



**Pastoral Care
Research Collaboration**

Understanding how pastoral care does and should fit into the youth justice system

Ms Chloe Gordon



**Centre for Health and
Social Research**

Research Aim

To understand how pastoral care does and should fit into the youth justice system



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'By [chaplains] being so closely interwoven in the fabric of such an institution [as prisons] it provides chaplains with a unique opportunity to minister to immediate and often raw need...that can only be described as both challenging and inspirational'

(Potter 1999)

Relevance/currency of the topic

- Focus on early prevention

Evidence of 'torture' of children held in Don Dale detention centre uncovered by Four Corners

Four Corners By [Caro Meldrum-Hanna](#) and [Elise Worthington](#)

Updated 26 Jul 2016, 6:00am



VIDEO: LANGUAGE WARNING: Children tear-gassed inside Don Dale detention centre (ABC News)

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What we know

About 1 in 466 young people (10-17 years) were under youth justice supervision in Australia in 2014-15 (AIHW, 2016).

4 in 5 were male



85 % supervised by the community



4 in 5 were aged 14-17



2 in 5 in detention at some point during the year



What we know

From one qualitative study (Carey and Del Medico, 2014) –

Clearest recommendation for chaplaincy service improvement in the justice context was that of increasing chaplaincy support for juvenile correctional institutions

Chaplain in focus group interview:

‘...A lot of people would say, “well they [juveniles] deserve to be in there [in prison]”, and we say, “Yes, we are not trying to say they don’t deserve punishment, but lets try and correct it so they don’t come back.” So that is our idea-if you could say to [these people], “Wouldn’t it be ‘heaps good’ if we could stop them at the juvenile section...”’

(Carey & Medico, 2014, p.1795).

Proposal

- Narrative review of what exists in relation to pastoral care in the youth justice context
- Interviews with key organizations to gain a comprehensive understanding of chaplains' involvement and impact in the youth justice context, and the gaps in knowledge and practice

Proposal

- Possible organizations to approach for the interviews include:
 - CatholicCare Melbourne
 - Anglican Criminal Justice Ministries Victoria
 - The Salvation Army
 - Whitelion
 - Kairos Torch
 - Prison Fellowship Darwin
- Delphi study – gain consensus from experts in the field on the critical research questions to pursue

Benefits of the research

- Comprehensive understanding and documentation of how pastoral care does and should fit into the youth justice system in this heavily under researched but critical area
- Solid grounding for pursuing focused research in the area through applying for potential grants

Comments, questions or suggestions?

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