



"A whole generation of young people would again have lost a positive future and we'll be back here in five or ten years time talking about terrible outcomes"

STAN WINFORD

Centre for Innovative Justice at RMIT associate director Stan Winford has been participating in the Royal Commission forum discussing alternative approaches in the youth justice system in Alice Springs. Picture: JEFF TAN

Alternative approaches to youth detention

Jeff Tan

A LACK of action on the findings of the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory would be a tragedy according to a participant at an associated forum.

As part of the royal commission, a forum discussing alternative approaches in the youth justice system has been held in Alice Springs.

Forum participant and Centre for Innovative Justice at RMIT associate director Stan Winford said there is a really diverse range of voices and a great commitment to trying to work on sustainable solutions on the issues.

"To make sure any solu-

tions are community driven and led and how to make that happen is a principal focus," he said.

"And we've been hearing about really interesting examples of that and how government needs to listen to community about solutions that will work."

"I think everyone is clear that what has been happening so far is not working."

Mr Winford said there has been talk about good local programs such as Bush Mob and Walpiri mediation.

"These are things that are working for the community that community has designed to solve its own issues and the real problem is that government is not prepared to sup-

port and to relinquish control, they are too prone to micro-managing or worrying about other things," he said.

On youth detention, Mr Winford said there will be discussions focusing on ways to divert young people out of the criminal justice system and the fact that contact with this system is probably the worst thing you can do in response to offending.

"It's criminogenic, it really increases the likelihood that a young person will offend in the future, if they have contact with the system," Mr Winford said.

"What we are hoping for is that there is a real shared understanding of what the purpose of youth justice is.

"I think people are looking to the commission to recognise the real expertise that the community has in terms of addressing these problems and solution."

Mr Winford said it would be a complete tragedy if the report from the commission is not acted upon to build towards lasting change.

"A whole generation of young people would again have lost a positive future and we'll be back here again in five or 10 years talking about terrible outcomes and some of the allegations and vision of what we've seen in some of these facilities," he said.

"If we're all back here again, it would be absolutely devastating."

\$20m cultural centre may be a pipedream, MLA

Andrea Johnston

QUESTIONS have been raised over the future of the National Indigenous Cultural Centre, after an arts announcement failed to include the project.

Independent member for Araluen Robyn Lambley raised her concern after the

Northern Territory's Arts Minister, Lauren Moss, announced the steering committee for the Iconic National Indigenous Art Gallery.

"The Northern Territory Government has made a formal commitment to both a National Indigenous Art Gallery and a National indigenous Cultural Centre, totalling \$70

million," Mrs Lambley said.

"In all recent government media, no mention has been made of the \$20 million Cultural Centre, only the \$50 million Art Gallery.

"My fear is that the Government has dropped this \$20 million project and is hoping no one will notice."

Mrs Lambley's comments

came after Ms Moss visited Alice Springs last weekend, and told the media two prominent arts figures — Hetti Perkins and Philip Watkins — would lead experts in the initial consultations.

"I look forward to making many more announcements about both projects in the near future," Ms Moss said.



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