

CONNECT42 SUBMISSION



LEGISLATIVE
COUNCIL
INQUIRY INTO
TASMANIAN
ADULT
IMPRISONMENT
AND YOUTH
DETENTION
MATTERS
APRIL 2023



Connecting through
language and learning
for a just society.

The Hon Tania Rattray MLC
Chair, Legislative Council Government Administration Committee 'B'
C/- Simon Scott
Committee Secretary
Parliament House
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Dear Tania,

Connect42 welcomes the Legislative Council Inquiry on Tasmanian corrective services and justice system matters related to adult imprisonment and youth detention.

Connect42 is a for purpose not for profit organisation that works with, and advocates for, people impacted by the justice system and their families to build prosocial communication skills so they can live whole lives in connection with others. Formerly Chatter Matters, it was founded by former Tasmanian Australian of the Year, Speech Pathologist and Criminologist Rosalie Martin and is run by a small staff and a volunteer Board, Chaired by Simon Barnsley. Rosalie Martin continues to be closely involved with Connect42 Inc. holding the role of Founder and Member of the organisation under our constitution. She is actively delivering professional services to our participants.

Connect42 currently runs rehabilitative programs in the Tasmania Prison Service and for people exiting prison which support emotional regulation, language and literacy skills development and relational attachment. Connect42's *Just Time* parenting program, funded by the Department of Justice, has run successfully in the Tasmania Prison Service since 2014. *Just Moving On*, funded by the Tasmanian Community Fund commenced in 2021 is a throughcare program to support people leaving prison with their communication and literacy skills so they can better connect with family and access community and work opportunities.

We have also developed a flexible suite of modules designed for professionals, correctional staff, and volunteers to support those with weak communication skills navigate the justice system. Connect42 is partnering with University of Tasmania researchers from the Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement (TILES) and Menzies Institute for Medical Research on a three-year study in the priority area of examining the role of literacy as a social determinant of public health.

The following submission addresses the Inquiry's Terms of Reference as they intersect with Connect42 work through providing evidence gathered from our program and advocacy experience including case studies, films and research. We have also made some broad recommendations for your consideration based on this evidence.

We offer the attached submission and appendices for the Committee's consideration. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss our insights with the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Simon Barnsley
Chair

CONNECT42 - RECOMMENDATIONS

Whole of government policy shift away from punitive incarceration models to whole of system, whole of person restorative justice and rehabilitation models.

A decadal strategy to guide justice system reform. A whole of system approach is needed to address the disadvantage which underpins criminal behaviour and respects the human rights of both adult and child victims and offenders.

Embedding communication support for offenders in all justice system interventions, including further investment in communications support, including assessment of offenders understanding, is critical, so that in all justice interventions offenders are supported to understand and participate in issues which affect them, and they can access benefit from therapeutic measures.

A whole of government consistent approach to shared information, inc. an electronic LLNED pre- and post-assessment approach and assessment tools be implemented across all of government

Investment in evidence-based initiatives to reduce prison numbers and recidivism

Phase out short sentences in favour of therapeutic community interventions

Raise the age of criminal responsibility to 14, and age of detention to 16 to be consistent with recommendations of the United Nations, medical advice and evidence, and other State governments.

Provision of public housing

Investment in targeted early intervention and diversionary programs and sentencing alternatives for adult and youth offenders across the whole justice system i.e. policing, cautioning, diversionary court alternatives, community conferencing, intermediaries, other

Embed a trauma informed approach to whole Tasmanian Justice System

Implement whole-of-community and whole-of-lifetime community-based programs to support justice reinvestment identified by justice mapping methods

Further investment into higher education and training programs

Embed voluntary communications skills screening and assessment as part of intake practices and education programs

Increased investment in integrated offender management and wrap around services that support the offender not the offence, inc. multi departmental information sharing

Fund research to understand fully the literacy, numeracy, digital and employability skills of people in the justice system

Investment in human and community services not further building infrastructure

OVERVIEW

Connect42 is a for purpose, not for profit organisation, that works with, and advocates for, people impacted by the justice system and their families to build prosocial communication skills so they can live whole lives in connection with others.

Connect42 does not support youth detention. Evidence suggests that detaining young people increases the likelihood of subsequent reoffending and lowers the chances of that child completing education or securing employment. Consistent with the recommendations of the United Nations², and other State governments, we also believe that the Government commit to raising the age of criminal responsibility to 14.³ Raising the age from 12 to 14 would be consistent with medical advice and evidence in relation to brain development (which is linked to behaviour control, moral awareness and therefore criminal culpability). The frontal cortex of children aged 12 and 13 is still developing, and their capacity for abstract reasoning is still evolving, therefore they are unlikely to understand the impact of their actions or criminal proceedings.

A whole of system approach is needed to address the disadvantage which underpins criminal behaviour and respects the human rights of both adult and child victims and offenders. This includes investment in community programs to support people experiencing key risk factors for criminal behaviour including financial stress, substance abuse, involvement with the child protection system and mental health issues. Also necessary is greater investment in skilled human capital to support early intervention, diversionary programs, restorative justice, and rehabilitation initiatives.

A symptom of a disadvantaged background in both adults and children are weak communication skills. Those impacted by the justice system are among the most disadvantaged people in our community with low levels of language comprehension and literacy, and yet the sophisticated systems, processes and language around the law are some of the most complicated in our society. Connect42 considers that further investment in communications support, including assessment of understanding, is critical, so that in all justice interventions offenders are supported to understand and participate in issues which affect them, and they can access benefit from therapeutic measures.

Connect42 can provide prosocial communications programs and support to offenders under any rehabilitative model of care, but the greatest results come in a therapeutic person-centred community-based context, where the whole person is supported and interventions customised to need. In this setting new skills are rewarded by stronger relational attachment, the capacity to address wrong-doing, obtain meaningful employment and connect with community and family to build whole, productive and purposeful lives. Evidence also suggests this model will positively impact recidivism rates.

¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Young people returning to sentenced youth justice supervision 2014–15* (Report, Juvenile justice series no. 20, 22 July 2016)

² United Nations, Convention on the Rights of the Child 2007, 'General Comment No.10: Children's rights in juvenile justice', Committee on the Rights of the Child, 44th Session, No. CRC/C/GC/10. p.11, Available at: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/CRC.C.GC.10.pdf>

³ For example, see Human Rights Law Centre, 'Raising the age in Tasmania: Responses to the Tasmanian Commissioner for Children and Young People's survey on raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility' (2021); Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service, Submission to Council of Attorney Generals (COAG), Age of Criminal Responsibility Working Group (2020); Social Investment Western Australia, 'Raising the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility: A Pathway to a Brighter Future for Western Australia's most at risk children' (2021).

Factors influencing increases in Tasmania's prisoner population and associated costs

There is a large body of international evidence that suggests that many people who commit crime and are incarcerated are impacted by significant disadvantage⁴. Disadvantage can be wide ranging and include a cocktail of challenges such as poverty, trauma, addiction, mental health disorders, family violence, racial discrimination, unemployment, and inequitable access to services. Tasmania has significant social challenges and many areas of disadvantage. More than a quarter of Tasmanian households are now estimated to live below the poverty line, homelessness and food insecurity are on the rise and rates of depression and anxiety are higher than the national average. Studies have shown that those in prison are likely to have more disadvantaged backgrounds including experiences such as unemployment, lower educational attainment, intergenerational incarceration, substance abuse and mental illness⁵. The criminal justice system needs to be equipped to respond to the disadvantages underlying criminal behaviour.

It is concerning there has been an increase of 37%⁶ in the number of offenders in Tasmanian prisons over the last decade. The figures from the Tasmanian Department of Justice Annual Report (2021-22) are also notable showing that the recidivism rate for those returning to prison within two years is now 51.1%, up from 39.9% in 2014-15⁷. The cost of incarceration in Tasmania to taxpayers is currently \$560.85 per prisoner per day, this is a total cost of \$204,710.25 per prisoner (capital + operating cost/prisoner).⁸ This contrasts with the cost to Community Corrections for working with offenders in community in Tasmania, which is only \$23.80 per prisoner per day⁹. Evidence suggests that a therapeutic approach that is community based is a more effective way of addressing criminal behaviour and rehabilitating offenders, so they are less likely to recidivate.

Mandatory sentencing and restrictive bail laws are contributing to increases in Australian prison numbers. As well as increases in incarceration rates, there are greater numbers of people on remand, with 36.6 % of the prison population Australia-wide making up this cohort. When on remand people are not eligible for education or rehabilitative programs and there is a high correlation between remand and short sentencing. More than two thirds of prisoners serving short sentences in Australia are in prison for non-violent offences such as theft and drug offences. These offences are often linked to social disadvantage and disrupt family attachment, housing, employment, and medical treatment while offering little or nothing in deterrence or rehabilitation¹⁰.

⁴ **The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare** found that Indigenous Australians are 12 times more likely to be incarcerated than non-Indigenous Australians due to poorer health, lower education, and unemployment. **The Brotherhood of St Laurence** found that homeless people are at a higher risk of being incarcerated. The **Australian Institute of Criminology** found that young people who are not in education, employment, or training are more likely to engage in criminal activity and end up in prison.

The **World Health Organization** found that there is a strong link between poverty and incarceration.

The **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime** has also highlighted the link between poverty and incarceration.

⁵ Productivity Commission, Australia's Prison Dilemma p20 (2021) <https://www.pc.gov.au/research/competed/prison-dilemma>

⁶ State of Incarceration – Tasmania's Broken Criminal Justice System, April 2021, A Paper from the Justice Reform Institute.

⁷ The Tasmanian Department of Justice Annual Report (2021-22)

⁸ Productivity Commission ROGS 2023 <https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2023/justice/corrective-services>

⁹ Productivity Commission RoG <https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2023/justice/corrective-services>

¹⁰ Productivity Commission – Australia's Prison Dilemma 2021

The use of evidence-based strategies to reduce contact with the justice system and recidivism.

Evidence suggests that diversionary programs such as community conferencing and cautioning can deal effectively with offences by young people, however recent data from Tasmania Police records suggested over a ten-year period a significant decrease of incidences where informal cautions have been offered. These measures are included as possible options in the Youth Justice Act 1997 (Tas) and are helpful tools in keeping young people diverted from youth detention. New Zealand has some great examples of successful diversionary initiatives undertaken in dealing with young offenders, where family and other support networks are involved to support the diversion.²

A trauma informed approach to Tasmanian youth justice system and further investment in more targeted early intervention and diversion from crime initiatives is necessary. Given intergenerational disadvantage is an indicator of crime Connect42 considers that young people most at risk of contact with the criminal justice system need to be the focus for early intervention³. Connect42 would like to see increased government investment in group conferencing and community service models rather than incarceration when dealing with young offenders. Further investment and structural reform across services and departments are also needed to improve cooperation and enable holistic, customised, culturally appropriate interventions for at risk young people.

Connect42 does not support the building of new detention facilities in Tasmania. Over reliance on incarceration of young offenders is a poor investment economically⁴ and rather than deter crime⁵ it entrenches existing disadvantage and trauma and increases the likelihood of ongoing criminal justice system involvement often across multiple generations. A high percentage of Tasmanian youth involved with the justice system continue to have contact with the justice system as an adult⁶. This continual cycle of people returning to prison entrenches disadvantage for families and increases harm within communities.

Connect42 believes activities that permit prosocial communication development, as well as literacy interventions can provide restorative diversion and sentencing alternatives to the detention model. If people can't speak out, they'll act out. Up to 90% of young people in contact with the justice system in Australia have measurable spoken language impairment and for 46% of these the impairment is in the severe range⁷. 48% of Tasmanians do not have written language skills at a high enough level to manage the comprehension and self-expression demands of daily life⁸. Giving skills to speak out well is at the core of rehabilitation.

¹¹ Sentencing Young Offenders, Sentencing Advisory Council 2021

¹² Youth Crime Act on Plan 2013 -2023, Ministry of Justice, New Zealand Government

¹³ [Report on Government Services – Youth Justice 2021](#)

¹⁴ Australian Government Productivity Commission, Report on Government Services 2022, Part F Community Services, Section 17 Youth Justice Services, 25 January 2022

¹⁵ Weatherburn, D, Imprisonment, reoffending and Australian crime decline, Judicial Officers Bulletin, September 2021, Vol. 33, No. 8

¹⁶ Australian Government Productivity Commission, Report on Government Services 2022, Part F Community Services, Section 17 Youth Justice Services, 25 January 2022

¹⁷ Back on Track – Speech Pathology in Youth Justice Custodial Education, Speech Pathology Australia Ltd and Monash University, 2013

¹⁸ A Road Map to a Literate Tasmania, The Tasmanian 100percent Literacy Alliance 2021 p5

Connect42 supports justice reinvestment in Tasmania. A recent report commissioned by the Tasmanian Government found that, 'justice mapping methods could identify communities of interest through cohesive data sharing arrangements between government agencies and service providers. This allows government agencies to tailor interventions based on actual community needs. The principle of re-investing savings from a smaller, more fit-for-purpose detention facility into early intervention and prevention is also consistent with this approach.'¹⁹ There is an opportunity to divest from expensive and ineffective prison infrastructure by implementing community-based programs. This model uses funds which are usually allocated to tertiary justice interventions (such as prison and parole), re-allocating funds towards early intervention and support. The programs adopt a whole-of-community and whole-of-lifetime approach, and seek to support all community members, rather than only those who are identified as needing support.

Connect42 has welcomed previous opportunity to provide feedback on Tasmania's Corrections Strategy and Youth Justice System Blueprint. We note that corrections policy development is ongoing, with Breaking the Cycle: Tasmanian Corrections Plan (2010-2020) now redundant. Despite improvements to the Youth Justice System Blueprint we agree with the Commissioner for Children and Young People, Leanne McLean's ongoing recommendation to the Tasmanian Government to reflect the nation-leading approach to youth justice that the Government promised, by *'transforming the way we address youth offending, providing improved outcomes for children and young people and increasing community safety. Our small size, while presenting geographical challenges, also gives us a chance to do something innovative and nation leading.'*²⁰

Successful models of adult diversion programs such as the Initial Drug Diversion Initiative²¹, the Mental Health Diversion List²² and other court mandated diversionary treatments would also benefit from additional investment and expansion. Targeted approaches which address the disadvantaged circumstances underlying the offense, make good economic sense and stop recidivism.

One jurisdiction model worth studying in more detail is from the ACT through its Building Communities, Not Prisons Justice Reinvestment Program²³. This includes investment in community programs including building capability, a purpose built, rehabilitative integration centre with customised therapeutic programs, providing supported housing options on release and early support for people living with mental illness or disability.

The ACT Justice System Cost Model below is part of an ACT specific evidence base under the Justice Reinvestment Strategy. It is an innovative system-wide approach to costing the ACT's justice system from the point of apprehension to detention. This evidence base includes an overall baseline of the costs and drivers of crime for both adults and youths in the justice system and projects those costs into the future (over nine years to 2025/26).

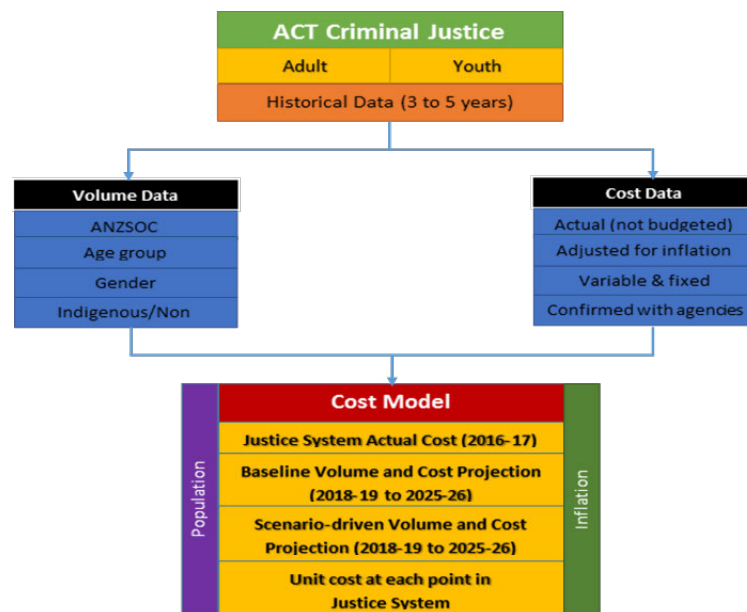
¹⁹ Noetic Solutions Pty Ltd, 'Custodial Youth Justice Options Paper: Report for the Tasmanian Government Department of Health and Human Services' (2016), 79.

²⁰ CCYP 2022 Response to Nov22 Youth Justice Blueprint

²¹ <https://www.hoyaoake.com.au/our-programs/national-drug-diversion-initiative>

²² https://www.magistratescourt.tas.gov.au/about_us/criminal_divisions/division_1

²³ <https://www.justice.act.gov.au/justice-programs-and-initiatives/reducing-recidivism/building-communities-not-prisons>



The ACT have significantly higher education and training program enrolment in their prisons with a whopping 70.8% of inmates in education and training programs in 2018/19 compared with Tasmania's 24.8%.²⁴

Therapeutic jurisprudence has also been successful in several countries around the world, including the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. It emphasises the importance of wellbeing of offenders and addresses the underlying causes of offending. A study conducted in Victoria, found that participants in the state's mental health court program had lower rates of reoffending and were more likely to receive appropriate mental health treatment than those who went through the traditional court system²⁵. Furlong argues that therapeutic jurisprudence leads to greater rehabilitation, wellbeing, and lower recidivism than traditional justice models²⁶.

Norway's justice system also uses a restorative justice model. It is often considered as one of the most progressive and effective internationally. It brings together the offender, the victim, and other stakeholders to discuss the harm caused by the crime and work together to find ways to repair that harm. This can involve a range of activities, including apologies, community service, and compensation. The model aims to rehabilitate offenders with a focus on education, vocational training, and mental health treatment. The goal is to help inmates develop skills and values that will enable them to become productive members of society after their release. In Norway, the recidivism rate is one of the lowest in the world, with only 20% of offenders returning to prison within two years of their release²⁷.

As demonstrated through the Norwegian model, education and transformative learning involves a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings and actions by the learner. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and permanently alters people's experience of the world. Tønseth

²⁴ RoGS Correct ons Report, 2019 quoted in the Response to House Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training Inquiry into and report on adult literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills in Australia, Australian Correct ons Education Association

²⁵ The Victorian Mental Health Court: Evaluation of a pilot program. Psychiatry, Psychology and Law, Ogloff, J. R., Davies, M. R., Rivers, G., & Ross, S. (2007).

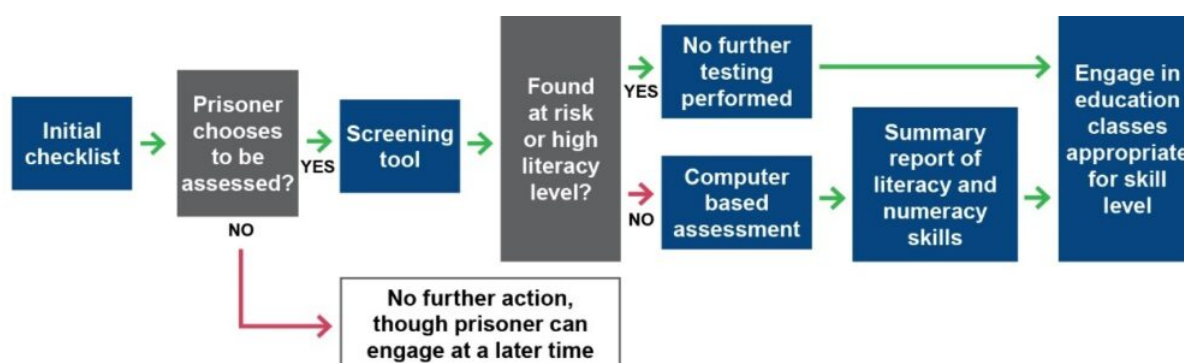
²⁶ Therapeutic Jurisprudence: A Possible Prescription for a Hypertensive Criminal Justice System, Scott Furlong, 2021 USQ

²⁷ Braithwaite, J. (2004). Restorative justice and responsive regulation. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

and Bergsland note that, *'Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationships with others and with the natural world; our understanding of relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race and gender; our body-awareness, our visions of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of possibilities for social justice and personal joy'* (p. xvii). They define categories of transitional outcomes as a²⁸:

- shift in basic premises of thought
- understanding of relations of power
- shift in feelings
- shift in actions
- shift in consciousness
- altered ways of being in the world
- shift in understanding of ourselves, shift in self-locations
- change in relationships with others and the natural world
- acquisition of new focus of attention (on relations of power in interlocking social structures)
- change in body-awareness
- becoming open to visions of alternative approaches to living and sense of possibilities

In WA, prisoners with low literacy levels are offered opportunities to improve their skills. Prisoners undergo voluntary screening and assessment as part of imbedded intake practices. The process adapts to the skill level of the prisoner and uses standardised tools to assess literacy and numeracy against the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF). The initial checklist to identify education history and other aspects that may impact the prisoners' education such as hearing or eyesight issues are also identified. People 'at risk' are identified enabling tailored interventions and suitable education pathways for each individual to be supported. The below is a summary of the literacy and numeracy screening and assessment process:²⁹



²⁸ Tønseth & Bergsland, *Cogent Education* (2019), 6: 1628408 <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2019.1628408> Page 4-6

²⁹ WA Auditor General, Report 31: 2020-21 Improving Prisoners' Literacy and Numeracy

Evidence based programs - Connect42's approach as a therapeutic model of rehabilitation

Connect42 evidence-based programs address a major area of disadvantage for people impacted by the justice system, that of poor written and spoken communication skills. There is international evidence that education achievements in prison, particularly those underpinned by literacy and numeracy gains have delivered reduced recidivism rates and led to greater engagement with employment and training in the UK and the US³⁰.

Social disadvantage impacts language development in a range of ways. Children from disadvantaged families have less access to language-rich environments and early developmental support services, they may be discriminated against in school environments leading to feelings of shame, anxiety and low self-esteem which can compound the problem and if they are impacted by trauma in their early years this can negatively affect brain development. This impacts people's whole lives. Canadian researchers found that crime is significantly linked to illiteracy.³ Language and literacy skills underpin academic, social and vocational success. For many people in the prison system, the traditional education systems were not successful in giving them functional literacy skills. Therefore, it is unsurprising that adolescents that end up in the youth justice system are likely to have severely compromised oral language skills³², poor literacy and numeracy.

Literacy is a problem Tasmania-wide. 48% of Tasmanians do not have written language skills at a level high enough to manage the comprehension and self-expression demands of daily life when those demands are in written form. In the justice system this rises to up to 4 in 5 people, or 80% of this community³³. This is particularly unfortunate, given the sophisticated communication skills needed to efficiently navigate the justice system. This often means there is failure to comprehend legal process, rights and choice, restricting adequate expression of needs and perspectives as well as the emotional regulation and social thinking needed to navigate relationships. This communication weakness becomes a barrier to accessing services essential to meet basic human needs, including medical services, social security support, employment, housing, the parole system and even the maintenance of significant relationships within prison and upon release³⁴.

Literacy programs for adult and youth offenders must be planned to encompass multifactorial learning needs and be delivered by appropriately qualified practitioners³⁵. Connect42 communications programs are underpinned by self-reflection, relational trust, a recognition of lived experience including utilising a trauma-informed approach, and speech pathology skills delivered by communications professionals. We have the capacity to work with inmates to identify specific communication difficulties using evidence-based assessment tools and develop targeted interventions to address them. These interventions may include speech and language therapy to improve articulation, vocabulary, and grammar, as well as social communication training to develop

³⁰ Disorders of language and literacy in prisons population: a scoping review, Morken, Jones, He and 2021 quoted in the Response to House Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training inquiry into and report on adult literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills in Australia, Australian Corrections Education Association

³¹ http://policeabc.ca/files/factsheets_englishPDFs/Ch02FactSheet02.pdf

³² https://pubs.asha.org/doi/full/10.1044/2018_LSHSS-CCJS-18-0027 (PC Snow 2016)

³³ Morken, Jones, He and (2021) Disorders of language and literacy in prisons population: a scoping review - <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsc11020077>, 26TEN - [https://26ten.tas.gov.au/stories/Pages/Iona awarded for work with inmates.aspx](https://26ten.tas.gov.au/stories/Pages/Iona%20awarded%20for%20work%20with%20inmates.aspx)

³⁴ Legal Literacy Conference: An Innovative Team Approach to Literacy Intervention by Rose Marie Martin and Greg Barnes 2014

³⁵ Disorders of language and literacy in prisons population: a scoping review, Morken, Jones, He and 2021 quoted in the Response to House Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training inquiry into and report on adult literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills in Australia, Australian Corrections Education Association

skills such as active listening, asking questions, demonstrating empathy and problem-solving. There is potential for much greater use of speech pathology skills in the suite of tools used in rehabilitation in the criminal justice system, where workers from different professions collaborate to provide wrap around services to address underlying cognitive, emotional, and social factors that may be impacting client communication capacity and inhibiting overall rehabilitation.

Nationally in 2021-22, 23.7 per cent of eligible prisoners participated in accredited education and training courses, the lowest proportion for the 10 years of reported data and reflecting the third consecutive drop in participation since 2018-2019. Vocational education and training courses had the highest participation levels (16.6 per cent), followed by pre-certificate Level 1 courses (5.5 per cent), secondary school education (1.8 per cent) and higher education (1.6 per cent) (table 8A.11).

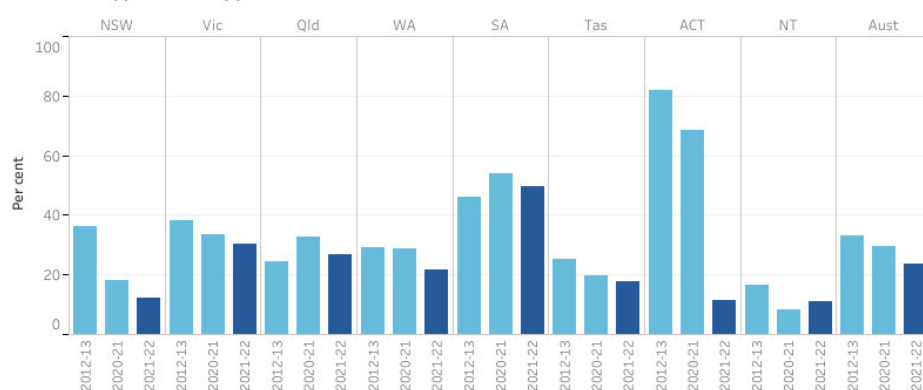
In Tasmania 17.6% of eligible prisoners participated in accredited education and training courses, down from 25.3% in 2012-13. It is important to note that these figures are based on enrolments not outcomes. The US implemented a 7-year longitudinal study tracking corrections education students' post release employment and recidivism³⁷. This study provided valid evidence to inform the effectiveness of government funding in raising the literacy, numeracy, digital and employability skills of those in custody. Tasmania does not yet have such evidence to inform policy and or funding strategies.

■ Data are not comparable across jurisdictions or over time.
 ■ Data are complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period.

Select year(s):
 Multiple values

■ 2012-13
 ■ 2020-21
 ■ 2021-22

Figure 8.6 Percentage of eligible prisoners in education and training by jurisdiction, by year



Source: table 8A.11

Clearer and more consistent parameters need to be developed to record prisoner and young offender participation in education and training programs across all Tasmanian departments. This will benefit and promote confidence in consistent and validated evidence for policy, resourcing decisions, and strategy development. Further, investment in a longitudinal research study would

³⁶ ROGS 2023, Part C: Section 8 - <https://www.pc.gov.au/ongo ng/report-on-government-serv ces/2023/just ce/correct ve-serv ces>

³⁷ Davis, Lo s M., Jennifer L. Steele, Robert Boz ck, Ma co m W lams, Susan Turner, Jeremy N. V. M es, Jessica Saunders and Paul S. Ste nberg, How Effect ve Is Correct ona Educat on, and Where Do We Go from Here? The Resu ts of a Comprehensive Eva uat on, Santa Monica, Ca f.: RAND Corporat on, RR-564-BJA, 2014. As of Apr 17, 2015: http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR564

track effectiveness of prisoner / offender educational outcomes resulting in increased community engagement, employment and reduced recidivism.

There is currently no consistent practice to record the entry and exit language, literacy, numeracy, digital and employability (LLNED) skills of adult and youth offenders across Tasmanian government departments. Each department uses different entry assessment methodologies and interpretation of offender entry levels or track improvement on these levels upon release or transition to community. This results in an opaque capacity to analyse national trends in the effectiveness of LLNED capability development with prison or youth justice education programs. A more streamlined and whole of system approach is recommended.

Exemplary prisoner education practice in UK

Leading reform in prison education is the UK's Coates Review strategy of "putting education at the heart of the prison regime"³⁸ by cascading accountability for access to quality education LLNED, VET and Higher Education programs at all levels of prison management.

This approach resulted in (among other aspects):

Each prisoner having:

- an individual personal learning plan (with progress reports available in digital form);
- access to quality programs offered by highly qualified and trained staff

Each prison:

- uses a consistent and rigorous assessment mechanism
- all staff (management, custodial, teaching, support) having access to appropriate professional development to ensure delivery of high-quality education programs and services
- Develops a framework of incentives to encourage attendance and progression in education
- Provides learning support for those with multiple learning needs

Prison management:

- is accountable for the achieving prescribed education performance measures.

With a focus on reducing offending patterns of individuals, the Coates review specified the importance of quality education programs targeted to supporting the language literacy, numeracy, employability and digital skills of offenders in custody. This is reinforced with a consistent performance measures, consistent assessment and review processes, skilled staffing well prepared to work in incarcerated settings and defined accountabilities for the conduct and review of these programs.

Providing quality LLNED education programs delivered by qualified and experienced teachers, trainers and assessors to assist Tasmanians to support offenders develop the skills required to actively participate and contribute to community cohesion is critical. The establishment of consistent

³⁸ Unlocked potential: A review of education in prison (published: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444444/unlocked_potential.pdf)

standards, measures and approaches to track progress of individual learning plans provide a fertile resource to inform interjurisdictional policy and practice reforms as well as building a useful informative research base.

Connect42 recommend that a consistent electronic LLNED pre- and post-assessment approach and assessment tools be implemented across all of government. The benefits of a consistent approach will facilitate consistent evidence for inter and intra jurisdiction planning and assessment of effective LLNED delivery.

Just Sentences

A whole of system, whole of person approach to rehabilitation, and further investment in collaborative models of care which accurately assess underlying problems of offenders will contribute to skills development that support positive behavioural change and drops in recidivism. One of the first programs that Connect42 initiated in the prison system was *Just Sentences*, a prison literacy program where a speech pathologist worked individually with prisoners to support them to learn to read and write. This case study³⁹ illustrates that trusted referrals from professional collaborators can create great opportunities for change and that assessment tools which examine the roots of low-level literacy are crucial to understand client need, keep trust, and plan effective and respectful interventions.

John is a functionally illiterate 32-year-old client three years past his earliest parole opportunity. Low literacy has prevented him from seeking parole. His referral to *Just Sentences* was from his trusted and encouraging lawyer who was aware of the extent to which he avoided independent engagement with the written documentation process for seeking parole.

John had previously engaged with prison-based literacy programs on an ad hoc basis, but he had not completed them. It had been understood that he did not have the motivation to finish the course. However, his engagement in *Just Sentences* revealed that the full extent of his reading disability had not previously been diagnosed because it had not been measured with tools designed to sample the sound-processing and linguistic bases of literacy.

John had great interactive social skills; these can mask an assessor's full appreciation of the extent of a literacy disorder unless incisive, objective tools are used. Clients can 'fly under the radar', and the true extent of their literacy difficulties may remain undiscovered. This means they can be judged as low on motivation and maturity, when in fact, they are experiencing the learning goals and processes as opaque and confusing. When the shame that adult clients most usually feel about not being able to read is added to this, the potential is high for an overwhelming level of vulnerability in entering learning programs. This is how it was for John. Given this lifelong experience, considerable trust was required for John to try again at literacy intervention.

To keep the trust, the assessment process needed to be dignified, non-blaming, on-target, and most importantly, clearly explained to John. This included a thorough rationale for the tasks within the assessment, the results, and the intervention processes which address those results. Based on John's assessment results, intervention began. A total of 29 sessions with the speech pathologist were offered to John between January 2015 and October 2015 he attended 20 of these with varying degrees of enthusiasm. At the beginning he was interested and curious, but in some sessions, he was more difficult to engage, 'because his head wasn't in it' or he had only attended to seize an opportunity to leave his cell during a lock-down, in the last three sessions prior to reassessment he was focussed and engaged. In these sessions, self-reflective conversations were facilitated.

Despite John's varied engagement in the sessions, he encouraged a fellow learner who suffered from motivation issues to continue to attend. He also made substantial gains on the areas of skill measured. His ability to comprehend written text was statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

The Connect42 short film, [Matt's Story](#)⁴⁰, shares the lived experience story of another young man impacted by the justice system who was substantially positively impacted by a similar Connect42 literacy intervention run through Common Ground. Matt was supported by Connect42 in community under a diversionary order which enabled him to remain very connected to his children and community support workers. This was critical to his success.

Just Time

Connect42's *Just Time* parenting program builds relational attachment, reflection, and emotional regulation skills in participants. It is an 8-week program which has run successfully in the Tasmania Prison Service since 2014. Over that time 454 people have participated in the program. *Just Time* uses the internationally recognised [Circle of Security Parent DVD Program](#)⁴¹ as its central tool and is delivered by communication professionals with speech pathology training. It is a powerful program to run in the prison because it acknowledges participants as parents first, not prisoners. It provides participants with skills that disrupt negative intergenerational patterns of parenting in families, replacing them with behaviours that build relational attachment. The program is radically strengthened when participants can repeat the program when they are living with their children and can 'practise' the skills of the 'circle'.

Underpinning Connect42's delivery of *Just Time* is the cultivation of self-reflection by participants and support for expression of their parenting journeys as well as their experience as a child being parented. Founder, Rosalie Martin explains the relationship between [reflective parenting and language](#)⁴² and how *Just Time* supports growth of these relational attachment abilities in this short film clip.

In [Karen's Story](#)⁴³, Karen shares her story of drug addiction, the traumatic impact of sexual violence and how petty crime landed her in prison. In this moving nine-minute film Karen explains how Connect42's *Just Time* parenting program supported her rehabilitation and helped her become a more caring, positive and responsible parent.

Just Time was [evaluated](#) by the University of Tasmania in 2019 to understand the perceived benefits for program participants, the effectiveness of the facilitator program delivery and to provide feedback and recommendations to enhance future programs. It concluded that it was well run with significant benefits for participants, correctional staff, facilitators, and volunteers.⁴⁴

Earlier this year Connect42 engaged SGS Economics and Planning to undertake a retrospective Social Return on Investment analysis of *Just Time* to assess the benefits of the program through an economic lens. SGS concluded that the *Just Time* program yields significant welfare benefits in Tasmania, generating a benefit to cost ratio of 3.3 and a net present value of \$1.2 million. For every dollar investment in the program \$3.23 of benefits are return to the wider community.⁴⁵ The full report is attached at Appendix 1.

⁴⁰ *Matt's Story*, <https://connect42.org/blog/matts-story>, a short film coproduced by Connect42 and Blue Sky Films, 2022

⁴¹ Circle of Security International, a training program developed by K Hoffman, G Cooper and B Powell and published as *Changing toddlers' and preschoolers' attachment class* fact on: -The Circle of Security Intervention, in *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 74, 2006

⁴² <https://connect42.org/just-time>

⁴³ *Karen's Story* <https://youtu.be/21fYKYLck0> a short film coproduced by Connect42 and Blue Sky Films, 2021

⁴⁴ Connect42's *Just Time* Program Evaluation Report, Carmen Reed, Patrick Burton and Rob White, University of Tasmania, 2019

⁴⁵ Connect42 Social Return on Investment Analysis of *Just Time*, SGS Economics and Planning, p6 March 2023

Just Moving On

Just Moving On (JMO) is a program that emerged from the broad insights and learnings that developed through the early implementation of Connect42's work with *Just Time*. *JMO* is a throughcare program that supports people leaving prison with their communication and literacy skills so they can meaningfully reconnect with family and access community and work opportunities. Currently in its second year, this four-year program, funded by the Tasmanian Community Fund, will support up to 15 participant places each year. *JMO* is an innovative world-first program which is exploring a model of professional intervention that inventively combines evidence and best practice from across the professional domains of clinical therapy, criminology and sociology about what works for people leaving prison and reintegrating back to community.

It was first tested through a self-funded pilot *Mini-JMO* with one client, taking a throughcare and capacity building approach when she left prison. This client had a long history inside the child protection and justice systems but has now remained out of prison for four years, achieved full reunification with one of her three children, established access with her two other children, and maintained a stable relationship. The obvious economic benefits in this pilot are the elimination of the costs of prison stays and ongoing crime, and the direct savings in out of home care for children removed from parental control. Within the wider circle of the woman's family and friends there is the modelling of ways to break the cycle of recidivism and its direct linkage to the child safety system. The current iteration of *JMO* takes this early, mini pilot to the next level and has a focus on building integration pathways to employment. It builds relationships with the participants in prison from prison into structured engagement and skill building. This includes the high degree of problem solving for the complex barriers to building a sustainable, connected life in the community, and finally seeks employment placement.

<i>Just Moving On Project Objectives</i>
1. Increase in number of people in employment
2. Improved employment access for those experiencing barriers
3. Improved skills, confidence, resilience and experience for participants
4. Increased participation in training and education that leads to employment
5. Improved communication skills including language, literacy and interpersonal skills
6. Improved connections with family and community
7. Increased understanding of the needs and potential of people exiting the justice system
8. Sustainability of the project to continue to provide opportunities for Tasmanians

The *JMO* program seeks to achieve the overarching goal of employment while working to support participants to remain out of prison and not fall into the 51.1% of people leaving prison who are back in the justice system within two years. A whole of person model of rehabilitation is necessary to address the past trauma and complexity of participants' barriers and lives. The diversity of approach demonstrated by the communication therapists (speech pathologists) is an essential component of the work undertaken.

JMO currently has 20 participants in the program, so far four participants have secured employment, but the placements have been short lived. The reasons behind the loss of employment (and revocation of parole) relate to the complex underlying social environments of the participants, as well as the disruption to relationships caused by terms of incarceration. Securing and retaining employment rests upon many factors including, communication skills, emotional security and

regulation, effective family support and peer support, and a safe living environment. When these foundations are tenuous an employment objective can fail.

Connect42 explores and develops with participants the key organising constructs that are preconditions for employment. Learning how to manage interactions with people is central to having a successful experience in the workforce. Practising skills like getting along with their kids, negotiating the child safety system, settling children in school, structuring a calm life, establishing a safe home, and learning skills to maintain their children's safety and development, support participants to manage their own interactions functionally in their day-to-day life.

The full report for *Just Moving On* contains many case studies and lived experience stories, it is attached at Appendix 2.

The provision of, and participation in, services for people in prison and leaving prison (health, housing and legal services)

Leaving jail after serving a sentence can be a difficult and challenging time for individuals. The transition from prison to the outside world can be overwhelming, and former inmates may face a range of difficulties as they try to reintegrate into society. Daily life for JMO participants can be a sliding scale of emotional dysregulation as they try to rebuild relationships, find secure housing, manage limited finances and navigate complex government systems. In these circumstances employment is not a priority for them, however foundational communication skills are an essential part of job-readiness and building relational trust and strengthen the framework of rehabilitation which will stop recidivism and build more productive lives.

We have identified the following as pre-conditions/measures to meaningful community and workforce participation (i.e.);

- Accommodation
- Transport (inc. public & driver's licence)
- Commonwealth support services (i.e. Centrelink)
- Financial (inc. bank account, TFN)
- Proof of identity
- Utility services (i.e. power, phone, internet)
- Education records
- Drug and alcohol services
- Health services
- Mental health services
- Medication
- Parole and Community Corrections
- Conviction history
- Family connection
- Food security, cooking, cleaning, hygiene, sanitation
- Planning and scheduling

People exiting prison would benefit from a more cohesive and better resourced system of support to wrap around them as they navigate the areas listed above and rebuild their lives in community. Every aspect requires literacy, comprehension of complex systems, money, resilience and emotional regulation. The current lack of practical support services and ongoing financial hardship contributes to recidivism when life becomes overwhelming.

In working with returning citizens we have noticed that it takes, and this list is not exhaustive:

- Availability of personal support often beyond 9-5 working hours and flexibility in this availability
- Non-judgment, patience, persistence, expansion of dominion*, high degree of adaptability
- Identification of, and response to, the presence of responsibility-demanding narratives (e.g. 'they need to learn to take responsibility for ___') that are experienced by participants as confusing, diminishing or punitive
- Identification of the non-comprehension within our community of the functional impact of language disability upon people's lives
- Standing, and capacity to bridge the gaps between community members' expectations and participants' understanding and capacities
- Time. Time to 'be with' to support reregulation. Reflection can only follow reregulation and reflection takes time too
- Professional problem-solving
- Pro-social friendship networks

Housing remains the biggest impediment to our JMO participants when they leave prison. Many adults entering prison had previous experiences of homelessness, with 1 in 3 homeless in the 30 days prior to being incarcerated, with more than one-quarter (27%) of surveyed women in prisons were in short-term or emergency accommodation in the 30 days prior to being incarcerated⁴⁶. Further, 35% of people experienced homelessness upon release, with more than half (54%) of people leaving prison expecting to be homeless. 44% of people plan to stay in short-term or emergency accommodation if possible⁴⁷. In 2021-22, 67% of people in prison were identified as being at risk of homelessness⁴⁸. Having stable accommodation helps people exiting prison to transition successfully into society and reduces the likelihood of reoffending.

Prisoners applying for parole may experience difficulties securing appropriately located and affordable accommodation, leading to refusal of parole or breach of parole conditions and subsequent return to prison⁴⁹. Access to stable accommodation is critical for successful reintegration into the community and people exiting custody can be highly vulnerable to not having adequate and stable accommodation⁵⁰. After prison people can face stigma associated with a history of incarceration and discrimination from landlords and potential employers⁵¹. This is true for our JMO participants where provision of a suitable address post release is a condition of release on parole. The lack of social and supported housing and the housing environment more broadly across the state means many of our participants are unable to meet this parole condition. This has a measurable economic cost to Tasmania as people remain incarcerated for the full term of their sentence rather than being supported under parole conditions in their transition to community.

* Dominion is a criminal sociology term that refers to personal freedom within a social context. It is not an individual personal freedom that includes the non-dominion of others. It understands personal and social freedom as a shared, collective good that can be expanded for individuals and communities through intentional respect and support of the non-dominion freedoms of others.

⁴⁶ AIHW 2020 - <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports-data/population-groups/prisoners/overview>

⁴⁷ AIHW 2019 - <https://www.aihw.gov.au/news-media/media-releases/2019/may-1/prisoners-more-likely-to-be-homeless-unemployed>

⁴⁸ AIHW 2022 - <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-annual-report/contents/contents-exiting-custody-arrangements>

⁴⁹ Schetzer and StreetCare 2013 - https://www.pac.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2013.05.10_hps_report.pdf

⁵⁰ AIC 2018 - https://www.aic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-05/rr07_supported_housing_300418_0.pdf

⁵¹ Schetzer and StreetCare 2013 - https://www.pac.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2013.05.10_hps_report.pdf

The inter-relationship between housing insecurity and imprisonment and re-imprisonment is relatively well established. Post-release housing assistance can be an effective measure in addressing the imprisonment homelessness cycle. Critically, rates of re-imprisonment have shown to be less for ex-prisoners with complex needs who receive social housing compared with those who receive private rent assistance only⁵². Young people leaving youth detention can also become entangled in a cycle of detention and homelessness. Housing instability and homelessness are often cited as drivers of an increasing youth detention population, with young people remanded in detention due to a lack of appropriate options for accommodation⁵³. Among those released from detention, 8% of young people accessed homelessness support within 12 months of release⁵⁴.

The role of secure housing also impacts reconnection to family and in particular access to children. Our JMO participants all have children, many of whom are in the child safety system. With secure housing, our work with the parent has the economic and social benefits of:

- achieving family reunification and thus reduced costs in out of home care
- reducing the risk of participants' children entering the child safety system, and/or youth justice system; and,
- increasing the likelihood of participants' children's reengagement with the education system, improving life-long earning capacity
- increasing the likelihood of participants' children seeing the benefits of education and employment and these becoming realistic pathways, thus reducing risk taking and harmful behaviours

For the participant, the JMO program delivers capacity to sustain a productive and fulfilling life in the community and re-establish goals of returning to education, training, and employment. The benefits are readily measured through community impacts of:

- reduced cost of prison stays
- reduced cost of children in out of home care
- reduced risk of children entering the youth justice system
- reduced cost through reduced risk taking and harmful behaviours

There are measurable individual benefits of:

- improved earning capacity
- improved aspiration for children to remain in school (and out of justice/child safety systems)
- improved outcomes across social determinants
- there are also intangible benefits of enhanced community understanding of the challenges of leaving prison and of the enormous barriers that reintegrating citizens must navigate to gain and sustain employment

Our short film [Anthony's Story](#)⁵⁵ is the lived experience story of JMO participant Anthony Smith which continues to unfold. We made this film while Anthony was still in prison and was working on building his communication skills and was very hopeful that he could get a job, access his son and turn his life around. Anthony is currently living in a tent near the Hobart Rivulet because he can't get a house and is despairing of his situation.

⁵² Martin et al. 2021 - https://www.ahur.edu.au/sites/default/files/documents/2021-09/AHURI-Final-Report-361-Extending-prison-with-complex-support-needs-the-role-of-housing-assistance_0.pdf

⁵³ Cunneen et al. 2016; Richards 2011

⁵⁴ AIHW 2022 - <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/housing/shs-annual-report-2020-21/contents-2020-21/contents-extending-custodial-arrangement>

⁵⁵ *Anthony's Story*, <https://youtu.be/sPd1pJWvnY8> a short film produced by Connect42 and Blue Sky Films

During throughcare Anthony worked with Lisa (communications therapist) completing literacy assessments and undertaking a decent block of interventions. Anthony started to make some good progress, "it is really nice to see that *he* could see that progress and feel genuinely proud of himself. Anthony's therapist observed, "I don't suspect that that's a feeling that he's had much before in their life. So, you know, Anthony was receiving praise for his skills from an external person, me, but then, he could actually recognise it for himself."

"Anthony's got quite good pragmatic skills. At times he doesn't have the language to use, but he's got some pragmatic skills that work really well for him. He knows when to say thank you and can say thank you sincerely. He is continuing to develop those skills, as well. And learn from what other people will say."

The following interaction in this next story between Anthony and Lisa demonstrates the growth in his personal communication skills and understanding;

"Oh, Anthony, I've got to reverse park." I said, "Don't, don't you laugh at my reverse parking. I'm not a very good reverse parker." And I had Anthony in the car, who's this big guy, and my car's little, so we look a bit comical in there. Anyway, I'm reversing in and I actually did a really good one and I don't think he would've done this before. He goes, "Oh, Lisa, you did such a good reverse park. You're such a good reverse parker. Wow, that was really good." And Anthony kept on and on and on and on, and I thought, "Anthony's learnt that. He's learnt now how to *praise* because that's what I do when they get a new skill with their literacy. And it was just really obvious to me that Anthony saw that as a reason or as a situation where there was something that I was unsure of. I was saying, "Oh, I don't think this is going to go well. I'm not very good at that." And so Anthony said, "Oh, my role now is to tell you you've done a really good job."

This may seem small, yet this story shows that Anthony has got the whole intent of the communication situation. Anthony knew what his role was, and had words to use because he'd heard them spoken lots of other times.

"Oh, they told me the first three months out would be the hardest, but actually it's harder now." ~ Anthony

Anthony has demonstrated he is keen to do literacy work. However, since release less clinical sessions have occurred. Challenges with access to housing has seen Anthony moving between relatives (which at times gets a little overwhelming), Day and Night safe spaces (which he has brokered), and tent communities. Anthony is also supported by Beyond the Wire who have provided practical supports in the form of clothing, medical appointments, support payments and referral to other services as required.

Lisa (communication therapist) notes that working with Beyond the Wire with an intentional whole of person approach has been invaluable in navigating unfamiliar service areas and referral pathways. "Anthony has an imposing physical appearance yet continues to use rituals of communication in a way that works for him. Anthony recognises that the reaction he gets from people is this really nice warm connected reaction, then he is intentionally able to put things in place to get that back each time." This is supporting interactions with other services and organisations. Adjusting to release, Anthony is missing a lot of appointments, forgetting them and he doesn't have a way of keeping track. But he's able to get back on track each time because he knows how to do that. "Oh yeah, I'll phone [name] and I'll tell [name] I'm sorry and I'll make another appointment."

"Things like that have kept Anthony connected in the system, whereas, without doing that, people would've, I think, written him off a bit sooner. This is really useful because it makes him a really likable person. While we may not be doing as much literacy as Anthony would like to do, because his time at the moment is being taken up with navigating primary needs, it's giving him another chance at things. Because his communication is working well for him. ...

Now we are connecting our learning in prison to what's happening in Anthony's life now. He is learning and through our interactions I think he is at a stage where he can start to make some very explicit reflections on things, about what's happening in his life and his feelings, and connecting to that," ~ Lisa (Anthony's communications therapist).

Training and support initiatives for corrective service staff related to increasing individual well-being, professionalism, resilience and reduced absenteeism.

Just Training

One of the most difficult challenges of running a partly rehabilitative model in an incarceration setting is the complex task and attitude mix required from staff, particularly correctional officers. On one hand they are instruments of a punitive system, required to contain, control and deal with dysregulated prisoner behaviour or safety threats, using violence or confinement through isolation, reinforcing underlying offender trauma in order to keep themselves and other prisoners safe. While on the other hand they are expected to support a range of potentially useful but disconnected rehabilitative education programs. Their initial training is based around security and containment of dangerous criminals rather than the rehabilitation of traumatised and disadvantaged people. There is a values misalignment which they live every day and is conflicted and confusing. It is no surprise that there are high levels of stress, illness and absenteeism among prison officers.

Connect42 has been working with the Tasmania Prison Service to build a program for staff which complements a rehabilitative model of care for inmates. The *Just Training* program brings a trauma-informed package of learning that will grow TPS staff skills, confidence and awareness in their work with prisoners, remandees and with each other. The program starts with building self-awareness, the anatomy of trust, attachment styles and ruptures, relationships, communication, psychological and physical safety as well as some hard skills in de-escalation and working with people with communication needs.

Australian prison jurisdictions report the difficulty in attracting and retaining suitably qualified staff for teaching and training in their prisons. Further investment in preparing professionals to work in this complex learning environment is necessary for sustainability of programs and continuity of facilitator engagement. There is limited or no preservice training focus for those preparing to teach LLNED or VET or higher education courses within custodial settings. Basic qualification requirements for those employed through TAFE or RTO providers delivering in custodial settings is a certificate 4 in Training and Assessment. There are no components with this course or Diploma VET which include an understanding of teaching students within custodial settings.

Connect42 value working with the Tasmania Prison Service and recognise the work being undertaken by everyone. We work primarily with the Integrated Offender Management team and believe in the opportunities this model offers currently and into the future. Currently, all partners manager offenders together where possible in a case management mode. We see further investment would a broaden this partnership base with co-located teams wherever possible. This helps to ensure that a tailored approach is underpinned by comprehensive evidence and intelligence and that a wide range of rehabilitative interventions are available to support offenders' pathways out of crime. We have seen that this delivers a local response to local problems. With all offenders potentially in scope facing up to their responsibility with best use made of existing programs and whole of systems arrangements to achieve long-term desistance from crime.

Integrated Offender Management arrangements focus on cutting crime and reducing reoffending and victimisation. All partners:

- work collaboratively together to ensure a common understanding of the crime and reoffending threats facing the local community, to inform the priorities to be addressed through local Integrated Offender Management arrangements

- agree the means to share relevant information and intelligence as a basis for multi-agency problem-solving, focused on the offender rather than the offence
- ensure that there is a process to assign responsibility for managing prioritised offenders, wherever possible utilising a single lead professional approach.⁵⁶

Innovations and improvements to the management and delivery of corrective services that may be applied in Tasmania, including to future prison/detention centre design.

Connect42 does not support the building of a northern correctional facility. While we understand that 46% of prisoners are from the north of the State, most of these are minimum security prisoners. The proposed facility, at 270 beds, including maximum security and remand accommodation, would not provide the therapeutic model that is required to support restorative justice and rehabilitative principles under the Government's previous strategic plan⁵⁷. Two-thirds of people in prison in Tasmania have been to prison before. In addition, 58% of young people in Tasmania return to prison less than a year after being released.⁵⁸ Rather than the experience of prison helping people to turn their lives around, it entrenches and deepens disadvantage. Prison does not support people to build productive lives in our community. And prison does not make our communities safer.

The cost of running our prisons is rapidly escalating, consuming Tasmanian taxpayer dollars without yielding corresponding results in reducing recidivism.⁵⁹ Imprisonment is an expensive model that increases the likelihood of ongoing criminal justice system contact. There are significant long-term savings to be made by pursuing approaches which do not rely on imprisonment and are much more likely to reduce recidivism. We believe that investment in human and community services should be the Government's priority. This includes outreach investment in place-based localised therapeutic centres, the community sector and professional wrap-around whole-of-systems services, with communication skills which support rehabilitation at the core.

⁵⁶ Integrated Offender Management: Key Principles

⁵⁷ Breaking the Cycle: Tasmanian Corrections Plan (2010-2020)

⁵⁸ JRI Tasmania Report 2021 - State of Incarceration

⁵⁹ Productivity Commission on ROGS 2023 <https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2023/justice/corrective-services>

29 March 2022

Simon Scott
Committee Secretary
Legislative Council Government Administrative Committee 'B'
Parliament House
HOBART TAS 7000
Email: csjs@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Simon,

Re: Legislative Council Inquiry into Tasmanian Adult Imprisonment and Youth Detention Matters

SGS Economics and Planning is pleased to present our Final Report examining the Social Return on Investment (SROI) from Connect42's Just Time. Delivered in Tasmania's Risdon Prison by speech pathologists, the Just Time program empowers incarcerated parents and caregivers with the tools to forge healthier attachments with their children, peers, and the wider community. Our enclosed report is the culmination of an in-depth study commissioned by Connect42 and conducted between October 2022 and March 2023.

SGS' modelling indicates that every dollar invested in Just Time generates \$3.23 of benefits to the wider community in the avoided costs of social harms, improvements to participants' mental health, employment outcomes, and the lifetime earnings potential of their children, as well as reduced rates of reoffending and associated costs.

It was clear from our research that Just Time addresses the burdens of incarceration in profound ways. Just Time nurtures inmates' rediscovery of self-belief and self-worth through the positive connections of language, literacy and love. It acknowledges the hidden consequences of separation and other disabling effects of parental incarceration. It calls to action community leadership from all walks of life during the rehabilitative and restorative processes that contribute to an effective throughcare framework.

SGS Economics and Planning is a leading public policy consultancy. We are a team of economists, public policy professionals and data scientists who believe that sound economics must go beyond the measurement of output to shine a light on the human stories at the heart of thriving communities. It is our hope that the insights in this report highlight the potential of evidence-based strategies to disrupt the cycle of adult imprisonment and youth detention for happier and healthier communities.

Kind regards,



Michelle Tjondro
Associate
SGS Economics & Planning Pty Ltd
Canberra, Hobart, Melbourne, Sydney



Social Return on Investment Analysis of Just Time

Connect42

MARCH 2023





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OFFICES IN CANBERRA, HOBART, MELBOURNE, AND SYDNEY ON THE COUNTRY OF THE NGAMBRI/NGUNNAWAL/NGARIGO, MUWININA, WURUNDJERI, AND GADIGAL PEOPLES.

Acknowledgement of Country

SGS Planning and Economics acknowledges the First Nations Peoples of Australia and on whose Country we live and work.

SGS Planning and Economics acknowledges that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia are one of the oldest continuing living cultures on Earth, have one of the oldest continuing land tenure systems in the World, and have one of the oldest continuing land use planning and management systems in the World.

We pay our respects to the First Nations Peoples, past and present, and acknowledge their stewardship of Country over thousands of years.

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Executive summary

SGS was engaged to undertake a retrospective analysis of Just Time, a program for parents living in prison, to support a clear and robust statement of benefits through an economic lens.

Since its inception in 2014, Just Time has garnered wide esteem for empowering incarcerated parents and caregivers with the tools for secure relationship-building with their children.

Delivered in Tasmania's Risdon Prison by the not-for-profit, non-government organisation Connect42, Just Time embodies a human and dignified approach to supporting incarcerated parents forge healthier attachments with their children, their peers, and the broader community. The program combines the internationally renowned Circle of Security (CoS) Parenting¹ model, delivery by speech pathologists, and Connect42's expertise as a purpose driven not-for-profit organisation that works with people to create positive connections through language, literacy and love.²

Between 2018 and 2021, 352 participants enrolled in Just Time, of which 224 completed the program. The number of enrolled participants each year has grown 35 per cent from 97 to 131 between 2019 and 2021, and the average annual completion rate has grown from 55 per cent to 75 per cent over this period. The pandemic and related policies disrupted the delivery of parts of the program, and sometimes resulted in lower participation and completion rates.

In early 2023, SGS undertook a retrospective Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis to compare the costs and community benefits associated with the Just Time program as it was delivered 2018 and 2021.

Key social benefits of the program include:

- The avoided costs of social harms, specifically from alcohol, tobacco and other drug use,
- The benefits of improved mental health in parents (the program participants),
- The improved employment outcomes to parents,
- The improved lifetime earnings of children of parents who participate in Just Time, and
- Reduced rates of reoffending and associated societal costs.

Other benefits, not quantified, include:

- Enhanced social networks upon reintegration in society,
- Improved self-worth, and
- Improved relational trust.

¹ Circle of Security International (2022), Resources for Parents, <https://www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/resources-for-parents/>

² Connect42 (2022), About Us, <https://connect42.org/>

Our modelling indicates that the Just Time program yields significant welfare benefits in Tasmania, generating a benefits to cost ratio (BCR) of 3.23 and a net present value (NPV) of \$1.23 million. For every dollar invested in the program, \$3.23 of benefits are returned to the wider community.

Projects with a BCR above 1 and a NPV above zero are considered viable from a welfare economics perspective based on a comparison of monetised social, economic and environmental costs and benefits.

Just Time is a robust investment that continues to return positive performance indicators. Just Time continues to perform well under scenarios of a lower (4%) and higher (10%) discount rates, and even when a +/- 25% buffer in both costs and benefits is introduced.

The key beneficiaries of Just Time are (formerly) incarcerated parents, their children, and society as a whole. It is important to note the program Just Time:

- **Embodies a human and dignified approach to supporting incarcerated parents forge healthier attachments with their children, their peers, and the broader community.** Participants reported more positive behaviours in their day-to-day lives, greater self-belief in their own progress outside of the prison context, and an improved ability to cope with challenges.
- **Has a reach where the benefits extend far beyond the beneficiary groups of parents and their children.** Just Time relies on the support of facilitators, volunteers and Tasmanian Prison Service personnel to embed program concepts, communication skills and, most importantly, relational trust between all stakeholders. In doing so, every individual partakes in the rehabilitative and restorative process. Participants reported that facilitators offered unwavering support and often go above and beyond to help in the transition to community after life in prison.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Since its inception in 2014, Just Time has garnered wide esteem for empowering incarcerated parents and caregivers with the tools for secure relationship-building with child.

Delivered in Tasmania's Risdon Prison by the not-for-profit, non-government organisation Connect42, Just Time embodies a human and dignified approach to supporting incarcerated parents forge healthier attachments with their children, their peers, and the broader community. The program combines the internationally renowned Circle of Security (CoS) Parenting³ model, delivery by speech pathologists, and Connect42's expertise as a purpose driven not-for-profit organisation that works with people to create positive connections through language, literacy and love.⁴

To date, Just Time has graduated hundreds of parents in prison. As citizens returning to society, they are supported to grow the bonds of love and positive emotion with others.⁵

It is well-established that, compared to the general population, the Australian prison population is disproportionately characterised by disadvantage, marginalisation, and diminished access to the relationships that drive meaningful communication. Just Time responds by equipping parents in prison with the tools for secure attachment as a means of disrupting the cycle of crime and reoffending.

1.2 Purpose and objectives

SGS was engaged by Connect42 to undertake a retrospective Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis of Just Time for the period between 2018 and 2021. The objective is to quantify the social and economic returns of Just Time to bolster the rationale for continued public and private investment. Our analysis implements a robust method to ensure that study results are suitable for incorporation into business cases and funding applications.

1.3 Report structure

This report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 summarises the program and policy context of Just Time,
- Chapter 3 reviews the literature on the effects of prison programs on incarcerated parents, their children, and society, and
- Chapter 4 introduces the SROI method, analytical framework, and presents the analysis results.

³ Circle of Security International (2022), Resources for Parents, <https://www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/resources-for-parents/>

⁴ Connect42 (2022), About Us, <https://connect42.org/>

⁵ Connect42 (2022), Just Time, <https://connect42.org/just-time>

A note about terminology

This report uses ‘welfare benefits’ to describe the collective social, economic, and environmental dividends to society. The term derives from the field of welfare economics, which is concerned with how market structures and the allocation of goods and resources in the community determine the overall wellbeing of society. The use of ‘welfare’ in this study is distinct from its commonplace application to describe services and payments to people and households in response to employment, housing, family support, or other need.

2. Just Time program context

This chapter summarises the policy and program context of Just Time as background to the economic appraisal.

2.1 Overview

Since 2014, Just Time has attracted wide esteem for empowering incarcerated parents and caregivers with the tools for secure relationship-building with their children. The program has grown considerably in scale, from being championed and delivered by Connect42, initially on a wholly voluntary basis in 2014, to its present-day attendance throughout the year by inmates living in Risdon Prison.

Just Time is grounded in the CoS model of intervention, backed by decades of research on the value of secure attachment. Nonetheless, the program has necessarily and gradually evolved to incorporate program learnings and feedback. This is so that delivery is tailored to the diverse needs of the men and women living at Risdon Prison, located in Risdon Vale near Hobart, Tasmania, and operated by the Tasmania Prison Service (TPS), an agency of the Tasmanian Government's Department of Justice.

In addition to Just Time, Connect42 also administers a suite of complementary programs that provide relationship-based support for men and women in and exiting prison. These have included the Just Sentences⁶ literacy program and also now include the Just Moving On⁷ throughcare program. Therefore program continuity over the last decade and the longstanding partnership between Connect42, TPS and other proponents are a major asset for continued success.

More broadly, independent evaluation⁸ and stakeholder feedback also indicates alignment between Just Time and the mission of the TPS, which is to provide a safe, secure and constructive environment for prisoners that encourages rehabilitative prospects, personal development and safer communities.⁹

2.2 Key figures: 2018 to 2021

Between 2018 and 2021, 352 participants enrolled in Just Time, of which 224 completed the program.¹⁰ These figures include a small proportion of prisoners who repeat the program, either to make up for earlier non-completion or to refresh their knowledge. Discontinuation of Just Time generally coincides with the following factors: participants exiting prison before program conclusion, the disruptions

⁶ Connect42 (2023), 'Just Sentences', <https://connect42.org/just-sentences>

⁷ Connect42 (2023), 'Just Moving On', <https://connect42.org/just-moving-on>

⁸ Reid, Burton & White (2019) Connect42's Just Time Program Evaluation Report.

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/607e0f0e5e584b36c2326abf/t/60e6bfb1f3006732a1f4766b/1625735097130/Just_Time_Evaluation_Report_2019.pdf. A desktop study of the impact of *Just Time* upon recidivism and prisoner outcomes is also underway.

⁹ Tasmanian Department of Justice (undated), 'Vision and Purpose', <https://www.justice.tas.gov.au/prisonservice/about>

¹⁰ Summary figures calculated from Just Time Quarterly Reports (unpublished) for the period 2018-2021, supplied to SGS by Connect42.

imposed by the evolving coronavirus pandemic from 2020, and/or competing commitments in prisoners' activity schedules. Just Time completion rates per cycle varied between 44 per cent and 79 per cent, averaging 64 per cent across the study period (Table 1). The number of enrolled participants each year has grown 35 per cent from 97 to 131 between 2019 and 2021, and the average annual completion rate has grown from 55 per cent to 75 per cent over this period.

TABLE 1: JUST TIME PARTICIPANTS, CYCLES 1-15, 2018-21

Year	Cycle	# participants commencing	# participants completing	Completion rate [^]
2018	1	18	10	55%
2019	2	18	13	72%
	3	18	8	44%
	4	33	20	61%
	5	28	13	46%
2020	6*	24	14	58%
	7*	23	13	57%
	8**	16	11	69%
	9**	21	12	57%
	10**	22	12	55%
2021	11**	29	23	79%
	12**	25	19	76%
	13**	30	21	70%
	14**	20	14	70%
	15**	27	21	78%
Total		352	224	64%

Source: Collated from Just Time Quarterly Reports (Connect42, 2018-21). MHWP = Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison; RBMSP = Ron Barwick Minimum Security Prison; RPC = Risdon Prison Complex. *Denotes cycles significantly disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic. **Denotes cycles whose delivery was adapted to the changing circumstances of the coronavirus pandemic. ^Excludes partial completions.

15 cycles were funded under three delivery agreements (established in October 2018, April 2020 and January 2021) between Connect42 and the Tasmanian Government.

In August 2021, additional government funding of \$1.5 million was committed toward rehabilitation programs under the Tasmanian Department of Justice's Reduce Re-offending Program. Almost \$610,000 over the 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 financial years was allocated for Just Time.¹¹

¹¹ Tasmanian Government (2021), 'Continuing the focus on rehabilitation for our State's Corrections system', https://www.premier.tas.gov.au/budget_2021/budget_releases/continuing_the_focus_on_rehabilitation_for_our_state_s_corrections_system

2.3 Program features

Service delivery model

At present, Just Time operates with Tasmanian government funding under a model that contracts Connect42 to administer the program. Just Time facilitators are accredited speech pathologists working for Speech Pathology Tasmania. All facilitators receive training in the CoSP program by CoS International,¹² a TPS induction as preparation for prison attendance, and ongoing support from a Just Time Clinical Manager and Liaison Manager.

In earlier cycles 1-3 of Just Time (running from late 2018 to early 2019), speech pathologists who were trained by CoS International but who had yet to deliver the program in the prison context held the role of volunteer. This helped to train prospective facilitators, who would observe delivery under the guidance of a more experienced facilitator.¹³

The role of Just Time volunteers has since shifted. Notable community figures are now invited to volunteer to carry out several functions, such as transporting teaching aides, note-taking, preparation of morning or afternoon tea, and providing session feedback. This is with the aim of designing the Just Time experience to cue the innate universality of the parent-child relationship as a basis for other connections, no matter the many (in)visible barriers between the 'general' and prison populations:

'Another early motivating variable...is the intentional engagement of highly influential volunteers into the program. I drew on my networks to invite many persons who have their hands on the levers of power and voices on the airwaves of influence, to participate with us in the prison-based circles. This included the Tasmanian Governor, the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, Children's Commissioner, ABC radio presenters and other journalists, law professors, human rights activists, politicians and emerging politicians, leaders of social-change organisations, senior bureaucrats from within justice and communities, practitioners within employment agencies, donors, sponsors, and business influencers.

The intention in inviting these people to participate was/is to give them a powerful embodied experience of the forging of positive, trustful relationship across diverse life experiences, and within the rigid context of the prison. These simultaneous yet contrasting experiences counterpoint each other in ways that cause the invited participant to reflect newly and deeply. And to take some of their reflections, and thereby changed selves, back into their lives, dinner parties and influential workplaces. The invited participants' positive experiences in attending the program with the prisoners and facilitators, energises their renewed and 'lived' flow of insights and hope, into extant cultural narratives - for paradigm change. These participants gain new insights about restoration, redemption, punishment, humanisation of prisoners, equity of human dignity, equity of opportunity, the agency of oral language and literacy, possibility, hope, the damaging reality of structural violence and disempowerment, and so much more. Through the influences of their lives, these insights in our invited participants contribute to reform of society's response to crime in ways that will help to create flourishing for both individuals and communities.'

Rosalie Martin, Founder of Connect42 and Just Time Facilitator

¹² CoS International (2022), Circle of Security International – Company History, <https://www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/about/company-history/>

¹³ Reid, Burton & White (2019) Connect42's Just Time Program Evaluation Report. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/607e0f0e5e584b36c2326abf/t/60e6bfb1f3006732a1f4766b/1625735097130/Just_Time_Evaluation_Report_2019.pdf

Delivery structure and format

Just Time consists of the CoSP DVD Program[®], an 8-week program of attachment, relationship and wellbeing. In week 1, facilitators interview potential participants. This is not part of the main CoSP content; instead, it serves to introduce the program, provide opportunity to better understand prisoners' communication skills and to address any concerns.¹³

From weeks 2 to 8, participants partake in weekly, two-hour sessions that combine CoSP video content, guided reflections and discussions. Just Time is designed to support interactivity and shared dialogue by providing a safe space for expression and communication, however, participants are invited but not obligated to share responses. Rather, self-reflection is key.

In week 9, a graduation ceremony is held to mark successful program completion. This event is typically attended by special guests invited by Connect42.

Just Time is delivered in person. As experienced by many other close contact settings in 2020 and 2021, several cycles of Just Time were either significantly disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic or faced logistical challenges in adapting to the changing circumstances of pandemic management and recovery. On some occasions, this led to lower than anticipated completion rates, for example where sessions were cancelled or not delivered per their intended design.¹⁴

Delivery setting

Each of the 15 cycles between 2018 and 2021 were delivered in three facilities at Risdon Prison:

- The Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison for female prisoners of all security classifications,
- The Ron Barwick Minimum Security Prison for male prisoners, and
- The Risdon Prison Complex for male prisoners of medium and maximum security classification.

In time, there is potential for the program to be rolled out to other parts of the prison per recommendation 4 of the University of Tasmania's Just Time Evaluation Report (2019).¹⁵

Eligibility and enrolment

There are no eligibility requirements for Just Time, apart from being based in one of the three facilities at which the program is delivered.

Just Time enrolment is largely attributable to several drivers: word of mouth recommendations from previous participants, promotional material placed on notice boards and in the prison bulletin, and through a recommendation for candidature by TPS staff. A proportion of prisoners also repeat the program, either to pick up from where they left off or to refresh their knowledge of CoSP concepts.

¹⁴ This was the reason provided for 0 of 4 participants completing Cycle 7 in Risdon Prison Complex in 2020.

¹⁵ Reid, Burton & White (2019) Connect42's Just Time Program Evaluation Report.
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/607e0f0e5e584b36c2326abf/t/60e6bfb1f3006732a1f4766b/1625735097130/Just_Time_Evaluation_Report_2019.pdf

3. Effects of prison interventions

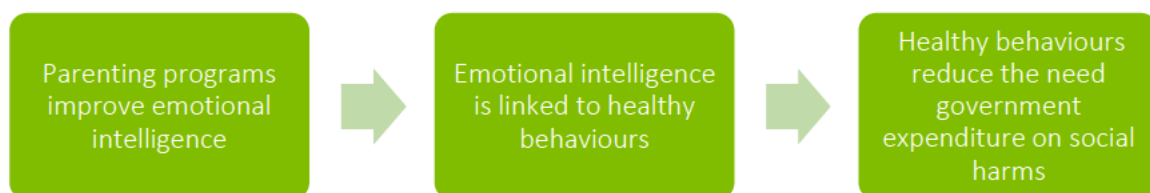
SGS undertook a literature review to investigate how prison-based rehabilitation programs benefit three primary stakeholder groups: incarcerated parents, their children, and society.

In responding to a research gap on the links between prison-based COSP program delivery and wider social and economic benefits, this study compiles evidence from the literature on several elements that motivate program investment: benefits to parents who attend the COSP program, parent-child attachment as a foundation for healthy childhood development, and the link between language, literacy and positive interpersonal behaviours throughout life.

By considering the ‘logic’ of each benefit below, this chapter provides the evidence underpinning the analytical framework in Chapter 4.

3.1 Benefits to parents in the criminal justice system

3.1.1 Avoided costs of social harms



The literature shows a significant positive link between prison-based parenting programs and parents’ emotional intelligence. Across a range of program types, methodological bases, and contact time with attendees, participants experienced improved attitudes toward parenting,¹⁶ increased empathy¹⁷ and self-understanding,¹⁸ and better understanding of child behaviours.¹⁹ Evaluations of the COSP program

¹⁶ Kennon, S. S., Mackintosh, V. H., & Myers, B. J. (2009). Parenting education for incarcerated mothers. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 10-30.

¹⁷ Simmons, C., Noble, A., & Nieto, M. (2013). Friends outside’s positive parenting for incarcerated parents: An evaluation. *Corrections Today*, 74(6), 45-48. ISSN:01902563

¹⁸ Bell, L. G., & Cornwell, C. S. (2015). Evaluation of a family wellness course for persons in prison. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 66(1), 45-57. ISSN:07402708

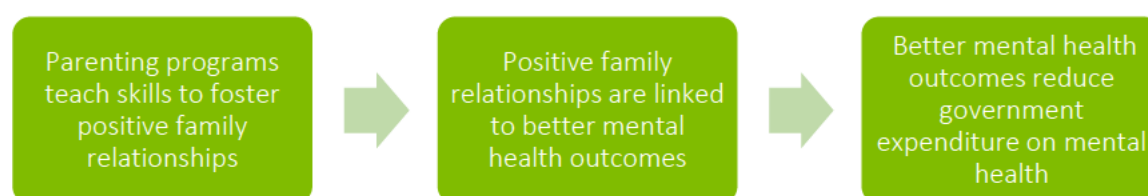
¹⁹ Rossiter, C., Power, T., Fowler, C., Jackson, D., Hyslop, D., & Dawson, A. (2015). Mothering at a distance: what incarcerated mothers value about a parenting programme. *Contemporary Nurse*, 50(2-3), 238-255. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10376178.2015.1105108>

have also demonstrated large improvements in caregiving behaviours maintained at one-year follow up,²⁰ although the range of effects and their longevity may vary with program design and duration.²¹

Emotional intelligence refers to a person's 'self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skills at appropriate times and ways in sufficient frequency to be effective in the situation'.²² Research shows that having higher emotional intelligence reduces one's physical and psychological health risk behaviours across the life course, such as drug and alcohol dependence, poor relations with friends, poor diet and exercise.²³

The welfare-economic case for improving population health is clear. Public health policy has long recognised that many leading causes of death and disability arise from largely preventable risk factors, and that 'addressing those risk factors is an efficient use of governments' money'.²⁴ Recent estimates place the economic impacts of alcohol use in Australia at \$66.8 billion, \$4.5 billion for cannabis use, and \$5 billion for methamphetamine use, derived from the costs of premature death, lost quality of life, and workplace costs and absenteeism.²⁵

3.1.2 Improved mental health



Similarly, studies show that prison-based parenting programs have positive effects on family relationships and parenting capacities. Studies into the effectiveness of a 20-week intensive CoS program have found that parents experienced decreased levels of caregiver helplessness,²⁶ negative emotions and rejection towards the child.²⁷

²⁰ Huber, A., McMahon, C. A., & Sweller, N. (2015). Efficacy of the 20-week circle of security intervention: Changes in caregiver reflective functioning, representations, and child attachment in an Australian clinical sample. *Infant mental health journal*, 36(6), 556-574.

²¹ McMahon, C., Huber, A., Kohlhoff, J., & Camberis, A. L. (2017). Does training in the Circle of Security framework increase relational understanding in infant/child and family workers?. *Infant mental health journal*, 38(5), 658-668.

²² Boyatzis, R. E., Goleman, D., & Rhee, K. (2000). Clustering competence in emotional intelligence: Insights from the Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI). *Handbook of emotional intelligence*, 99(6), 343-362.

²³ Brackett, M. A., Mayer, J. D., & Warner, R. M. (2004). Emotional intelligence and its relation to everyday behaviour. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 36(6), 1387-1402.; Saklofske, D. H., Austin, E. J., Galloway, J., & Davidson, K. (2007). Individual difference correlates of health-related behaviours: Preliminary evidence for links between emotional intelligence and coping. *Personality and individual differences*, 42(3), 491-502.

²⁴ World Health Organization. (2015). *Promoting Health, Preventing Disease the Economic Case: The Economic Case*. OECD Publishing.

²⁵ AIHW (2022), Alcohol, tobacco & other drugs in Australia: Economic impacts, <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/alcohol/alcohol-tobacco-other-drugs-australia/contents/impacts/economic-impacts>

²⁶ Huber, A. McMahon, C., & Sweller, N. (2015). Improved child behavioural and emotional functioning after Circle of Security 20-week intervention. *Attachment & Human Development*, 17(6), 547-569.

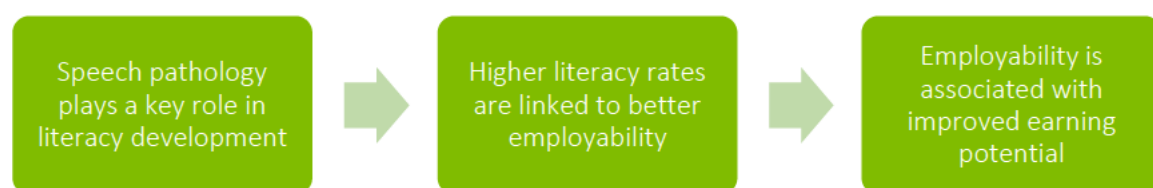
²⁷ Kohlhoff, J. Stein, M. Ha, M., Mejaha, K. (2016). The Circle of Security Parenting (COS-P) intervention: pilot evaluation. *Australian Journal of Child and Family Health Nursing*.

Access to a ‘positive’ environment in which one enjoys stable and harmonious family relationships is linked to better mental health outcomes.²⁸ For example, a 2016 survey of Victorian parents found that parents’ mental health was positively associated with receiving understanding and support from a partner or other caregiver, as well as satisfaction with how parenting duties were shared and their confidence in parenting.²⁹

Poor population mental health results in a range of direct and indirect economic implications for individuals and governments: lower productivity, higher welfare payments, lost taxes, and health system burden. Therefore the ‘avoided costs’ method may be applied to monetise the economic value of improving mental health outcomes.

In 2019-20, \$11 billion or 7.6 per cent of government health expenditure in Australia was spent on mental health related services; equivalent to \$431 per capita.³⁰ In 2019-20, the Tasmanian government spent \$136.9 million on specialised mental health services, or \$253.59 per capita. In terms of hospital care, a report from 2011 estimated the cost of one night in an Australian mental health facility to be \$1,745.³¹ This represents a cost of \$2,099 in 2021 (after adjusted for inflation).³²

3.1.3 Improved earning potential



Speech language pathologists play a key role in literacy development and functional communication needs, combining expertise in language development, language acquisition and diagnostic-prescriptive approaches to assessment and intervention.³³ Unlike the Just Sentences program, improving literacy is not the primary objective of Just Time. However, evidence from the literature suggests that many features of Just Time delivery – facilitated by an accredited speech pathologist, a small-group peer to peer discussions, reflective dialogue – may nonetheless lay the foundations for improved literacy.³⁴

²⁸ Torres-Soto, N.Y., Corral-Verdugo, V. Corral-Frías, N.S. (2022). The relationship between self-care, positive family environment, and human wellbeing. *Wellbeing, Space and Society*, 3.

²⁹ Millward, C. Matthews, J. Wade, C. Forbes, F., & Seward, A. (2018). Parent mental health Research Brief. *Parenting Research Centre*.

³⁰ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2022). *Expenditure on mental health services*. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/030bb981-9de2-4520-8831-d9ddff1f6c4a/Expenditure-on-mental-health-related-services-2019-20.pdf.aspx>

³¹ MacKenzie, D. Flatau, P. Steen, A., & Thielking, M. (2016). The cost of youth homelessness in Australia.

³² Reserve Bank of Australia. (2023). *Inflation Calculator*. <https://www.rba.gov.au/calculator/annualDecimal.html>

³³ Spracher, M. M. (2000). Learning about literacy: SLPs play key role in reading, writing. *The ASHA Leader*, 5(8), 1-19.

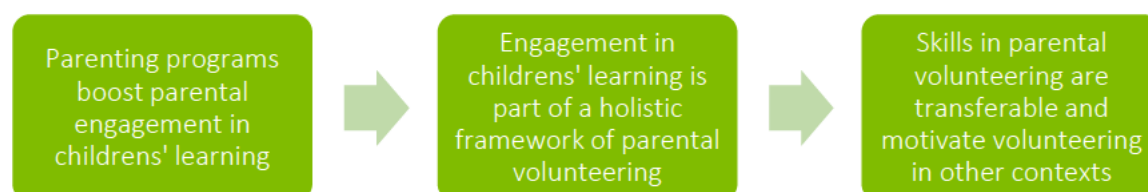
³⁴ Bennett, J., Hogarth, S., Lubben, F., Campbell, B., & Robinson, A. (2010). Talking science: The research evidence on the use of small group discussions in science teaching. *International Journal of Science Education*, 32(1), 69-95.

Literacy as a foundation for lifelong learning is particularly important for vulnerable populations who have been 'excluded from or failed to acquire basic competencies through formal schooling'.³⁵ The Australian prison population has lower levels of educational attainment and a higher prevalence of learning difficulties compared to the general population.³⁶ Two per cent of Australian prisoners have not had formal schooling, while more than a third have not completed secondary education beyond Year 8.³⁷

Work is already underway to ensure that Just Time attendees with lower literacy levels are supported in their ability to effectively and meaningfully participate in sessions and to achieve desired outcomes. This is in response to a 2019 evaluation of Just Time, which recommended pre-program literacy checks, modifying program materials to suit comprehension levels, and strategies for encouraging participants to ask questions.³⁸

Literacy, numeracy and educational attainment are widely recognised determinants of labour market and economic success.³⁹ Econometric modelling in the Australian context estimates that an increase in one skill level⁴⁰ in literacy is associated with an increased probability of employment of 2.4 and 4.3 percentage points for men and women respectively.⁴¹ Furthermore, studies have calculated average Australian wage rates by literacy skill level and gender.⁴² This report applies these metrics to the data assess the benefit of improved literacy skill level that may be achieved from Just Time participation.

3.1.4 Higher propensity for volunteering



³⁵ Hanemann, U. (2015). Lifelong literacy: Some trends and issues in conceptualising and operationalising literacy from a lifelong learning perspective. *International review of education*, 61(3), 295-326.

³⁶ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Mental Health Services in Australia. (2015). *The health of Australia's prisoners 2015*. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/9c42d6f3-2631-4452-b0df-9067fd71e33a/aihw-phe-207.pdf.aspx?inline=true>

³⁷ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Mental Health Services in Australia. (2019). *Adult prisoners*. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-welfare/adult-prisoners>

³⁸ Reid, C., Burton, P., & White, R. Connect42's Just Time Program Evaluation Report 2019.

³⁹ Chiswick, B. R., Lee, Y. L., & Miller, P. W. (2003). Schooling, literacy, numeracy and labour market success. *Economic Record*, 79(245), 165-181.

⁴⁰ Skill level here refers to the OECD's (2013) 5-level classification of literacy skills. A description of each skill or proficiency level is provided in Table 2.2 of Desjardins, R., Thorn, W., Schleicher, A., Quintini, G., Pellizzari, M., Kis, V., & Chung, J. E. (2013). OECD skills outlook 2013: First results from the survey of adult skills. *Journal of Applied Econometrics*, 30(7), 1144-1168.

⁴¹ Shomos, A., & Forbes, M. (2014). Literacy and Numeracy Skills and Labour Market Outcomes in Australia, Productivity Commission Staff Working Paper, Canberra.

⁴² Ibid

Parenting programs share a common aim to enhance parenting capacity by imparting the tools and techniques that promote positive behaviours and parent-child relationships. Parents who enrol in these programs are typically motivated to help their children succeed, and value their own relationship with others as part of the holistic educational and social development of their children. It is this motivation that also shapes how and why parents become and stay engaged in their childrens' learning.⁴³

According to the 'Framework of Six Types of Involvement' developed by Joyce Epstein, volunteering is part of parental involvement, along with parenting, communicating, learning at home and decision making.⁴⁴ The framework also considers volunteers to be any parents that can support school goals and childrens' learning or development in any way, at any place, and at any time not just during the school day and at the school building.⁴⁵ Thus, outside of the school context, the communication and relationship-building outcomes achieved with the learnings from Just Time contribute to the broader context of volunteering and modelling positive behaviours for others.

To quantify the monetary value of volunteering, SGS adopts the leisure time method of the Australian Transport Assessment and Planning Guidelines. All volunteering hours are treated as leisure time and valued at 40 per cent of seasonally adjusted full time Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) for Australia.⁴⁶ Data from ABS 2022 shows that AWE for an adult full-time worker is \$1,835.2,⁴⁷ or \$48.3/hour, assuming a 38-hour work week. As a result, volunteering is valued at approximately \$19.32/hour.

3.1.5 Established social networks on reintegration to society

While included in the discussion here, this benefit is not monetised in the SROI framework. In the absence of established methods, valuation is complex with potentially wide margins of error, and therefore the benefit was not quantified.

Recently released prisoners face a range of social, economic and personal challenges upon their release into the community. As noted earlier, the link between offending and social disadvantage means that upon release from prison, many formerly incarcerated individuals often grapple with poor educational attainment, a lack of employment history, debt, and/or poor mental and physical health.⁴⁸ Furthermore, it is not uncommon for the period spent in prison to disrupt pre-established social and familial networks, causing former prisoners to lose contact with their children and others in their lives.

During the Just Time program, prisoners have the opportunity to establish relationships of trust with other participants, facilitators, volunteers, and TSP personnel. Post-release, the 2019 program evaluation recommended investigating the feasibility of connecting recently released participants with an external CoSP provider or TPS case worker to facilitate smoother transitions into the community.

⁴³ Mapp, K. L. (2003). Having their say: Parents describe why and how they are engaged in their children's learning. *School Community Journal*, 13(1), 35.

⁴⁴ Epstein, J. L. (1992). School and Family Partnerships. *Center on Families, Communities, Schools, and Children's Learning*.

⁴⁵ Epstein, J. L. (1995). School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we share. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 76(9), 701–712.

⁴⁶ Australian Transport Assessment and Planning. (2016). Australian Transport Assessment and Planning Guidelines/PV2 Road Parameter Values

⁴⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2022). *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia*.

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/average-weekly-earnings-australia/may-2022>

⁴⁸ Borzycki, M., & Baldry, E. (2003). Promoting integration: the provision of prisoner post-release services. *Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice*, no. 262. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.

Such actions may help to break the cycle of reoffending by addressing the predisposing factors to criminal activity and by supporting physical and social needs in prison and via throughcare.⁴⁹

3.1.6 Improved sense of self-worth

This benefit is included in the discussion here, but not monetised in the SROI framework. In the absence of established methods, valuation is complex with potentially wide margins of error.

Feedback from Just Time participants indicates that an improved sense of self-worth was a benefit of participating in the program, both as a parent and as a valued member of the community. Consultation with former participants of the program showed clear evidence of improved self-worth and with that, improved relationships with loved ones and neighbours. Additional detail from consultation with Just Time participants is included in section 3.4 below.

3.1.7 Improved relational trust

This benefit is not included in the SROI framework as it is considered a flow-on or secondary effect of several other benefits: improved mental health, established social networks on reintegration to society, and improved sense of self-worth. However, the concept of relational trust is outlined here as core to the practices and relational dynamics between parents, caregivers and children that are promoted by Just Time.

Relational trust is based on the belief that ‘the behaviour of another person or a group will be altruistic and personally and professionally beneficial’.⁵⁰ Although the concept originated in the educational setting to describe the types of exchanges that occur within the school community,⁵¹ the benefits of relational trust offer useful guidance when designing the pre- and post-release pathways for people exiting prison.

Creating relational trust has many benefits. Through the principles of mutual respect, personal regard, integrity, and confidence in the competence of Just Time facilitators and volunteers, relational trust may help to reduce the sense of risk associated with imminent change⁵² and forge a more certain pathway to more constructive social exchanges outside of prison. Within the prison setting, relational trust is shown to be a latent yet powerful element of cohesion between prisoners, whereas declining trust leads to fractured relationships and negative impacts to prisoner wellbeing.⁵³

⁴⁹ Makkai, T. (2003). Promoting Integration: The Provision of Prisoner Post-release Services.

⁵⁰ Charteris, J., Page, A., Anderson, J., & Tomkinson, E. (2020). What is relational trust and how do we foster it in our schools?. *Good Teacher Magazine*.

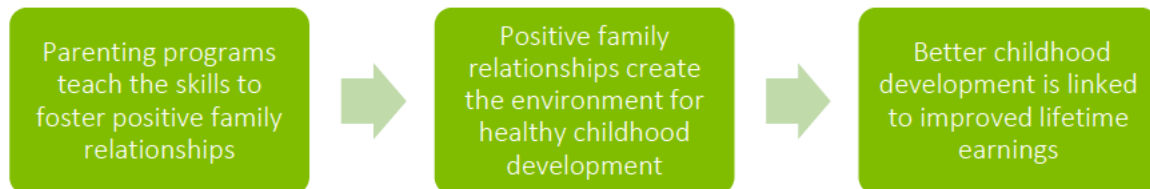
⁵¹ Bryk, A. S., & Schneider, B. (2002). Trust in Schools: A Core Resource for Improvement. *Russell Sage Foundation*.

⁵² Bryk, A. S., & Schneider, B. (2003). Trust in schools: A core resource for school reform. *Educational leadership*, 60(6), 40-45.

⁵³ Liebling, A. & Arnold, H. (2012). Social relationships between prisoners in a maximum security prison: Violence, faith, and the declining nature of trust. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 40(5).

3.2 Benefits to children of incarcerated parents

3.2.1 Improved lifetime earnings



The quality of a child's attachment relationship with his or her primary caregiver is a key determinant of emotional development.⁵⁴ Yet the Australian prison population is disproportionately characterised by disadvantage and diminished access to the relationships that drive meaningful communication. 18 per cent of prison entrants had at least one parent or guardian in prison as a child.⁵⁴ Negative externalities often result, such as the 'psychological strain from the separation experience, learnt harmful behaviour or a reduction in household income with subsequent adverse effects on human capital investment'.⁵⁵

Just Time and similar interventions equip participants with the communication skills to nurture a more positive household environment for childhood development. The benefits of healthy childhood development extend far into overall life opportunity, with children more likely to do well at school and earn more as adults.⁵⁶

In the development of cost-benefit analysis framework for non-capital educational initiatives in New South Wales, SGS (2022) has previously estimated that improvements in school performance, measured by test score increases, is associated with a 14 per cent uplift in lifetime earnings for primary school students and a 7 per cent uplift for high school students.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Note that in some cases, imprisonment of a parent or caregiver may afford a degree of protection to the child and other family members, however this statistic demonstrates the adverse intergenerational effects. Productivity Commission (2021), *Australia's Prison Dilemma – Research Paper*, <https://www.pc.gov.au/research/completed/prison-dilemma/prison-dilemma.pdf>

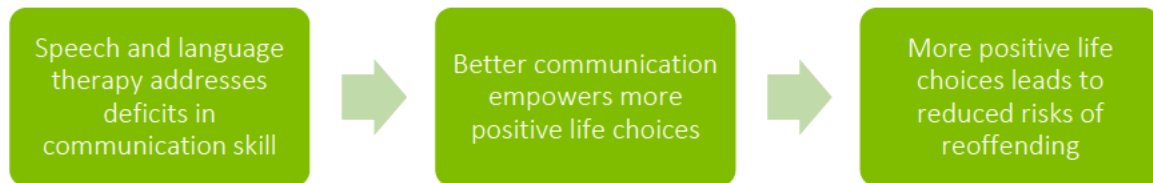
⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Hansen, K. (2016). Early childhood development: A smart investment for life. *The World Bank Blogs*.

⁵⁷ SGS Economics and Planning. (2022). 'Cost-benefit analysis framework for non-capital educational initiatives'.

3.3 Benefits to society

3.3.1 Reduced recidivism



Studies have found that education and training is positively associated with reduced recidivism. Both the content of the programs (for example: raising literacy levels, programs teaching skills for positive transition to society) and the number of classes completed by prisoners appear to be correlated with improved post-release outcomes.⁵⁸ Recidivism within two-years post release for ex-inmates is estimated to be 50.4 per cent in Tasmania in 2022.⁵⁹

A recent economic evaluation of speech pathology interventions for Australians with speech, language and communication needs estimates between \$3,637 and \$7,635 in incremental cost savings per individual for adults at the point of justice custody and who participate in an oral communication intervention.⁶⁰ In the UK, the first-year reconviction rate among ex-prisoners who had begun a general education course was moderately lower than the national average, at 28 per cent compared to 44 per cent.⁶¹ Other evidence presented shows a reduction in recidivism of between 4.5 per cent to 23 per cent if an intervention program has taken place⁶².

A reduction in recidivism results in the benefit of avoided costs to the governments. In 2020-2021, Tasmania's real net operating expenditure was \$385 per prisoner per day.⁶³

The median length of sentence for Tasmanian inmates of between 5 and 36 months (excluding Homicide and sexual assault)⁶⁴, any reduction in recidivism will have a benefit to the state through lower costs, in addition to the benefits to others as well.

In addition, and this was not monetised, reduced recidivism results in less crime and associated societal costs in terms of damages to assets and goods and health due to harm.

⁵⁸ Giles, M. (2016). Study in prison reduces recidivism and welfare dependence: A case study from Western Australia 2005-2010. *Trends and issues in crime and criminal justice*, (514), 1-9. ; Mohammed, H., & Mohamed, W. A. W. (2015). Reducing recidivism rates through vocational education and training. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 204, 272-276.

⁵⁹ Productivity Commission (2022) – Report on Government Services 2022 Part C

⁶⁰ Dowse, L., Cronin, P., Reeve, R., & Addo, R. (2020). Economic evaluation of the impact of speech pathology services on criminal justice outcomes.

⁶¹ Hartshorne, M. (2006). The Cost to the Nation of Children's Poor Communication. *I CAN Talk Series* - Issue 2

⁶² Productivity Commission (2021) – Australia's Prisoners Dilemma

⁶³ Tasmania Prison Service - Department of Justice. (2022). *Budget Estimates Brief*. https://www.justice.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/669630/Budget-Estimates-Briefings-2022.PDF

⁶⁴ ABS (2021) – Prisoners in Australia – Table 25

3.4 Evidence from stakeholder engagement

SGS supplemented the above research with additional consultation. This took the form of 1:1 phone interviews and participation in a cycle of the Just Time program.

3.4.1 CoSP program

At the beginning of this study, Connect42 invited the SGS project team to participate in a cycle of the CoSP program attended by fee-paying members of the community. These sessions took place over 8 weeks between October and December 2022.

While acknowledging the differences in delivery mode and target audiences of Just Time and the sessions attended by SGS team, the experience nonetheless highlighted the richness of the CoSP framework and the role of the facilitator and the group setting in realising program benefits. This experience also provided a valuable frame of reference for subsequent consultation, outlined below.

3.4.2 1:1 interviews

In February 2023, SGS interviewed former participants of Just Time. We are grateful to these individuals who volunteered their time and feedback. 2 interviewees were formerly incarcerated and attended Just Time while in prison, while 1 interviewee was the mother of a former prisoner who upon release participated in a Circle of Security program delivered by a speech pathologist in community as part of the Just Moving On program.

Several common themes emerged from these conversations. Interviewees said that Just Time:

- Marked an important inflection in their self-belief, and that they would be a different parent if not for the program,
- Enabled their discovery of the ‘possibilities for a different life’,
- Renewed their motivation and drive to seek out positive social influences and to make better life choices,
- Improved their relationships with family members and neighbours, and
- Gave them the courage to face day to day stresses head-on.

It was also clear from speaking to these individuals that the Just Time facilitator was a critical enabler of many program benefits. Volunteers were grateful for their facilitators being on hand to offer practical advice on making friends, resolving grievances, and fostering healthy behaviours.

Some paraphrased comments made by the interviewees included:

- ‘I wouldn’t know where I would be without her (the facilitator). I’ve been three years out of jail now.’
- ‘The program provided me the confidence to make friends with the neighbours. I now bring out the rubbish for my elderly neighbours, and she makes lasagna for us for dinner. I would have never thought about doing things like that.’

4. SROI of Just Time

To bolster the justification for Just Time investment, SGS undertook a SROI analysis to compare the estimated program costs with the social and community benefits associated with the Just Time program.

SGS' modelling indicates that the Just Time program yields significant welfare benefits, generating a benefit to cost ratio (BCR) of 3.23 and a net present value (NPV) of \$1.23 million.

Projects with a BCR above 1 and a NPV above zero are considered economically viable based on the quantification of costs and benefits.

An overview of the method is provided below (section 4.1), followed by an outline of how costs and benefits are monetised (section 4.2), and the results of the analysis (section 4.3). An efficiency assessment and sensitivity analysis are also applied as part of quality assurance and to mitigate bias in the conclusions. Section 4.4 discusses several program costs and benefits not included in the modelling, either because data was not available to enable monetisation or because there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate the independent effect of Just Time on those outcomes. Nonetheless, they are relevant factors in future investment decisions.

4.1 Method

SROI analysis is derived from the Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) method, a widely used tool for assessing the monetised costs and benefits of a policy, intervention or investment. Compared to CBAs, SROIs typically entail a stronger emphasis on stakeholder engagement to understand first-hand the effects of the investment being analysed, as well as the returns being generated for various stakeholder groups – not just the investor.⁶⁵

The aim of SROI is to determine whether a net benefit to society was, or will be, created. Evaluative SROIs like the present study are conducted retrospectively and reference actual outcomes that have taken place, while forecast SROIs aim to predict social value creation should the program or policy meet its intended outcomes.⁶⁶ The Australian Social Values Bank (2018) provides that:

An SROI is an outcomes-based measurement tool that helps organisations to understand and quantify the social value they are creating...SROI calculates a ratio score which outlines for every dollar invested in the program, how many dollars of social return have been created.

⁶⁵ Hamelmann C, Turatto F, Then V, Dyakova M. Social return on investment: accounting for value in the context of implementing Health 2020 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2017 (Investment for Health and Development Discussion Paper).

⁶⁶ Social Value UK (2012), A guide to Social Return on Investment, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/60dc51e3c58aef413ae5c975/t/60f7fa286b9c6a47815bc3b2/1626864196998/Th+e+SROI+Guide-2012.pdf>

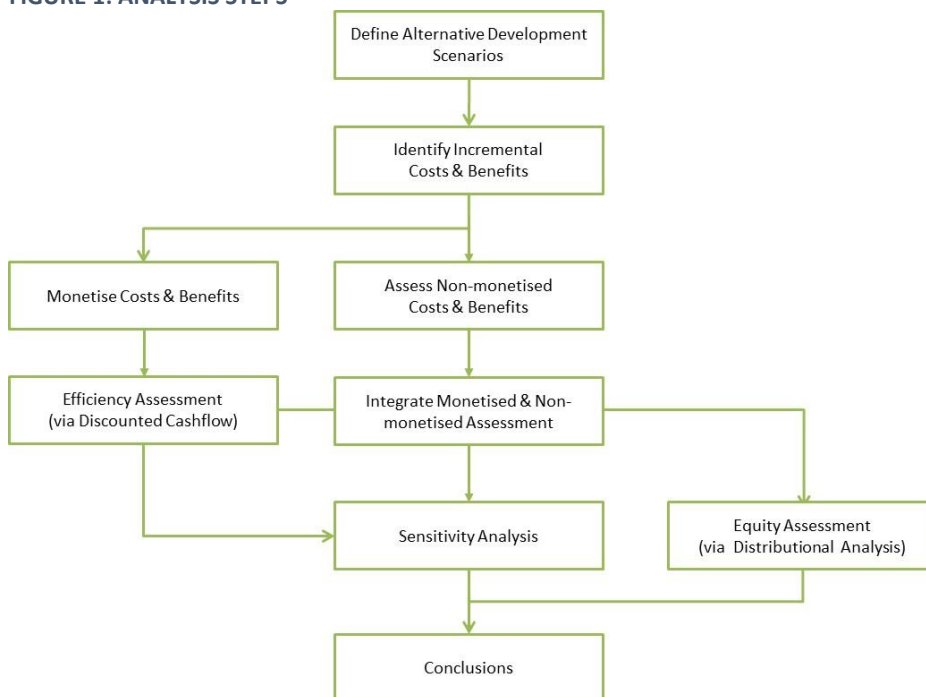
Any ratio where the return is higher than 1:1 is worth doing, but the larger the difference in the ratio in favour of social benefit, the larger your impact has been.⁶⁷

CBAs and related methods are increasingly popular in numerous areas of policy research. Faced with competing investment options, access to a clear and concise statement of cost effectiveness is a powerful tool for policymakers. That is, while the primary purpose of prison intervention programs may not be economic, defensibility on economic grounds is often required. So too has public demand for accountability and transparency in the allocation of government expenditures led to the growing application of CBA and related methods to inform decision-making.

In the field of criminal justice research, there is a relative paucity of Australian case studies investigating the economics of prison programs compared to the work undertaken in the United Kingdom and in the United States.⁶⁸ This study therefore contributes to the body of literature on the benefits of rehabilitation within the Tasmanian prison context and the mechanisms by which crime prevention may be mediated through the effects of secure attachment.

The main steps in a CBA/SROI analysis are summarised in Figure 1. The first step involves scoping the analysis to identify which options are being compared. In this analysis, the base or reference case is where incarcerated parents do not participate in Just Time before they exit prison. Under the project case, incarcerated parents attend a cycle of Just Time during their time in prison.

FIGURE 1: ANALYSIS STEPS



Source: SGS (2022)

⁶⁷ Australian Social Values Bank (2018), 'CBA vs SROI – Which is the better social impact measurement approach?', https://asvb.com.au/2018/12/11/cost_benefit_analysis_vs_sroi/#:~:text=CBA%20is%20the%20oldest%20and,stakeholders%20in%20the%20measurement%20process.

⁶⁸ Dossetor, K. (2011). *Cost-benefit analysis and its application to crime prevention and criminal justice research*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.

Next, costs and benefits are identified and monetised where possible. Direct costs incurred through program implementation are generally straightforward, however other cost elements may also need to be included. These include indirect (e.g. when programs run after hours and incur additional overhead in utilities; venue hire), intangible (i.e. costs lacking direct market value) and opportunity costs (i.e. the loss of other opportunity through the pursuit of the investment being analysed).

Determining and monetising the benefits of a program is commonly regarded as the most difficult step in the analysis,⁶⁸ and there are inherent complexities in ascribing an effect or benefit to a program. Care should be taken to avoid double counting benefits, biases in the valuation technique, and to canvass established evidence of benefits' independent effects.

The efficiency assessment involves adjusting the value of monetised costs and benefits to account for inflation and the time value of money. This step relates to several major features of the CBA, which is to control for differences in comparative monetary value and differences in study periods.⁶⁹ A discount rate of 7 per cent is generally accepted. Since discount rates are utilised to account for risk, past costs and benefits do not require discounting. That is, it is only future cashflows that require adjustment for risk and therefore, discounting.

Distributional assessment is undertaken when an intervention is likely to impact population cohorts in different ways. A qualitative description may suffice if disparity in the effect appears low, otherwise an in-depth calculation of the gains and for whom they are concentrated may be required.⁷⁰

Lastly, sensitivity analysis is performed to strengthen the analysis and minimise bias in the conclusions. Sensitivity analysis tests how well the project case withstands changes to certain assumptions or other influencing factors. For example, by lowering or raising the discount rates in the efficiency assessment, or assuming an altered degree of program benefit.

4.1.1 Valuation framework

The valuation framework is set out in Table 2. It is based on our synthesis of primary and secondary sources:

- The literature review in Chapter 3,
- Established methods for monetising costs and benefits,
- SGS participation in the Just Time program between October and December 2022,
- Interviews facilitated by SGS with Just Moving On participants in February and March 2023
- Viewing of short films (unpublished) commissioned by Connect42 to showcase learner journeys.

⁶⁹ Welsh BC & Farrington DP 2001. Monetary value of preventing crime, in Welsh B, Farrington D & Sherman L (eds), Costs and benefits of preventing crime. Colorado: Westview Press

⁷⁰ Australian Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (2020), Distributional Analysis: Guidance Note, <https://oia.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-06/distributional-analysis-guidance-note.pdf>

TABLE 2: COST AND BENEFIT PARAMETERS IN THE SROI FRAMEWORK

Costs *		Monetised?
Speech pathologist (facilitator) hours		Y
Administration / Project management		Y
Events, mandatory registrations, sundry		Y
Benefits	Stakeholder group	Monetised?
Avoided costs of social harms	Parent	Y
Improved mental health	Parent	Y
Improved employment outcomes	Parent	Y
Improved lifetime earnings	Child	Y
Reduced recidivism	Society	Y
<i>Higher propensity for volunteering</i>	<i>Parent</i>	<i>N</i>
<i>Established social networks on reintegration to society</i>	<i>Parent</i>	<i>N</i>
<i>Improved self-worth</i>	<i>Parent</i>	<i>N</i>
Net present value		Total benefits less total costs
Benefit-cost ratio		Total benefits / by total costs

Source: SGS (2022). *Ad hoc and other costs that do not occur under all scenarios and in any event (for example research and program evaluation costs) are excluded to ensure results are representative of the net benefits generated by Just Time delivery in the future.

One-off or ad hoc costs incurred by Connect42 and/or other stakeholders are not included in the framework, for example, working with vulnerable people registrations for facilitators. This is to ensure consistency of costs referenced in the economic appraisal.

The avoided costs of insecure housing are excluded for reasons of double counting, since the cost elements (avoided healthcare costs; avoided domestic and family violence costs) are captured in other benefit categories. Additional program benefits such as established social networks on reintegration to society and parents' improved sense of self-worth are qualitatively discussed at section 4.4. For these benefits, there was either insufficient data to support monetisation, or their independent effect as a program benefit was not clear from the literature.

4.1.2 Key inputs and assumptions

The SROI analysis adopts several key assumptions, specified below:

- **Age of Just Time participants.** For the purposes of this analysis, we assume that participants are aged 18 and over.

- **Number of children of incarcerated parents.** For the purposes of this analysis, we conservatively estimate that, on average, each participant in the program has one child. We note that the benefits of attending Just Time would also extend to additional children of parents living in prison.
- **Scope, content, structure and delivery of Just Time.** This analysis assumes that the substance and quality of program features is consistent across all sessions and cycles.

4.1.3 Limitations

Like any evaluation tool, SROI analysis involves a degree of judgement in the development and application of the analytical framework. To the best of our ability, we have mitigated risks to the representativeness of the results through carefully selecting cost and benefit parameters, applying established methods for monetisation, and taking guidance from SROI best practice regarding model construction and data sources.

4.2 Costs and benefits

This section itemises costs, benefits, and their monetisation method.

4.2.1 Monetising costs

As outlined in section 4.1.1 Valuation framework, the primary cost categories for modelling are facilitator hours, administration, and events and other costs typically incurred by Just Time delivery. Costings provided by Connect42 have been adjusted for CPI and expressed at the 2023 price level (Table 3).

TABLE 3: JUST TIME PROGRAM COSTS (IN 2023 DOLLARS)

Cost category	2018	2019	2020	2021
Project Management		11,156	16,470	16,520
Speech Pathologist hours	41,004	120,483	164,702	112,334
Volunteer hours*	1,584	7,759	6,110	7,660
Connect42 – TPS training			22,399	22,467
Conference and Events			659	661
Total	42,589	139,398	210,340	159,642
Total over evaluation period				551,968

Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2023), compiled from data provided by Connect42. All values have been Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjusted and are expressed in 2023 dollars. *A cost of \$19.32 per hour is used to estimate the total cost of volunteer hours.⁴⁶

Therefore, the total undiscounted program costs are **\$551,968**.

Cost elements are described below:

- Project management – this includes program administration and organisation.
- Speech pathologist / facilitator hours – this is the cost of engaging speech pathologists to facilitate the Just Time program.
- Conference and events – costs associated with the Week 9 graduation ceremony for participants who successfully complete Just Time.

4.2.2 Estimating benefits

This section estimates the value of each benefit on a per program attendance, per annum basis. These values flow into the comparison of costs and benefits in section 4.3.1 and are described below. A more detailed method is provided in Appendix A.

Avoided costs of social harm

SGS quantifies the avoided costs of social harms due to Just Time completion at \$159 per participant per annum.

To avoid overlap with other benefit categories, we assume that social harm in the framework refers specifically to the costs of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use; a reporting category used by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.⁷⁵ The total annual avoided costs of social harms is equivalent to the number of parents in prison who will go on to experience alcohol and other drug use after exiting prison, if not for the healthier behaviours promoted by Just Time, multiplied by the annual social cost of alcohol and other drug use. Please refer to Appendix A for the method detail.

An estimated benefit of \$159 per program attendance per annum is applied annually to 2043 (20 years to 2043, where Year 0 = 2023), to account for the cumulative accrual of benefits to participants.⁷¹ That is, the full benefit of $224 \times \$159 = \$35,618$ is realised annually between 2021 to 2043, while between the years 2018 to 2020 inclusive. This results in a total avoided social harm of \$851,004 to 2043 (Table 4 in the next section).

Avoided costs of poor mental health

SGS quantifies the avoided costs of poor mental health due to Just Time completion at \$70.53 per attendance per annum.

The calculation is based on the number of parents in prison who will go on to experience poor mental health after exiting prison, if not for the improvements to parenting confidence from attending a parenting program, multiplied by the annual cost of poor mental health. The valuation method assumes that prevalence of mental illness in Tasmania is the same as in Australia.

⁷¹ Refer to Table 1. Based on data from Connect42 on actual attendances, this assumes that in 2018, there were 10 participants, 54 in 2019, 62 in 2020 and 98 in 2021 and a total of 224 participants who are experiencing the benefits for each of the years 2022 and beyond.

The benefit of avoided mental health costs is applied annually to 2043 (20 years to 2043, where Year 0 = 2023), to account for the cumulative accrual of benefits to participants.

That is, the full benefit of $224 \times \$70.53 = \$15,800$ is realised annually between 2021 to 2043. The total avoided mental health cost is \$377,502 to 2043 (Table 4).

Improved lifetime earning potential of Just Time participants

SGS quantifies the benefits of Just Time completion at \$1,715 (in 2023 dollars) per program attendance, per annum with respect to parents' improved earnings potential.

The valuation method assumes the following:

- A baseline of 39.5% of former inmates will be employed at 6 months post release,⁷²
- Just Time participation increases the probability of employment by 19%,⁷³
- The improved earning potential that is attributable to Just Time is strongest immediately after completion and lessens in following years. The method makes a conservative assumption that the benefit is sustained for only 1 year.
- Average weekly hours worked for females working <35 hours is 21.12 hours per week and 20.2 hours per week for males. A weighted average for the calculation below is based on the gender split of Just Time participants: 20.6 hours per week,⁷⁴
- Minimum wage is \$21.38 per hour.⁷⁵

The annual benefit is based on an 'earnings uplift factor' applied to the number of Just Time program completions. This factor is derived from the probability of employment (at 6 months post release) multiplied by the comparative employment advantage of parents who complete Just Time compared to their peers who exit prison without Just Time attendance. The benefit is realised two years after the program was undertaken.

This benefit is 'once-off' for each participant. That is, the benefit is realised once per program completion, in the year of release from prison. This results in a total lifetime earnings benefit of \$384,267 until 2043 (Table 4).

⁷² Cutcher, Z., Degenhardt, L., Alati, R., & Kinner, S. A. (2014). Poor health and social outcomes for ex-prisoners with a history of mental disorder: a longitudinal study. *Australian and New Zealand journal of public health*, 38(5), 424-429.

⁷³ This statistic is derived from Graffam et al (2008), which finds that likelihood of hiring increased by 38% if ex-inmate completed two training programs. This figure (38%) has therefore been divided by 2 (19%) to reflect that the increased likelihood is only partly attributable to Just Time, with the rest attributable to the participation in a second program.

⁷⁴ Average weekly hours worked was based on the population (female and male) working 35 hours or less. Higher weekly hours worked were not included in the average as this would skew representativeness of the assumption: Only 54% of Australian prisoners working prior to incarceration and approximately 20% reported working full-time. AIHW (2018), The Health of Australia's prisoners, <https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/2e92f007-453d-48a1-9c6b-4c9531cf0371/aihw-phe-246.pdf.aspx?inline=true>

⁷⁵ Based on the national minimum wage as of 1 July 2022. Fair Work Australia (2023), Minimum wages, <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/pay-and-wages/minimum-wages>

Improved lifetime earnings of children

SGS quantifies the benefits of Just Time at \$2,417 (2023 dollars) per program completion as a lump sum benefit with respect to the improved earnings potential of children whose parents complete Just Time. The valuation method assumes:

- Improvements to childrens' emotional intelligence as a result of Just Time-informed parenting leads to a 4 per cent improvement on children's test scores,⁷⁶
- An increase in children's test scores translates to a 14 per cent improvement in children's lifetime earnings,⁵⁷
- On average, each parent in prison has one child aged 10 years and who is attending primary school. The child is assumed to enter the workforce at age 21 (11 years later). Nonetheless, the benefit is assumed as a lump-sum in the year that the child enters the workforce, which is a very conservative estimate, as higher earnings at the start of a person's working life will likely continue and escalate over time,
- The improvement in test scores improves earnings over the whole working life, as it is related to an improvement in skill level,
- Average weekly earnings of \$1,163.80 per individual in Tasmania,⁴⁷
- That the parent-child relationship is one of many determinants of children's economic attainment⁷⁷, and;
- The average age of the children is 10 years, and the benefit is realised 11 years after the participant completes the program (when they are 21 years old). That is, the benefit is realised once per program completion, 11 years after their participation.

Assuming This results in a total lifetime earnings benefit of \$541,449 ($224 \times \$2,417 = \$541,449$) until 2043 (Table 4).

Reduced recidivism

SGS quantifies the benefits of Just Time completion at \$2,811 (in 2023 dollars) per program participant with respect to reduced recidivism based on avoided prison system costs. In reality, reduced recidivism also results in lower costs to society in terms of avoided damages and harm. These important flow-on benefits have not been included, and therefore the estimate is conservative.

The valuation method assumes the following:

- A daily cost of \$385 per prisoner, per day to the state⁶³⁶³

⁷⁶ MacCann, C., et al (2020). *Emotional Intelligence Predicts Academic Performance: A Meta-Analysis*. Psychological Bulletin, 146(2), 150-186.

⁷⁷ The implicit value of parents who nurture, monitor, teach and care for their children is a significant determinant of children's attainment, see for example Haveman, R., & Wolfe, B. (1995). The determinants of children's attainments: A review of methods and findings. *Journal of economic literature*, 33(4), 1829-1878. While labour market success is 'transmitted from parents to children', quality of education and a raft of other factors have been shown to be robust predictors of earnings: Bowles, S., Gintis, H., & Osborne, M. (2001). The determinants of earnings: A behavioral approach. *Journal of economic literature*, 39(4), 1137-1176.

- A 4% reduced recidivism rate among imprisoned people who attend the program based on research on a prison nursery program,⁷⁸
- That the average parent in prison may enrol in more than one program prior to exiting prison,
- The average length of a prison sentence in Tasmania (excluding homicide and sexual related crimes) is 663 days.⁶⁴
- This benefit is once-off. That is, the benefit is realised two years after program completion.

This benefit is \$354,123 to 2043 (Table 4).

4.3 SROI results

This section presents the cost benefit analysis results. It assesses if a net gain in community welfare will result after comparing program costs with the monetised wider benefits.

4.3.1 SROI parameters

Overarching assumptions for the discounted cashflow analysis are as follows:

- Values 2023, real (i.e. no escalation)
- Timeframe 20 years from 2023, to 2043 (Year 0 = 2023)
- Discount rate 7 per cent real

4.3.1 SROI results

Our analysis supports the finding that the Just Time program generates a net gain in welfare benefits in Tasmania, with a BCR of 3.23 and NPV of \$1.23 million. In other words, for every \$1 invested in the program, \$3.20 of benefits are generated to the wider community. Table 4 shows the incremental costs and benefits in discounted terms.

TABLE 4: SROI PERFORMANCE RESULTS

Costs and benefits	Undiscounted value (\$)	Discounted value (\$)
Costs		
Program costs	551,968	551,968
<i>Total costs</i>	<i>551,968</i>	<i>551,968</i>
Benefits		
Avoided costs of social harms	851,004	515,986

⁷⁸ Goshin, L. S., Byrne, M. W., & Henninger, A. M. (2014). Recidivism after release from a prison nursery program. *Public Health Nursing*, 31(2), 109-117. Other studies have shown that vocational and other education programs have resulted an approximate 18% reduction in recidivism (8.75% among vocational completers compared to 26% who had not participated in any educational program): Gonzalez, P., Romero, T., & Cerbana, C. B. (2007). Parent education program for incarcerated mothers in Colorado. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 357-373.

Avoided mental health costs	377,502	228,890
Improved lifetime earnings of Just Time participants	384,267	384,267
Improved lifetime earnings of children	541,449	313,465
Reduced recidivism	354,123	342,723
<i>Total benefits</i>	<i>2,508,345</i>	<i>1,785,331</i>
Net value	1,956,376	1,233,363
Benefit-cost ratio	4.54	3.23

Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2023)

4.3.1 Distributional analysis

SROI also includes a cross check to ensure that the 'economic efficiency' results are sustained when interpreted with broader considerations of social equity. That is, are any members of the Tasmanian community disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged from the proposed investment?

Connect42 bears project costs of \$0.55 million through a combination of funding from the State Government and private benefactors.

As a result, the State and Federal governments, and individuals and the wider community enjoy a net present benefit of \$1.17 million and \$0.61 million respectively due to the range of benefits generated through Just Time.

TABLE 5: DISTRIBUTIONAL ANALYSIS

Stakeholder group	Present value (\$)
Connect42	-551,968
State & Federal governments	1,172,175
Individuals & wider community	613,156

Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2023)

4.3.2 Sensitivity analysis

This section assesses how the NPVs and BCRs change based on varying assumptions around the discount rate, costs and benefits. The impact of these changes in assumptions on the investments' NPVs and BCRs is summarised in the tables below.

Discount rate

Sensitivity testing on the discount rate (Table 6) tests the effect of a change in the adopted discount rate on the NPV and BCR of the project. The project returns a positive BCR under all three discount rates. The BCR is highest under a four per cent discount rate, when greater weight is placed on

monetary flows further into the future. This is because most of the benefits are experienced well into the future in comparison to the costs.

TABLE 6: SENSITIVITY TESTING ON DISCOUNT RATE

Discount rate	NPV (\$'000)	BCR
4%	1,472.89	3.67
7%	1,233.36	3.23
10%	1,059.49	2.92

Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2022)

Costs and benefits

Table 7 and Table 8 below show the effects of a 25 per cent increase or decrease in overall costs and benefits to the key performance indicators. Under the lowest performing scenario (in terms of economic viability), the project still returns a net positive benefit to community welfare. It also shows that, due to the relative timing of the costs and benefits, the project's performance is more sensitive to changes in benefits than costs (indicated by the broader range of BCRs under changes in costs). This is largely attributable to the relative size of the benefits compared to costs.

TABLE 7: SENSITIVITY TESTING ON COSTS AND BENEFITS (NPV)

NPV (\$'000)		Change in costs		
		25%	0%	-25%
Change in benefits	-25%	649.04	787.03	925.02
	0%	1,095.37	1,233.36	1,371.35
	25%	1,541.70	1,679.70	1,817.69

Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2023)

TABLE 8: SENSITIVITY TESTING ON COSTS AND BENEFITS (BCR)

BCR		Change in costs		
		25%	0%	-25%
Change in benefits	-25%	1.94	2.43	3.23
	0%	2.59	3.23	4.31
	25%	3.23	4.04	5.39

Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2023)

4.4 Summary and conclusions

The SROI shows that the Just Time program increases economic welfare levels across Tasmania, with the benefits (\$1.79 million) outweighing the costs (\$0.55 million). This is equivalent to a NPV of \$1.23 million and a BCR of 3.23.

Additional sensitivity testing of these suggests that under a range of scenarios differentiated by discount rate, cost base, and estimated benefits, a net positive benefit in community welfare is still returned by the Just Time program.

Appendix A: Method detail for monetising benefits

This Appendix sets out the detailed method for monetising each benefit.

Avoided costs of social harms

Calculation steps	Data	Input / Output
1. Determine number of Just Time program completions	This is 224 participants in total across 2018-2021, as per the Just Time quarterly report data (Table 1).	224
2. Calculate annual per capita social cost of alcohol and other drug use	The estimated social cost of alcohol use in Australia was \$66.8 billion ⁷⁹ in 2017-18. This is equivalent to \$74.5 billion in 2023 dollars. Divided by: 25.69 million = total Australian population in 2018 ⁷⁹	\$2,901
3. Determine attribution rate	39% of prisoners reporting consuming alcohol at high-risk levels prior to prison entry ⁸⁰ .	39% attribution
4. Determine success rate	Participation in a COS program is associated with a 14.1% decline in alcohol and other drug use ⁸¹ .	14.1%

⁷⁹ ABS (2020), Nation, state and territory population, [https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/national-state-and-territory-population/jun-2020#:~:text=Media%20releases-,Key%20statistics,was%2032.1%2C300%20people%20\(1.3%25\).Australia's%20population%20grew&text=ABS%20Demography%20Director%20Beidar%20Cho,were%20male%20and%20153%2C000%20female](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/national-state-and-territory-population/jun-2020#:~:text=Media%20releases-,Key%20statistics,was%2032.1%2C300%20people%20(1.3%25).Australia's%20population%20grew&text=ABS%20Demography%20Director%20Beidar%20Cho,were%20male%20and%20153%2C000%20female.).

⁸⁰ AIHW (2015), The health of Australia's prisoners 2015, <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/prisoners/health-of-australias-prisoners-2015/contents/risky-alcohol-consumption>

⁸¹ This association has two parts. Firstly, there is a 46.4% improvement in child behaviour (externalising problems) after their parent completed a 20-week COS program (Huber, A. McMahon, C., & Sweller, N. (2015)). SGS assumes the same relationship for participants of the program. SGS also assumes that the improvement is directly proportional to the length of the program, and therefore scales this benefit by 8/20 (to reflect the length of the Just Time program). This association is multiplied by the association between externalising problems and alcohol and other drug use. Those with

5. Multiply attribution rate, success rate and upper limiting estimate of avoided costs of social harm per annum, 2018-21	39% multiplied by 14.1% multiplied by \$2,901	\$159 per program participant per year
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Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2023). All values have been Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjusted and are expressed in 2023 dollars. *Combined data for alcohol and drug use not available. Statistic for alcohol consumption used on the basis that it was the most common principal drug of concern among clients seeking treatment for their own drug use (AIHW, 2022).

Avoided costs of poor mental health

Calculation steps	Data	Input / Output
1. Determine number of Just Time program completions	This is 224 participants in total across 2018-2021, as per the Just Time quarterly report data (Table 1).	224
2. Calculate annual per capita cost of providing mental health services	The estimated cost is \$431 per capita in Australia.	: \$431
3. Calculate upper limiting estimate of avoided costs of poor mental health per annum	224 program completions Multiplied by \$431	\$96,544
4. Determine attribution rate	37.0% of former inmates reported a previous diagnosis of a mental health condition ⁸² .	37.0% attribution
5. Determine success rate	Those with high parenting self-efficacy are 44.2 per cent more likely to have better mental health. ⁸³	44.2% likelihood of avoided mental health costs
6. Multiply avoided costs by attribution and likelihood to estimate total avoided costs of poor mental health per annum, 2018-21	37.0% multiplied by 44.2% Multiplied by \$431	\$70.53 per participant per year

Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2023). *An estimated 1 in 5 Australians experience mental illness in any given year (AIHW, 2022).

externalising problems are 75.8% more likely to engage in alcohol and other drug use (Heradsveit, O., et al, (2018)). Together, this is $46.4\% \times (8/20) \times 75.8\% = 14.1\%$.

⁸² AIHW (2018), The health of Australia's prisoners 2018, <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/prisoners/health-australia-prisoners-2018/summary>

⁸³ Parenting Research Centre (2018). Parent Mental Health, <https://www.parentingrc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Mental-Health-Research-Brief-Oct-2018.pdf>

Improved lifetime earning potential of Just Time participants

Calculation steps	Data	Input / Output
1. Determine number of Just Time program completions	This is 224 participants in total across 2018-2021, as per the Just Time quarterly report data (Table 1).	224
2. Calculate minimum per capita salary per annum based on average hours worked	<p>\$21.38 per hour</p> <p>Multiplied by average 20.6 hours worked per week⁸⁴</p> <p>Multiplied by 52 weeks a year</p>	\$22,857
3. Timeframe	The improved earning potential that is attributable to Just Time is strongest immediately after completion and lessens in intervening years. The method makes a conservative assumption that the benefit is sustained for only 1 year.	1 year of attribution
4. Attribution rate	<p>39.5% of former inmates are employed 6 months post release⁸⁵</p> <p>Multiplied by 19.0% improvement in employment prospects due to participation in Just Time⁷³</p> <p>Equals 47.0% of former inmates who complete Just Time are employed 6 months post release.</p> <p>Minus 39.5% baseline</p> <p>Equals 7.5% likelihood</p>	7.5% increased likelihood of employment

Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2023).

⁸⁴ SGS (2023) weighted average calculation based on ABS (2023) - Labour Force, Australia, Detailed December 2022

⁸⁵ Cutcher, Degenhardt, L., Alati, R. and Kinner, S.A. (2014), Poor health and social outcomes for ex-prisoners with a history of mental disorder: a longitudinal study. Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, 38: 424-429

Improved lifetime earnings of children whose parents participate in Just Time

Calculation steps	Data	Input / Output
1. Determine number of Just Time program completions	This is 224 participants in total across 2018-2021, as per the Just Time quarterly report data (Table 1).	224
2. Calculate incremental salary increase (improved annual earnings) from the minimum annual salary of an individual in Tasmania	<p>The average weekly earnings for an individual in Tasmania is \$1,163.80⁴⁷</p> <p>Multiplied by 52 weeks</p> <p>Equals \$60,518.60 annual salary</p> <p>Multiplied by 14% improvement in earnings potential due to a 1 standard deviation increase in test scores⁵⁷.</p> <p>Equals \$8,472</p>	\$8,472
3. Determine attribution rate	Assumption that 50.0% of child's labour market success is attributable to the household environment	50.0% attribution
4. Determine success rate	Improved emotional intelligence is associated with a 4.0% increase in test scores.	\$339
5. Multiply improved annual earnings by attribution factor to find annual improvement in earnings	<p>\$8,472 incremental improvement in annual earnings</p> <p>Multiplied by 50.0% and multiplied by 4.0%</p> <p>Equals \$169 per year of working life</p>	\$169 per child of program participant per year of working life
6. Calculate the present value of lifetime earnings using the annuity formula ⁸⁶ , 2018-21	<p>Applying a discount rate of 7.0% and assuming a working life of 39 year (age 21 to 60), the present value of lifetime earnings is equal to:</p> <p>$\\$169 + \\$169 \times (1 - (1/(1+7.0\%)^{39}))/7.0\%$</p> <p>Which equals \$2,417 per child of participant</p>	\$2,417 per child of program completion

Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2023).

⁸⁶ Present value of cashflow in annuity = annual cashflow + annual cashflow*(1-(1/(1+discount rate)³⁹))/ discount rate

Reduced recidivism

Calculation steps	Data	Input / Output
1. Determine number of Just Time program completions	This is 224 participants in total across 2018-2021, as per the Just Time quarterly report data (Table 1).	224
2. Source per prisoner cost to the state	Cost per day is \$385 based on annual cost of \$140,525 ⁸⁷	\$140,525
3. Determine attribution rate	50.4% recidivism rate 4% lower probability of recidivism among ex-prisoners who attend a parenting program	4% reduced recidivism
4. Cost savings per participant and program total	$\$140,525 * 4\% = \$5,621$ $\$5,621 * 224 \text{ participants} = \$1,259,104$	\$5,621 per participant (1 year incarceration) \$1,259,104 (1 year incarceration)
5. Attribution due to JT	Assumed to be 50%, as other programs may also be contributing	50%

Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2023).

⁸⁷ Tasmanian Prison Service (2022), Budget Estimates Brief, https://www.justice.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/669630/Budget-Estimates-Briefings-2022.PDF

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