

## **NAIDOC week the perfect time to acknowledge – and strengthen – efforts in Justice Reinvestment**

NAIDOC Week presents as a perfect opportunity to acknowledge the importance of Justice Reinvestment efforts and to seek opportunities to expand initiatives, according to the Law Council of Australia.

Justice Reinvestment is a relatively new concept, which refers to the diversion of funds that would ordinarily be spent on keeping individuals in prison into the development of programs and services that aim to address the underlying causes of crime in communities that have high levels of incarceration.

Law Council of Australia President-elect Mr Stuart Clark said NAIDOC week is an ideal time to consider the expansion of Justice Reinvestment initiatives.

“There is some terrific work being done in Aboriginal communities in Australia on expanding this revolutionary idea of Justice Reinvestment,” Mr Clark said.

“For example, Bourke’s ‘Just Reinvest’ team has been working tirelessly to show their local corporate and government sectors that Justice Reinvestment will work and is a worthy effort.

“And in South Australia, concerted advocacy efforts from the Indigenous community have resulted in the State Government committing to announcing Justice Reinvestment trials in two separate locations.

“It’s time that Australia really started getting serious about this idea on a national level.

“We need to break the cycle of those who get incarcerated, and then released back into problematic communities, only to be locked up again. We can’t just keep spending more and more money on the jail section of the cycle and expect to improve lives. We need to shift some of those resources back into the community.

“NAIDOC Week is a time to celebrate the diverse history, many achievements, and rich potential of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The giant steps I see being made on innovative concepts like Justice Reinvestment fit perfectly within that spectrum.

“Non-Indigenous Australians should support and assist initiatives like Justice Reinvestment so it can start making a real difference in the communities that need it,” Mr Clark concluded.

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