outcome evaluation report

Department of Youth Justice

12 June 2024



Nous Group acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians and the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging, who maintain their culture, country and spiritual connection to the land, sea and community.

This artwork was developed by Marcus Lee Design to reflect Nous Group's Reconciliation Action Plan and our aspirations for respectful and productive engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

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Contents

Executive summary.....	1
2 YCRT was introduced to offer a community-based response to youth crime.....	5
2.1 YCRT delivers round-the-clock support to young people at risk of, or currently, interacting with the youth justice system.....	5
2.2 QPS and YJ worked rapidly to establish a unique collaborative model.....	7
2.2.1 YCRT has a unique focus on early intervention/prevention through co-response.....	7
2.2.2 Operational YCRT locations were quickly established, followed by a continued refinement of the model.....	10
2.2.3 Youth Justice and QPS collaborated closely from the start.....	10
3 An evaluation of establishment and outcomes has been used to support the implementation.....	12
3.1 This evaluation has sought to improve YCRT as it has been delivered.....	12
3.2 Additional data collection and analysis conducted to identify outcomes achieved by YCRT.....	13
4 YCRT is associated with positive outcomes for young people.....	16
4.1.1 There was an overall reduction in the average number of offences.....	16
4.1.2 Those that did reoffend committed less serious crimes.....	19
4.1.3 Staff attribute these outcomes to YCRT.....	20
5 YCRT adapts to local needs and to deliver support that wouldn't otherwise exist.....	21
5.1.2 YCRT extends the reach of YJ and QPS to provide services 24/7.....	22
6 YCRT works with a varied cohort of youth, from at-risk to serious repeat offenders.....	25
6.2 YCRT supports young people across the risk spectrum.....	25
6.2.2 Young people that engage with YCRT often exhibit 'high risk' traits, necessitating ongoing support.....	27
6.3 As a collaboration, YCRT is benefiting QPS, YJ and the "system".....	29
Appendix A Methodology.....	33
A.1 Staff survey.....	33
A.2 Statistical modelling.....	34
A.2.1 Reoffending count.....	34
A.2.2 Reoffending seriousness.....	34
A.2.3 YLS/CMI risk ratings.....	35
Appendix B Site activities analysis.....	36

Executive summary

Youth Co-Responder Teams (YCRT) is a joint initiative of the Department of Youth Justice and the Queensland Police Service (QPS) and operates as a key intervention to connect young people to appropriate supports and services. It is a new approach which sees Youth Justice (YJ) staff and QPS officers working together with the aim of providing services to young people aged 10 to 18 who are at risk of entering the youth justice system, or who require additional support to comply with court ordered bail conditions and statutory orders.

YCRT has been established across thirteen locations. Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Moreton, and Logan were launched in 2020. Mackay, Gold Coast, and Brisbane North launched in 2021. Locations in Mount Isa, Fraser Coast, Ipswich, Toowoomba and South Brisbane launched in 2023.

In December 2022 the Department of Youth Justice engaged Nous Group (Nous) to conduct an evaluation of YCRT. The evaluation has been conducted in two parts: a 'Program Evaluation' and an 'Outcome Evaluation'.

The Program Evaluation sought to review the extent to which the intent of YCRT was clear between Youth Justice and QPS and across sites and to assess early outputs and outcomes. It was delivered in July 2023 and presented findings based on the eight YCRT sites established in 2020 and 2021. The Program Evaluation report made recommendations to improve the implementation of YCRT, including refinements to the activities data collection form. These were implemented in July 2023.

This evaluation report builds on earlier evaluation findings. It draws on further data collection and analysis made during July 2023 and January 2024 to assess the outcomes of the YCRT initiative based on all thirteen YCRT sites, including the initial eight locations and additional five locations introduced in 2023.

YCRT delivers approximately 7,200 interactions per month across 13 sites

As of 31 March 2024, YCRT have had nearly 90,000 engagements with at risk young-people in total.¹ YCRT delivers approximately 7,200 interactions per month, comprising of approximately 3,500 direct engagements with young people and 3,700 alternative interactions with family members, community organisations, and others². Through these interactions, YCRT reaches at least 1,500 unique young people per month.

Almost half of YCRT engagements are with 15 to 17 year-olds (49 per cent), followed in frequency by 12 to 14 year-olds (38 per cent) and 9 to 11 year-olds (7 per cent). Of the unique young people engaged by YCRT, approximately 39 per cent were female and 46 per cent were First Nations.

Most YCRT interactions with young people occur outside of standard Youth Justice business hours, with the 2pm to 10pm shift seeing the greatest activity. These interactions are typically brief, with 49 per cent being less than 10 minutes, 25 per cent being between 11 and 20 minutes, and 26 per cent being longer. On average, young people that have been engaged by YCRT have had six unique interactions (including follow-ups), although many (44 per cent) interact with YCRT only once.

YCRT is being used to prevent youth crime by actively working with youth who are typically at risk of offending

YCRT operates a 24/7 jointly resourced outreach service that delivers activities that complement other youth crime initiatives or respond to local priorities.

YCRT is available to respond to local concerns or proactively assist youth and families in practical ways. YCRT staff consistently expressed support for its objective to deliver proactive support to young people at-risk and/or in vulnerable situations, including those not yet known to Youth Justice. Analysis of YCRT

¹ Breaking the cycle: Youth Co-Responder Teams extended. Queensland Government. Available online at: <https://statements.qld.gov.au/statements/100172>

² Correction 8 August 2024, due to calculation error. Previous text stated engagements with 6000 unique young people per month.

activity data confirms that YCRT is being used to support young people from across the spectrum from those with no criminal record (<1 per cent), those that are known to police but with no history of offending (2 per cent), those with a history of offending (81 per cent), and serious repeat offenders (17 per cent).

The young people involved with YCRT are typically at risk of offending because of multiple underlying and ongoing risk factors, which often remain even after engaging with YCRT. While YCRT is not a case management intervention and is therefore not designed to address criminogenic risk factors, an analysis of Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) data showed that a greater number of young people were classified high risk after engaging with YCRT in substance abuse, peer relations, and other categories than they were before (noting that only young people with statutory youth justice involvement would be assessed using the YLS/CMI). This may be due to the additional information about young people's circumstances that is derived from YCRT engagement and suggests that these young people may benefit from further, more intensive support that addresses their underlying risk factors.

YCRT is contributing to reduced offending with the young people it supports

YCRT acts to prevent youth crime in different ways. The YCRT teams can: conduct outreach activities like patrolling where it supports community safety and police work by engaging with youth in situations which can contribute to offending; conduct practical actions like bail compliance or transportation which improve compliance and build trust with youth and families; engage with youth and families who are involved with the youth justice system to understand support needs and make connections with supports; build connections with community and support organisations to improve capacity in the youth justice system and support those with entrenched needs.

The evaluation identified that YCRT is actively supporting youth and families together with other support initiatives and programs offered by Youth Justice or QPS. In 44 per cent of instances YCRT has one engagement with a young person, on 33 per cent it has between two and five engagements, and on 23 per cent it has greater than five engagements. In addition to direct engagement, other interactions are used to connect and support families or other follow up work.

The evaluation conducted analysis of youth who were supported by YCRT to determine what impacts of reoffending were being observed. A sample of 1,254 was analysed where it was possible to observe offending activity six months before and after engagement with YCRT. Statistical analysis based on causal inference was used to identify if and how the offending behavior of young people changed after engaging with YCRT. This was complemented by descriptive counts of the volume and type of offences committed by the young people engaged by YCRT.

Based on the analysis conducted for the evaluation, there were substantial reductions in the volume and severity of offences committed by young people in the six months after their most recent engagement with YCRT as compared to before. These findings can be summarised as:

1. 12 per cent of young people did not reoffend in the six months following engagement with YCRT among a sample where 79 per cent had one or more offences six months before their engagement.
2. A general reduction of reoffending was observed across the sample of youth who had previously offended, with an overall reduction of six offences on the average when comparing offending six months pre and post engagement with YCRT.
3. The greatest reduction in reoffending was with serious repeat offenders, where the average amount of offending reduced by 73 per cent among those who had ten (or more) offences, with youth responsible for an average of 25 offences in the six months before engaging YCRT reducing to an average of 7 offences in the period after YCRT engagement.
4. YCRT was contributing to reductions in specific types of offending including significantly reduced rates of breaking and entering, illegal use of a motor vehicle, and theft.

When interpreting these results, it should be recognised that YCRT operates as a 'connector' program between more intensive supports delivered by YJ, Police, and the broader community. Changes reported here should not be attributed to YCRT alone.

Staff attribute these outcomes to the complementary role YCRT plays among other Youth Justice, QPS, and community initiatives.

YCRT are locally adapted to build trust with families and complement existing youth crime prevention priorities and initiatives. The most common activities delivered by YCRT are follow up (including support for referrals), bail compliance, and patrolling. These activities provide a foundation for Youth Justice and QPS to conduct policing in a new way that, according to staff:

- builds positive relationships with young people;
- leverages trusted relationships with young people, their families, and community services to make better referrals; and
- draws on the skillset of Youth Justice staff to effectively and sensitively deescalate challenging situations.

YCRT have the flexibility to target the types of support they deliver, and how they deliver them, to meet the specific needs of their community members. For example, the Fraser Coast site recognised that young people aren't always willing to accept referrals up-front. They invest time building warm relationships with young people and meeting with community services to understand when the young person is ready for a referral, and which service is appropriate.

YCRT extends the reach of Youth Justice and QPS to provide these services 24/7, while Youth Justice staff would traditionally only be available during business hours. Activity patterns show that there is clear demand for this service on the weekends, but very little demand in the early mornings.

As a collaboration, YCRT is benefitting QPS, Youth Justice and the "system".

Staff participating in YCRT, both from Youth Justice and QPS, value the opportunity that YCRT gives them to collaborate and share information for a coordinated response.

Youth Justice reports having benefited from having access to information through QPS and the ability to reach families and youth at times and places they otherwise would not. This is regarded by Youth Justice as creating opportunities to de-escalate youth incidents or provide help to youth or families to prevent involvement in youth crime

QPS reports having benefited from having access to skilled Youth Justice workers/staff who have been able to provide tangible support when engaging with youth and their families. QPS has also reported the importance of accessing Youth Justice's networks of support. QPS regards these as helping QPS better understand and manage juvenile behaviours and find better ways of conducting policing work e.g. bail compliance.

More importantly, both QPS and Youth Justice have identified that YCRT has allowed benefits that wouldn't have otherwise been realised. The joint prioritising of how to use YCRT has allowed teams to make the best use of the resources in light of local youth crime priorities and, complement other initiatives e.g. Taskforce Guardian. Both partners, but in QPS particular, also highlighted the importance of being able to have capacity to address the factors that contribute to youth crime. Both parties saw YCRT as creating capacity to use information and skills to target proactive and tailored supports to high risk families.

The evaluation makes the following recommendations to improve YCRT.

The following recommendations aim to refine YCRT to address specific challenges and realise the potential of opportunities.

Recommendation

- 1 Continue to draw on local intelligence and policing data to respond to young people that may benefit from YCRT across the spectrum from at-risk to serious repeat offenders. Connect young people that demonstrate criminogenic risk factors to more intensive support.
- 2 QPS should consider extending the length of QPS rotations in YCRT to a minimum of six months, giving officers more time to understand the role, building productive relationships with young people, and leverage those relationships to connect people to pro-social supports. Furthermore, explore permanent QPS staffing arrangements.
- 3 Consider extending all sites to operate 7 days per week, pending demand. If capacity constrained, consider limiting YCRT coverage in the low-demand period between 6 am and 10 am.
- 4 Improve the quality of YCRT data collection by:
 - Implementing data entry restrictions for all fields that require data in a specific format. This includes: ICMS, SPI, Date of birth.
 - Implementing a consistent system to report the severity of offences between QPS and Youth Justice.
 - Implementing a consistent identifier of how deeply young people have been exposed to the justice system and use this to continuously monitor the cohorts of young people being engaged by YCRT. This could follow the following categories:
 - Young people with no criminal record
 - Young people are known to police (e.g. via caution, warning) with no recorded offences
 - Young people with a history of offending that are not considered serious repeat offenders
 - Young people that are considered serious repeat offenders.

2 YCRT was introduced to offer a community-based response to youth crime

2.1 YCRT delivers round-the-clock support to young people at risk of, or currently, interacting with the youth justice system

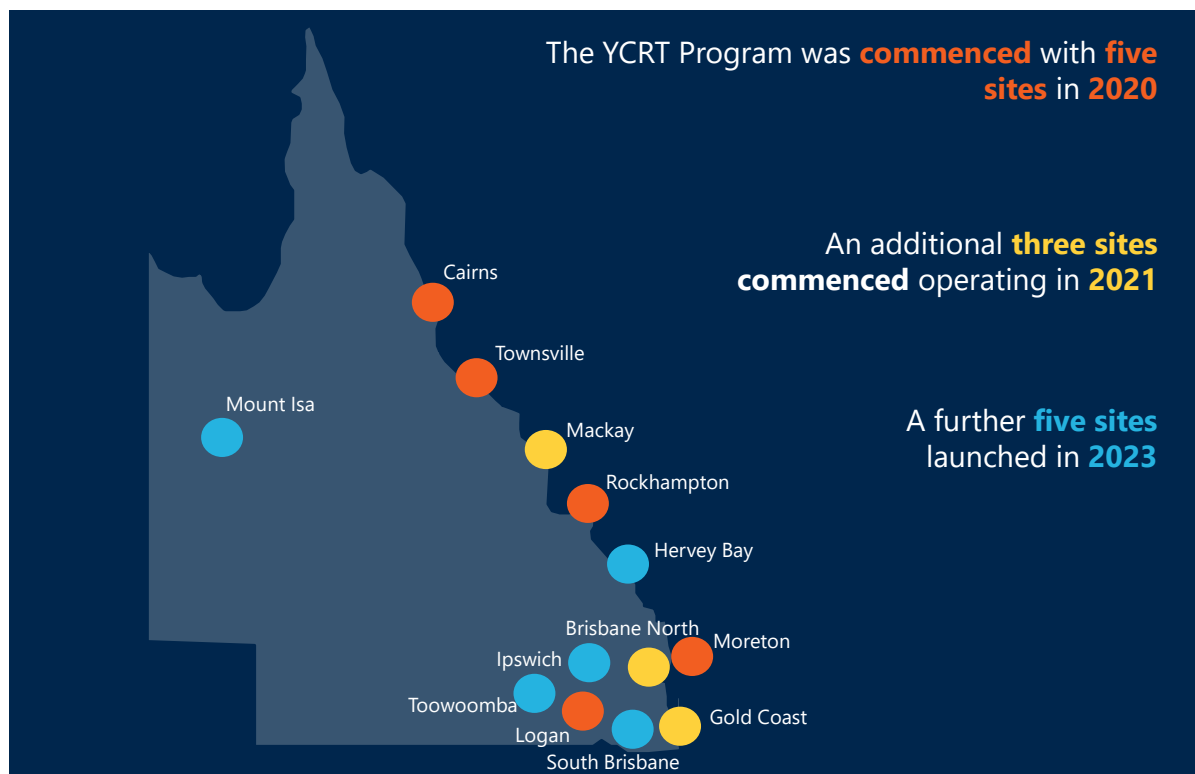
YCRT was launched in March 2020 to provide 24/7 co-responder teams

The origins of Youth Co-responder Teams (YCRT) arose from Action 3 of the Queensland Government's Five-Point Plan and its commitment to keep the community safe. The implementation and operation of the Plan aligns closely with the Government's *Working Together Changing the Story: Youth Justice Strategy, 2019-2023*, which highlights a continued commitment to target efforts to intervene early, keep children out of court, keep children out of custody, and reduce youth offending. Queensland Government's 2021-22 budget allocated \$11.9 million for the initiative, which was renewed in 2022-23. In the 2023-24 Budget, \$96.2 million over 4 years was committed to continue the youth co-responder model and expand YCRTs into Toowoomba, Mount Isa, Ipswich, South Brisbane, and the Fraser Coast.

The teams involve Youth Justice workers from the Department of Youth Justice (DYJ) and police officers from the Queensland Police Service (QPS). They are responsible for engaging young people aged 10 to 18 who are at risk of entering the youth justice system, or who require additional support to comply with court ordered bail conditions and statutory orders.

YCRT has been established in eight original locations: Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Moreton, Brisbane North, Logan, and Gold Coast. An additional five sites were launched in 2023: Hervey Bay, Ipswich, Mount Isa, South Brisbane, and Toowoomba. These are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1 | YCRT locations in scope for the evaluation



Youth Justice site governance is centralised, while QPS report to their local leadership and the central team

All sites have the basic premise of QPS and Youth Justice working together to operate co-response shifts. The teams are led by a QPS Hub Coordinator and a permanent Youth Justice Team Leader in each site. They work together to ensure a cohesive YCRT response and rectify issues as appropriate. In most locations they are supported by five permanent Youth Justice staff and five rotating QPS officers.

The Hub Coordinator, usually a Sergeant, reports to their relevant Snr Sgt /OIC / Inspector, through to the Youth Crime Taskforce. The Youth Crime Taskforce is within the remit of the Deputy Commissioner Regional Operations and Youth Crime. The Hub Coordinator local crime management team monitor and assess local youth crime trends and intelligence to effectively task the team.

Youth Justice staff are managed by one YCRT Manager per region. Prior to 2023, the Youth Justice Team Leader reported to one of two regional AO8 positions, and through to the Director of State-wide Services. The Team Leader is responsible for collating data and sharing information with Youth Justice colleagues to allow for targeted, coordinated responses to youth.

The YCRT operating model varies slightly by site

Most locations operate 24/7 with 3 shifts per day, except for the Wednesday night shift. The Wednesday night shift is only activated when an EMD is ordered within the site catchment. Mackay and Fraser Coast operate from Wednesday to Saturday due to lower local demand. On the other hand, Townsville has two teams to ensure that they can operate a fully 24/7 model and provide both proactive and reactive responses. These models are outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1 | YCRT site operating schedule

#	Launch	Site	Days	Hours	#	Launch	Site	Days	Hours
1	2020	Cairns	All	24 hours	8	2021	North Brisbane	All	24 hours
2	2020	Logan	All	24 hours	9	2023	Ipswich	All	24 hours
3	2020	Moreton	All	24 hours	10	2023	Mount Isa	All	24 hours
4	2020	Townsville (2 cars)	All	24 hours	11	2023	South Brisbane	All	24 hours
5	2020	Rockhampton	All	Reduced hours	12	2023	Toowoomba	All	24 hours
6	2021	Mackay	Wed to Sat	Reduced hours	13	2023	Fraser Coast	Wed to Sat	Reduced hours
7	2021	Gold Coast	All	24 hour					

QPS uses existing officers to staff YCRT, so the staffing approach differs in each location. For example, Mackay does not have a standalone Hub Coordinator position and QPS officers are rostered on to YCRT shifts as overtime. In other locations QPS officers from local stations are rostered on to YCRT shifts, usually for one-to-three-month periods, sometimes following an EOI, sometimes through direct selection.

2.2 QPS and YJ worked rapidly to establish a unique collaborative model

When the Queensland Government announced the 5-Point Plan in March 2020, QPS and Youth Justice had until July of 2020 to get five YCRT sites operating at 24/7 capacity. For Youth Justice, that required rapid recruitment and QPS had to redeploy existing resources. Both parties worked together to pull together a broad operational plan to support the sites to understand and implement the model.

Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Logan, and Moreton were the first sites and were operating at a 24/7 capacity by 1 July 2020. Mackay commenced in March 2021. Brisbane North and Gold Coast were later additions, starting in April 2021. Ipswich, Mount Isa, South Brisbane, Toowoomba, and Fraser Coast launched in June 2023. Sites were chosen based on the needs and demands of each region.

2.2.1 YCRT has a unique focus on early intervention/prevention through co-response

When YCRT was launched, the concept of Youth Justice and QPS working together in such a coordinated way was new. YCRT was, and remains, a unique initiative that aims to bring the practice of Youth Justice officers into the earlier touchpoints that had typically been between young people and police, to reduce the number of young people entering the youth justice system. Operating as a close-to 24/7 model, this provides after hours support that few other youth justice programs do, making it an important 'connector'. For example, YCRT connects young people to support by:

- Proactively checking-in on young people after they have exited more intensive programs (e.g. Intensive Case Management).
- Providing transport to community events and education, connecting young people to structured activities and filling public transport gaps.
- Making referrals to community services.

This unique way of working – both in terms of collaborative co-response and early intervention – required both organisations to carefully design YCRT in relatively uncharted territory.

Youth Justice developed a program logic to describe what YCRT aims to deliver and to whom, and the outcomes that it is intended to contribute to. Figure 2 presents the assumptions, target group, inputs, and outcomes/outcomes of this program logic. Figure 3 presents the intended immediate, short/medium-, and long- term outcomes of YCRT.

Figure 2 | Youth Co-Responder Teams Program Logic (Target group, inputs, outputs, and activities)

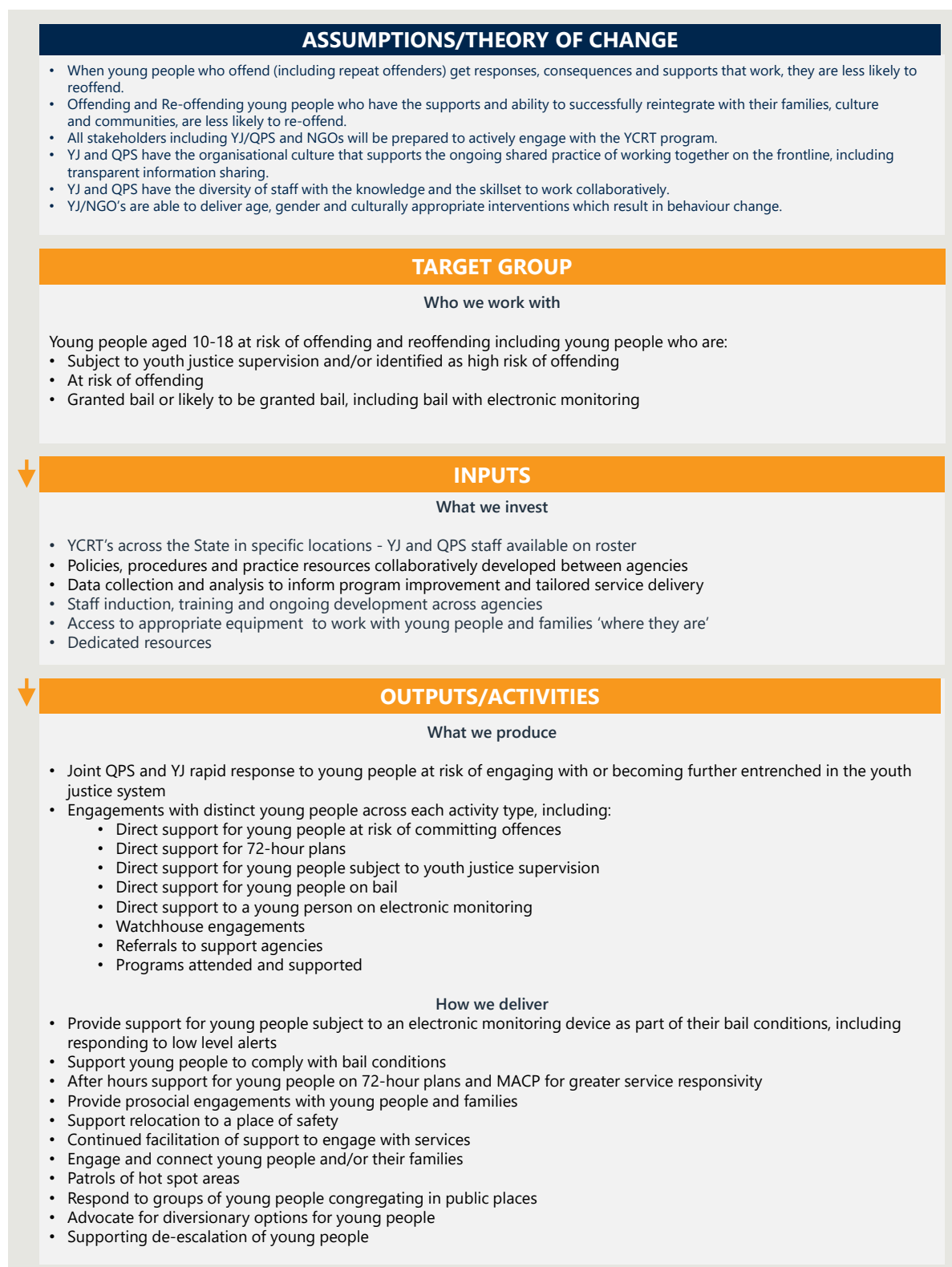
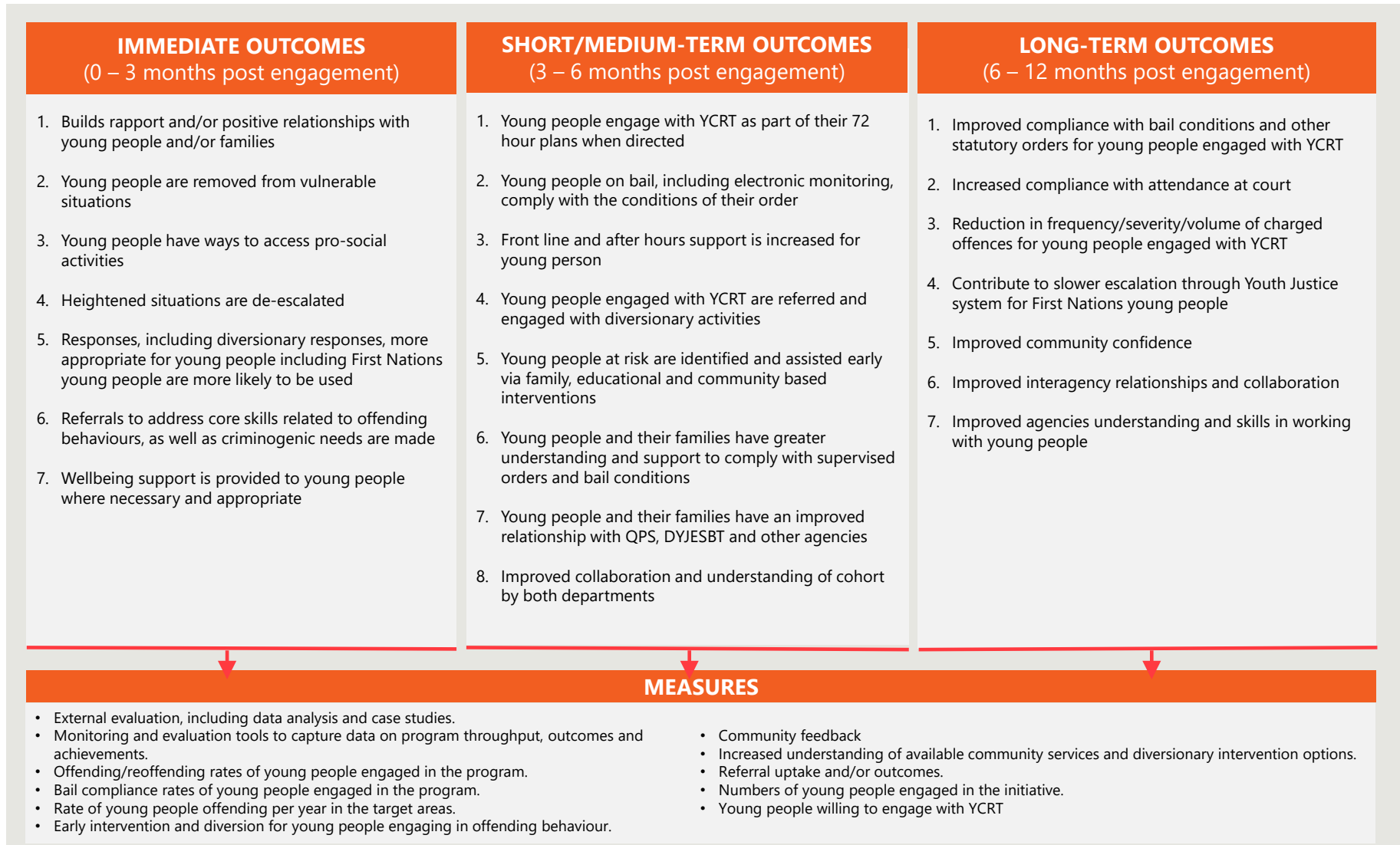


Figure 3 | Youth Co-Responder Teams Program Logic (Outcomes)



2.2.2 Operational YCRT locations were quickly established, followed by a continued refinement of the model

Youth Justice and QPS had approximately four months to stand up the model in the initial five locations. This required rapid, collaborative design between the two agencies. Staff on both sides worked closely to develop the initial program logic and scoping documents, policies and procedures and establish recruiting and resourcing models. The central teams continue to support implementation in each site, including through continually updating, aligning, and sometimes merging guidance and documentation between the two agencies.

At initiative commencement, establishment was challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic. Central management was unable to travel to the sites, so they conducted online training for the initial site staff and provided set-up support in a remote capacity.

Early diagnosis of needs across sites were made and responded to flexibly. For example, Youth Justice ran cultural competency sessions for staff in some locations.

The establishment of a new model between two agencies, within a short timeframe and during COVID-19 was an impressive feat.

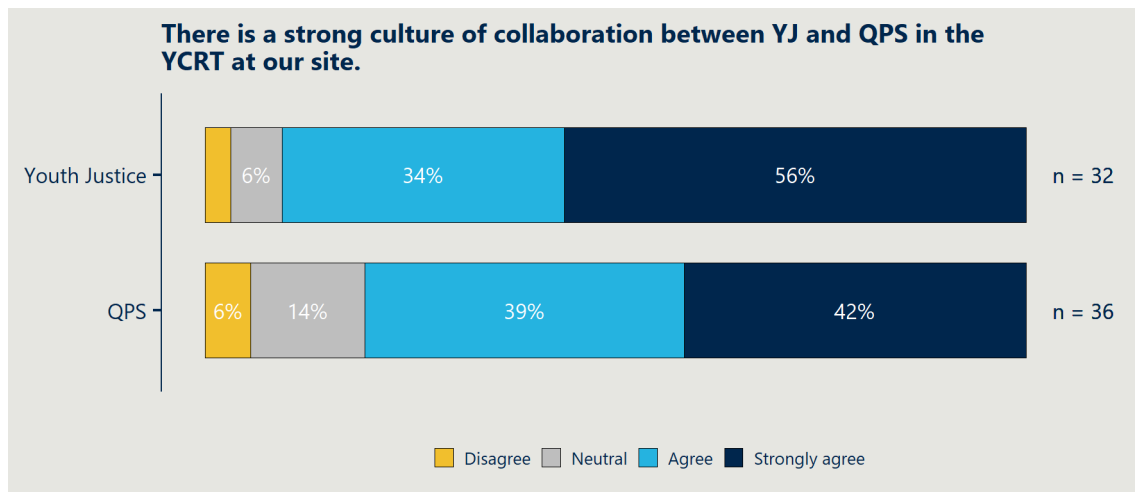
2.2.3 Youth Justice and QPS collaborated closely from the start

Staff within YCRT report a high degree of collaboration. This is a strong result considering the significant cultural differences present between the two agencies. As can be seen in Figure 4, 90 per cent of Youth Justice respondents and 81 per cent of QPS respondents to the 2023 Nous survey 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' there is a strong culture of collaboration between the two organisations at their site.

Staff who report a high degree of collaboration (n=58) attribute this to clear understanding of the intent of the model, leadership, and a sense of working toward a shared outcome. All respondents (n=10) who selected 'neutral' or 'disagree' were from one of three sites. These respondents often attributed their rating to a lack of information sharing and under resourcing.

This was reinforced in the 2024 Nous survey, where the most and second most common benefit identified by QPS and YJ staff, respectively, was *collaboration and information sharing between QPS and YJ for a coordinated response*. This degree of reported collaboration should be seen as a success of the implementation process of YCRT. The 'right' staff fit, collaborative leadership, and information sharing are critical elements to this achievement.

Figure 4 | YCRT staff responses to the survey question 'To what extent do you agree with the statement 'There is a strong culture of collaboration between Youth Justice and QPS in YCRT at our site'' (n=68)



'There is a strong culture of collaboration between Youth Justice and QPS in YCRT at our site'

“ I believe the [site] YCRT QPS & YJ sides work hand in glove. Both know each others role and help each other out if possible. We have a very strong and productive team who I believe are making a difference with the YP. – QPS survey respondent ”

“ Good relationships from initially utilising experienced YJ and QPS staff to develop quality local practice which has then continued on with experience YJ and QPS staff in leadership roles. – Youth Justice survey respondent ”

“ YJ and QPS all get along, and exchange information as required. – QPS survey respondent ”

3 An evaluation of establishment and outcomes has been used to support the implementation

3.1 This evaluation has sought to improve YCRT as it has been delivered.

This report builds on the YCRT Program Evaluation conducted last year.

Nous, in collaboration with YJ and QPS, conducted a process evaluation of YCRT in July 2023. This report reviewed the extent to which the intent of YCRT was clear between Youth Justice and QPS and across sites, assessed early outputs and outcomes of YCRT and made recommendations regarding data collection and reporting.

Recommendations regarding the Teams reporting form that YCRT staff use to log activities were implemented in June 2023.

The Program Evaluation used a mixed-method approach to understand the priorities and benefits of YCRT from QPS and Youth Justice separately and collectively. The approach included:

- **Desktop review:** Understand the current policies, systems, and procedures to carry out YCRT activities
- **Program data analysis:** Review quantitative datasets to identify trends and insights since the inception of the program
- **Interviews with QPS and Youth Justice YCRT central management:** Understand the initial establishment phase and how the governance, leadership and management of the program operates
- **Site visits and virtual interviews with YCRT staff from all eight locations:** Gain first-hand understanding of the YCRT experience and elaborate on insights from data analysis
- **YCRT Staff survey:** an online survey was issued to all currently serving YCRT staff from both Youth Justice and QPS to understand their perspectives of the program. The survey received 68 responses: 32 from Youth Justice and 36 from QPS.
- **Benefits mapping workshop:** Identify opportunities from QPS and Youth Justice separately and collaboratively to reach program objectives.

The evaluation aimed to help refine the goal, purpose, and mission of YCRT.

In late 2023, Nous facilitated workshops with YJ and QPS to clarify the purpose and intent of YCRT, in response to feedback that it was unclear to staff. The output of these sessions – a refined goal, purpose, and set of mission statements – is outlined in Figure 5.

Figure 5 | Working goal, purpose, and mission statements for YCRT

Overarching goal
Overarching goal is to help stop youth crime / offending and reoffending.
Purpose - The purpose of YCRT is to:
Proactively help youth “at risk” or already involved with the justice system address the causes of offending
Or
Expand the range of innovative approaches for local youth crime prevention
Or
Enhance community safety by working with youth at risk to stop their offending
Our mission is to:
Focus on prevention – work with the right young people and their families
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We work with youth who are at risk of offending and reoffending – across the spectrum from at risk to repeat offenders• Use local knowledge to determine the best use of our time and resources• Complement other QPS and YJ prevention programs (not duplicate them)
Use the combined skills and capability of youth workers and our police - expand our opportunity to make a difference
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the right youth to work with (through our local knowledge and networks)• Understand what is going on for youth and their families and help them make changes• Refer youth and families to services through our networks and relationships
Being in the community and working after hours – we there at the right time / when we are most needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connect with families when they are available – a 24 / 7 presence• Use our time to help young people when it makes the greatest difference• Organize our team to be where it’s most needed in our communities
There to help youth and their families – understanding and engaging
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proactively offer support to young people and families – not waiting for trouble to occur• Be there to make a difference and responsive to their needs (causes of offending)• Use our time to connect and help youth make positive changes or access supports

3.2 Additional data collection and analysis conducted to identify outcomes achieved by YCRT

Building on the foundation of the Program Evaluation, Nous conducted further data collection and analysis to identify the contribution to outcomes of YCRT. Given the data quality issues identified in the Program Evaluation report, an iterative and collaborative process between Nous, QPS, and YJ was adopted to:

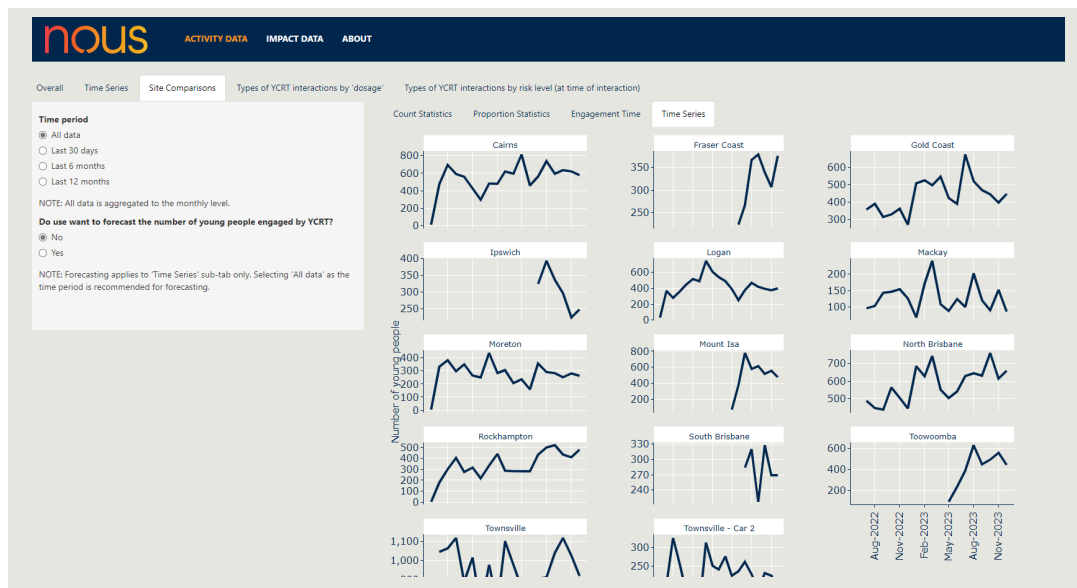
- Identify relevant datasets to inform the outcomes evaluation of YCRT.
- Iteratively clean and test this data to ensure it is accurate.
- Triangulate findings arising from quantitative analysis with YCRT staff observations through a series of consultations and a survey.

The following approaches were used as part of the outcomes evaluation:

- **Development of an interactive dashboard.** Nous developed an interactive dashboard reporting key statistics on what was being delivered and to whom at each YCRT site over time. This enables users to understand the overall user profile and activities delivered by YCRT, and to filter this by time period and site to identify differences. An image of this dashboard is shown in Figure 6.

- **Statistical analysis of offending and YLS/CMI.** Nous drew on offending history data provided by both QPS and YJ to identify how trends in the volume and severity of offences changed for young people after interacting with YCRT.
- **Staff survey.** The survey used to inform the Program Evaluation in 2023 was re-distributed in early 2024 to identify any changes in perception over time and gather perspectives from the five sites that launched in mid last year.
- **Staff interviews.** Nous conducted virtual interviews with QPS and YJ staff at each of the five sites that launched in 2023. Building on findings from the process evaluation and the activities analysis, the dashboard was used to highlight unique elements of each site and used these interviews to explore how local conditions have led to site-level variance in the implementation of YCRT. These interviews were also used to gather perspectives of the outcomes achieved by YCRT.

Figure 6 | Interactive activities dashboard



Despite this iterative process, findings are constrained by data collection and reporting limitations.

Limitations and inconsistencies in how data is collected in relation to YCRT have – to some extent – limited efforts to understand what is being delivered, to whom, and what outcomes are being achieved. These are listed include:

- **Issues with the Teams reporting form cause data quality issues and inconsistencies.** For example, fields that require specific and constrained information (e.g. date of birth, ICMS) are 'free text' fields, enabling staff to enter invalid information.
- **Inconsistencies between YJ and QPS reporting.** For example, QPS and YJ do not use a consistent scheme to describe the seriousness of offences. YJ uses the Australian Standard Offence Classification (ASOC)³, while QPS uses a bespoke system.
- **Difficulties ascertaining how far embedded a young person is in the justice system.** A key consideration for the outcomes evaluation was identifying how far embedded in the justice system were the young people that engaged with YCRT (e.g. not known to YJ/QPS, known but not offended, serious repeat offenders). This is not clearly captured in current reporting (e.g. a young person may have an SPI either because they have committed an offence, or been victim of an offence).

³ <https://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/about-statistics/statistical-standards-classifications/australian-standard-offence-classification-queensland-extension>

RECOMMENDATION

Improve the quality of YCRT data collection by:

- Implementing data entry restrictions for all fields that require data in a specific format. This includes: ICMS, SPI, Date of birth.
- Implementing a consistent system to report the severity of offences between QPS and YJ.
- Implementing a consistent identifier of how deeply young people have been exposed to the justice system and use this to continuously monitor the cohorts of young people being engaged by YCRT. This could follow the following categories:
 - Young people with no criminal record
 - Young people are known to police (e.g. via caution, warning) with no recorded offences
 - Young people with a history of offending that are not considered serious repeat offenders
 - Young people that are considered serious repeat offenders

4 YCRT is associated with positive outcomes for young people

There is evidence to suggest that YCRT contributes to reducing both the volume and severity of offences committed by young people. Nous applied a statistical analysis approach based on causal inference to identify how the offending behaviour of young people changed after engaging with YCRT. Findings are calculated relative to the young person's most recent engagement with YCRT. The pre period was calculated to be 6-months prior to the date of their most recent YCRT engagement, and the post period was calculated to be 6-months after the date of their most recent YCRT engagement.⁴ Results from this analysis was contextualised with sentiments expressed by YCRT staff via survey and interviews.

Findings can be summarised as:

1. There was an overall reduction in the average number of offences.
2. Those that did reoffend committed less serious crimes.
3. Staff attribute these outcomes to YCRT.

These findings are detailed in the sections below.

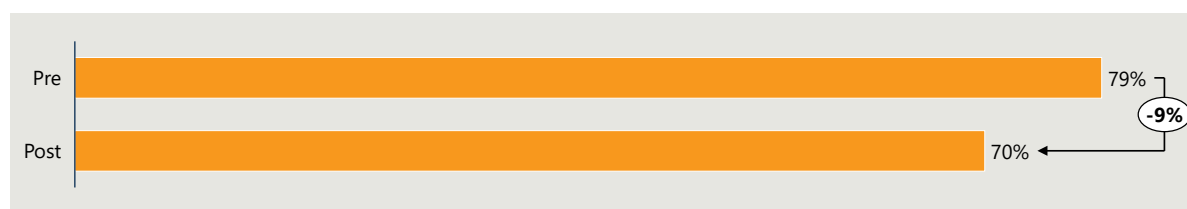
4.1.1 There was an overall reduction in the average number of offences

Of a cohort of 1,254 young people that engaged with YCRT with available offending data, 79 per cent had one or more offences prior to engaging with YCRT. Statistical modelling shows that this group committed an average of seven fewer offences in the 6-month period following their most recent engagement with YCRT.

Each young person committed, on average
7 fewer offences in the 6-month period following their most recent engagement with YCRT

As shown in Figure 7, nine per cent of young people that offended in the six months prior to YCRT committed zero offences in the six months following their most recent engagement.

Figure 7 | Proportion of young people that offended at least once in the 6-months prior and 6-months post their most recent YCRT engagement



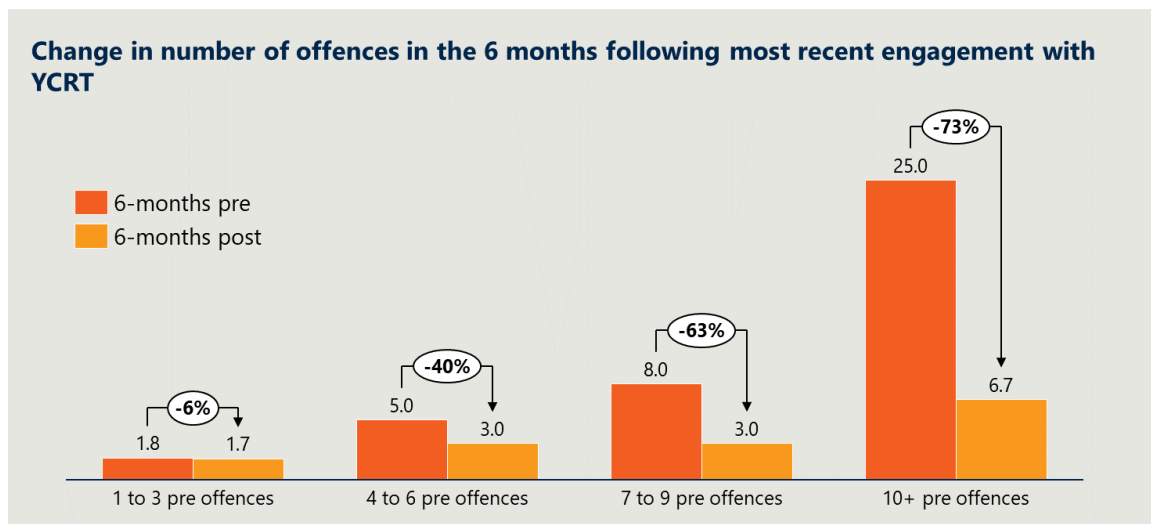
The reduction was greatest for high volume offenders.

Young people that committed a higher volume of offences in the six months prior to their most recent engagement with YCRT saw a greater reduction in offending post YCRT.

⁴ Note: This analysis was conducted on a subset of young people (n=1,254) with comprehensive data available. This cohort has an average number of offences in the six months prior to YCRT of 14, and 11% of these young people classified SROI/CYOI. This analysis spans the time period between 21 June 2022 and 21 December 2023.

As shown in Figure 8, the average reduction in volume of offences committed post-YCRT is greater for those that had committed more offences in the pre period. With those that committed ten or more offences pre YCRT seeing a 73 per cent reduction in their volume of offending, from an average of 25 to an average of 7 offences committed in six months.⁵ Note that this reflects a descriptive count of offences, and not a statistical analysis. It does not control for any factors that may have influenced offending behaviour (e.g. time in detention).

Figure 8 | Change in average number of offences in the 6 months following most recent engagement with YCRT

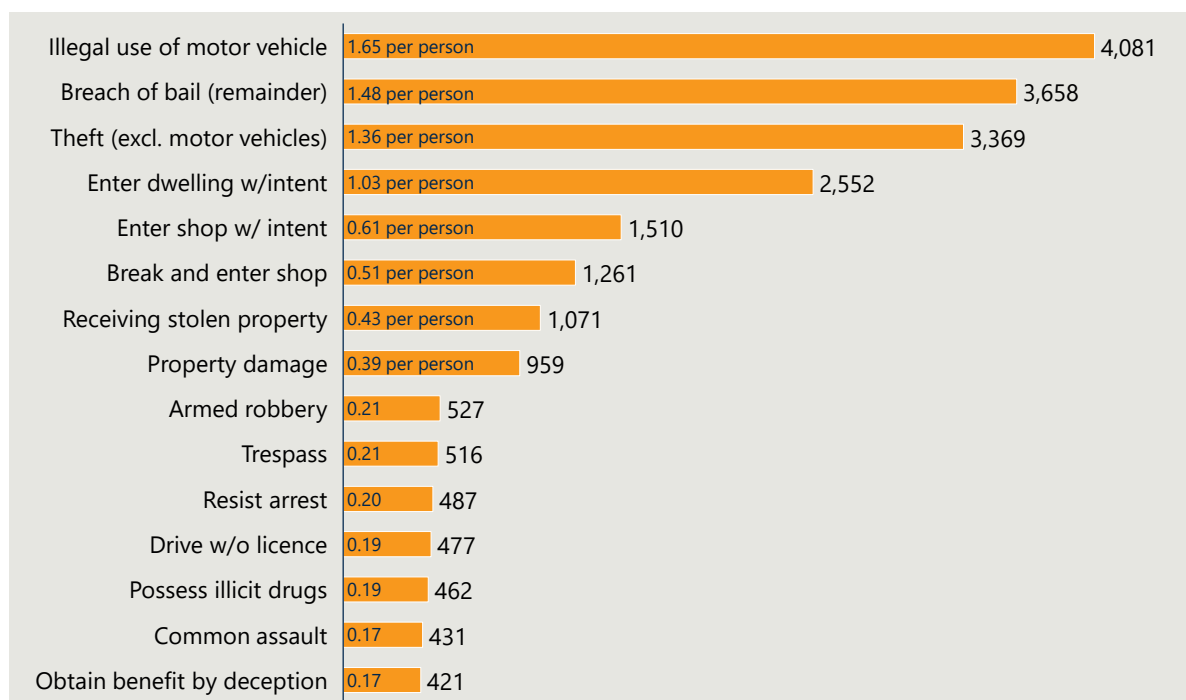


The rate of breaking and entering, illegal use of a motor vehicle, and theft decreased substantially.

Figure 9 shows the total number of offences committed by a cohort of 2,474 young people with a record in the ICMS system in the six-month period before being engaged by YCRT. As shown, the most prevalent offences were ‘illegal use of a motor vehicle’ (1.65 per person), ‘breach of bail (remainder)’ (1.48 per person) and ‘theft (excl. motor vehicles)’ (1.36 per person).

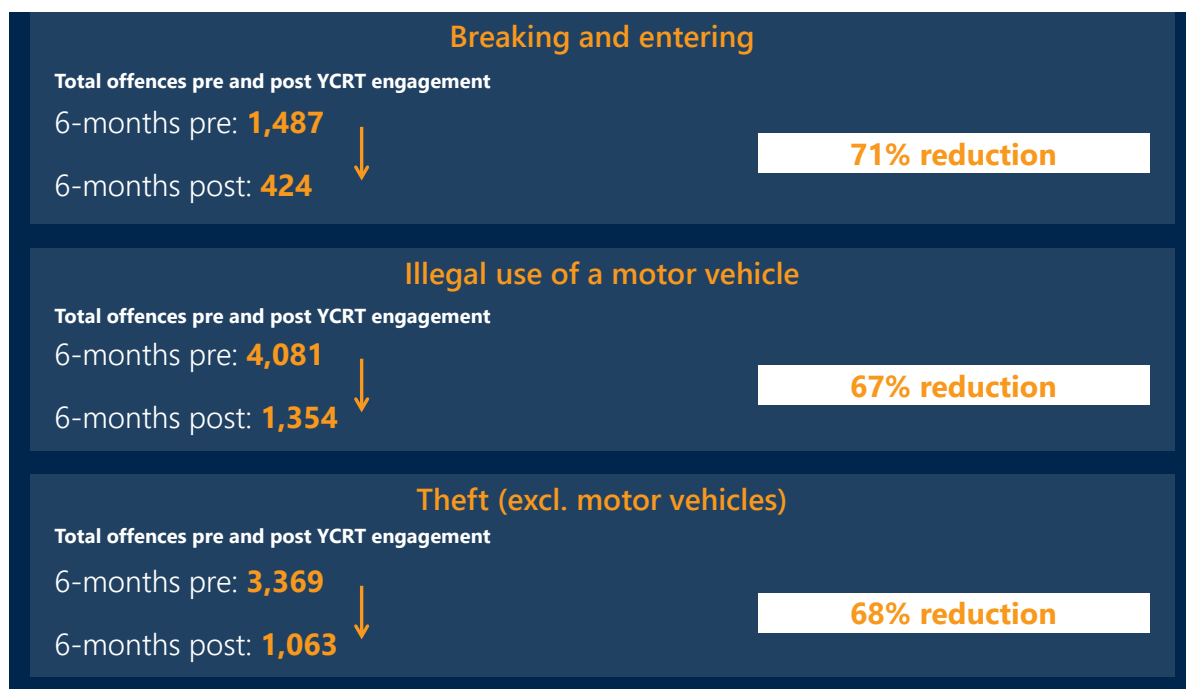
⁵ Note that this analysis has not controlled for young people that entered detention and were therefore not able to offend in the post period. This may partially explain the reduction for the ‘10+ pre offences’ group.

Figure 9 | Total offences in the 6 months prior to YCRT engagement



There was a substantial reduction in the total number of offences committed by this cohort, for several offence types, in the six-months following engagement with YCRT. As shown in Table 2 the volume of 'breaking and entering' reduced by 71 per cent; 'illegal use of a motor vehicle' decreased by 67 per cent, and 'theft (excl. motor vehicles)' decreased by 68 per cent.

Table 2 | Total number of offences committed in the 6-months pre and post final YCRT engagement, by offence type⁶



⁶ By a cohort of 2,474 young people with a record in the ICMS system in the six-month period before being engaged by YCRT.

Note that YCRT operates within a broader service system, and therefore these changes cannot be attributed to YCRT alone.

4.1.2 Those that did reoffend committed less serious crimes

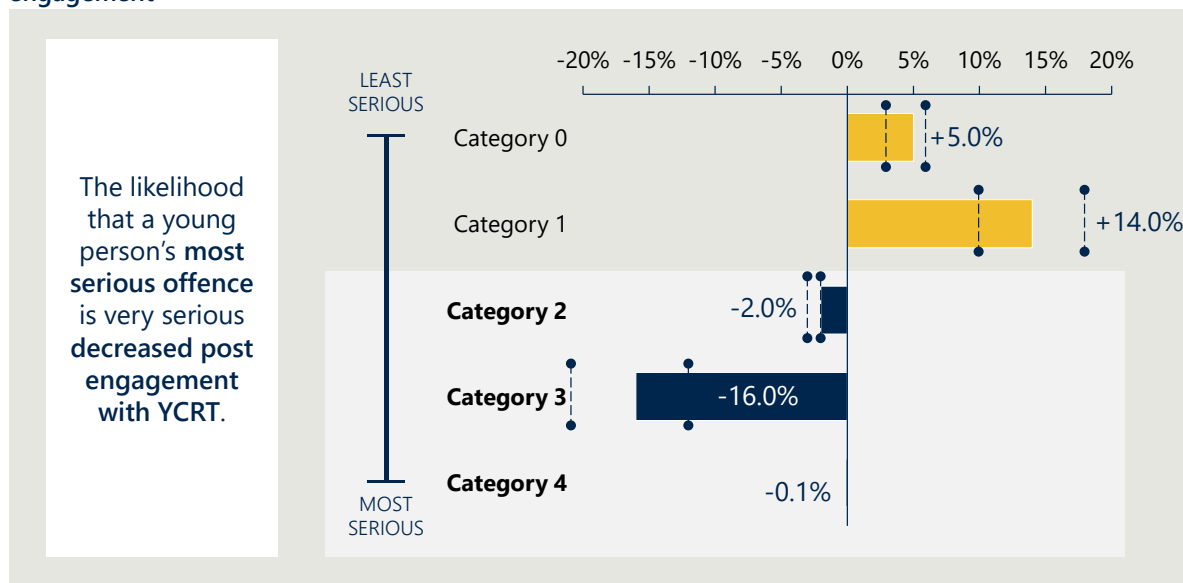
There is evidence to suggest that young people committed less serious crimes following engagement with YCRT. A statistical analysis was conducted to examine changes in the single most serious offence committed by young people in the six months before, and six months after their most recent engagement with YCRT.

Offending seriousness was measured according to banding of the National Offence Index (NOI). The banding converts the 158-level NOI into five categories, from least to most serious:

- 0 – e.g. drug abuse
- 1 – e.g. unlawful entry with intent/burglary, break and enter
- 2 – e.g. driving under the influence of alcohol or other substance
- 3 – e.g. sexual assault
- 4 – e.g. driving causing death

The results of this statistical analysis are shown in Figure 10. The bars represent the change in probability that a young person’s most serious offence falls within the given NOI band post YCRT. The striped lines represent the 95 per cent confidence interval.

Figure 10 | Change in percentage of the most serious offence in the 6-months pre and post final YCRT engagement



As shown, the probability that a young person’s most serious offence was very serious – being within NOI band two, three, or four – decreased. This suggests that young people were less likely to commit serious crimes after engaging with YCRT than they were before. There was a 0.1 per cent reduction in very serious crimes like driving causing death (NOI4), a 16 per cent reduction in crimes like sexual assault (NOI3), and a 2 per cent reduction in crimes like driving under the influence (NOI2).

There was a comparable increase in the probability that the most serious offence would be in the less serious NOI bands. Note that this does not suggest that the prevalence of NOI band zero and one offences (e.g. drug abuse, unlawful entry) increased. This analysis only considers the single most serious offence committed by young people, and not the volume of offending.

4.1.3 Staff attribute these outcomes to YCRT

YCRT staff consistently expressed the view that YCRT was making a difference in their communities by reducing rates of youth offending and addressing the factors that lead young people to being classified as serious repeat offenders. This suggests that the changes *associated* with YCRT in the above statistical analysis above may be, in part, *attributed* to YCRT. Staff reflections, collected during interviews in April 2024, are outlined below.

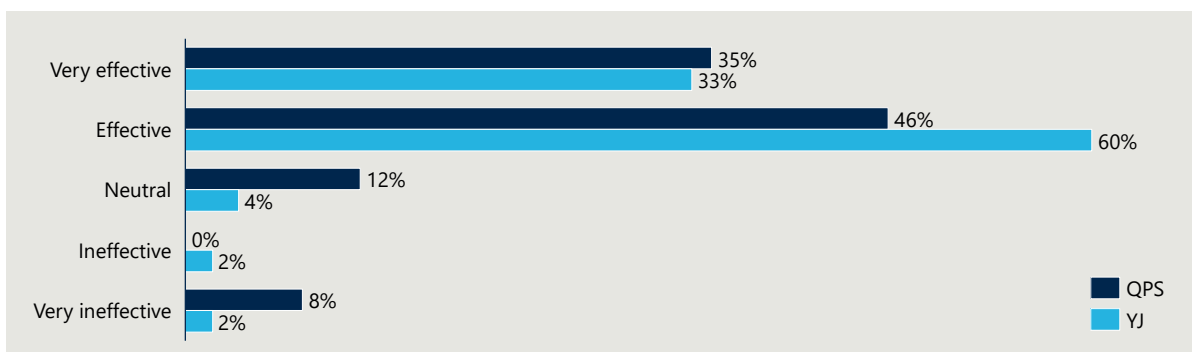
STAFF REFLECTIONS ON THE IMPACT OF YCRT

<p>“ Fraser Coast</p> <p>I've seen juvenile crime reduced in our area... YCRT is definitely making a major difference</p> <p style="text-align: right;">”</p>	<p>“ Mount Isa</p> <p>As we dropped off a kid he said: thanks, I was going to steal a car tonight. We are reducing the number of offences</p> <p style="text-align: right;">”</p>
<p>“ Ipswich</p> <p>(When asked if YCRT is making a positive difference) it's filling those holes and gaps... we've had a lot of success.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">”</p>	<p>“ South Brisbane</p> <p>We've seen numerous cases where they start offending badly, then we (YCRT) get them back in school, and they never offend again</p> <p style="text-align: right;">”</p>

Over 89 per cent of surveyed staff believe that YCRT is effective.

Both QPS and YJ staff perceived YCRT to be effective in the staff survey: 81 per cent of QPS respondents and 93 per cent of YJ staff consider YCRT “effective” or “very effective”. See Figure 11 for the breakdown of staff responses by organisation.

Figure 11 | YCRT staff perceptions of the effectiveness of YCRT, by organisation



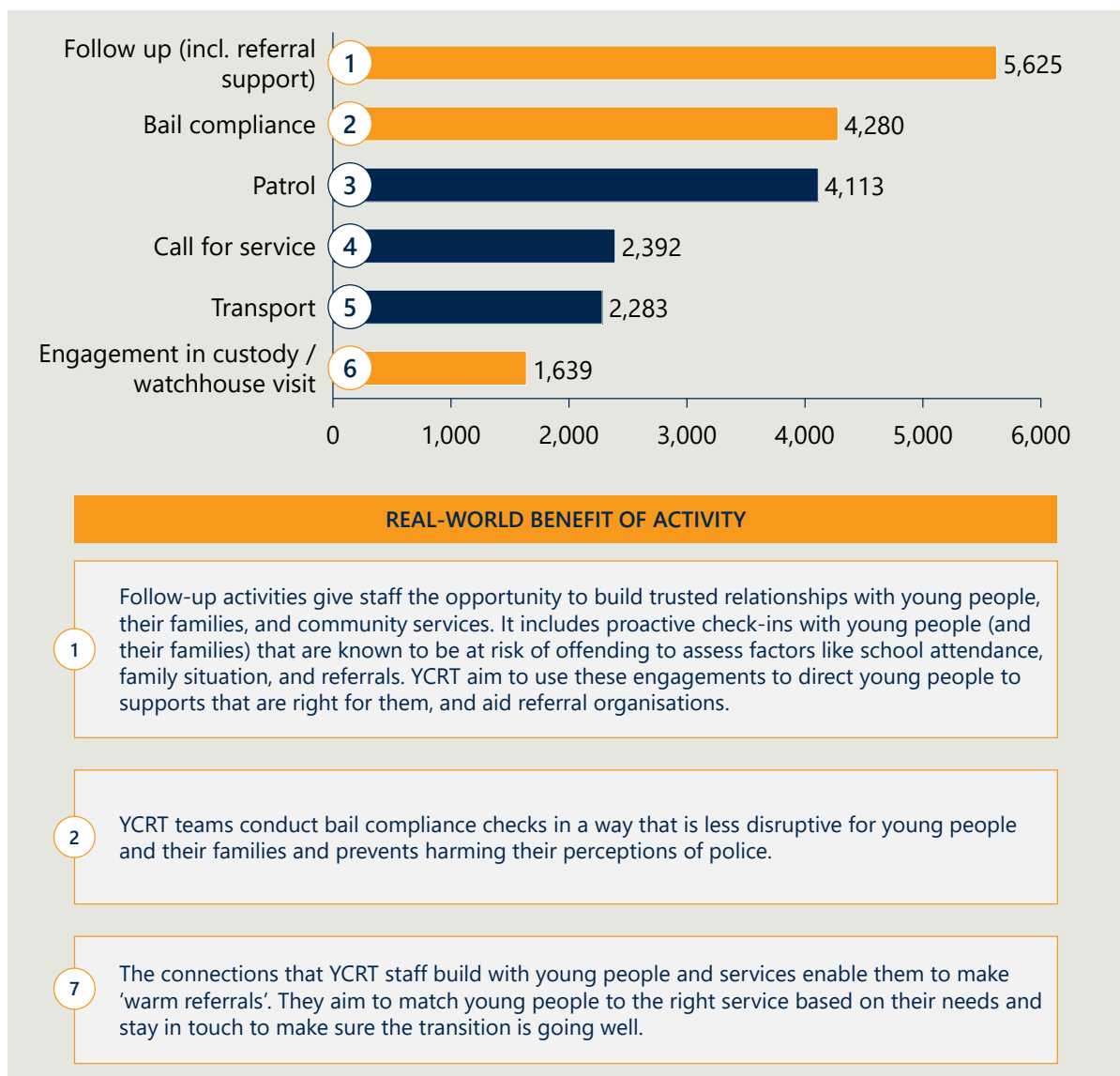
5 YCRT adapts to local needs and to deliver support that wouldn't otherwise exist

YCRT are locally adapted to build trust with families and complement existing youth crime prevention priorities and initiatives. By frequency, the most common activities delivered by YCRT directly to young people are follow-up, bail compliance, and patrol. These activities provide a foundation for YJ and QPS to conduct policing in a new way that, according to staff:

- builds positive relationships with young people;
- leverages trusted relationships with young people, their families, and community services to make better referrals; and
- draws on the skillset of YJ staff to effectively and sensitively deescalate challenging situations.

Figure 12 outlines the activities delivered directly to young people by YCRT by frequency, and the real-world benefit of these activities as reported by staff.

Figure 12 | YCRT activities delivered to young people, by frequency (June 2022 to December 2023)



The flexibility of YCRT enables staff to address community-specific needs.

The YCRT model gives local staff the capacity to assess what is needed in their communities, and the flexibility to meet these needs. Examples of how the YCRT model has been adapted to meet specific community needs are outlined in Figure 13.

Figure 13 | Examples of applying the YCRT model to address community needs

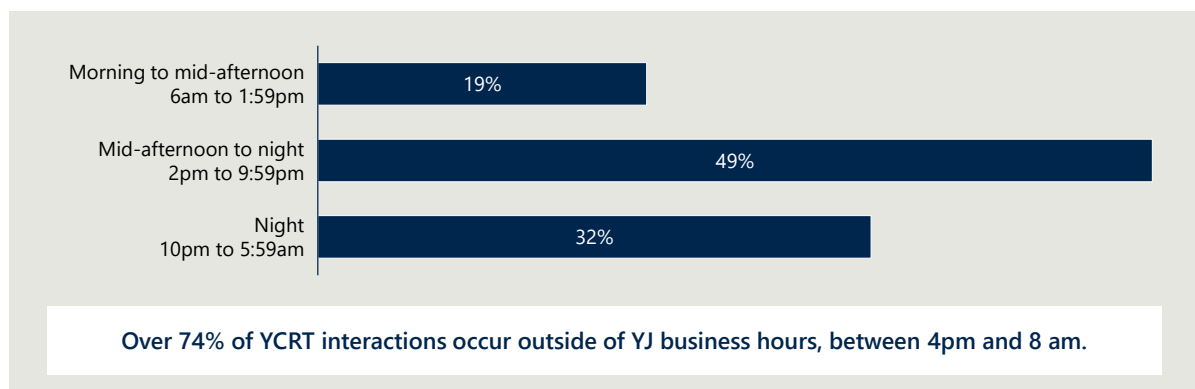
- Ipswich** identified multi-generational cycles of reoffending as a critical issue. In response, the site prioritises engagement with family members of at-risk young people, particularly siblings.
- Fraser Coast** recognised that young people aren't always willing to accept referrals up-front. They invest time building warm relationships with young people and meeting with community services to understand when the young person is ready for a referral, and which service is appropriate.
- Mount Isa** identified young people offending because "they're just bored". This is exacerbated by limited public transport in town. In response, YCRT provides proactive support that connects young people to prosocial activities within the community
- Toowoomba** identified a more effective and efficient approach to conducting bail compliance checks, whereby they would communicate to parents roughly when to expect a visit. This reduced the disruption caused by compliance checks.

5.1.2 YCRT extends the reach of YJ and QPS to provide services 24/7

Youth justice staff traditionally do not work outside of business hours. This makes them inaccessible to young people in the community at night and on weekends, when a substantial proportion of juvenile criminal activity is known to occur. YCRT addresses this gap and expands the reach of YJ staff into after-hours. As shown in Table 1, the majority of YCRT sites operate 24/7. Only Fraser Coast, Mackay, and Rockhampton operate with reduced hours.

Evidence suggests that there is demand for these after-hours services. The majority of YCRT interactions occur when YJ wouldn't otherwise be present in community. As shown in Figure 14, over 81 per cent of YCRT activities are delivered during the 'mid-afternoon to night', and 'night' shifts, and over 74 per cent of interactions occur between 4pm and 8am. The ability to provide after-hours support service and diversion was also highlighted by surveyed staff as a unique benefit of YCRT.

Figure 14 | Proportion of total YCRT activities, by shift (June 2023 to December 2023)



The 24/7 operating model extends the ability of YJ and QPS to provide both reactive and proactive support. Reactively, YCRT enables YJ officers to draw on their skills to respond to calls for service and de-escalate situations involving young people (see below quote).



In short: 24/7 is the most important part. We're able to develop trust... When mum or grandma rings us – if we're not doing anything else – we can pick him up, give him a meal, talk about what's going on. – QPS

Officer

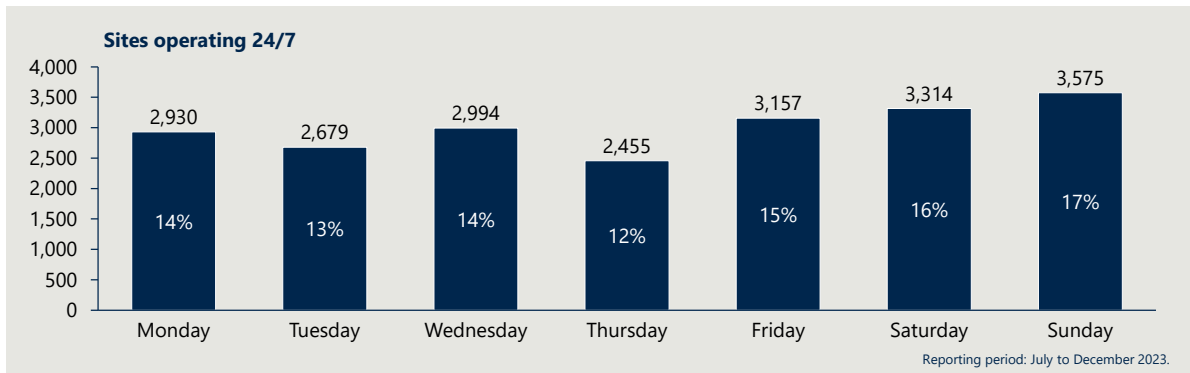


Proactively, YCRT enables staff to check-in on young people that are known to be at risk of offending after hours, particularly those on the Serious Repeat Offender (SRO) list⁷. By operating after hours, YCRT provides a purposeful service which connects and supports young people to appropriate services, reducing young people's likelihood of participating in high risk/offending behaviour.

A significant proportion of interactions occur on weekends.

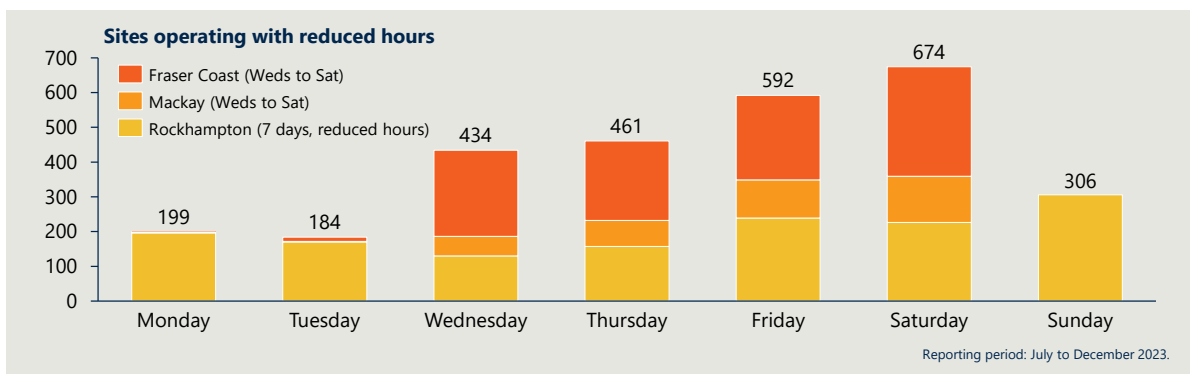
There is also demand for YCRT on the weekend. Figure 15 shows the number of YCRT direct interactions with young people delivered per day for sites that operate 24/7. As shown, the volume of interactions is relatively consistent per day, with Saturday and Sunday seeing the greatest activity.

Figure 15 | Number of YCRT direct interactions delivered by day (sites operating 24/7)



This suggests that there may be value in extending the coverage of sites that currently operate on reduced hours to every day of the week (Fraser Coast and Mackay). The daily volume of activity for these sites is shown in Figure 16.

Figure 16 | Number of YCRT direct interactions delivered by day (sites operating with reduced hours)



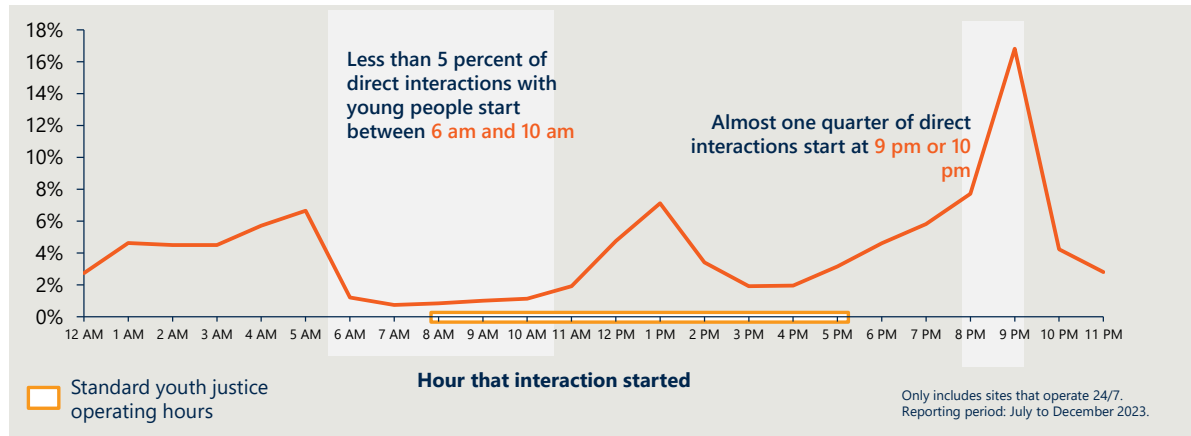
⁷ The Serious Repeat Offender Index (SROI) is an "as at" score that is calculated daily for all young people who: were juveniles, and had committed an offence in the past 12 months. Scores are calculated daily and take into account the young person's age at that date, and the young person's offending (including seriousness, frequency, clustering and recency) and custody nights over the 24 months leading up to that date. Higher index scores indicate more serious / frequent offending. Young people with scores of 6 or above are identified as a 'Serious Repeat Offender' (as at that measurement date).

Site managers reinforced the value of having some YCRT coverage each day of the week. This may be more beneficial than 'round the clock' coverage on some days of the week.

Fewer YCRT interactions occur in the early morning.

Figure 17 shows the proportion of YCRT interactions with young people per hour. As shown, there are three significant peaks of activity surrounding 5 am, 1 pm, and 9 pm.⁸

Figure 17 | Proportion of YCRT direct interactions delivered by hour (for 24/7 sites)



There is very little activity in the morning between 6 am and 10 am. This trend is consistent across all sites: no site had more than seven per cent of its total activity delivered between 6 am and 10 am.

This is consistent with YCRT staff perceptions of their 'busy' and 'slow' periods. One site manager interviewed proposed that YCRT cease operation between 2 am and 10 am to redirect resources to the busier afternoon and evening periods. Fraser Coast staff reflected of the cost effectiveness of its current reduced hours model.

RECOMMENDATION

Consider extending all sites to operate 7 days per week, pending demand. If capacity constrained, consider limiting YCRT coverage in the low-demand period between 6 am and 10 am.

⁸ Each of these arise in the final hour of the given shift. This suggests that staff are filling out Teams report 'in bulk' at the end of their shift, rather than as activities are delivered.

6 YCRT works with a varied cohort of youth, from at-risk to serious repeat offenders.

Since its commencement in 2020, YCRT has grown from five to thirteen sites. The quality of data collection has improved over this time. To account for this, the analysis below spans a limited time period, from June 2022 to December 2023. It does not report all of the activities that have been delivered by YCRT since its commencement.

YCRT is reaching and supporting a large number of youth across Queensland to act early and prevent youth crime.

In the two and a half years between June 2022 and December 2023, YCRT reached 7,249 unique young people across 48,506 direct engagements. It has also delivered 54,969 interactions with family members and others, and supported 3,427 referrals to community services. These statistics are summarised in Figure 18.

Figure 18 | Activities delivered under YCRT between June 2022 and December 2023



The reach of YCRT has continued to grow as the initiative has been expanded to further sites. YCRT delivers approximately 7,200 interactions per month, comprising of approximately 3,500 direct engagements with young people and 3,700 alternative interactions with family members, community organisations, and others. Through these interactions, YCRT reaches at least 1,500 unique young people per month. Staff report that YCRT has given them access to the capacity and the capability to address the unique needs of young people in their community, and to complement other programs and initiatives.

6.2 YCRT supports young people across the risk spectrum.

YCRT supports a broad spectrum of young people. This ranges from a small proportion who were not identified by police or had no previous recorded involvement with Police or Youth Justice, to a large number who were known to Police or Youth Justice. It includes a proportion of those who were classified as serious repeat offenders.

Figure 19 shows the profile of young people that were engaged by YCRT between June 2022 and December 2023 by risk profile. This is presented in two ways:

- **proportion of unique young people engaged** by YCRT (i.e. those that had at least one YCRT interaction); and
- **proportion of YCRT activities delivered** to that cohort (i.e. the volume of “YCRT effort” committed to these young people).

Figure 19 | Risk profile of young people engaged by YCRT between June 2022 and December 2023

LEAST RISK  GREATEST RISK	Cohort of young people	Proportion of unique young people engaged	Proportion of activities delivered
		No criminal record or were not identified by police	3%
	Known to Police but had no history of offending	6%	2%
	Known to Police and YJ and/or had a history of offending	86%	81%
	Serious repeat offenders or on the CYOI index	5%	17%

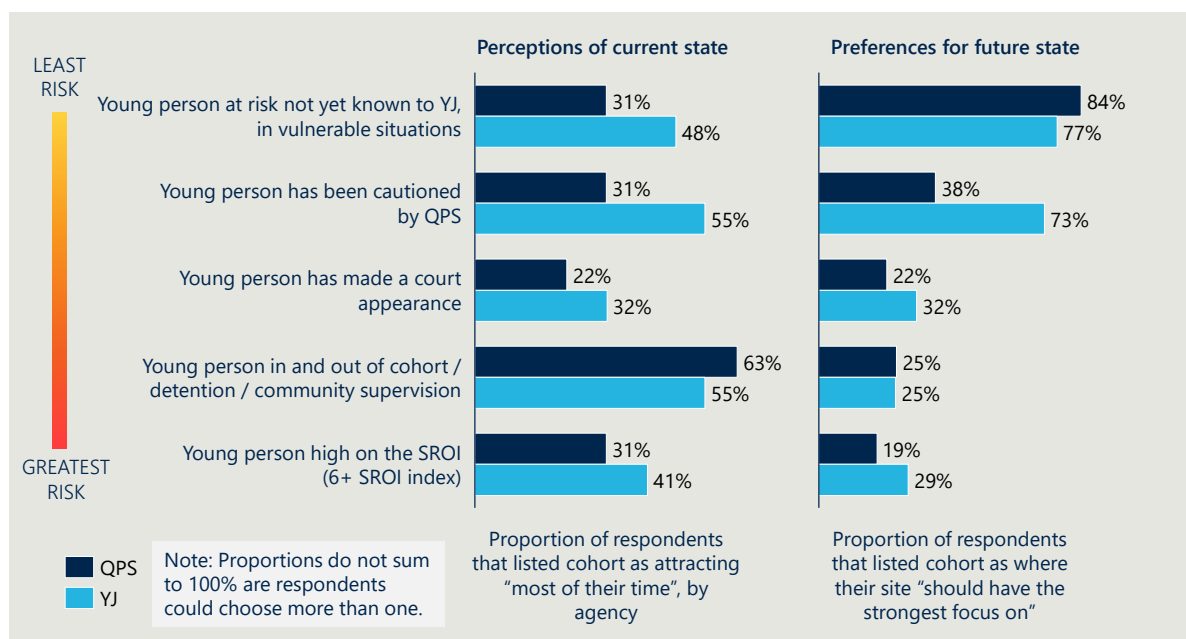
As shown above, young people who were not identified or had no know criminal record represented just three per cent of the cohort that interacted with YCRT at least once. This group accounted for less than one per cent of YCRT effort. Young people that were known to Police but had no history of offending represented a slightly greater number of activities. Young people that were known to both Police and YJ represent the largest cohort, at 86 per cent of unique young people engaged by YCRT.

Almost one-fifth of YCRT activities were delivered to serious repeat offenders

Young people that were classified as either serious repeat offenders or on the Criminal Youth Offender Index (CYOI) represented five per cent of the unique young people engaged by YCRT. However, as this cohort was much more likely to have repeat engagements with YCRT and represented 17 per cent of the activities delivered.

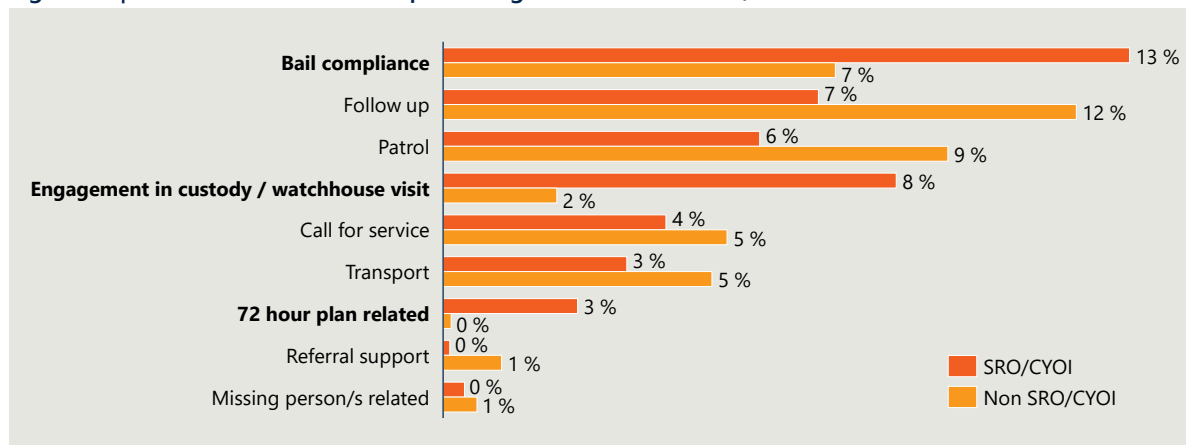
This is aligned with staff perceptions of where they currently direct their time and attention. As shown in Figure 20, both QPS and YJ staff report that they spend most of their time working with youth known to Police and/or Youth Justice, and are recognised to be at risk of offending. This suggests that sites are directing effort toward local priorities by targeting young people with deeper connections in the justice system.

Figure 20 | YCRT staff perceptions of how they currently spend most of their time, and where they should have the strongest focus



These young people are more likely to receive proactive support from YCRT in the form of bail compliance checks, supervision, and 72-hour plans. This is evidenced by the distribution of activities delivered to SRO vs non-SRO young people. For example, bail compliance checks represent 13 per cent of the activities delivered to SRO young people, and only 7 per cent of the activities delivered to non-SRO young people. This activity breakdown is provided in Figure 21.

Figure 21 | Activities delivered as a percentage of total to cohort, SRO/CYOI vs. non SRO/CYOI



There is also agreement from both QPS and YJ staff that YCRT should have a stronger focus on young people that are at risk and/or in vulnerable situations, but not yet known to YJ. Currently, YCRT reportedly provides meaningful support for young people across the risk spectrum, particularly where there are service gaps (e.g. lack of community services, public transport). But this has been most commonly directed toward young people that have already been exposed to YJ and/or Police in some other way. This survey response highlights the potential of YCRT as a crime prevention measure. YJ staff also highlight the capacity of YCRT to support youth who have been cautioned and to identify how to prevent further involvement in the youth justice system.

Providing proactive support to at-risk young people early, before they escalate through the justice system, can prevent future offending. Staff expressed the view that YCRT enables them to use their knowledge of their local community and policing data to identify these at-risk young people and support them. For example, QPS officers from several sites reported that they seek to support children and siblings of people that are known to the justice system to prevent multigenerational cycles of reoffending (see quote below). Survey responses highlighted the opportunity to provide early intervention and support as a key benefit of YCRT.

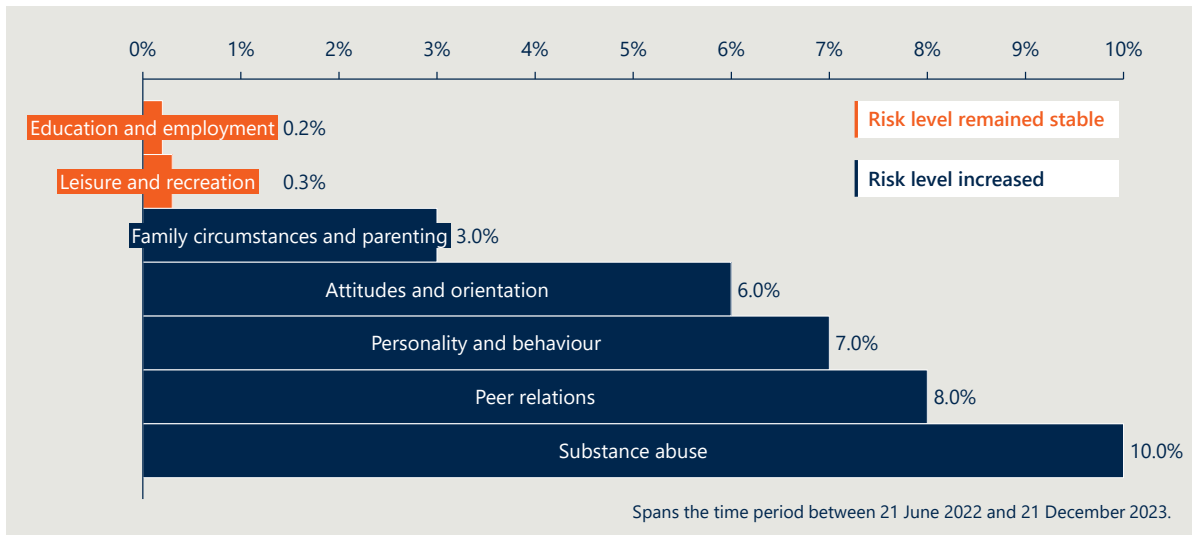
“ There’s been massive benefit to kids and their families. It’s about the siblings... the siblings are following the same track. We focus on making sure that the siblings are going back to school. – QPS Officer ”

6.2.2 Young people that engage with YCRT often exhibit ‘high risk’ traits, necessitating ongoing support

As shown in section 1, engagement with YCRT is associated with a reduction in the volume and severity of offending. A similar analysis was conducted to estimate the probability that the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) ratings of young people changed in the six months following engagement with YCRT.

Despite the reduction in offending associated with YCRT, YLS/CMI ratings continued to increase. Figure 22 shows the estimated change in the probability that a young person is assigned a ‘high’ risk rating by YLS/CMI domain in the six months following engagement with YCRT. This suggests that the proportion of young people with higher risk ratings increased after engaging with YCRT as compared to before.

Figure 22 | Estimated change in probability of 'high' risk rating by YLS/CMI domain 6-months pre and



As shown, the probability of a 'high' risk rating increases across almost all domains. This may be reflective of two factors:

- As a brief intervention (i.e. not case management), YCRT alone is less able to address underlying factors that contribute to youth offending and for those young people who have multiple risk factors, linkage to ongoing supports and interventions is necessary.
- YJ staff gain a better understanding of young people's attitudes, behaviours, and living conditions during YCRT engagements. For those young people already engaged with youth justice and who have been assessed using the YLS/CMI, this additional information may contribute to an increase in risk assessment rating without necessarily indicating a change in the young person's conditions.

This suggests that many of the young people that are engaged by YCRT may benefit from further, more intensive supports, that address their underlying risk factors. YCRT provides a mechanism to identify these young people.

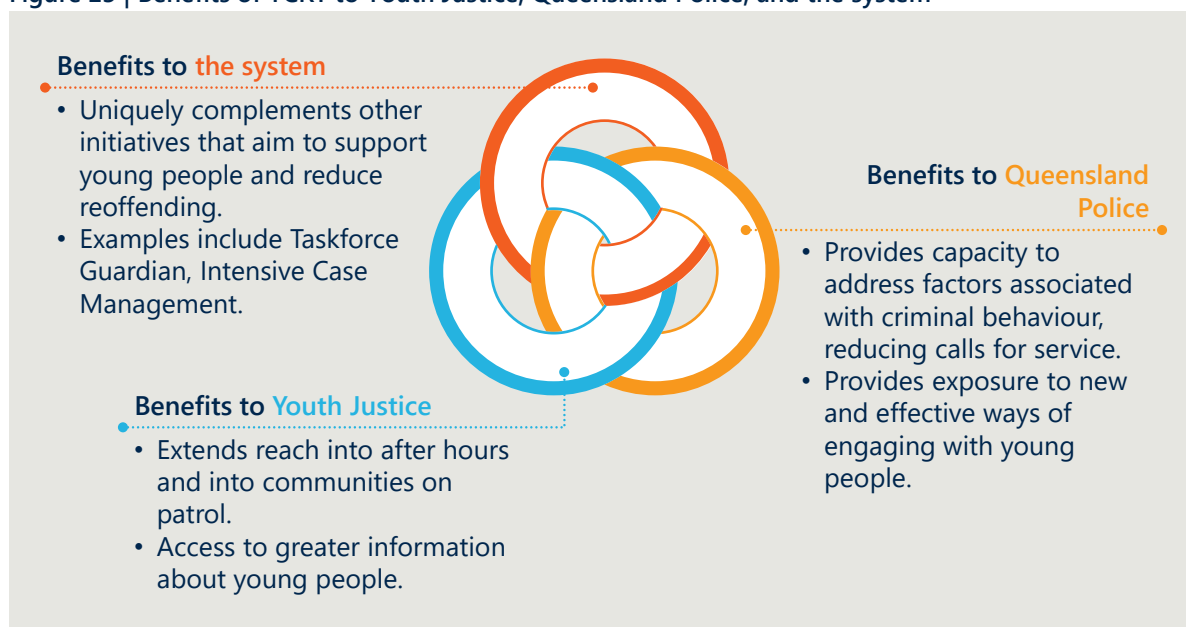
RECOMMENDATION

Continue to draw on local intelligence and policing data to respond to young people that may benefit from YCRT across the spectrum from at-risk to serious repeat offenders. Connect young people that demonstrate criminogenic risk factors to more intensive support.

6.3 As a collaboration, YCRT is benefiting QPS, YJ and the “system”

YCRT uniquely combines the capabilities of Youth Justice staff and police officers to serve a common purpose. Staff report that this model delivers complementary benefits to YJ, QPS, and to the broader system. These are summarised in Figure 23.

Figure 23 | Benefits of YCRT to Youth Justice, Queensland Police, and the system



YCRT was introduced with a deliberate intention to establish a new and jointly resourced initiative. From the outset, the design of YCRT aimed to provide an opportunity to bring the skills, capability and resources of QPS and Youth Justice together.

As a form of collaboration, success may be defined using a number of factors, including:

- recognition of a shared purpose;
- ability to achieve things together either partner could not reasonably achieve alone (without the other);
- effective and appropriate leadership;
- recognition and respectful use of the resources of each party;
- ability to be organised to realise the shared objectives.

The evaluation has received reports that QPS and Youth Justice both hold distinctive working practices and cultures. While working on and with youth crime, QPS and Youth Justice typically approach this with fundamentally different priorities and emphasis. For example, QPS and YJ both follow very different operational processes and procedures which are translated into reporting and monitoring approaches. This observation is made to reflect the magnitude and significance of the commitment to collaboration YCRT has involved.

Stakeholders who have participated in the evaluation have reported the importance and challenges of collaboration, but highlighted how critical the joint participation of QPS together with YJ has been to be achieving the benefits observed through YCRT.

Specifically, the benefits of collaboration have included the following:

- Youth Justice reports having benefited from having access to information through QPS and the ability to reach families and youth at times and places they otherwise would not. This is regarded by YJ as creating opportunities to de-escalate youth incidents or provide help to youth or families to prevent involvement in youth crime
- QPS reports having benefited from having access to skilled YJ workers/staff who have been able to provide tangible support when engaging with youth and their families. QPS has also reported the importance of accessing youth justices networks of support. QPS regards these as helping QPS better understand and manage juvenile behaviours and find better ways of conducting policing work e.g. bail compliance.

More importantly, both QPS and YJ have identified that YCRT has allowed benefits that wouldn't have otherwise been realised. These include:

- **Access to practical capacity.** The joint prioritising of how to use YCRT has allowed teams to make the best use of the resources in light of local youth crime priorities and, complement other initiatives e.g. Taskforce Guardian.
- **Creating capability to focus prevention.** Both partners, but in QPS particular, highlighted the importance of being able to have capacity to address the factors that contribute to youth crime. Both parties saw YCRT as creating capacity to use information and skills to target proactive and tailored supports to high risk families
- **Complementing other initiatives.** QPS and YJ highlight the various ways YCRT is being used and how this offers 24/7 coverage and boosts capacity to conduct practical assistance, refer to social or therapeutic supports.

YCRT staff from both QPS and YJ recognise the value of this collaboration.

Staff participating in YCRT – both from QPS and from YJ – value the opportunities that the initiative gives them to collaborate. The responses to surveys have consistently rated the benefits of collaboration and particularly information sharing as being one of the most significant benefits of YCRT.

Figure 24 shows the top five benefits of YCRT identified by surveyed YJ and QPS staff in 2024, with benefits highlighted by staff in both organisations bolded. *Collaboration and information sharing between QPS and YJ for a coordinated response* was the most common response among QPS staff, and the second most common among YJ staff.

Figure 24 | Proportion of respondents that listed benefit as a 'top five' benefit of YCRT, by organisation

		YJ staff		QPS staff	
Rank	Benefit	% selected	Benefit	% selected	
1	Young people and their families are connected to pro-social community supports	72.6%	Collaboration and information sharing between QPS and YJ for a coordinated response	84.4%	
2	Collaboration and information sharing between QPS and YJ for a coordinated response	71.2%	QPS develop improved relationships with young people and families	59.4%	
3	Provision of after hours support for other programs and responses (i.e. support for ICM, 72 hour plans etc.)	61.6%	Young people and their families are connected to pro-social community supports	56.3%	
4	Young people are removed from vulnerable situations and have ways to access safety and pro-social activities	54.8%	QPS members have improved capability in engaging with young people and their families	56.3%	
5	Young people and their families have greater support to comply with bail conditions	54.8%	Young people and their families have greater support to comply with bail conditions	50%	

As shown, staff from both organisations appreciate the opportunity that YCRT gives them to work together to build better relationships with young people and their families and to connect them to pro-social support.

Specifically, QPS staff value the unique skills and experiences of YJ staff to sensitively de-escalate situations, particularly those involving people experiencing mental ill-health. YJ staff appreciate the opportunities that YCRT gives them to participate in 'policing business' (e.g. bail compliance checks) and support young people at all hours.

“ Police plus Youth Justice are more than the sum of their parts. We’re not social workers, psychologists, counsellors... they’re great at de-escalating situations – QPS Officer ”

YCRT “fills in the gaps” in the system.

YCRT provides support that bridges between more intensive support programs and touchpoints with the justice system. Staff report that, prior to the launch of YCRT in their site, there was limited ongoing support for young people after they transition out of more intensive case management programs or detention. YCRT provides capacity to check-in with young people and support them and their families to connect with relevant community services.

“ What’s key (is), after kids leave a program, there’s no ongoing support or check-ins. YCRT provides that. YCRT picks up on kids after other programs end – QPS Officer ”

YCRT excels when staff support the mission and remain on the team for longer

When it works well, YCRT enables police and YJ staff to build trusted relationships with young people. Building these relationships takes time, particularly with serious repeat offenders, and requires that staff want to engage with young people constructively. Staff consistently reported that the limited nature of

QPS placements in YCRT inhibits their ability to build these relationships. They suggested that six months is the minimum placement length needed to build relationships and use them to effectively support young people and connect them to appropriate supports.



I would prefer QPS to have permanent staff. You get that buy-in from community, you build those relationships, that rapport.

– QPS Officer



RECOMMENDATION

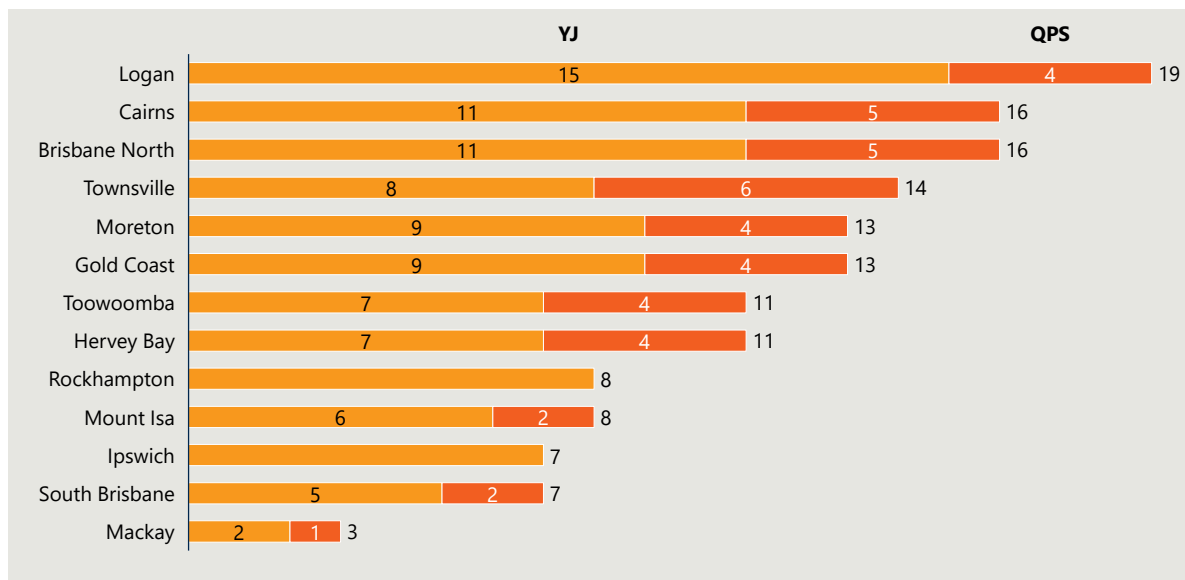
QPS should consider extending the length of QPS rotations in YCRT to a minimum of six months, giving officers more time to understand the role, building productive relationships with young people, and leverage those relationships to connect people to pro-social supports. Furthermore, explore permanent QPS staffing arrangements.

Appendix A Methodology

A.1 Staff survey

The staff survey was conducted in April 2024. There were 146 complete or responses, with 41 (28.1 per cent) from QPS staff, and 105 (71.9 per cent) responses from YJ staff. Figure 25 provides a breakdown of responses by site and organisation.

Figure 25 | Number of survey responses, by site and organisation



A.2 Statistical modelling

Three broad classes of statistical models were fit –one for each program outcome type. Each is discussed in turn below. All used prior information from previous related evaluations to specify appropriate model parameter distributions. Importantly, each model considered changes in the outcome between the six months prior to a young person's *most recent engagement* with YCRT, and the six months after their *most recent engagement* with YCRT. This means modelling results, for those with multiple YCRT engagements, may represent the cumulative work of the preceding engagements. Further, no model was able to capture the entire YCRT cohort, due to data limitations, data availability, and filtering. This means each model's outputs should be interpreted relative to the cohort it was fit on.

A.2.1 Reoffending count

This analysis aimed to understand the association between YCRT engagement and the number of offences committed. This analysis used data from both ICMS on the YJ side and QPS data. The following covariates were used in the generalised linear mixed model (with a Poisson likelihood to capture the count nature of the outcome):

- Time (Pre vs Post)
- Age
- Gender
- Indigenous status
- District involved
- Number of YCRT engagements (fit as a smooth term as in a generalised additive model to capture the non-linear relationship)
- Total support time (fit as a smooth term).

A.2.2 Reoffending seriousness

This analysis aimed to understand the association between YCRT engagement and the seriousness of offences committed. This analysis only considered young people known to YJ who had a valid ICMS number as QPS use a different offence type classification system to YJ. Reoffending seriousness was measured according to banding of the National Offence Index (NOI) supplied to Nous previously by the Department. The banding converts the 158-level NOI into five categories:

- 0 – e.g. drug abuse
- 1 – e.g. unlawful entry with intent/burglary, break and enter
- 2 – e.g. driving under the influence of alcohol or other substance
- 3 – e.g. sexual assault
- 4 – e.g. driving causing death.

Specifically, the most serious offence (MSO) in the 6-months pre and post final YCRT engagement were calculated and used for analysis. The following covariates were used in the generalised linear mixed model (with a cumulative likelihood to capture the ordinal nature of the outcome):

- Time (Pre vs Post)
- Age
- Gender
- Indigenous status

- District involved
- SROI score (fit as a smooth term)
- Number of YCRT engagements (fit as a smooth term)
- Total support time (fit as a smooth term)

A.2.3 YLS/CMI risk ratings

This analysis aimed to understand the association between YCRT engagement and changes in YLS/CMI risk/protective factors. This analysis only considered young people known to YJ who had a valid ICMS number as YLS/CMI scores only exist in ICMS.

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

- Overall assessed risk
- Prior and current offences and orders
- Family circumstances and parenting
- Education and employment
- Peer relations
- Substance abuse
- Leisure and recreation
- Personality and behaviour
- 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 in the generalised linear mixed model (with a cumulative likelihood to capture the ordinal nature of the outcomes):

- Time (Pre vs Post)
- Age
- Gender
- Indigenous status
- District involved
- SROI score (fit as a smooth term)
- Number of YCRT engagements (fit as a smooth term)
- Total support time (fit as a smooth term)
- Random effects term for each unique young person.

Appendix B Site activities analysis

The following page outlines quantitative data on the type and volume of activities delivered to young people under YCRT, and the profile of these young people, per site between **June 2022 and December 2023**.

Note that per cent SROI/CYOI represents the proportion of unique young people engaged by YCRT that were classified SROI/CYOI at the time of their first engagement.

Site	Young people engaged	Activities delivered to young people	Busiest time	Average duration	Referrals	SROI/CYOI*	
	OVERALL	7,249	48,879	2pm-10pm	5 mins	3,427	5%
	Est. 2020	24/7 model					
CAIRNS	1,004	8,880	2pm-10pm	5 mins	272	6%	First Nations 83% Female 35%
	Est. 2020	24/7 model					
LOGAN	877	4,288	2pm-10pm	5 mins	577	2%	First Nations 17% Female 38%
	Est. 2020	24/7 model					
MORETON	554	3,200	2pm-10pm	5 mins	167	5%	First Nations 25% Female 33%
	Est. 2020	24/7 model	2 cars				
TOWNSVILLE	1,146	9,035	2pm-10pm	5 mins	246	4%	First Nations 75% Female 42%
	Est. 2020	Reduced hours					
ROCKHAMPTON	346	3,278	2pm-10pm	10 mins	254	5%	First Nations 53% Female 40%
	Est. 2021	Reduced hours					
MACKAY	184	1,164	2pm-10pm	5 mins	55	7%	First Nations 38% Female 30%

GOLD COAST	Est. 2021	24/7 model					
	Young people engaged	Activities delivered to young people	Busiest time	Average duration	Referrals	SROI/CYOI	11%
	565	4,298	2pm-10pm	10 mins	427	First Nations	7%
						Female	43%
NORTH BRISBANE	Est. 2021	24/7 model					
	Young people engaged	Activities delivered to young people	Busiest time	Average duration	Referrals	SROI/CYOI	4%
	898	5,589	2pm-10pm	5 mins	856	First Nations	31%
						Female	38%
IPSWICH	Est. 2023	24/7 model					
	Young people engaged	Activities delivered to young people	Busiest time	Average duration	Referrals	SROI/CYOI	5%
	431	1,011	2pm-10pm	6 to 10 mins	75	First Nations	29%
						Female	30%
MOUNT ISA	Est. 2023	24/7 model					
	Young people engaged	Activities delivered to young people	Busiest time	Average duration	Referrals	SROI/CYOI	2%
	420	2,130	2pm-10pm	6 to 10 mins	127	First Nations	94%
						Female	42%
SOUTH BRISBANE	Est. 2023	24/7 model					
	Young people engaged	Activities delivered to young people	Busiest time	Average duration	Referrals	SROI/CYOI	6%
	216	881	2pm-10pm	6 to 10 mins	88	First Nations	34%
						Female	41%
TOOWOOMBA	Est. 2023	24/7 model					
	Young people engaged	Activities delivered to young people	Busiest time	Average duration	Referrals	SROI/CYOI	7%
	335	1,810	2pm-10pm	<5 mins	107	First Nations	42%
						Female	38%
FRASER COAST	Est. 2023	Reduced hours					
	Young people engaged	Activities delivered to young people	Busiest time	Average duration	Referrals	SROI/CYOI	3%
	273	1,163	2pm-10pm	6 to 10 mins	176	First Nations	31%
						Female	39%