

Leader of the Opposition
LIA FINOCCHIARO MLA

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Country Liberal Government will commit \$5 million for youth boot camp in Alice Springs

A Country Liberal Party Government will commit \$5 million over two years to establish a new purpose built 'Sentenced to a Skill' boot camp in Alice Springs. The boot camp will serve as an alternative sentencing option for courts dealing with youths who commit offences, Opposition Leader Lia Finocchiaro said today.

"Youth crime, especially in places like Alice Springs is out of control, and it makes sense to have a pathway for youths who are on the wrong track to acquire new skills and set them on a positive path to adulthood, rather than detention," Mrs Finocchiaro said.

The "Sentenced to a Skill" boot camp for Alice Springs would include:

- Vocational Education and Training and/or work experience to give youth skills for a better future
- Secure residential facilities
- Long term programs
- Strong assessment and monitoring
- Appropriate drug and alcohol programs
- Family support
- Post-release pathways

"The rate of youths in detention in the Northern Territory is more than three times the national average and it's important that worthwhile pathways are offered to youths, to get a chance to improve themselves and for courts to have flexibility," CLP candidate for Araluen, Damien Ryan said.

Boot camps that incorporate skills training and work experience can reduce reoffending and increase employment prospects by about third.

The "Sentenced to a Skill" boot camp's location will be determined through extensive community and stakeholder consultation in Alice Springs. Registered Training Organisations and Aboriginal Organisations will be sought to operate the training and therapeutic aspects of the camp, supported by Corrections.

The boot camp will require a level of security. Youth in the camp will be closely monitored, it will be fenced, and supported by innovative solutions such as electronic monitoring with barrier alerts will be considered.

"The boot camp model attempts to create a solution to longer term issues for youths who find themselves on the wrong track," CLP candidate for Namitjira, Bill Yan said.

"The Gunner Government's approach to youth crime has been ineffective and slow. We need a new approach, and this model of boot camp has proven to be effective," CLP candidate for Braitling, Joshua Burgoyne said.

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Media contact: Joe Prevedello 0437 916 899