



**Mark Robertson CEO One Vision Productions
Answers to the NSW Parliament Hearing | 19.11.2024**

1. How long has the issue of youth crime been prevalent in your region and why do you think it's continued?

The issue of youth crime in Northern NSW has been a persistent challenge for over a decade. Recent data shows a worrying resurgence. Between 2022 and 2024, there has been a 10% increase in youth court actions, indicating a rise in more severe offences such as robbery, break-and-enter, and car theft. (*NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR)*).

Despite significant investments by the Government in diversion programs, youth crime continues to escalate. This is due to Government programs that focus on children and young people who are in contact with the justice system or custody, a focus on case management and risk, and the use of traditional intervention systems which do not work.

A gap analysis of the NSW Governments 2023 diversion programs include:

1. Youth Justice NSW Initiatives

- Focus: Court-imposed custodial/community-supervised orders, intervention programs.
- Strengths: Directly targets youth involved in criminal behaviour with structured legal and rehabilitative support.
- Limitations: Primarily focuses on youths who have already entered the criminal justice system rather than early intervention. Lacks emphasis on creative, community-based engagement and life skills development.

2. Youth on Track Program

- Focus: Early intervention for youths aged 10-17 who are at high risk of long-term criminal behaviour.
- Strengths: Proactive approach targeting at-risk youth before they commit serious crimes.
- Limitations: Focuses heavily on case management and risk assessment, with less emphasis on creative arts, cultural expression, and holistic development, which are crucial for youth engagement.

3. Youth Koori Court

- Focus: Culturally sensitive judicial processes for Aboriginal youths.
- Strengths: Incorporates community elders and cultural considerations into the legal process to reduce recidivism.
- Limitations: Limited to those already in contact with the justice system. Focuses on legal support rather than preventive and empowering activities like skill-building, creative expression, or digital literacy.

4. NSW Police Force Youth Strategy 2023-2025

- Focus: Prevention, intervention, and partnerships to reduce youth crime.
- Strengths: Prioritises prevention through community engagement and tailored responses to local crime.
- Limitations: Lacks focus on leveraging arts, creativity, and technology to engage youth who may not respond to traditional intervention methods.

Gap Analysis: Government Programs vs. One Vision Productions (OVP)

1. Limited Creative Engagement: Government programs primarily focus on **legal, custodial, or case management approaches**. They often miss opportunities to use creative arts and technology to reach disengaged or vulnerable youth.

2. Digital and Media Literacy: There is minimal emphasis on digital skills, media production, and creative arts as tools for **personal development, empowerment, and reducing antisocial behaviour**.

3. Holistic Support Systems: **Programs tend to be segmented, focusing on specific aspects like law enforcement, case management, or judicial processes**. This approach lacks a holistic framework combining mental health support, self-expression, and career readiness.

There are six areas of concern that are linked to the continuation of youth crime in the region:

1. **Socioeconomic Disadvantage:** Many young offenders come from communities facing economic hardship, unemployment, and limited access to resources. These challenges are particularly acute in regional and remote areas, where support services are scarce.
2. **Lack of Early Intervention:** The system remains reactive rather than proactive, dealing with youth after they have already committed serious offenses. The NSW Government's own data shows that only 1% of youth justice investment is allocated to early intervention. *(NSW Government Youth Justice Statistics)*
3. **High Rates of Recidivism:** Existing interventions are not effectively addressing the root causes of offending. Data from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) supports this with over 60% of youths aged 10 -12 returning to sentenced supervision within 12 months of release.

4. **Trauma and Mental Health Issues:** Born into socioeconomic disadvantage, coupled with the lack of early intervention, lack of interventions that address significant lived experience of trauma, family violence, and mental health challenges. BOCSAR reports that 87% of detained youth have psychological disorders, highlighting the urgent need for integrated mental health support.
5. **Limited Education and Employment Pathways:** Disadvantage, limited access to resources, trauma creates a disconnection from education. With incarceration these young people experience limited job prospects. This contributes to ongoing cycles of repeated trauma, poverty and crime. Only 32.9% of youth in detention were engaged in education prior to their incarceration. *(NSW Government Young People in Custody)*
6. **Intergenerational Disadvantage:** Deep-rooted systemic issues, including intergenerational trauma, discrimination, and lack of culturally appropriate support disproportionately affect Indigenous children who are 28 times more likely to be in juvenile detention than their non-Indigenous peers. *(NSW Government Young People in Custody)*

2. With respect to any programs you deliver for young people for which you receive funding.

With support from NSW Department of Education, National Indigenous Advancement Agency, NSW and Queensland Detention Centres and Australian Philanthropic Foundations, OVP has delivered programs for the past 17 years. For the past ten years we have been funded by the National Indigenous Australians Agency under the Children and Schooling Programme. We have worked with Detention Centres in NSW and Queensland to support predominantly young indigenous children and youth whilst in detention with an aim to empower them to reduce the rate of reoffending.

National Indigenous Australians Agency supports our highly successful Music for Change an eight-week, culturally relevant music and film production in school workshop that integrates educational and creative activities, Indigenous mentors, singers and production mentors with educational objectives, fostering improvements in literacy, numeracy, and vital skills such as teamwork, communication and the power of the mind. Students can also access 24/7 tools for self-development as part of the program and for use going forward. This funding also includes intensive mentoring for Indigenous children aged 8-12, focusing on those with the highest needs. Over a 12 month period we offer 300 mentoring sessions to 100 high-need, at-risk students aimed at increasing school attendance, foundational skills, and self-confidence. Students are kept engaged in learning and also empowered to realise their potential.

Our commitment to high-quality outcomes is reflected in the recognition we've received from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. They've praised our reporting and data collection as "high quality," providing a clear and accurate picture of project delivery.

Teachers have highlighted the impact of our programs, describing them as “instrumental in improving wellbeing, confidence, and self-esteem” and noting “a dramatic shift in participation and engagement” among students.

Our holistic and integrated approach has led to 83.3% of participants feeling safer and more supported in school settings after attending our workshops. Additionally, our programs have driven behaviour change, reduced offending, and introduced practical skills like multimedia technology use, with 50% of participants reporting they learned new technical skills and felt more enthusiastic about group work.

The numbers speak to our impact: 66.7% of students were more inspired to attend school during workshop days, 58.3% found the workshops helpful in managing anxiety and mental health, and 75% demonstrated improvements in literacy and numeracy.

a. How many programs are you currently delivering and what is each program called?

We have the experience, knowledge and capacity to deliver five distinct programs each designed to engage and support high-need and at-risk students where they are at.

We are currently delivering Music for Change Workshops (funded by NIAA) and are seeking additional funding on an ongoing basis through donations, sponsorships, grants and philanthropic support for the following programs.

- 1. Music for Change Workshop:** An 8 week in-school program using hip-hop, dance, and film as tools for positive change. Participants work alongside top artists, gaining hands-on experience in media production and often achieving national recognition for their projects. Hip hop is just the tool to teach kids and give the. Tools to stay out of jail and become self empowered humans.
- 2. One-to-One Mentoring:** An intensive, ongoing support program for at-risk youth, focusing on educational engagement, self-esteem building, and vocational skills development, with guidance from experienced Aboriginal mentors.
- 3. Change the Track:** Is a program focused on reducing recidivism among Indigenous youth by providing culturally relevant support and early intervention through creative arts. It engages at-risk young people in contact with the legal system or incarcerated aged 12-18 with hands-on projects in music and multimedia, fostering self-expression, confidence, and positive pathways away from the justice system. Having mentors based on there passion, youth attend focus days on development by leading experts and are mentored into getting life’s back on track.
- 4. MPOWER 1-Day Workshop:** A one-day, fully facilitated in-school workshop focused on mental health education, using hip-hop culture, popular media, and creative arts to empower students with tools to overcome challenges, build resilience, and boost

self-confidence. It gives kids the toolkit to be empowered and not not engage in risky behaviour.

5. **MPOWER 5-Day Intensive Workshop:** A deeper engagement where students dive into hands-on hip-hop music and film production. This program promotes teamwork, self-expression, and confidence..

In addition to our facilitated programs we have developed three standalone resources that can be embedded into the school curriculum and have been developed to support teachers with easy to use structured content.

1. **MPOWER Classroom:** A year-long, curriculum-aligned digital platform providing interactive lessons and mental health resources for teachers and students. It supports educators with structured, ready-to-teach content, helping students develop social and emotional skills, critical thinking, and resilience.
2. **MPOWER TV:** An on-demand library of videos and tutorials focused on mental health, wellbeing, and personal growth. This platform offers students and teachers ongoing access to resources that enhance learning and engagement, with content delivered by prominent creatives and mental health specialists.
3. **MPOWER Master Classes:** Specialised workshops led by industry professionals to provide deeper insights into creative fields like music, dance, and film. To refine skills and inspire students from all around the world.
4. **MPOWER App** is an innovative digital platform developed by One Vision Productions to support youth mental health and personal development. Designed to engage young people through creative mediums, the app offers a comprehensive toolkit for mind, body, and soul evolution. Key features include:
 - **Mood Tracker:** Allows users to monitor their emotions over time, helping them identify patterns and understand how lifestyle choices impact their moods.
 - **Multi-Track Recording:** Enables users to record, overlay, and share music tracks instantly, fostering collaboration with artists worldwide.
 - **Master Classes:** Provides access to in-depth video courses from leading professionals in music, dance, fitness, and self-actualization, guiding users to master new skills.
 - **Fitness Workouts:** Offers coached fitness sessions, including Pilates, Yoga, Strength Training, and Dance, accessible anytime and anywhere.
 - **MPOWER TV:** Features an extensive library of on-demand videos covering mental and personal growth topics, including ancient wisdom, mind mastery techniques, and integrative health practices.

These resources are designed to meet children and young people where they are, using creative mediums and digital tools they connect with, ensuring both in-person and online accessibility to accommodate different learning environments and needs.

b. What is the purpose and audience of each program?

Research shows that 75% of mental health issues manifest before the age of 25, with adolescents particularly vulnerable during their school years. A prominent factor is feelings of loneliness and lack of connection. Our approach bridges this gap by using creative arts, music, and multimedia to captivate and involve youth.

Studies on arts-based interventions demonstrate that creative expression in educational settings enhances engagement and emotional regulation, particularly for at-risk youth. According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, participation in creative activities significantly boosts self-esteem, reduces anxiety, and builds resilience. Our workshops foster active involvement, encouraging self-expression while teaching practical skills.

A critical gap remains in reaching youth before they disengage from school, engage in criminal behaviour or fall into cycles of anxiety and depression.

Research highlights that culturally sensitive mentoring programs are particularly effective in improving educational outcomes and reducing risky behaviours among Indigenous and disadvantaged youth. OVP addresses this by aligning its programs with the NSW PDHPE curriculum, ensuring that the skills students gain are not only relevant but directly applicable to their academic and personal development.

Throughout the past 14 years CEO Mark Robertson an acclaimed teacher and youth advocate, has used his personal experience to inform his award winning approach to social work, that is creating recovery paradigms.

Using his experience, he developed the following 6 pillars of mind mastery framework to facilitate discussions on mental health, addictions, depression, anxiety and explore strategies to overcome barriers to mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.

1. **Self-Realisation:** Students explore self-realisation and self-determination – e.g.: “You are the Master of Your Own Mind.” Concepts include positive thought patterns, impacts of social media on emotional health, self-criticism vs. self-care.
2. **Passion:** Students discover a passion that is based on learning and lifestyle. They are asked “What makes you happy?” and we get them to identify their unique strengths and talents. Together we explore fear and self-limiting belief systems.
3. **Mental Empowerment:** Together we explore adversaries to mental wellbeing, including depression, anxiety and addictions, and work with students to discover

strategies they can implement to improve mental health, including exercise, meditation and connection to others.

4. Reach Full Potential: Students are taught that they have unlimited potential, and how to explore concepts including the power of forgiveness to overcome trauma and conscious kindness to self vs. the internal critic.

5. Staying in the Now: Students explore change, relationships, attachment and resistance with a focus on mindfulness.

6. Planning: Students explore the importance of planning to achieve life goals. Focus, discipline, and self-direction. Students are encouraged to create a map of steps required to achieve any goal, and the importance of asking for help.

The purpose and audience of each of OVP's workshops are included below:

1. Music for Change Workshop

Purpose: Using music to promote mental wellbeing, self-expression, and positive change. The program focuses on breaking down barriers, enhancing self-esteem, and providing hands-on media production experience.

Audience: 15-20 at-risk youth, typically selected by primary and high schools to help students who may struggle with anxiety, disengagement, or lack of confidence. Participants gain recognition for their work, boosting both personal and community pride.

2. Change the Track

Purpose: To reduce recidivism among Indigenous youth by providing early intervention and culturally relevant support. It uses creative arts, music, and multimedia as tools to engage at-risk young people and offer them positive pathways away from the criminal justice system.

Audience: This program is aimed at Indigenous youth aged 12-18 who have had interactions with the criminal justice system, are at high risk of offending or re-offending. The focus is on those living in regional and remote areas where access to supportive services is limited.

By providing both creative engagement and ongoing mentoring, the program works to guide them toward positive educational and vocational pathways.

3. One-to-One Mentoring

Purpose: Provides intensive, ongoing support through personalised mentoring sessions each year. The program aims to improve educational engagement, build self-esteem, and develop vocational skills, particularly for Indigenous and at-risk youth.

Audience: 300 at-risk youth, selected by primary and high schools with a focus on those needing extra support in education, personal growth, and career planning. The program leverages mentors to connect culturally and guide participants toward positive outcomes.

4. MPOWER 1-Day Workshop

Purpose: A one-day, fully facilitated workshop focused on mental health education using hip-hop, popular media, and creative arts to engage students. It teaches practical tools for resilience, self-confidence, and mental wellbeing.

Audience: Up to 100 students per session, typically aimed at entire primary and high school year groups to maximise reach within schools. Ideal for introducing mental health topics in an engaging and relatable way.

5. MPOWER 5-Day Intensive Workshop

Purpose: A hands-on, five-day program where students dive into music and film production. Participants learn to create music, write lyrics, use cameras, and produce a professional music video, fostering teamwork and creative self-expression.

Audience: Up to 30 high school students, often those identified as at-risk or disengaged. This immersive experience aims to boost confidence, encourage collaboration, and provide tangible creative skills.

6. MPOWER Master Classes

Purpose: Specialised workshops led by industry professionals to provide deeper insights into creative fields like music, dance, and film. These classes are designed to further develop skills and inspire youth who have already participated in other OVP programs.

Audience: Students who have completed previous workshops and are looking to refine their skills or pursue creative industry pathways.

Each of these programs can be adjusted to fit youth focused organisations and juvenile justice centres.

Digital Tools to Support Teachers and Students:

1. MPOWER Classroom

Purpose: A year-long, curriculum-aligned digital platform providing structured, interactive lessons. It supports teachers with ready-to-use content that focuses on mental health, social-emotional learning, and resilience.

Audience: Teachers and students, especially in regional and remote schools where access to mental health resources may be limited. The platform empowers educators to effectively teach wellbeing topics.

2. MPOWER TV

Purpose: An on-demand video library covering mental health, personal growth, and wellbeing. It serves as a continuous learning resource for both teachers and students, enriching the school curriculum.

Audience: Schools, educators, and students seeking flexible access to mental health content that can be used for classroom learning or independent study.

3. MPOWER App

Purpose: A digital platform offering a comprehensive toolkit for mind, body, and soul development. The app engages youth through features like a mood tracker, music recording tools, fitness workouts, and master classes, promoting self-awareness and personal growth. **Audience:** Young people aged 12-18 who are interested in creative arts, music, fitness, and self-development. The app is designed to be accessible anytime, providing ongoing support even outside traditional school hours.

These programs collectively address critical mental health, educational, and personal development needs by leveraging creative mediums that resonate with youth, ensuring both in-person and digital accessibility to adapt to various learning environments.

a. How many young people do you have on your books within each of the programs that you deliver?

As of November 2024, One Vision Productions (OVP) has engaged over 12,000 children and young people across Australia through its award winning programs. For the past 10 years we have delivered NIAA funded Music for Change workshops to 50 students and one on one mentoring to 100 students annually.

We have ongoing engagement with 20 high schools and 29 primary schools throughout the Northern Rivers. Our programs are highly sought after by schools and educators having experienced or heard of the impact that our programs have on high-need and at-risk students.

b. How many full-time equivalent staff in each program?

Current funded programs support 5 FTE staff (1 full-time, 5 part-time, individual program casuals and contractors) Roles include: program management, school liaison, mentors and specialised support staff such as indigenous, music, video mentors and production.

c. How many days per week are you doing direct engagement with young people in each program?

OVP's funded program includes 5 x 8 week (1 day a week) in-school programs (40 days) with one on one mentoring for 100 students totalling 300 hours (3 students a day for 100 days).

OVP's programs are substantially underfunded compared to the number of young people who are incarcerated, disengaged with school and society, experiencing mental health challenges.

The number of children and young people incarcerated in late 2023 were 212, 129 of those being First Nations, with 51 receiving a custodial sentence and the rest denied bail due to a gap in services available for release. 4 children are under the age of 14 (3 First Nations).

The figures above and the ongoing cost to society at large creates a strong case for the urgent need for diversionary programs and early intervention programs that meet the needs of OVP's direct engagement with vulnerable children and young people are fit for purpose and meet children and young people where they are at.

OVP programs that are of most need are:

Change the Tracks: (Breaking the Cycle - Diversionary Program)

Live changing program for 10 high -need, at-risk children / young people. Change the Track not only aims to reduce recidivism but empowers youth to discover their true potential and build fulfilling futures.

This program features 10 hours a week as a part of a diversionary program:

- 4 hours group work a week led by psychologists, world-class innovators, personal growth coaches, and renowned musicians and DJs. These sessions inspire youth to explore their interests while addressing critical issues like depression, aggression, passion, purpose and anxiety. Each week young people are asked to bring something unique to the program where they are supported together to thrive.
- 6 hours a week of personalised mentoring tailored to their career aspirations and life challenges. Participants must commit to full-time study or work; this commitment reinforces accountability and dedication. By pairing youth with mentors who share their passions and utilising world class pioneers—whether in music, arts, or industry—we foster trust and community connections.

OVP's integrated approach addresses complex issues such as family dynamics, education, and mental health, providing tailored support that fosters positive life pathways.

By matching youth with mentors who share their aspirations—whether in music, film, or trades—we build trust and create vital community connections.

We also equip every participant with one of Australia's most innovative self-development resources including the MPOWER PRO mental health app which can be linked to caseworkers.

MPOWER One Day Workshops: (School Based - Early Intervention Program)

In 2021 - 2022 MPOWER School based workshops were piloted on the Central Coast, Hunter and New England. The results showed substantial increases in knowledge of mental health supports, connection to peers, increased confidence and overall improvement in learning how to self centre, feeling empowered and how to look after their mental health. The previous government accepted a comprehensive budget to provide early intervention programs to schools which the current government did not fund.

MPOWER One Day Workshops takes students through the Six Pillars of Mind Mastery, with a focus on tools that will increase a student's ability to withstand adversity, learn from difficult experiences, and confidently cope with life's challenges. Complex, challenging and unsafe behaviours are expressed through creative mediums that redirect negative behaviour toward positive, inclusive and respectful outlets.

Workshop outcomes are measured to create an evidence base of program support. The program builds sector capacity and capability, contributing to broader social and economic gains, social justice, and sustainable development for communities, through the empowerment and education.

In addition to the MPOWER One Day Workshops each school will receive access to OVP's MPOWER Classroom (Gold) program. A dynamic, curriculum-based resource that enables teachers to deliver life-changing, youth-focused mental health lessons, workshops, and mentoring through interactive, ready-to-teach modules.

Key components include:

- Teacher Resources and Class Activity Kits
- Full Access to MPOWER Classroom, MPOWER TV, and Master Classes

Designed to align with the Stage 5 NSW PDHPE syllabus, MPOWER Classroom provides an innovative, press-and-play platform for teachers, making it accessible even for those without prior experience in mental health topics. It fosters skills in self-regulation, reflection, social awareness, and overall mental well-being, leading to increased student engagement and attendance.

As a Deputy Principal noted, "Attendance increases, students actually being in the class and not wandering around the school."

Through growth mindset strategies and OVP's 6 Pillars framework, MPOWER Classroom helps students tackle trauma, develop resilience, and cultivate essential skills in critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. Each unit consists of a 10-lesson video course, allowing teachers to confidently deliver impactful lessons with minimal preparation, ensuring consistent and quality mental health education.

d. How many (if any) young people are on waiting lists or have been referred for each program but are not able to be supported at the moment?

Currently, due to limited funding, we are only able to deliver our transformative programs to 5 schools per year, despite demand. Many schools, particularly those with high numbers of at-risk students, lack the financial capacity to afford our program but reach out, seeking support. This leaves countless students—who are most in need of these services—falling through the cracks, unable to access the proven, life-changing benefits our programs offer.

We are actively pursuing funding from every possible source to bridge this gap. Expanding our financial resources is critical to meeting this urgent need, enabling us to reach more schools, ensuring no student misses out on this vital opportunity for positive change.

3. You spoke about the importance of connecting young people with their passions. How would you like to see NSW schools working to achieve this?

Connecting young people with their passions is crucial for their development and well-being, particularly for those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds or have experienced trauma, domestic violence, or family instability. The traditional focus on academics and sport simply doesn't resonate with every student, especially those who are dealing with such significant personal challenges. These students often disengage from a system that fails to recognise their unique needs, offers no respite from life's demands at such a young age leaving them feeling unsupported and excluded.

To genuinely support these young people, NSW schools need to integrate passion-led, hands-on programs that extend beyond the standard academic and sports frameworks.

NSW Schools can achieve this through the following 3 steps:

1. Partnerships:

Schools collaborate with organisations like OVP to offer creative arts, music, and media workshops that are culturally relevant and engaging. These programs would provide students—especially those who are disengaged, dealing with trauma or at risk of offending a safe space to express themselves, build confidence, and heal. Embedding these programs into the school curriculum or as part of extracurricular activities will help students find their voice and explore new interests.

2. Establishing Mentorship Programs:

Schools should prioritise creating opportunities where high-need, at-risk students connect with positive role models who understand their struggles. Mentors with lived experience from creative industries, arts, and music can inspire students to pursue their passions and help set meaningful goals. This connection is essential for students who live challenging lives within their family environment to connect with positive role models to gain positive and practical one-on-one guidance to see possibilities beyond their current circumstances.

3. Building Inclusive Learning Environments:

By integrating passion-led projects into everyday learning, schools can create inclusive environments where all students feel valued. This can range from project-based learning that incorporates music, film, or art, to special programs that address mental health and resilience.

Schools require the opportunity to offer programs with a focus on creativity into their curriculum with the aim to re-engage students who are otherwise disengaged.

By implementing these strategies, NSW schools can ensure that every student—regardless of their background—has the opportunity to explore their passions, connect with their peers, discover a sense of purpose and feel supported holistically. This approach not only improves engagement and retention but also helps students build the skills they need to thrive beyond the classroom into adulthood.

4. Where is education falling short – in particular for young people at risk of disengaging – and what opportunities do you see for improvement in NSW.

Education in NSW is falling short for at-risk young people, particularly in its ability to engage those who are on the verge of permanent school disengagement.

Education models rely heavily on standardised curricula, rigid structures, and didactic teaching methods that do not resonate with students facing complex challenges, such as trauma, socio-economic hardship, family violence or mental health issues.

As a result, these young people often feel disconnected, misunderstood, or overlooked within the conventional school environment, leading to higher dropout rates, reduced motivation, and limited future opportunities.

Schools are falling short due to education models that lack flexibility and culturally relevant content. High-need, at-risk youth, especially those from Indigenous and marginalised communities, are often unable to see themselves or their experiences reflected in the curriculum.

The absence of personalised, creative, and hands-on learning approaches means that schools struggle to keep these students engaged, further exacerbating their sense of alienation.

Additionally, there is insufficient support for mental health and emotional wellbeing in schools, with limited access to culturally relevant counsellors, mentors, and programs that address the specific needs of vulnerable students.

The NSW Government has the opportunity to integrate creative and flexible learning models into the school system. Programs like OVP's music and multimedia workshops have demonstrated success in re-engaging high-need, at-risk youth by using creative arts to improve school attendance, foster self-expression, support well-being, build a sense of community and confidence.

Programs such as OVP's are particularly crucial for Indigenous youth who benefit from seeing their culture and history represented through self expression showcasing their passion and purpose to their school and community.

OVP programs provide role models and community-based mentorship that builds trust with a focus on self determination which results in the re-engagement of students in the education system. By aligning the programs with educational outcomes, students can see clear pathways to education and employment and are more likely to stay engaged with studies to reach their long term goals.

In 2023 it was reported that the NSW Government spends \$2700 per child / young person in prison per day. In 2023 the state spent \$208,000 million per year on children / young people in prison.

By shifting towards a more inclusive, passion-driven approach to education, the NSW Government and schools can better serve all students, especially those at risk. It's time to rethink how we educate, support, and empower our youth to ensure they have the tools and opportunities to succeed, regardless of their background or personal circumstances.

A future committed to early intervention and breaking trauma cycles that lead to incarceration investing in OVP's research driven, proven, award winning programs would cost the NSW Government:

- \$704 per child / young person engaged in OVP programs
- \$1,807,158 million in comparison to the 2023 state spend of \$208,000 million.

Breakdown:

OVP's Breaking the Cycle - Diversionary Programs costs \$356 per child / young person per day. \$130,000 per child / young person.

Program delivery to 10 high- need, at-risk children / young people per year costs \$1.3 million.

OVP's Early Intervention School Based Workshop and 12 months full access to teacher resources including: Class Activity Kits, MPOWER Classroom, MPOWER TV and MPOWER Masterclasses:

Cost \$338 per student for a 12 month program.

\$33,810 per school.

Program delivery to 15 schools per year costs \$507,158.86

In conclusion:

Youth crime and disengagement are critical issues in NSW, disproportionately affecting disadvantaged communities. The statistics are staggering: \$2,700 is spent per child / young person per day, with 62% reoffending within 12 months.

This punitive model is both unsustainable and ineffective.

OVP provides a proven, cost-effective alternative. Through programs like MPOWER and Change the Track, OVP harnesses creative engagement and mentorship to achieve remarkable outcomes.

With an 80% program completion rate—far exceeding the national average—these initiatives empower young people, foster resilience, and reduce recidivism, all at a fraction of the cost of incarceration.

This is a call to action for NSW: invest in scalable, culturally relevant, and preventative solutions that transform lives and communities. The evidence is clear, the results are proven, and the opportunity to build a brighter future is now.

By shifting focus from punishment to prevention, we can create a safer, more connected society where every young person has the chance to thrive.

Mark Robertson CEO

www.onevisionproductions.com.au

References:

Crime Statistics, youth offending rates and trends:

<https://bocsar.nsw.gov.au/>

NSW Government Youth Justice Statistics:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/legal-and-justice/youth-justice/about/statistics>

NSW Government Youth Justice Profile:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/legal-and-justice/youth-justice/about/statistics/youth-justice-profile>

NSW Government Young People in Custody:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/legal-and-justice/youth-justice/about/statistics/custody>

NSw Police Force:

https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/about_us/research_with_nsw_police_force/research_themes/youth_crime

ABS- Reported Crime Statistics:

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/recorded-crime-offenders/latest-release>

Allies for Children

<https://www.alliesforchildren.org.au/resources/australian-institute-of-health-and-welfare-report-on-youth-detention-population-in-australia-2023>

Cost of Youth Incarceration

[Parliament NSW](#)

[Greens NSW](#)

[Greens NSW Update](#)

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

<https://www.aihw.gov.au/>