

# Media release

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## The Public Guardian applauds new youth justice changes

The Public Guardian has welcomed the announcement that the Queensland Government will inject increased resourcing into the tailored and dedicated care of 10-13 year olds in youth detention, and more funding for after-hours legal services for young people.

Public Guardian Ms Natalie Siegel-Brown said these changes will have a direct and positive impact on the lives of vulnerable children and young people – and is confident they will directly reduce re-offending.

“The Public Guardian monitors and advocates for the human rights of young people held in youth detention facilities, and children and young people in the child protection system,” Ms Siegel-Brown said.

“Sadly, we know from experience that these two systems frequently overlap.

“I particularly applaud the Queensland Government’s insight and action to ensure young people facing charges are not held in detention purely because no suitable accommodation or responsible person can be found to care for them within the community.

“We know that many of the young people we are talking about here have committed crimes because of a life underpinned by childhood abuse and trauma. So many of these young people find it safer to live on the streets than at home and commit crimes purely to survive.

“There is no place within the community that they feel genuinely safe.

Ms Siegel-Brown said supervised bail accommodation would fill a critical gap in the current youth justice system.

“Supervised bail accommodation provides young people with a safe environment, and an opportunity for therapeutic interventions outside of the more prison-like youth detention environment.

“The evidence for supervised bail accommodation for young people charged with offences cannot be denied in reducing recidivism, and importantly giving them a window of opportunity to instead fulfil their potential in life.

“I am really proud that Queensland is the second state in Australia to take supervised bail accommodation seriously and do something about it.

“I urge the rest of the nation to follow this lead.”

*ENDS*

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