

# NO YOUNG PEOPLE IN ADULT PRISONS

## DID YOU KNOW?

- People as young as 16 years of age are being placed in Victoria's adult prisons.
- Many young people in adult prison are held in solitary confinement, often involving long-term lockdown for 23 hours a day.
- Solitary confinement breaks the spirit of adult prisoners, with even worse consequences for young people, including serious psychological and physical harm, heightened risk of suicide, and other forms of self-harm.
- Young people in adult prison suffer lasting, serious damage to their mental, physical and emotional health, and risk being trapped in the adult prison system.
- Placing young people in adult prison puts rehabilitation at risk and increases the likelihood of future offending.
- The reasons young people are placed in adult prison are not open to independent review.
- Transfers to adult prison from youth training centres are occurring because of inadequate resourcing and management of more appropriate options in the youth justice system.
- Most of these young people have had long involvement in the child protection system prior to their incarceration in adult prison.
- Most of these young people are either Aboriginal, of refugee background or are young men or women of 'colour'.

## **WE CALL ON THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT TO:**

- **Immediately stop the transfer and placement of young people in adult prison;**
- **Ban the use solitary confinement.**

## **AND TO:**

- Be transparent and accountable about the numbers of young people being placed in adult prison, which units they are placed in, and the process that resulted in them being placed there;
- Ensure that young people in youth justice have ready access to independent advocacy and legal representation and support in all decisions affecting them, including transfer to adult prison;
- Notify the Commissioner for Children and Young People of any proposed transfers to adult prison and support the Commissioner to independently monitor and investigate these decisions;
- Review and reform the youth justice system and facilities to reflect the different developmental needs and special vulnerabilities of young people, maintaining the focus on rehabilitative and therapeutic responses to address challenging behaviours, and disciplinary and security problems; and
- Increase mental health and wellbeing support for young people post release.

## **WHO WE ARE**

'No young people in adult prisons' is a coalition of concerned advocates and self advocates.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Visit our blog: [www.noprison4kids.org.au](http://www.noprison4kids.org.au)