

**YLS/CMI™ 2.0: Leisure/Recreation**

This brief aims to provide information for all Youth Justice staff about for what works for young people when addressing assessed need in the Leisure/Recreation domain of the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI™) 2.0.

**High need in Leisure/Recreation: What does this mean?**

Young people who have high need within the Leisure/Recreation domain of the YLS/CMI™ will often:

* Be disengaged from organised prosocial activities.
* Associate less with prosocial individuals.
* Achieve a sense of connection through antisocial networks and groups.
* Lack a regular daily routine.
* Struggle to remain engaged in structured activities.

**How to address high need in Leisure/Recreation?**

Addressing the Leisure/Recreation need means identifying some of the criminogenic thinking patterns linked to motivation to engage in leisure and recreation for example, identifying with antisocial companions and/or demand for excitement; and helping the young person to **develop positive connections and a sense of belonging within prosocial groups**. You should encourage them to:

* Participate in rewarding activities.
* Regularly engage in structured activities (e.g. prosocial group or clubs).
* Develop a sense of connection to prosocial individuals through planned activities.

**Can participation in sport address high need in Leisure/Recreation?**

**Yes, but only if it includes regular and ongoing participation that promotes social connection.**

Participation in sport is beneficial for a young person’s health and mental wellbeing. There is some evidence that sport programs [can reduce reoffending .](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Jugl%20et%20al_2021_Do%20sports%20programs%20prevent%20crime%20and%20reduce%20reoffending.pdf) However, participation in sport alone does not change reoffending behaviour. Instead, the change in offending behaviour happens because of [a sense of belonging and positive relationships](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Cameron%20and%20MacDougall_2020_Crime%20prevention%20through%20sport%20and%20physical%20activity.pdf) that can be developed in a sport setting. This means that to reduce reoffending, a sport program must provide [social](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Cameron%20and%20MacDougall_2020_Crime%20prevention%20through%20sport%20and%20physical%20activity.pdf) [connections and positive role modelling.](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Cameron%20and%20MacDougall_2020_Crime%20prevention%20through%20sport%20and%20physical%20activity.pdf)

**Can traditional martial arts address high need in Leisure/Recreation?**

**Sometimes, if practiced for a long time and based in a philosophy of non-violence.**

Research shows that practice of traditional martial arts (e.g. Karate, Judo, Taekwondo, Aikido, Kung Fu) can [reduce aggressive behaviour](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Harwood_et%20al_2017_Reducing_aggression_with_martial_arts_A.pdf) and [increase mental and physical health](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Croom_2014_Embodying%20martial%20arts%20for%20mental%20health.pdf) when it is practiced [over a long period of time.](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/frigout%20et%20al_2020_The%20level%20of%20aggressivenessduring%20karate%20practice%20of%20inmates%20in%20correctional%20settings.pdf) A consistent practice can help to develop emotional [control and self-regulation.](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Harwood%20et%20at_2021_The%20effect%20of%20martial%20arts%20training%20on%20cognitive%20and%20psychological%20function%20in%20at%20risk%20youths.pdf) To achieve these benefits, physical training should [be](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Harwood%20et%20at_2021_The%20effect%20of%20martial%20arts%20training%20on%20cognitive%20and%20psychological%20function%20in%20at%20risk%20youths.pdf) supplemented by a philosophy that emphasises [prosocial behaviours,](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Burt%20and%20Butler_2011_Capoeira%20as%20a%20Clinical%20Intervention_%20Addressing%20Adolescent%20Aggression%20with%20Brazilian%20martial%20arts.pdf) [non-violence aggression,](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Twemlow%20and%20Sacco_The%20application%20of%20traditional%20martial%20arts%20practice%20and%20theory%20to%20the%20treatment%20of%20violent%20adolescents_.html) and [respect for others.](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Harwood_et%20al_2017_Reducing_aggression_with_martial_arts_A.pdf) Further, trainers play a significant role in guiding positive change. Behavioural changes occur when trainers [encourage students to take responsibility, maintain](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13573320802200677) [rules, and promote open communication.](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13573320802200677)



**Can modern martial arts address high need in Leisure/Recreation?**

**Maybe, but they are** [**less effective than traditional martial arts.**](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13573320802200677)

Research about the effects of modern martial arts (e.g. Boxing, MMA, Kickboxing) on offending behaviour is mixed. Modern martial arts focus more on [physical techniques than philosophy,](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Mickelsson_2020_Modern%20unexplored%20martial%20arts-what%20can%20mixed%20martial%20arts%20and%20Brazilian%20Jiu-Jitsu%20do%20for%20youth%20development%20.pdf) and do not provide the same mental benefits as traditional martial arts. Some studies reveal participation in boxing increases [aggressiveness outside the gym and non-violent antisocial behaviour .](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15845127/#:~:text=Results%3A%20The%20total%20pattern%20of,violent%20antisocial%20behaviour%20outside%20sports.) Boxing can reinforce beliefs that violence is an [appropriate response to a problem](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Jump_2020_The%20criminology%20of%20boxing%2C%20violence%20and%20desistance.pdf) and there is often hyper-masculine talk that occurs in boxing gyms which contributes to this. Some of the [messages transmitted in boxing gyms exclude women, promote homophobia and mirror](https://theconversation.com/boxing-can-the-sport-really-help-turn-young-men-away-from-violent-crime-114881) [derogatory street talk. As such, participation in boxing can reinforce antisocial behaviour rather](https://theconversation.com/boxing-can-the-sport-really-help-turn-young-men-away-from-violent-crime-114881) than prevent it. Researchers argue that to be effective in reducing reoffending, boxing classes need to [think more strategically about the use of the sport](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Jump%20et%20al_2020_Dropping-your-guard_jul-09-2020-07-18-36.pdf) and teach young people that it is [masculine to walk away from violence](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Jump%20et%20al_2020_Dropping-your-guard_jul-09-2020-07-18-36.pdf) rather than to physically respond to it.

**Can social media and online gaming address high need in Leisure/Recreation?**

**Maybe, when it is age-appropriate, structured, prosocial, and used in moderation.**

**Social media:** Australian teenagers and young people spend a lot of time on social media – [on](https://study.uq.edu.au/stories/how-social-media-affects-teenagers) [average 2 hours per day.](https://study.uq.edu.au/stories/how-social-media-affects-teenagers) Social media platforms are not inherently good or bad. When used appropriately, social media can [promote social engagement, positive development, communication,](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Nesi_2020_Impact-of-social-media-on-youth-mental-health-challenges-and-opportunities.pdf) [and creativity.](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Nesi_2020_Impact-of-social-media-on-youth-mental-health-challenges-and-opportunities.pdf) On the other hand, overuse of social media correlates with [social exclusion, self-harm](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Nesi_2020_Impact-of-social-media-on-youth-mental-health-challenges-and-opportunities.pdf) [or suicide, victimisation depression, anxiety, loneliness, and low self-esteem](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Nesi_2020_Impact-of-social-media-on-youth-mental-health-challenges-and-opportunities.pdf). For young people in contact with Youth Justice, social media can provide a platform [to brag about crimes,](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Wood_2021_Social%20Media%20%26%20Youth%20Crime%20_%20Debating%20Communities%20and%20Networks%20XII.html) connect with [antisocial peers, and commit cyber-crimes, such as cyber-stalking and bullying](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Patton%20et%20al_2014_Social_media_as_a_vector_for_youth_violence%20-%20a%20review%20of%20the%20literature.pdf).

**Gaming:** Video games can also have positive or negative influence on young people. They can teach [problem-solving, teamwork, and cooperation.](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Adachi_and_Willoughby_2013_Do_video_games_promote_positive_youth_development.pdf) On the other hand, video games can also correlate with [increased aggression,](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Shao%20and%20Wang_2019_The%20relation%20of%20violent%20vidoe%20games%20to%20adolescent%20aggression.pdf) [reduced victim empathy,](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/McLean%20and%20Griffiths_2014_Violent%20video%20games%20and%20attitudes%20towards%20victims%20of%20crime.pdf) [and offending behaviour.](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/DeLisi%20et%20al_2012_Violent%20video%20games%2C%20delinquency%20and%20youth%20violence.pdf) For social media and video games to have a positive effect on young people, [supervision of online activity,](https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/skills-advice/are-they-old-enough) [age-appropriate games and content, and conversations about privacy and online abuse are](https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/skills-advice/are-they-old-enough) [advised.](https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/skills-advice/are-they-old-enough)

**What other activities address high need in Leisure/Recreation?**

Any **regular group-based engagement** within community that fosters a sense of belonging and commitment can contribute to reducing need in the Leisure/Recreation domain. For example, regular attendance at a [church youth group,](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Johnson%20et%20al_2006_Escaping%20the%20crime%20of%20inner%20cities%20-%20church%20attendance%20and%20religious%20salience%20among%20disadvanted%20youth.pdf) cultural-based [arts](file://///ebus.root.internal/dc/YouthJustice/General/Shared/Youth%20Justice%20Resources/Endnote%20Library%20PDFs/Programs/Ware_2014_Supporting%20healthy%20communities%20through%20arts%20programs.pdf) groups (arts, dance, theatre, story-telling). Connecting a young person to specific **community agencies** or people in a **mentoring** capacity can also assist to develop personal interests and increase likelihood of ongoing attendance and commitment to prosocial activities.

**What core programs address high need in Leisure/Recreation?**

Core internal programs that address high Leisure/Recreation needs include:

* Integrated Case Management (ICM)
* Transition to Success (T2S)
* Changing Habits and Reaching Targets (CHART)
* Black Chicks Talking (BCT)
* Young, Black and Proud (YBP)
* Emotional Regulation and Impulse Control (ERIC)\*
* Girls… Moving On (GMO)

\*Note ERIC does not address Leisure/Recreation needs specifically, however delivery of specific modules within ERIC are likely to complement service responses targeting this area.