

Progress against past inquiries

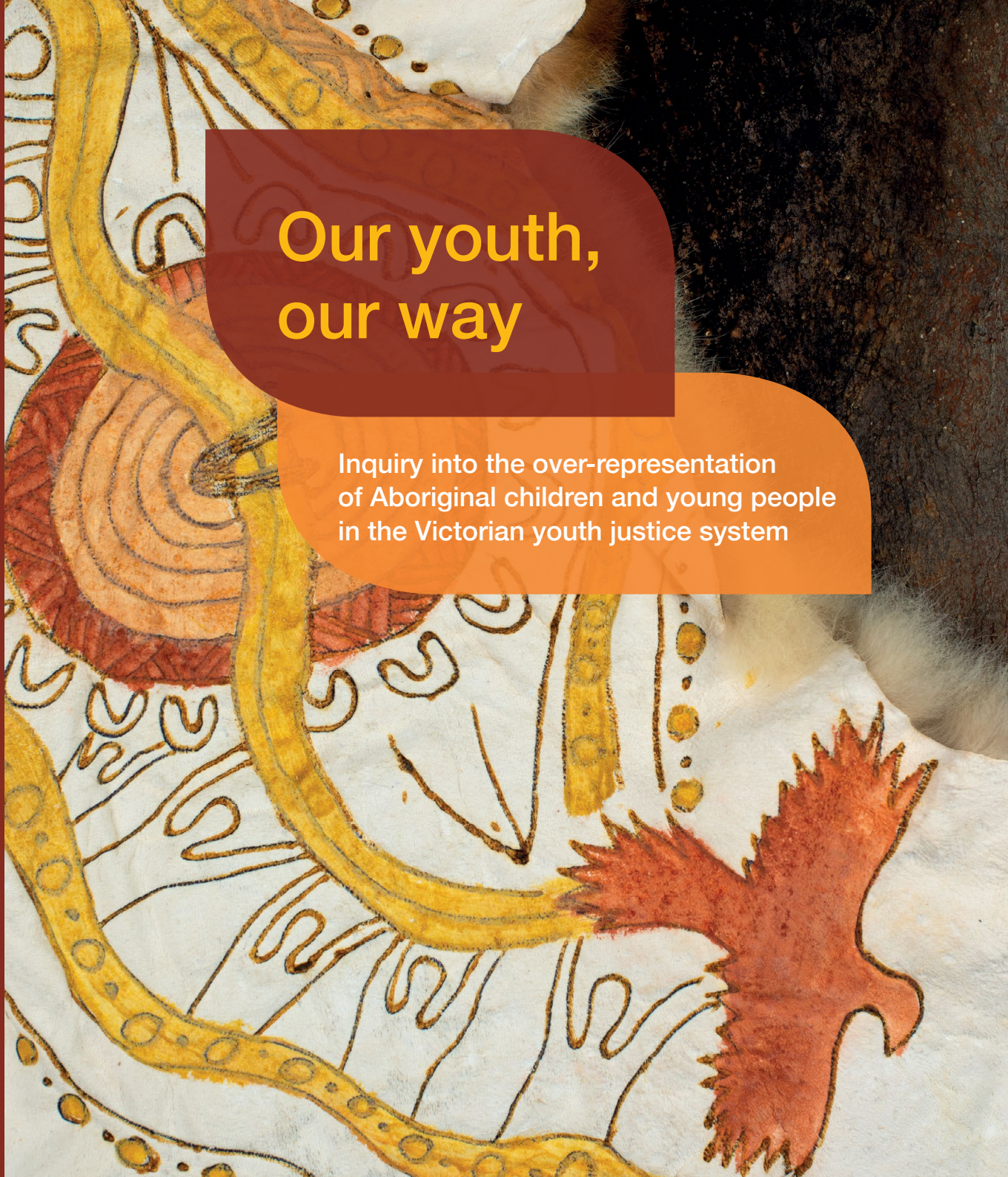
This document provides an update on the Department of Justice and Community Safety's responses to our recommendations from *Our youth, our way: Inquiry into the over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people in the Victorian youth justice system* (2019) and the Commission's assessment of progress made in 2025–26.

The Commission will continue to annually assess and report on progress made against these recommendations.

This inquiry report is available at <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/inquiries/systemic-inquiries/our-youth-our-way/>

Our youth, our way

Inquiry into the over-representation
of Aboriginal children and young people
in the Victorian youth justice system



Progress against past inquiries: *Our youth, our way*

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
1	That the new <i>Youth Justice Act 2024</i>: a) enable the DJCS Secretary to authorise Aboriginal communities to design, administer and supervise elements of the youth justice system, including: – delivering cautions and alternatives – to proceedings, including diversionary options – delivering family group conferencing and restorative justice group conferencing – determining the location and delivery of hearings (including Koori Court hearings) – determining the conditions of community-based youth justice orders – designing and administering community-based youth justice options, including alternatives to custody b) place a positive duty on the DJCS Secretary to develop strategic partnerships with Aboriginal communities, and report regularly on measures taken to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people.	Support in principle	DJCS Victoria Police	Completed. No further action.	Completed	While the Commission notes that the <i>Youth Justice Act 2024</i> incorporates this recommendation, there was no dedicated funding for Early Diversion Group Conferencing in the 2026–27 State Budget, which prevents the diversionary service from being implemented.

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2	That the Victorian Government resource and develop the capacity of Aboriginal organisations to design, coordinate and deliver youth supports, including through a peak body or bodies for Aboriginal youth sector workers and organisations.	Support	DJCS	Aboriginal Youth Justice continued to support workforce development across 2025–26 through a combination of professional development, regional training and capacity-building activities. The Aboriginal Youth Justice Annual Gathering was held in May 2026 and brought together staff from DJCS, ACCOs and funded Aboriginal Youth Justice programs to support networking, shared learning and professional development across the Aboriginal Youth Justice workforce. Between November 2025 and March 2026, seven regional in-person training sessions were delivered to 62 Aboriginal Youth Justice Program staff and local stakeholders. The training focused on supporting Aboriginal young people involved with Youth Justice, with a particular focus on the 2025 bail reforms and strengthening workforce capability to support young people and families through bail assessment processes. From April 2025 to May 2026, frontline teams from seven ACCOs across six regions were also supported through capacity-building workshops. These workshops focused on program logic modelling, storytelling and filmmaking, economic empowerment and financial literacy, helping staff and managers strengthen how they plan, deliver and communicate the impact of their work.	Significant progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges that DJCS is undertaking activities to develop the capacity of ACCOs to deliver youth justice services. As DJCS's review and recommissioning of Aboriginal youth justice programs is ongoing, the Commission encourages the adequate resourcing and capacity building of ACCOs to design, coordinate, and deliver youth supports.

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3	That the Victorian Government ensure that relevant agencies record data on Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children and young people at each point in their journey through the youth justice system, using indicators developed and approved in partnership with the Aboriginal community.	Support	DJCS	DJCS continues to share data and information with Aboriginal organisations under Domain 4 of <i>Wirkara Kulpa</i> . Following endorsement of the first <i>Wirkara Kulpa</i> Performance Measurement Framework by the Youth Collaborative Working Group and Aboriginal Justice Caucus in December 2024, drafting of the first Annual Report commenced in January 2026. The report will establish a baseline for future reporting and support ongoing monitoring of outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people at risk of, or in contact with, the youth justice system.	Significant progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission notes progress towards <i>Wirkara Kulpa</i> annual reporting including indicators developed in partnership with and approved by the Aboriginal Justice Caucus. Data recording should capture new and emerging legislative changes, such as Adult Time for Violent Crime reforms which shift sentencing outcomes and system pathways for Aboriginal children and young people and risk undermining the intent of these recommendations if not accounted for.
4	That DJCS, in partnership with the Aboriginal community, establish a centralised mechanism for the regular publishing of accurate, cross-agency, linked data to provide a single, authoritative source of information on Aboriginal children and young people in the youth justice system and their outcomes.	Support	DJCS	See response to recommendation 3.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission notes progress towards <i>Wirkara Kulpa</i> annual reporting including indicators developed in partnership with and approved by the Aboriginal Justice Caucus. Data recording should capture new and emerging legislative changes, such as Adult Time for Violent Crime reforms which shift sentencing outcomes and system pathways for Aboriginal children and young people and risk undermining the intent of these recommendations if not accounted for.
5	That DJCS partner with an Aboriginal organisation to pilot Kapiti Youth Support's Outcomes Measurement Model used in New Zealand.	Support in principle	DJCS	This action has been completed.	Completed	This action has been completed.
6	That the Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy prioritise early intervention and prevention strategies and justice reinvestment programs led by the Aboriginal community.	Support	DJCS Children's Court	This action has been completed.	Completed	This action has been completed.

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7	That the Victorian Government resource the establishment of a culturally-based, multi-service, accessible youth hub in each region to coordinate and provide holistic supports for Aboriginal children and young people. Youth hubs should be designed and developed in partnership with, and managed by, Aboriginal communities and organisations.	Support in principle	DJCS	In June 2025, DJCS completed contracting with 5 of the 16 organisations who were selected to advance to the Exploration stage with up to \$250,000 in additional funding over 9 months to further develop their work. The Exploration stage is to focus on designing and developing the services and programs that respond to the needs and desires that young people expressed to the organisations during the Co-design phase. The selected organisations were (in alphabetical order): • Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative (Loddon Mallee) • Dandenong and District Aborigines Co-operative (Southern Metro) • Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association (Gippsland) • Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd (Hume) • Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative (Barwon Southwest) At the end of the Exploration stage, 2 of the 5 organisations were to advance to the final Scale stage and receive \$1.25 million in additional funding to build and open their youth hubs. The two selected organisations were announced in June 2026 to the Aboriginal Justice Caucus.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission notes the continued work to develop culturally based, multi-service, accessible youth hubs in collaboration with ACCOs and the Aboriginal Justice Caucus, and looks forward to further progress of this work. Further resourcing will be required to achieve full implementation of this recommendation, which seeks a hub in each region of Victoria.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
8	That the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i> be amended to increase the minimum age of criminal responsibility in Victoria to 14 years. This should not be subject to any exceptions.	Under review	DJCS	On 30 September 2025, Victoria became the first Australian state to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility to 12-years-old without exceptions. To support the change to the minimum age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 12 years and prevent children from entering the justice system, DFFH has established a new service response targeting the small number of young children engaging in serious harmful behaviour, and their families. Recognising that children and young people who engage in anti-social behaviour often have multiple unmet needs, the response seeks to intervene early to address unmet needs, disrupt harmful behaviour and build protective factors in young people's lives before they transition to adolescence. Available services include: • intensive family support delivered by the existing statewide Family Preservation and Reunification response • child focussed behaviour change supports, including lived experience peer mentoring and • specialised forensic assessment, case formulation and care team support. This is delivered by statewide specialist services, including the Youth Forensic Disability Clinical Service and the Youth Forensic Specialist Service (Alfred Health). Local multi-agency partnerships across each of the 17 DFFH areas proactively share information about high-risk children and facilitate referrals to the service. The 2026 Victorian state budget provided lapsing funding for continued delivery of the service response for children under the minimum age of criminal responsibility for a further two years. Funding will maintain current levels of service delivery.	Limited progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission notes the Victorian Government's decision not to proceed with its commitment to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility to 14 by 2027, despite the evidence on childhood development. The Commission notes the implementation of supports for children aged 10 and 11 and encourages further work towards developmentally-appropriate, age-appropriate, child-centred, and culturally responsive service system responses.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
9	That the Victorian Government, in partnership with Aboriginal organisations, develop and provide a range of culturally responsive and gender-specific programs and services that are tailored to meet the needs of Aboriginal children under the age of 14 years who are engaging in anti-social behaviour, and to address the factors contributing to the behaviour.	Support	DJCS	Under <i>Wirkara Kulpa</i>, the Victorian Government continues to support culturally responsive programs and services for Aboriginal children and young people who are at risk of, or in contact with, the youth justice system. DJCS funds 16 community-based organisations, including 15 Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and one Community Service Organisation, to deliver the Aboriginal Youth Justice Program. This includes the Community-Based Aboriginal Youth Justice Program, Aboriginal Youth Support Service, Aboriginal Early School Leavers Program and Youth Services – Youth Justice Development Program. These programs support Aboriginal children and young people, including those under the age of 14, who are at risk of or engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour. Services use culturally safe and responsive models of care to address individual needs, strengthen protective factors and support connections to family, culture, community, education and other services. Further information on related culturally responsive, gender-specific and early intervention programs is included in the responses to recommendations 6, 17, 25 and 72.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges funding for culturally safe programs for Aboriginal children and young people. It is important that this funding is provided on an ongoing basis to ensure programs can continue.

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10	That the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i>, the <i>Sentencing Act 1991</i> and the <i>Bail Act 1977</i> be amended to prohibit: - children under the age of 16 years being sentenced to, or remanded in, youth justice custody - children under the age of 18 years being sentenced to adult imprisonment - the transfer of children under the age of 18 years from youth justice custody to an adult prison.	Under review	DJCS	On 30 September 2025, the codification of the common law presumption of <i>doli incapax</i> (that a child under 14 lacks the mental capacity to form criminal intent) under the <i>Youth Justice Act 2024</i> came into effect. The remaining reforms under the <i>Youth Justice Act</i> will commence on 30 September 2026, including a new presumption against custodial sentences for children under 14 (unless they have committed certain serious or violent offences and pose a serious risk to community safety). In November 2025, government announced the Adult Time For Violent Crime reforms which seek to address increasing levels of crime and respond to increasing community concern about serious violent offending by children and young people. These reforms are enacted via the <i>Justice Legislation Amendment (Community Safety) Act 2025</i> and commenced in full in February 2026. The <i>Justice Legislation Amendment (Community Safety) Act</i> amends the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i> and the <i>Youth Justice Act</i> to: - remove the jurisdiction of the Children's Court to hear and determine designated serious and violent offences for 15-17-year-olds (and 14-year-olds in certain cases) summarily. Following a committal hearing in the Children's Court, these offences must now be dealt with in the County Court - update sentencing considerations and principles for children to better reflect community expectations. DJCS will closely monitor the long-term impacts of the Adult Time for Violent Crime reforms. In relation to remand, see recommendation 57.	No progress in the past year	The Commission is concerned the recent passing of the <i>Bail Amendment Act 2025</i> and Adult Time for Violent Crime reforms under the <i>Justice Legislation Amendment (Community Safety) Act</i> does not align with contemporary evidence to support children and young people and reduce harm in community. These measures have been identified as leading to a significant worsening in the number of Aboriginal children and young people under 16 sentenced and remanded in youth justice custody. We note the detrimental impact of custody experiences upon Aboriginal children and young people, which reinforce cycles of entrenchment in the criminal justice system. The Commission will continue to monitor the impact of detention on Aboriginal children and young people as part of our legislated monitoring and oversight functions.

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11	That the new <i>Youth Justice Act 2024</i> require youth justice system decision-makers: a) to prioritise early intervention and diversionary processes at all points on the youth justice system continuum b) to ensure that children and young people are subject to the least intrusive intervention that is necessary in the circumstances, including a decision not to take any formal action against the child or young person c) not to commence a criminal proceeding against a child or young person if there is another appropriate means of dealing with the matter.	Support in principle	DJCS	Completed. No further action.	Completed	The Youth Justice Act completes this recommendation by including the recommended clauses. However, it is important to note the reversal of the tenet that children should be subject to the least intrusive interventions following the passing of the Bail Amendment Act, which removed the principle of remand as a last resort. The Commission considers there is a need for further investment to strengthen assessments, interventions and supports that address the drivers of each child's offending and effectively support prevention, early intervention and rehabilitation.
12	That the Victorian Government pilot in at least two regions an integrated case management program for Aboriginal children and young people in the youth justice system, based on <i>A place to go</i> .	Support in principle	DJCS	Completed. No further action.	Completed	This action has been completed.
13	That Youth Justice ensure that the proposed Aboriginal Case Management Review Panels are chaired by a senior Aboriginal person, include senior representatives of relevant departments and service providers, adopt a strengths-based approach, give due weight to the views of the child or young person and place culture at their centre. The panels should be monitored at Secretary level by all relevant departments to ensure collaboration and accountability in relation to nominated actions, and to identify and address any systemic issues that arise. The panels should be established in consultation with the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People.	Support	DJCS	A reflection on the panel run in Gippsland in 2025 resulted in the review and revision of the entire ACMRP process, standardising the process across all Youth Justice regions. The Terms of Reference was reviewed by the Acting Commissioner Youth Justice and Director Aboriginal Youth Justice, following final revisions, the document will be shared with Caucus. Other supporting documents such as consent forms for young people, family and carers have been completed in collaboration with the Disability Advisory Team to ensure accessible language is included. Panels will commence in 2026–2027.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission notes the review and revision of the Aboriginal Case Management Review Panels. The timely establishment and consistent operation of Aboriginal Case Management Review Panels is vital, as a key mechanism for addressing systemic issues and centring the voices and self-determination of Aboriginal children and young people in decisions about their lives.

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14	That Youth Justice establish regular regional Koori youth justice forums with local justice partners and social services.	Support	DJCS	DJCS continues collaborating with local community members to address their concerns and issues regarding youth justice in the regions. Forums and workshops have been set up to capture the voice of the local community.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission notes DJCS collaboration with Aboriginal community members, organisations, and leaders to inform Aboriginal youth justice policy and practice. It is important that collaboration with Aboriginal community members, local justice partners, and social services occur on an ongoing basis.
15	That Youth Justice ensure that its staff are adequately resourced and trained to comply with practice guidelines focused on building trusting, stable and therapeutic relationships with Aboriginal children and young people. In particular, youth justice staff should be equipped to understand and respond to different behaviours in Aboriginal children and young people, and to apply a culturally safe and trauma-informed approach.	Support	DJCS	Completed. No further action.	Completed	This action has been completed.
16	That Youth Justice review its policies, guidelines and training to ensure that they do not promote 'deficit discourse' with respect to Aboriginal children and young people and consider the adoption of a strengths-based framework for case management of Aboriginal children and young people.	Support	DJCS	Youth Justice is continuing to improve its training to help ensure it is culturally safe, inclusive and respectful in its work with Aboriginal children and young people. Aboriginal-led training providers deliver Aboriginal-specific training, and the Aboriginal Training Manager is involved in the endorsement of new and revised training materials.	Progress made	The Commission notes DJCS' continued work to improve training and case management.

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17	That the Victorian Government, in implementing the expansion of the Community-based Koori Youth Justice Program announced in March 2021, ensure that the program has sufficient capacity to provide holistic support for Aboriginal children and young people in the youth justice system, including through increased brokerage funding and an appropriate gender distribution among Koori Youth Justice workers (see recommendation 21).	Support	DJCS	The Community-based Aboriginal Youth Justice Program is delivered through 15 funded agencies. Fourteen of these agencies are Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and one is a Community Service Organisation (CSO) (Anglicare). Funding for the CB-AYJP has been further extended until June 2027 to allow for the review and recommissioning of Youth Justice funded community programs. Additional funding has been delivered to three organisations to employ one additional FTE; these roles are funded until June 2027.	Completed	This action has been completed.
18	That Youth Justice develop a framework to identify an Aboriginal child or young person's most trusted worker and give them a central role in planning and decision making concerning the child or young person's care. DFFH should commit to the same framework for Aboriginal children and young people for whom DFFH has joint responsibility with Youth Justice. This should be reflected in the revised protocol between Child Protection and Youth Justice (see recommendation 40).	Support	DJCS	The delivery of a 'trusted worker' approach for every Aboriginal young person in Youth Justice was identified for progression through Phase 2 of the <i>Wirkara Kulpa</i> Implementation Plan. This work has not yet formally commenced. DJCS will work with DFFH to progress the trusted worker approach for Aboriginal children and young people who are jointly involved with Youth Justice and Child Protection. This work will include consideration of how the trusted worker approach can be reflected in planning, case management and decision-making processes. DJCS will commence this work in the 2026–27 financial year and continue to progress implementation in partnership with DFFH.	No progress in the past year	There is evidence of very limited progress towards developing this framework, noting the high overrepresentation of Aboriginal children and young people in out-of-home care involved with youth justice. Further collaboration between DFFH and DJCS is needed to streamline planning and case management processes in 2026–27 to progress this recommendation.

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19	That Youth Justice ensure that Aboriginal children and young people have meaningful input into, and influence on, the decisions that affect them in the youth justice system. This should include working with the Koorie Youth Council or another Aboriginal youth organisation to develop Youth Justice youth participation principles and implementing regular and ongoing training for staff on effective youth participation.	Support	DJCS	Koorie Youth Council have been funded by Aboriginal Youth Justice to develop and implement the Youth Voice Model project. From July to December 2025 Aboriginal Youth Justice also supported the development of the project with fortnightly workshops with project leads from Koorie Youth Council to create the program for custodial settings. Koorie Youth Council have since been in contact with custodial staff at Parkville and Cherry Creek youth justice centres to organise and schedule the delivery of the program.	Significant progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges the work of DJCS and the Koorie Youth Council in their development of a Youth Voice Model and looks forward to its establishment in custodial settings. We note the importance of adequate funding and support for Koorie Youth Council to deliver this program.
20	That the Victorian Government fund and partner with the Koorie Youth Council to design, implement and lead a whole-of-government Aboriginal youth engagement strategy.	Support in principle	DJCS	Please see the response to recommendation 19 for an update on the development of Koorie Youth Council's Youth Voice Model. DJCS will explore opportunities to build upon the current initiative with Koorie Youth Council to inform a whole-of-government Aboriginal youth engagement strategy.	No progress in the past year	While the Commission notes that progress has been made on a Youth Voice Model in partnership with the Koorie Youth Council, the response does not indicate plans or progress for a whole-of-government youth engagement strategy and the further involvement and resourcing of the Koorie Youth Council in its development.

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21	That DJCS ensure that the youth justice system is responsive to the specific needs of all Aboriginal children and young people, including young women, young people with disability and LGBTIQ+ young people. This should include: a) resourcing more Aboriginal-led, designed and delivered programs for Aboriginal girls and young women b) employing more female Koori Youth Justice workers c) ensuring that all children and young people entering Youth Justice supervision or youth justice custody are screened for disability, referred for a further assessment if the result indicates the likelihood of a disability, and assisted to access appropriate supports d) ensuring that disability screening and assessment tools and processes are culturally appropriate e) implementing specific training for all youth justice staff in relation to working with LGBTIQ+ children and young people f) reviewing policies, procedures and accommodation options to ensure that the needs of transgender and gender-diverse children and young people are met, including by amending databases so that they can accurately record gender descriptors.	Support	DJCS Children's Court	Youth Justice continues to embed an LGBTIQ+ inclusive lens in policies and procedures to support LGBTIQ+ Aboriginal children and young people. Recent work has also included updates to our data management systems and forms to reflect expansive options for gender identity, including Brotherboy and Sistergirl as well as a field to allow self-description.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission notes that several aspects of this recommendation have progressed, including LGBTIQ+ supports and disability screenings for young people entering custody.

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22	That DJCS work with DFFH, DET and other agencies, and in partnership with the Aboriginal community, to implement mandatory pre-charge family group conferencing, based on the New Zealand model, for all children and young people whom police are considering charging, and for whom a warning, caution or other less intensive diversionary process is not appropriate. Without limiting the purposes of the pre-charge family group conference, its primary purpose should be to provide: a) integrated and coordinated welfare responses to address the holistic needs of children and young people and the underlying causes of their offending behaviour b) a formal mechanism for family involvement in planning and decision-making regarding appropriate interventions and supports for the child and their family.	Support in principle	DJCS	The <i>Youth Justice Act 2024</i> legislates Early Diversion Group Conferences as a pre-charge diversionary service to divert young people from entering the justice system (subject to investment by government). The <i>Youth Justice Act</i> also provides for Aboriginal-led EDGCs, which will commence within two years of the mainstream model commencing (subject to funding).	Limited progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	While the Commission acknowledges the Youth Justice Act's legislative provision for Early Diversion Group Conferencing, the design of an Aboriginal-led pre-charge diversionary service has not yet occurred. Dedicated funding is required and the 2026–27 State Budget did not provide for this function, which prevents the service from being implemented.
23	That DJCS convene a working group of Aboriginal organisations to design Aboriginal-led family group conferences for Aboriginal children and young people, informed by Iwi-led conferences in New Zealand.	Support	DJCS	Please see the response to recommendation 22 for update on work related to Aboriginal-led Early Diversion Group Conferences (EDGCs).	Limited progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	While the Commission acknowledges the Youth Justice Act's legislative provision for Early Diversion Group Conferencing, the design of an Aboriginal-led pre-charge diversionary service has not yet occurred. Dedicated funding is required and the 2026–27 State Budget did not provide for this function, which prevents the service from being implemented.

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24	That Youth Justice strengthen family and community connection for Aboriginal children and young people in custody by: a) expanding the definition of ‘family’ for Aboriginal children and young people in all practice guidelines, instructions and procedures to include extended family, kin and Aboriginal community members b) implementing a generous visits program to increase the frequency and flexibility of visits, leave, and phone and virtual contact c) providing adequate information to children and young people and their families about visits and other contact opportunities, and proactively planning regular visits and communication with family d) amending practice guidelines and procedures to ensure that contact (including through phone calls) is not linked to, or limited by, children and young people’s behaviour or ranking in behaviour management systems e) continuing the availability of video visits post COVID-19 to enable more frequent contact, or to facilitate contact when physical visits are not possible.	Support	DJCS	Youth Justice ensures that Aboriginal children and young people in custody are informed of their rights under the Child Safe Standards, Charter and <i>Youth Justice Act 2024</i>. These rights are captured in information provided on admission. Dedicated staff also sit down with young people to go through their rights to ensure they understand these and the entitlements and supports available to them. Youth Justice continues to develop guidance for staff and young people on an Aboriginal young person’s entitlements to in-person and video-call visits, in line with the Charter and the <i>Youth Justice Act 2024</i>. Dedicated staff work with Aboriginal young people and involve them in decisions around maintaining connection to family and community to ensure their needs are met. Visits via video calls remain available to all children and young people in custody.	Significant progress made	The Commission acknowledges that work has progressed so that many elements of this recommendation are incorporated into updated operating procedures. Guidance is now required for staff regarding Aboriginal children and young people’s access to in-person, phone, and video call visits, and revised information material for Aboriginal children and young people in custody.

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25	That the Victorian Government fund holistic family support programs, including through services delivering multi-systemic therapies, to address disadvantage experienced by the families of Aboriginal children and young people in the youth justice system. These programs should be available in every region and designed and led by Aboriginal organisations. They should be available through youth justice family group conferencing, in addition to other avenues.	Support	DJCS	The Aboriginal Family-Centred Youth Justice Program is operational across all sites, with Specialist Family Practitioners providing intensive, culturally informed support to young people and families. Caseloads are continuing to build, with strong demand across the program. Practitioners are supporting families in homes, schools and community settings, with a focus on strengthening family relationships, improving school engagement, supporting emotional regulation and connecting young people to culture, community and pro-social activities. ACCOs have also expanded early intervention activities, including camps, recreational activities and outings, to engage a broader cohort of young people and provide additional support to families. A Community of Practice has been established to support shared learning across sites, and practitioners are continuing to build their capability through supervision, therapeutic practice support and professional development. The program evaluation is underway, with baseline data collection commenced and site visits scheduled from May to September 2026. Aboriginal Youth Justice continues to provide regular support to ACCOs and work closely with RAJACs to support implementation and local oversight.	Significant progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges the work of the Aboriginal Family-Centred Youth Justice Program in establishing specialist family practitioners in three regions to provide culturally informed support to young people and families. We look forward to further progress to meet the intent of this recommendation in providing holistic family support programs in every region of Victoria, available through family group conferencing and other avenues.

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26	That Youth Justice improve its support for Aboriginal children and young people and their families by: a) updating its practice guidelines to ensure that they clearly address the impact of family disadvantage on Aboriginal children and young people's ability to comply with Youth Justice obligations, and direct youth justice staff to facilitate or provide necessary family supports b) ensuring that its practice guideline on working with families addresses the situation of young people with their own caring responsibilities.	Support	DJCS	Youth Justice continues to develop and reinforce material that supports Aboriginal children and young people and their families. This includes reviewing the case evidence base and framework policy documents around working with families, including young people with their own caring responsibilities. Youth Justice will continue to update guidance in the Custodial Operating Manual and Community Practice Manual based on this work. The <i>Youth Justice Act 2024</i> sets out specific guiding principles and rights for Aboriginal children and young people and their families. This includes direction to support Aboriginal children and young people to maintain connections with their family and culture. Youth Justice is working on reviewing and developing guidance to be in line with these new changes.	Significant progress made	The Commission acknowledges that DJCS continues to develop and review material to support Aboriginal children and young people and their families. The Commission notes that completion of Youth Justice updated practice guidance in line with the new Youth Justice Act is yet to be finalised.
27	That youth justice family group conferencing include consideration of Aboriginal children and young people's family circumstances, home environment and caring responsibilities, with a view to identifying and facilitating all necessary family supports.	Support	DJCS	Please see the response to recommendation 22 for update on work related to Aboriginal-led family group conferences.	Limited progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	While the Commission acknowledges the Youth Justice Act's legislative provision for Early Diversion Group Conferencing, the design of an Aboriginal-led pre-charge diversionary service has not yet occurred. Dedicated funding is required and the 2026–27 State Budget did not provide for this function, which prevents the service from being implemented.

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28	That the new <i>Youth Justice Act 2024</i> require youth justice system decision-makers at all points on the youth justice continuum, including police, judicial officers and youth justice staff, to: a) recognise that strong connections with culture, family and community are essential for Aboriginal children and young people to thrive b) have regard to the need to strengthen connection to culture, family and community in decision-making affecting Aboriginal children and young people.	Support in principle	DJCS	This action has been completed. No further action.	Completed	This action has been completed.
29	That the new <i>Youth Justice Act 2024</i> require the DJCS Secretary to ensure that every Aboriginal child and young person under Youth Justice supervision has a cultural support plan.	Support in principle	DJCS	This action has been completed. No further action.	Completed	This action has been completed.
30	That Youth Justice review and update its approach to cultural support planning, with a view to improving practice and accountability in complying with practice guidelines and strengthening the role of families. The review should consider the need for additional resourcing for Aboriginal organisations to develop and implement high-quality cultural support plans for children and young people in the youth justice system.	Support	DJCS	This action has been completed. No further action.	Completed	This action has been completed.

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31	That DJCS ensure that the families of Aboriginal children and young people are meaningfully involved in the Youth Justice cultural support planning process, whether by means of family group conferencing or through the strengthening of existing processes.	Support	DJCS	The Aboriginal Cultural Support Plan Sub-Working Group reconvened in October 2025, with Aboriginal Justice Caucus members appointed as co-chairs. Youth Justice has delivered seven of nine regional workshops, coordinated with relevant RAJACs. These workshops have provided an opportunity for RAJAC and community members, ACCOs and government stakeholders to help shape the design of the new Aboriginal Cultural Support Plan and supporting processes. Youth Justice will also work directly with Aboriginal children and young people to ensure the redesigned cultural support plans are child-centred and reflect the young person's voice, priorities and ownership. A Senior Project Officer, an identified role, has been appointed to lead the development, design and implementation of the new cultural support plans, including the development and delivery of supporting training materials.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges DJCS continued work to redesign Cultural Support Plans in collaboration with the Aboriginal Justice Caucus and community members.

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32	That DJCS, DFFH and DET work together and with Aboriginal organisations to develop protocols for the sharing of cultural support plans with the young person's consent. An Aboriginal child or young person should only have one cultural support plan across all agencies.	Support	DJCS	This recommendation is in progress. DJCS, DE and DFFH will continue to work together, along with ACCOs and key partners, to consider the steps required to support implementation of this recommendation. Implementation will be guided by consultation and co-design with ACCOs and partners. A self-determined approach is required to ensure that any sharing of Cultural Plans is culturally safe, purposeful and responsive to the needs of the child or young person. Cultural Plans contain information about a child or young person's identity. For this reason, any sharing of Cultural Plans should be carefully considered and should occur in a way that protects the integrity of the Plan and upholds the rights and voice of the child, young person, their family and community. DFFH, DJCS and DE are continuing to work collaboratively to strengthen arrangements for the sharing of Cultural Support Plans for Aboriginal children and young people engaged across Child Protection and Youth Justice. This work is ongoing, and the departments remain committed to developing a consistent and culturally responsive approach in partnership with Aboriginal organisations.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges continued commitment to collaboration between DJCS, DFFH and DE regarding the sharing of Cultural Support Plans. However, the Commission is yet to see specific work, including any work plan that demonstrates an agreed approach for how this will work for Aboriginal children and young people engaged with Youth Justice and Child Protection.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
33	That the Victorian Government implement systems to ensure that there is appropriate monitoring of the quality and implementation of cultural support plans, and the involvement of the young person and their family in the development of plans.	Support	DJCS	The Aboriginal Cultural Support Plan Sub-Working Group reconvened in October 2025, with Aboriginal Justice Caucus members appointed as co-chairs. Youth Justice has delivered seven of nine regional workshops, coordinated with relevant RAJACs. These workshops have provided an opportunity for RAJAC and community members, ACCOs and government stakeholders to help shape the design of the new Aboriginal Cultural Support Plan and supporting processes. Youth Justice will also work directly with Aboriginal children and young people to ensure the redesigned cultural support plans are child-centred and reflect the young person's voice, priorities and ownership. A Senior Project Officer, an identified role, has been appointed to lead the development, design and implementation of the new Cultural Support Plans, including the development and delivery of supporting training materials. Once launched, the role will also support rollout and quality assurance through existing Youth Justice practice oversight mechanisms, helping to monitor how the new templates are being used, identify implementation issues, and strengthen the quality and cultural responsiveness of Cultural Support Plans.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges the planning that is occurring for Cultural Support Plan oversight mechanisms to monitor quality and implementation and looks forward to continued progress.
34	That the Victorian Government monitor and publicly report on the implementation of the Framework to reduce criminalisation of young people in residential care, including a focus on its effectiveness at reducing the criminalisation of Aboriginal children and young people.	Support	DFFH	This action has been completed. No further action.	Completed	This action has been completed.

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Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
35	That DJCS support the development, including via adequate resourcing, of a crossover list between the Family Division and the Criminal Division of the Children's Court, beginning with regional headquarter courts, to strengthen the court's ability to identify and meet the needs of Aboriginal children and young people, and holistically address the underlying causes of their offending behaviour.	Support in principle	Children's Court of Victoria	Not completed – no longer relevant. No further action.	Not completed – no longer relevant	Not completed – no longer relevant

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
36	That the Victorian Government ensure that sentencing legislation requires judicial officers to consider the impact of various factors on a child or young person's behaviour, including: a) the systemic racism, increased disadvantage and postcolonial and intergenerational trauma experienced by Aboriginal children and young people, including any culturally inappropriate responses that may have worsened the effects of trauma b) any experience of trauma, including the effect of that trauma on the child or young person's development and capacity to avoid problematic behaviour, and the relationship between trauma and any mental illness, neurological difficulties or developmental issues c) removal from family, home, community and school, or other disruption to the child or young person's living situation or education d) any experience of out-of-home care, particularly foster care and residential care, including the number of placements and carers, and the need for the child or young person to have safe, stable and secure living arrangements e) the child or young person's age, including developmental age, when they first offended and at their current offence and sentence.	Support in principle	DJCS	This action has been completed. No further action.	Completed	While the Commission acknowledges the inclusion of the recommended clauses in the Youth Justice Act, we note the passing of Adult Time for Violent Crime reforms under the Justice Legislation Amendment (Community Safety) Act which retracts developmentally appropriate, age-appropriate, and evidence-based court-processing and sentencing measures. The Commission advocates for an evidence-informed approach that is focused on reducing recidivism.

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Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
37	That the Victorian Government continue to build on its commitment to improve early intervention and family preservation services, with new investment over time informed by monitoring of recently funded and other existing programs.	Support in principle	Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)	This action has been completed. No further action.	Completed	This action has been completed.
38	That the Victorian Government, in implementing the recommendations from the Commission's <i>In our own words</i> inquiry, particularly recommendation 16, work with Aboriginal organisations to identify and develop alternatives to residential care that meet the needs of Aboriginal children and young people with complex trauma and challenging behaviours.	Support in principle	DFFH	Not completed – retired and monitored through another inquiry	Not completed – retired and monitored through another inquiry	Not completed – retired and monitored through another inquiry.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
39	That DFFH work in partnership with the Aboriginal Children's Forum, the Aboriginal Justice Forum and relevant departments to develop a strategy to divert Aboriginal children in out-of-home care from entering or progressing in the youth justice system.	Support in principle	DFFH	To prevent children from entering the justice system, DFFH has established a new service response targeting the small number of young children engaging in serious harmful behaviour, and their families. This model is designed for children under the minimum age of criminal responsibility or slightly older children who are <i>doli incapax</i>. It is not restricted to children in out of home care. Recognising that children and young people who engage in anti-social behaviour often have multiple unmet needs, the response seeks to intervene early to address unmet needs, disrupt harmful behaviour and build protective factors in young people's lives before they transition to adolescence. A number of ACCOs have been providing services for 10- and 11-year-olds and their families, connected to the Family Preservation and Reunification Response. Through the model, funding is allocated for an Aboriginal-led child focused behaviour-change response. DFFH continues to implement activities through the Reducing Criminalisation of Young People in Residential Care Framework (Framework), to address unnecessary and inappropriate contact with police. The <i>Supporting Stable and Strong Families (SSSF) Act</i> establishes a SSSF group. The initial priority for SSSF will include children and young people in care, along with care leavers up to age 25 years and those families working to reunify or remain safely together under a Family Preservation Order or Family Reunification Order. <i>continued on next page</i>	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges DFFH's new service response, the inaugural joint Aboriginal Children's Forum and Aboriginal Justice Forum, and the recent legislation of the <i>Supporting Stable and Strong Families Act</i> . Further work is required to develop a strategy to divert Aboriginal children in out-of-home care from entering or progressing into the youth justice system.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
39				<i>continued from previous page</i> The SSSF will place responsibilities on all department heads and ministers to deliver services to the SSSF group, promote wellbeing of the SSSF group, promote equality of opportunity of the SSSF group, and recognise and support the cultural identity of Aboriginal people in the SSSF group. Department heads and Ministers will be required to consider relevant outcome measures across key domains including education, employment, justice, health, Aboriginal self-determination and housing. This will support system level decision making, which could improve the safety of children in care and promote protective factors to avoid future contact with the justice system. In addition, a joint Aboriginal Justice Forum (AJF) and the Aboriginal Children's Forum (ACF) was held in July 2026 that looked at cross-portfolio opportunities to improve experiences for Aboriginal children who are clients of both Child Protection and Justice systems.		

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
40	That: a) DJCS and DFFH urgently review and update the Protocol between child protection and youth justice b) DFFH provide clear guidance to Child Protection workers in both the Child Protection Manual and the Protocol between child protection and youth justice to clarify their obligations to perform their statutory duty to the children and young people they work with throughout any contact with the youth justice system. Similar guidance should be provided to contracted agencies.	Support in principle	DJCS DFFH	DJCS and DFFH are working together to review and update practice advice to both the Child Protection and Youth Justice workforces in line with the commencement of <i>Youth Justice Act 2024</i> reforms in September 2026, including clarifying Child Protection's obligations where a young person has contact with the criminal justice system. This guidance will be made available to contracted agencies.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges DJCS and DFFH's continued review and update of practice advice following implementation of the Youth Justice Act. The strengthening of a joint approach between DFFH and DJCS remains critical, as identified in recommendation 3 of <i>With us, not against us</i> , the Commission's recent systemic inquiry about children who entered the criminal justice system before 14.
41	That DFFH ensure that Child Protection is properly supporting children and young people involved in both the youth justice and child protection systems, preferably by establishing a senior 'crossover' role in each division or by another mechanism that achieves the same outcome.	Support in principle	DFFH	DJCS and DFFH are currently working together to review and update practice advice to both Child Protection and Youth Justice workers to reflect the commencement of <i>Youth Justice Act 2024</i> reforms in September 2026. DFFH notes the delivery of a comprehensive work plan under the Wungurilwil Gapgapduir Aboriginal Children and Families Strategy which includes key priorities and actions that directly respond to diverting Aboriginal children in out-of-home care from entering or progressing in the youth justice system.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges DFFH and DJCS' continued work to support Aboriginal children and young people involved with both the child protection and youth justice systems. The importance of an improved coordinated DFFH and DJCS approach is highlighted in recommendation 3 of the Commission's recent systemic inquiry, <i>With us, not against us</i> , which calls for strengthened joined-up approaches for children and young people in contact with both the child protection and youth justice systems.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
42	That the Victorian Government require and resource Child Protection to provide an appropriate level of support to children and young people throughout their contact with the youth justice system, including by: a) rostering Child Protection staff to the Children's Court b) empowering the Criminal Division of the Children's Court to compel Child Protection workers and/or contracted agency staff to attend hearings and to provide the court with reports concerning children and young people under Child Protection's care c) ensuring that Child Protection workers and/or contracted agency staff visit and support children and young people in custody, actively engage with youth justice staff and attend hearings, appointments, assessments and meetings as advocates for children involved with both Youth Justice and Child Protection.	Partially support in principle a) Do not support b) Support-in-principle c) Support	DFFH DJCS	The <i>Youth Justice Act 2024</i> introduced critical reforms to improve information sharing and facilitate Child Protection and authorised ACCOs participation in Children's Court matters. Cross-departmental work between DJCS and DFFH is under way regarding assisting Child Protection/authorised ACCOs to meet their new obligations under the <i>Youth Justice Act</i> to: • provide information the Court requires to the DJCS for inclusion in court report or provision to court • provide a report to the Court and to other parties to the proceeding, with any information the Court requires • attend any criminal proceeding in relation to the child and give any information and assistance required.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges the introduction of these measures through reforms in the Youth Justice Act. We look forward to overseeing the implementation of these new obligations.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
43	That the Victorian Government establish Aboriginal community-controlled crisis accommodation for Aboriginal children and young people in every region, informed by the model provided by Nungurra Youth Accommodation Services.	Under review	Homes Victoria	Homes Victoria continues to be guided by the Blueprint Steering Committee in implementing the Blueprint for self-determined Aboriginal-specific homelessness services. Homes Victoria also continues to oversee implementation of the remaining new supported housing sites, funded through the Big Housing build, for young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. This includes two more Aboriginal-specific youth accommodation and support facilities (in Gippsland and Shepparton) due to open progressively over the next two years and adding 12 new units for Aboriginal young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. These build on the Aboriginal-specific Village 21 already in operation (Frankston). Housing Australia is also continuing to assess applications, including a number from Victorian ACCOs, for funding through the Housing Infrastructure Fund–Crisis and Transitional (NHIF-CT). If successful, these capital initiatives will deliver more supportive youth accommodation for Aboriginal young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges the work underway by Homes Victoria's to deliver Aboriginal youth-specific housing for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. We encourage continued partnership with Aboriginal organisations, adequate funding, and resourcing to deliver accommodation for Aboriginal children and young people in every region across the state.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
44	That the Victorian Government establish at least four Aboriginal community-controlled youth foyers across the state, with consideration given to three regional locations and one metropolitan location.	Support in principle	Homes Victoria	Youth foyers remain a key deliverable in the Blueprint for an Aboriginal specific homelessness system and continues as a priority for the Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Forum. Ten new supported housing sites for young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness have been delivered or are currently in development through a \$50 million Big Housing Build investment. This investment includes funding for new Education First Youth Foyers, with the first opening in Wodonga in May 2025 and a second due to open in Wangaratta in 2027-28. These new foyers are in addition to the 13 youth foyers, including three Education First Youth Foyers, already operating across metropolitan and regional Victoria. Housing Australia is also continuing to assess applications, including a number from Victorian ACCOs and homelessness and housing providers, for funding through the Housing Infrastructure Fund–Crisis and Transitional (NHIF-CT). If successful, these capital initiatives will deliver more supportive youth accommodation for Aboriginal young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.	Significant progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges the Victorian Government's commitment to establish Aboriginal-specific youth accommodation facilities. We encourage continued partnership with Aboriginal organisations, adequate funding, and resourcing to deliver at least four Aboriginal community-controlled youth foyers for Aboriginal children and young people.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
45	That DJCS fast-track plans to introduce mandatory, ongoing mental health training for Youth Justice community staff to enable them to identify, understand and respond to trauma and mental health concerns experienced by Aboriginal children and young people.	Support	DJCS	Youth Justice frontline staff in both custody and community are required to complete Youth Mental Health First Aid training and keep this training current as part of their role. Frontline staff also receive initial training in Aboriginal Cultural Awareness and trauma-informed practice. While the Youth Mental Health First Aid training package is not specific to Aboriginal children and young people, the combined training suite helps staff respond to the wellbeing, trauma and mental health needs of Aboriginal young people in Youth Justice services.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges the work of DJCS and members of the AJC Youth Social and Emotional Wellbeing sub working group on the establishment of a Youth Social and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy. We look forward to the revised Youth Social and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy implementation plan.
46	That the Victorian Government resource Aboriginal organisations to provide in-reach mental health support for Aboriginal children and young people in youth justice custody, and facilitate transitional and post-release mental health treatment for Aboriginal children and young people.	Support in principle	DJCS	The Aboriginal Health Unit (AHU) within Justice Health has transitioned to lead the oversight and monitoring of Aboriginal Healthcare and cultural safety across youth justice facilities. AHU has conducted site visits to youth justice facilities, focusing on engagement with Aboriginal young people, health staff, and youth justice personnel, to understand young people's health care experiences and identify areas for improvement. AHU is working with health service providers to strengthen and expand engagement with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, to support the culturally appropriate delivery of Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) services; however, this work remains ongoing and continues to evolve.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges continued work to support culturally appropriate delivery of Social and Emotional Wellbeing services. We look forward to the implementation of this work and the provision of in-reach, transition, and post-release mental health support for Aboriginal children and young people.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
47	That the Victorian Government work with the Aboriginal community to design and establish at least two healing centres for Aboriginal children and young people, in addition to Bunjilwarra and Baroona. Consideration should be given to establishing a dedicated healing centre for Aboriginal girls and young women, and another for Aboriginal children and young people under the age of 16 years.	Support in principle	DJCS	The Baroona Youth Healing Centre in Echuca is progressing following initial delays caused by COVID-19 restrictions, flooding, and organisational challenges. Throughout 2024 and early 2025, Njernda undertook a series of community consultations to inform a revised project proposal. This proposal was endorsed by the Aboriginal Justice Caucus in March 2025, and updated governance arrangements have since been established to support delivery. An external project manager, strategic communications team, and architects have been engaged to assist with project management, design, and communications. The Model of Care is currently under development and is expected to be finalised by September 2026. Infrastructure works are scheduled for completion by mid-2027, with service delivery anticipated to commence by the end of 2027. An additional healing centre for Aboriginal girls and young women will be considered, in partnership with the Aboriginal community, as part of future business cases upon completion of the Baroona Youth Healing Centre.	Significant progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges progress towards re-establishing the Baroona Youth Healing Centre. Further work is required to meet the intent of this recommendation, including the allocation of adequate funding for two additional healing centres.
48	That the Victorian Government: - resource additional strengths-based cultural mentoring programs for Aboriginal children and young people across the state, designed in partnership with local Aboriginal communities and in accordance with youth participation principles - in expanding the Aboriginal Youth Mentoring Program under the Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy, establish dedicated programs for Aboriginal girls and young women, and for Aboriginal children and young people in custody.	Support	DJCS	Uncle Ron Murray continues to provide cultural mentoring to young people through weekly visits to each Youth Justice Precinct. Koorie Youth Council have commenced a Youth Voice Program at the Parkville Youth Justice Precinct in April 2026 that aims to provide a culturally safe space for young people to maintain and build on connections with culture and community. Session content has been developed by KYC based upon lived experience and engagement with young people.	Progress made	The Commission acknowledges the mentoring programs currently provided to Aboriginal children and young people in Parkville and Cherry Creek justice centres. We note the importance of ensuring that programs keep pace with demand as the number of children and young people in custody increases.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
49	That the Victorian Government improve Aboriginal children and young people's engagement in education by: a) expanding the Navigator program to include children aged 10 years and above b) ensuring targeted educational support for Aboriginal children and young people in the youth justice system, whether through the expansion of the LOOKOUT program, the Youth Justice Education Pathway Coordinator role, the Education Justice Initiative program or the role of Parkville College c) resourcing the expansion of the Out Teach program to another region, with consideration given to it being led by an Aboriginal organization d) expanding the Aboriginal Early School Leavers program to enable more Aboriginal organisations to provide material support to Aboriginal children and young people in contact with the youth justice system e) considering the expansion of referral pathways to the Aboriginal Youth Support Service from education providers f) regularly publishing data on the suspension of Aboriginal children and young people from Victorian government schools g) implementing mandatory reporting of informal expulsions and requiring parents or guardians to provide information regarding the student's departure from school, in line with the Victorian Ombudsman's 2017 recommendations h) strengthening efforts to tackle and eliminate racism in schools. i) strengthening efforts to tackle and eliminate racism in schools.	Support in principle a–e) Support in principle f) Support in principle g–h) Support	Department of Education (DE)	Not completed – retired and monitored through another inquiry	Not completed – retired and monitored through another inquiry	Not completed – retired and monitored through another inquiry

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Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
50	That DET consult Aboriginal children and young people and work in partnership with Aboriginal communities to design and deliver additional schooling options embedded in culture for Aboriginal students, taking into consideration the example of Worawa College.	Support in principle	DE	This action has been completed.	Completed	This action has been completed.
51	That DET review the supports provided to Aboriginal children and young people, including the Koorie Engagement Support Officer role, with a view to increasing direct support for Aboriginal children and young people in schools, and prioritising access to educational support for Aboriginal children and young people in the youth justice system.	Support in principle	DE	Not completed – retired and monitored through another inquiry	Not completed – retired and monitored through another inquiry	Not completed – retired and monitored through another inquiry
52	That DE develop and fund an ongoing identified Aboriginal education support role for Parkville College at each youth justice centre. The role should have a particular focus on directly assisting Aboriginal students in the classroom and with planning transition into education or employment pathways in the community.	Support	DE	This action has been completed.	Completed	This action has been completed.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
53	That the Victorian Government expand partnerships with community organisations and implement a strategy to create more employment opportunities in a variety of fields for Aboriginal children and young people in contact with the youth justice system, with priority for those leaving custody.	Support in principle	DE DJCS	Currently, Parkville College provides comprehensive pathways and transition support to all students, primarily funded through the Student Resource Package and supplemented through a partnership with the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions. This support spans pathways exploration, development of required skills and knowledge, school preparation and reintegration, workplace readiness, and post-placement employment support. Pathways planning for First Nations students prioritises student voice, identity, and self-determination, and is undertaken with the Aboriginal Education team, Care Teams, and identified family and community members. In practice, this approach results in strong, established partnerships with key stakeholders including Youth Justice Aboriginal Liaison Officers, Aboriginal Youth Justice Case Managers, Koorie Education Liaison Officers, Koorie Engagement Support Officers, and organisations such as VACCA, VAHS, and other Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations. Wherever possible, students are also connected to culturally responsive supports within their chosen pathways, including First Nations programs and inclusion supports across schools, TAFEs, universities, and workplaces. This integrated, partnership-based approach aligns with and actively contributes to the intent of expanding employment opportunities and strengthening community connections for Aboriginal young people transitioning from custody. DJCS is committed to exploring opportunities that improve vocational learning support and living skills for Aboriginal children and young people before leaving custody under <i>Wirkara Kulpa</i>.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges the work of Parkville College in supporting pathways planning through a partnership-based approach. We look forward to further work to meet the intent of this recommendation, in implementing a strategy to create more employment opportunities in a variety of fields for Aboriginal children and young people in contact with the youth justice system, with priority for those leaving custody.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
54	That the Victorian Government commission an independent and properly mandated body with specialist knowledge and expertise in relation to children and young people to undertake an urgent review of the experiences of Aboriginal children and young people with Victoria Police. This review should: a) include an examination of police powers and the exercise of discretion in the investigation and processing of Aboriginal children and young people suspected of offending, including cautioning, diversion, arrest, summons, custody and complaints processes b) be empowered to make recommendations for improved police practice and policy in relation to Aboriginal children and young people.	Under review	DJCS	The Victorian Government is committed to ensuring Victoria's police oversight system is robust, accountable and meets the needs of the community, including children and the Aboriginal community. The Government consulted with key stakeholders to inform potential reforms to Victoria's police oversight system. The Government is now taking the time to get this work right. Consideration is being given to what can be achieved to better meet the needs of complainants and victims of police misconduct, including children, in the context of a constrained budget environment. At the same time, Government acknowledges the work of the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) in establishing IBAC's Focused Police Complaints Team (FPCT). The FPCT is a specialist unit within IBAC that assesses and investigates single-incident complaints about Victoria Police by people from communities considered at a higher risk of experiencing police misconduct, including children and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Since the FPCT commenced operations in December 2024, investigations have occurred relating to complaints from all focused community groups. <i>continued on next page</i>	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges IBAC in investigating police misconduct through their complaints process. We encourage further work to undertake a review of the experiences of Aboriginal children and young people's interactions with Victoria Police, as intended by this recommendation.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
54				<i>continued from previous page</i> Of the 28 investigations launched, 18 have been finalised – IBAC substantiated police misconduct in a third of these investigations and shared concerns and identified misconduct vulnerabilities surrounding policy, training, practice or procedure in all but two cases with Victoria Police. Themes from these investigations include allegations of unlawful use of force, unlawful searches or detainment, serious mishandling of sexual assault disclosures and allegations of serious mistreatment by police including breaches of human rights. These investigations resulted in 25 recommendations being made to Victoria Police, and IBAC charging a police officer in relation to the alleged common assault of a child.		
55	That the Victorian Government prioritise investment in Aboriginal-led diversionary programs across Victoria that meet the needs of Aboriginal children and young people, drawing on relevant interstate and New Zealand examples.	Support	DJCS Victoria Police	The <i>Youth Justice Act 2024</i> introduces Early Diversion Group Conferences as a pre-charge diversionary response for children where a warning or caution is not appropriate. The Act also provides for Aboriginal-led Early Diversion Group Conferences, which must commence within 24 months of the mainstream model and will be co-designed with DJCS, Aboriginal Justice and ACCOs.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	While the Commission acknowledges the legislative provisions in the Youth Justice Act for Early Diversion Group Conferencing, we note that the design of an Aboriginal-led pre-charge diversionary service has not yet occurred. There was no dedicated funding in the 2026–27 State Budget for this function, which prevents the service from being implemented.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
56	That the Victorian statutory Children's Court diversion scheme be amended to maximise opportunities for children and young people to obtain diversion. This should include introducing a presumption in favour of diversion, removing the requirement for prosecutorial consent to diversion, and reviewing current exclusions under section 356B of the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i> for certain road safety offences.	Support in principle	DJCS	No further action. See 2025 update.	Limited progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	While the Commission acknowledges the emphasis on access to diversion in the Youth Justice Act, we note the absence of dedicated funding in the 2026–27 State Budget for Early Diversion Group Conferencing, which prevents the service from being implemented. Further systemic work is required to amend the Victorian statutory Children's Court diversion scheme to maximise opportunities for children and young people to obtain diversion.
57	That the <i>Bail Act 1977</i> be amended to exclude children and young people from the operation of the 2017 and 2018 amendments, including the requirement to show exceptional circumstances or compelling reasons.	Under review	DJCS	On 27 August 2025, the government's <i>Bail Further Amendment Act 2025</i> (Further Amendment Act) to further strengthen Victoria's bail laws was passed. The Further Amendment Act introduced a new 'high degree of probability' threshold in relation to certain serious offences committed whilst on bail for similar offences. The threshold forms part of the unacceptable risk test which the Prosecution is responsible for establishing. The Further Amendment Act also imposed a reverse-onus bail test on people charged with committing an indictable offence while on bail for a prior alleged indictable offence with safeguards to ensure this 'uplift' is proportionate. These reforms apply equally to children and adults.	No progress in the past year	The Commission is concerned that in the passing of the Bail Amendment Act and Further Amendment Act, harsher bail tests have been imposed and the principle of remand as a last resort has been removed for children and young people. It is evident that these laws will capture vulnerable Aboriginal children and young people in numbers well beyond the small group of repeat, serious offenders. It is the Commission's view that government should invest in strengthened assessments, interventions, and supports that address the drivers of each child's offending and effectively support prevention, early intervention and rehabilitation, instead of further entrenching Aboriginal children and young people in the youth justice system.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
58	That the <i>Bail Act 1977</i> be amended to expand sections 3A and 3B to require decision-makers, in making determinations under the Act, to take into account: a) the systemic racism, increased disadvantage and postcolonial and intergenerational trauma experienced by Aboriginal children and young people, including any culturally inappropriate responses that may have worsened the effects of trauma b) any experience of trauma, including the effect of that trauma on the child or young person's development and capacity to avoid problematic behaviour, and the relationship between trauma and any mental illness, neurological difficulties or developmental issues c) removal from family, home, community or school, or other disruption to the child or young person's living situation or education d) any experience of out-of-home care, particularly foster care and residential care, including the number of placements and carers, and the need for the child or young person to have safe, stable and secure living arrangements e) the child or young person's age, including developmental age, at the time of the alleged offence.	Under review	DJCS	No further action. See 2025 update.	Completed	This action has been completed.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
59	That the Victorian Government fully resource a 24-hour bail system for children and young people across Victoria, whether this is a Children's Court bail and remand service, or otherwise involves access to specialised and trained decision-makers who have expertise in working with children and young people, and Aboriginal children and young people. The 24-hour bail system should also include access to corresponding support services.	Under review	DJCS	The Children's Court Weekend Online Remand Court remains active, hearing after-hours bail and remand applications to reduce unnecessary after-hours remand of young people, including Aboriginal young people, wherever possible and appropriate.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission notes that the Children's Court Weekend Online Remand Court remains active. However, the response does not describe efforts to fully resource a 24-hour bail system with corresponding support services. The Commission notes the increase in Aboriginal children and young people being remanded to custody following the introduction of the Bail Amendment Act. The Commission has identified the importance of further structural and systemic work to reduce the likelihood of remand and address the drivers of each child's offending.
60	To reduce the likelihood of remand and increase compliance with bail orders, that the Victorian Government: a) increase the number of roles in the Koori Intensive Support Program to enable statewide access b) resource and, in partnership with Aboriginal organisations, establish therapeutic, home-like supported bail accommodation options across Victoria.	Support in principle	DJCS	Aboriginal Intensive Support Practitioners continue to provide targeted, culturally safe case management to Aboriginal young people in contact with Youth Justice across multiple regions. In late 2025, the program was expanded to Loddon Mallee, increasing access to this support. Youth Justice is also progressing research and consultation on on-Country alternatives to remand and custody, with a focus on keeping Aboriginal children and young people connected to family, community and culture. A report is currently being developed to inform future work, including consideration of system drivers, existing alternatives and Aboriginal-led models.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission welcomes the expansion of KISP and acknowledges DJCS plans to provide residential bail support as well as on-Country alternatives to remand. We urge the government to implement, adequately resource, and support these measures to reduce increasing numbers of children and young people being held on remand and improve bail support.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
61	That the Victorian Government work towards having no Aboriginal child or young person on remand. As a step towards this, the Victorian Government should provide community-based alternatives to custody for Aboriginal young people on remand. In particular, DJCS should invest in establishing a minimum of two small, home-like facilities that provide therapeutic and culturally appropriate care for Aboriginal children and young people on remand.	Support in principle	DJCS	Youth Justice is progressing research and consultation on on-Country alternatives to remand and custody for Aboriginal children and young people. This work is focused on identifying culturally safe, Aboriginal-led approaches that keep children and young people connected to family, community, culture and Country. The research includes consideration of existing alternatives to remand, Aboriginal-led models, and approaches used in other jurisdictions to support Indigenous children and young people in contact with the justice system. A report is being developed to inform future policy and program advice.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges the work of DJCS to develop on-Country alternatives to remand and encourages the timely establishment of community-based alternatives, particularly as the Commission notes an increase in the number of Aboriginal children and young people remanded to custody.
62	That the Victorian Government resource the expansion of the fully specialised Children's Court, commencing with rural and regional headquarter courts, to support the court's work with Aboriginal children and young people. Specialisation for all magistrates undertaking Children's Court work should include training in child and adolescent development, trauma, adolescent mental health, cognitive and communication deficits, and Aboriginal cultural safety.	Under review	Children's Court of Victoria	The Children's Court of Victoria will expand the availability of Marram-Ngala Ganbu and the Children's Koori Court to all metropolitan locations by September 2026. This recommendation continues to be actively considered by Government alongside recommendations 18 and 19 of the Yoorrook for Justice Commission which address the need for specialist children's court statewide and the expansion of Marram-Ngala Ganbu subject to resourcing.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges the expansion of Marram-Ngala Ganbu and the Children's Koori Court to all metropolitan locations. Further expansion and ongoing systemic efforts are required to ensure every Aboriginal child and young person has appropriate access to specialised, culturally responsive court supports, particularly in regional and rural areas.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
63	That the Children's Koori Court be expanded to sit at more locations and with greater frequency at existing locations.	Support in principle	Children's Court of Victoria	The Children's Court of Victoria is committed to ensuring that all Aboriginal young people and their families are able to access and participate in court proceedings in a culturally safe and supportive manner. In support of this commitment, the Court will expand the delivery of Marram-Ngala Ganbu Koori Family Hearing Day and the Children's Koori Court to all metropolitan venues in 2026. This expansion has seen two new Children's Koori Courts commence, with Broadmeadows and Wyndham Courts in July, while the Moorabbin Children's Koori Court is set to commence in August 2026.	Significant progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges the direction and support that has seen the expansion of the Children's Koori Court to sit at three new locations. We will continue to follow how expansion and sustained funding for this initiative occurs.
64	That the Victorian Government review the role of Elders in the Children's Koori Court process with a view to strengthening Elder participation and self-determination. This should include consideration of the role of Elders in New Zealand's Rangatahi Courts and Queensland's Youth Murri Courts, and the ability to conduct hearings in more culturally appropriate spaces.	Support in principle	Children's Court of Victoria	The Government acknowledges the crucial role that Elders play in the Children's Koori Court in ensuring the cultural safety of the justice system for Aboriginal children. This recommendation will be given further consideration subject to resourcing, noting the significant reform underway as a result of the <i>Youth Justice Act 2024</i> .	No progress in the past year	The Commission strongly reiterates the importance of this recommendation and notes that Elders' role in Koori Court will be given further consideration as part of reforms under the Youth Justice Act.
65	That the Victorian Government ensure that Balit Ngulu is resourced to provide specialist legal services statewide for Aboriginal children and young people on an ongoing basis.	Support in principle	DJCS	This action is completed. No further action.	Completed	This action has been completed.

Progress against past inquiries: *Our youth, our way*

continued

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
66	That the Victorian Government develop and implement measures to increase the capacity of mainstream legal assistance providers to ensure culturally and age-appropriate services are delivered to Aboriginal children and young people.	Support	DJCS	This action is completed. See 2025 update.	Completed	This action has been completed.
67	That the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i> be amended to include a presumption against the use of restrictive conditions in supervised community orders, except where necessary and achievable in the individual circumstances of the child or young person.	Support in principle	DJCS	This action is completed. No further action.	Completed	This action has been completed.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
68	That DJCS: a) work with Aboriginal communities in Victoria to establish a community steering committee to guide and monitor the design and implementation of cultural services and programs in youth justice centres b) validate its risk assessment tools for use with Aboriginal children and young people c) ensure that all Aboriginal children and young people have access to culturally safe youth offending programs in custody, preferably delivered by Aboriginal organisations d) establish a dedicated, permanent indoor cultural space at the Malmsbury youth justice centre secure site e) evaluate the recent improvements to cultural spaces in youth justice centres and continue to improve these spaces to provide access to culturally enriching environments f) ensure that custodial placement decisions prioritise, where possible, placing Aboriginal children and young people with at least one other Aboriginal child or young person g) give every Aboriginal child or young person remanded or sentenced to custody a cultural connection package, preferably tailored to their needs and cultural connection. This care package should not be connected with behaviour management and incentive programs.	Partially support a) support b) support c) support d) under review e) support f) support g) support	DJCS	a) The Youth Collaborative Working Group is made up of Aboriginal Justice Caucus members, Aboriginal organisation representatives, government staff, and relevant independent statutory bodies/agencies. The Youth Collaborative Working Group supports the development and implementation of initiatives that meet the particular needs of Aboriginal children and young people at risk of, or in contact with, the justice system, including cultural services and programs in Youth Justice centres. b) Current risk assessment tools are validated for use with children and young people, but not specifically for Aboriginal children and young people. c) Regarding culturally safe youth offending programs in custody, please see the response to recommendation 75 and recommendation 17 respectively. d) Due to the closure of the Malmsbury Youth Justice Precinct, the original action of establishing an indoor cultural space at the Malmsbury Youth Justice Precinct cannot be completed. However, on 30 April 2026, Malmsbury Youth Justice Precinct was officially re-opened; this action will be closely monitored by the department. Meanwhile, Cherry Creek Youth Justice Precinct has a Multi-faith and Cultural Centre. This centre offers a variety of spaces for culturally specific programs and activities for Aboriginal young people, and young people from culturally and <i>continued next page</i>	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission notes that several actions to address this recommendation are in progress. We look forward to seeing the outcomes from this work, particularly the development of the Indigenous Garden at Parkville Youth Justice Centre.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
68				<i>continued from previous page</i> linguistically diverse backgrounds and faiths. The cultural spaces include a dedicated building for cultural and multi-faith staff and visitors, gardens with a yarnning circle and picnic style seating, and a foot washing room next to the multi-faith space. e) Work will be undertaken in 2026/27 to refresh the Indigenous Garden at Parkville to ensure it remains fit for purpose and offers young people a culturally enriching environment that is safe and secure. In 2025 DJCS engaged renowned artist Matt Adnate to complete a mural on the wall of the Parkville Precinct, to honour the important work of Aunty Joy Murphy, Uncle Archie Roach and Uncle Jack Charles in supporting young people in custody over many years. This artwork is highly visible to young people, staff and visitors upon entry to the site. f) Aboriginal children and young people admitted to custody are consistently provided with cultural connection resources, including possum skins, and continue to have access to art therapy materials to support and strengthen cultural identity. These supports are not linked to behaviour management or incentive programs (such as ACE); however, access may be moderated where there are concerns relating to suicide, self-harm, or other safety risks.		

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
69	That DJCS review the Aboriginal Liaison Officer program to assess how it can meet the competing needs and demands placed on the program, with a view to strengthening it. The review should include an assessment of the training needs of, and remuneration for, the Aboriginal Liaison Officer role.	Support	DJCS	Recruitment has recently occurred for a dedicated ALO role to support the re-opening of the Malmesbury Youth Justice Precinct. Planning is also underway to roll-out a specific team development program for ALOs that will be facilitated by the recently established Operational Leadership and Capability Unit. Topics will include building positive relationships, self-care, resilience, communication and teamwork. ALOs will also be given opportunity to shape content of the program.	Completed	This action has been completed.
70	That DJCS: a) urgently progress the implementation of the Youth Justice custodial workforce plan, and monitor the extent to which it is reducing the use of isolation and lockdown b) ensure that culturally supportive therapeutic spaces as an alternative to separation, isolation or seclusion rooms are established in youth justice centres c) immediately introduce care packages for all children and young people experiencing isolation or lockdown to relieve stress, boredom and psychological damage.	Support	DJCS	a) Youth Justice continues to implement the custodial workforce plan and regularly monitors custodial metrics including isolations and security information. b) The utilisation of culturally supportive spaces as alternatives to isolation remains ongoing. Upgrades have been made to the Indigenous Garden at Parkville, and a fence will be established around the garden in 2026/27 to ensure it can be better utilised by Aboriginal children and young people. At Cherry Creek, the use of cultural and therapeutic spaces continues to be refined as site operations mature. c) Aboriginal children and young people continue to have access to cultural support during periods of isolation or lockdown, consistent with prior reporting.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges the efforts of DJCS to ensure custodial staff have the appropriate training and staffing numbers; however, we note minimal progress towards the use of culturally supportive therapeutic spaces as an alternative to separation, isolation, and seclusion rooms. The Commission will continue to closely monitor the use of isolation and lockdowns as part of our monitoring and oversight function, particularly as the number of Aboriginal children and young people in custody has increased.

Progress against past inquiries: *Our youth, our way*

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Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
71	That the Victorian Government ensure that the body designated as the National Preventive Mechanism for youth justice facilities is a body with specialist expertise in children and young people including child development, working with vulnerable children and young people, and Aboriginal children and young people.	Support in principle	DJCS	The Victorian Government strives to protect all people deprived of liberty, including children and young people, from torture and other cruel inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment and there are oversight regimes in place to support that endeavour. Consistent with the Government's established position, we continue to support the principles of OPCAT and will engage with the Commonwealth on a commitment to provide sufficient and ongoing funding to establish a National Preventive Mechanism in Victoria. As previously highlighted, implementation of this recommendation is contingent on the outcomes of funding negotiations with the Commonwealth, noting OPCAT does impose additional and separate obligations on states and territories. The Government reiterates that if funding negotiations are successful, National Preventive Mechanisms established in Victoria will be designed to meet the needs of children and young people in places of detention.	Not yet progressed	The Commission notes that the Victorian Government is seeking commitment from the Commonwealth for the establishment of a National Preventative Mechanism in Victoria. We reiterate that this body must have specialist expertise in children and young people, including Aboriginal children and young people.
72	That DJCS urgently develop a strategy to provide improved, consistent and therapeutic responses to children and young people at risk of suicide or self-harm in youth justice centres. The strategy should include specific elements to ensure a culturally safe and improved response to Aboriginal children and young people.	Support	DJCS	This action has been completed. See 2025 update.	Completed	This action has been completed.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
73	That DJCS fast-track plans to equip custodial staff with the training and skills they need to undertake trauma-informed, evidence-based and person-centred interventions. This should include support to understand the trauma often experienced by, and complex needs of, children and young people in custody, and to anticipate, de-escalate and respond effectively to challenging behaviours without resorting to the use of force. Training should also include a specific focus on intergenerational trauma.	Support	DJCS	This action has been completed.	Completed	This action has been completed.
74	That the Victorian Government work towards having no Aboriginal child or young person in custody. As a step towards this, the Victorian Government should work with Aboriginal communities to establish three small, home-like facilities for Aboriginal children and young people serving custodial sentences. These facilities should have no more than six beds. Although these facilities would be secure, they must allow for Aboriginal children and young people to connect with their culture and community.	Support in principle		Youth Justice is progressing research and consultation on on-Country alternatives to remand and custody for Aboriginal children and young people. This work is focused on identifying culturally safe, Aboriginal-led approaches that keep children and young people connected to family, community, culture and Country. The research includes consideration of existing alternatives to remand, Aboriginal-led models, and approaches used in other jurisdictions to support Indigenous children and young people in contact with the justice system. A report is being developed to inform future policy and program advice.	No progress in the past year	The Commission acknowledges the work of DJCS to develop on-Country alternatives to remand. The Commission remains disappointed in the passing of the Bail Amendment Act and the Justice Legislation Amendment (Community Safety) Act (Vic), which has resulted in an increase in the number of children and young people in custody.

Rec #	Recommendation	Government position Feb 2022	Lead department or agency	Department update	Commission assessment	Commission comment
75	That the Victorian Government work with the Commonwealth Government to ensure that all Aboriginal children and young people who leave youth justice custody have access to culturally appropriate and reliable community-based support for as long as required. This may include intensive case management, housing, employment and training, and mental health, drug and alcohol and cultural support services.	Support		Youth Justice continues to support Aboriginal children and young people through programs that provide continuity of care, culturally responsive support and pathways for reintegration. The Youth Through Care program continues to provide statewide wrap-around support to Aboriginal children and young people transitioning from custody to the community, promoting stability, wellbeing and successful reintegration. The Youth Justice Transitional Housing Program also continues to support young people involved with Youth Justice to maintain transitional housing and establish longer-term housing pathways. From 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, nine Aboriginal young people accessed Transitional Housing Management through Youth Justice Community Support Services. In 2025, DJCS also commenced a review and redesign of the Aboriginal Youth Justice Program. The redesigned model is being informed by consultation, including with Aboriginal children and young people with lived experience, and will seek to provide more targeted and individualised support through stronger case planning, improved information sharing and enhanced collaboration across services.	Progress made – ongoing systemic effort required	The Commission acknowledges the work of VACCA's Youth Through Care program and the Youth Justice Transitional Housing Program. We reinforce the importance of recurrent funding and assisting young people to find stable housing post-release, as well as employment and training opportunities available to young people leaving custody. We also note the current review and redesign of Aboriginal Youth Justice Programs and reinforce that Aboriginal-led programs must be adequately resourced and funded to meet demand.