

From: Inquiry into Youth Justice Centres in Victoria [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 21 March 2017 8:56 AM
To: Youth Justice System in Victoria Inquiry
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into Youth Justice Centres in Victoria

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Youth Justice Centres in Victoria

Rod Andrew

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission.

I believe that the 'law and order' agenda promoted by some sectors of our society does not work. I have been a teacher for many years and I have some real life understanding of adolescent behaviour.

Australia was founded on a 'punish them and they will behave' mentality and we know that the convict system did not work. The most feared people in Victoria during the gold rushes were the 'Vandemonians' - brutalised ex-convicts from Van Dieman's Land (Tasmania) who were beyond redemption. Many of these had been sentenced because of minor crimes against property. If 'law and order' as espoused for example by the Herald-Sun newspaper is followed to its logical conclusion, then we will end up hanging people for what started out as minor crimes.
Incarceration brutalises people.

So, two steps:

1. Nip the problem in the bud. Provide support to families who are struggling. Provide proper funding to agencies who are trying to help - such as Anglicare. I know there are many others.
2. Properly fund care for people with mental health problems.
3. Properly staff gaols (that's what Malmsbury YJC is). It's well-know around here that many staff have minimal training. And staff numbers are kept to a minimum so that inmates are locked up for unreasonable periods. Of course inmates are going to crack-up.

Overall, a dollar spent on prevention is going to save many dollars on the prison system, as well as producing better outcomes for the fabric of our society.

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File1:

File2:

File3: