

Telephone: 07 3900 6000

Reference: [REDACTED]

Secretary
Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee

Via email: [REDACTED]

Dear Committee Secretary

Thank you for the opportunity to review the *Queensland Community Safety Bill 2024*, and to provide feedback on behalf of the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC). Community safety is everybody's business and the QFCC acknowledges the Bill's intention to strengthen existing legislation to support this endeavour.

The QFCC has made a number of submissions and provided advice to Government and Parliament on youth justice over the last 12 months and our position regarding the need for evidence based, restorative justice practices and policies that address the root-causes of offending remains clear.

Appreciating the matters referenced in the Bill as it relates to firearm regulation, responses to domestic and family violence, changes to penalties for specific high harm offences, and youth justice responses for children in detention, I have attached references to our previous policy submissions and relevant QFCC publications.

I also point to the recommendations of the Child Death Review Board in the 2022-23 Annual Report regarding the need to reappraise the response to youth crime and the purpose of youth detention.

If you have any issues or wish to discuss further, please contact me via telephone on [REDACTED] or via email at [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Luke Twyford
Principal Commissioner
Queensland Family and Child Commission

17 May 2024



Title	Summary	Reference
Submission – Inquiry into Youth Justice Reform in Queensland – Commissioner Luke Twyford	Commissioner Twyford’s individual submission focused on the need for any changes to the youth justice system to be designed and implemented strategically, with clear whole-of-system outcomes.	LTR - YJ Select Committee Cover LTR Submission – final.pdf (qfcc.qld.gov.au)
Submission – Inquiry into Youth Justice Reform in Queensland – Commissioner Natalie Lewis	Commissioner Lewis’ individual submission focused on a child rights-based approach to youth justice and the manner in which such a system would encompass all the systems that can help prevent the entry of children into the youth justice system.	Inquiry into youth justice reform in Queensland - CMR Natalie Lewis.pdf (qfcc.qld.gov.au)
Growing Up in Queensland 2024	The QFCC’s 2024 Growing Up in Queensland report tells the story of child and family wellbeing in Queensland. It is a comprehensive reference for researchers and policy- and decision-makers, containing extensive data and evidence about key issues affecting Queensland families. The data aligns with the six interconnected domains of the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) Framework.	QFCC Publication - Growing Up in Queensland 2024
Who’s responsible: Understanding why young people are being held longer in Queensland watch houses	The QFCC completed a review of Queensland’s use of watch houses to understand why children are increasingly being held in watch houses for extended periods and to identify who is responsible for monitoring and reducing the trend. The review makes five recommendations for immediate implementation to reduce the time children are detained in watch houses, including improving cross-agency collaboration, transparency of record-keeping and public reporting, and reducing unsentenced detention.	QFCC Publication - Who’s responsible: Understanding why young people are being held longer in Queensland watch houses
Domestic and Family Violence Perpetrator Strategy	A submission considering the actions of primary prevention, early intervention and response, and the systemic reforms needed to improve the experiences of those impacted by family violence, increase perpetrator accountability and behaviour change, and provide long-term support to children and families. The submission included the perspectives of young people including their suggestions for improvements to existing reforms and campaigns, and their thoughts on providing accessible information across a wide community demographic.	QFCC Submission - Domestic and Family Violence Perpetrator Strategy



Title	Summary	Reference
First Nations Children's Report	The First Nations Children's Report showcases the stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, who are thriving despite the challenges of structural racism and the impacts of colonialism. First Nations children and young people thrive when they can fully enjoy their right to family, community, culture, and Country. The report demonstrates their strength and resilience and shows the positive outcomes that are possible when their rights are upheld. The report celebrates stories of strong First Nations children and young people, their families and communities in the areas of health and emotional wellbeing; safety and home environment; learning and skills and economic empowerment; and culture and connection.	QFCC Publication – First Nations Children's Report
Queensland Child Rights Report 2023	The report details the state of children's rights in Queensland. It analyses how Queensland upholds children's rights, and it identifies the changes needed to embed a child rights approach across government policy, legislation and systems to deliver better, more equitable outcomes for Queensland children.	QFCC Publication – Queensland Child Rights Report 2023
Inquiry into Support Provided to Victims of Crime	A detailed submission into the improvements needed to support timely and accessible supports and services to victims of crime and their families, which respond to the harm they have experienced. The submission highlights the use of restorative justice processes to empower victim-survivors and improve accountability and behaviour change for individuals who perpetrate harm against others.	QFCC Submission - Inquiry into victims of crime.PDF
Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023	In this submission, the QFCC emphasised that any improvements to the youth justice system should place weight on all four pillars of the Youth Justice Strategy 2019-2023; intervene early, keep children out of court, keep children out of custody and reduce reoffending. If the long-term goal of reducing youth crime is to be achieved, efforts and investment should focus on reducing the factors that contribute to a young person committing crime, and specialised services for the young people already in the statutory system who are committing most of the crime – and their families.	QFCC Submission - Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023
Monitoring of Places of Detention (Optional Protocol to the Convention	A submission considering the United Nations Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment to visit places of detention in Queensland. Increasing the	QFCC Submission – Monitoring of Places of Detention



Title	Summary	Reference
against Torture) Bill 2022	transparency and accountability of our detention system is a necessary reform that should enhance community understanding and confidence in the statutory youth justice system whilst providing further safeguards for the rights of children and young people.	(Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture) Bill 2022
Yarning for Change: Listen to my voice	The rights and aspirations of First Nations children and young people with a lived experience of the youth justice system are largely rendered invisible in the discourse, in the policy and practice of 'justice'. There's been a lot of talking about young people, less talking to them and less still, listening to them. The Yarning for Change: Listen to my voice report highlights their voices, experiences and stories of their interactions with the youth justice system. Young people talked about the things that matter to them and things that they wish were different. They emphasised the importance of relationships, of what it means to have people who care and show up for them. What is clear – it's people not programs that makes a difference.	QFCC Publication - Yarning for Change: Listen to my voice
Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce Discussion Paper 3: Women and girls' experience across the criminal justice system as victim-survivors of sexual violence and also as accused persons and offenders	A submission detailing the difficulties experienced by women and girls who are victim-survivors of sexual violence, beyond the immediate impacts of harm. The submission includes information reported to the QFCC as to the experienced or perceived barriers to reporting sexual violence and the merits of alternative justice models such as restorative justice practices to empower victim-survivors and increase accountability for perpetrators.	Womens Safety and Justice Taskforce Discussion Paper 3 (qfcc.qld.gov.au)
National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children	Submission to the National Plan as it relates to the four pillars of action – prevention, early intervention, response and recovery. The submission highlights the intersections of child safety, women's safety, and family wellbeing where family violence is present, and the importance of recognising children as rights-holders and individuals in the context of family violence and responses to family violence. This includes access to child-friendly and age-appropriate services to address the impacts of harm and offer long-term safety.	National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children (qfcc.qld.gov.au)
Women's Safety and Justice	The QFCC submission focuses on the particular impacts of coercive control on children, and the importance of considering children as individuals in the context of family	Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce



Title	Summary	Reference
Taskforce: Discussion Paper 1	violence and as victims in their own right where coercive control has been perpetrated against an individual or family unit. The submission further details the need for specific child-centric supports for immediate and long-term assistance to children impacted by violence.	discussion paper on options for legislating against coercive control and the creation of a standalone domestic violence offence (qfcc.qld.gov.au)
Commissioner's letter to Justice McMurdo, Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce	Commissioner Natalie Lewis identified the importance of this taskforce in elevating the voices of women and children, who are over-represented as victims of sexual violence and domestic violence. This correspondence to the Taskforce Chair highlighted findings from the <i>Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse</i> , including barriers to reporting child sexual abuse (including delayed reporting of abuse incidents).	Womens Safety and Justice Taskforce discussion paper - Women and girls experience of the criminal justice system (qfcc.qld.gov.au)

