

Chance for life

Four hundred young people in custody every day in NSW is a shocking number (Shame of 400 kids in prison, July 6).

Thinking about who these young people are and what their life experience has been, makes it even worse.

Here are just a few of the statistics: 45 per cent have had a parent in prison; 62 per cent were not going to school; 18 per cent of young women experienced homelessness before going into custody; 81 per cent are on remand.

Aboriginal children and young people made up 49.8 per cent of people in the juvenile justice system.

Locking up our most vulnerable young people doesn't work. Change is needed and NSW Attorney-General Greg Smith's commitment to a review of the Bail Act will go a long way to addressing the problem.

We need to expand support services and resources and reduce time in detention. This is the only way to reduce the number of young people coming into contact with the justice system and give them the best chance at life.

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