



**Wednesday 8 February 2017**

*For immediate release*

## **NT Government makes a start to a safer community**

**Making Justice Work commends the Northern Territory Government's announcement today of an \$18.3m investment in youth conferencing and diversion, case management and bail support services across the Northern Territory.**

Making Justice Work understands the frustration that the wider community has about crime in the NT, and as such MJW supports the implementation of programs which assist and support victims of crime, not just the offender.

The rights of victims of crime need to be protected and kept at the centre of responses to crime. They must be kept informed of justice system processes regarding the offence against them, and offenders must be made to see how their behaviour has impacted people.

Jared Sharp, General Manager of Jesuit Social Services said,

"Making Justice Work acknowledges the need for serious responses to serious crimes. The Northern Territory locks up four times more kids than anywhere in Australia – we are tough on crime – but this is not equating to a safer community

"But as Chief Minister Gunner noted today, 'if we treat youth offenders as adult offenders we create adult offenders'"

Priscilla Collins CEO NAAJA said,

"Ongoing case management is an important part of the whole system, one-off interventions for kids and their families are not enough. We have to start thinking about children, families and young people across generations, not just within political cycles.

"The role of the family is critical in kids' lives. Some families are really struggling and case management can help families to help their kids stay out of crime"

MJW wants to ensure that programs potentially funded with this \$18.3m are independently evaluated so there is certainty that they will be effective. Program viability must also be proven over the long and short-term to ensure this significant investment is not wasted.

Making Justice Work looks forward to working with the NT Government and community to develop cost effective, evidence and rights-based responses to crime in our community.

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Making Justice Work is a coalition of over 25 organisations from across the NT with a common interest in effective responses to crime in our community. Our asks and proposed reforms are available on our [website](#)