

Easy Fix for Youth Justice

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“No jurisdiction in Australia currently provides telecommunications in cells for youth, although adult prisons in the ACT and NSW do. The 85% recidivism rate and \$1 million a year cost per youth is outrageous. Yet Youth Justice NSW told us ‘we do not yet have funding.’ We will ask the Youth Justice Senate Inquiry on Monday for that,” said the Hon John Dowd AO KC, President of the Community Justice Coalition.

“Wasting money on youth imprisonment fails to lessen crime. The [First Nations Digital Inclusion Advisory Group](#) recommended in their [Roadmap](#) that immediately *‘All governments focus on ensuring First Nations Australians in vulnerable settings, such as prison...are provided with connectivity to remain connected to family and country.’* (p. 35) If the TVs in cells were interactive, that would open up mainstream services at little cost. This is consistent with the [Nairobi Declaration](#),” said Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans, Vice President of the Community Justice Coalition.

“In-cell access to external counselling, restorative justice, and education including art and music through the ‘import model’ would be:

- Effective in providing trusted external counselling without a conflict of interest with a security role
- Efficient, as they are often already paid for by governments
- Existing through the sentence and available after release
- Emotionally important, enabling detainees to feel connected to the outside community

This is urgently needed,” said Mr Dowd.

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