



# **Corporate parenting and the link between the child safety and youth justice systems**

**Anglicare Victoria's submission to  
the Child Safety Commission of  
Inquiry (Qld)**

# Introduction

Every child deserves the support, security and opportunities that a nurturing family environment provides.

Meeting our obligations as a corporate parent, particularly in the context of children and young people placed in non-family-based care, those dually involved in the child safety and youth justice systems, and young people transitioning from detention or care into adulthood requires a cross-agency, child-centred model to address their complex needs.

The introduction of the Children, Youth and Families Amendment (Supporting Stable and Strong Families) Bill 2025<sup>1</sup> into the Victorian Parliament marks a significant step forward, embedding a whole-of-government approach to corporate parenting.

This approach recognises that the wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people is a shared responsibility, requiring collaboration not just within child protection and youth justice sectors, but across health, education, housing, mental health and other essential services. Such an approach is already well established in leading international jurisdictions, including the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Canada and several European nations, where multi-agency partnerships have demonstrated improved outcomes for children in care.

Many children involved with the youth justice system have experienced significant adversity, including trauma, abuse, neglect and family violence. Only by working collaboratively across systems can we ensure continuity of care, timely access to services, and the holistic support necessary to promote positive pathways into adulthood.

Anglicare Victoria is one of the state's largest providers of out-of-home care and family services. With over two decades of experience supporting vulnerable children, young people and families, Anglicare Victoria combines frontline service delivery with evidence-based advocacy and sector leadership. Our work spans residential care, foster and kinship care, youth justice support, family preservation, post-care transition and a range of early intervention programs. Through strong relationships with government, community and sector partners, we are uniquely positioned to offer insights into the challenges and opportunities of corporate parenting for young people with contact with the youth justice and child protection systems in Victoria.

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<sup>1</sup> This Bill was passed by the Victorian Parliament in March 2026.

We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this inquiry and we would welcome the opportunity for further discuss the approaches outlined in this paper.

## Responses

Is the Department an effective corporate parent and is it meeting community expectations in relation to parenting, particularly in respect of:

- children and young people who are placed in non-family-based (residential) care;
- young people in care who are known to both the child safety system and the youth justice system;
- young people who are transitioning out of detention into care and care into adulthood?

### *Corporate Parenting as a whole-of-government responsibility*

In 2025, the Victorian government introduced the *Children, Youth and Families Amendment (Supporting Stable and Strong Families) Bill 2025* (State Government of Victoria, 2025). This landmark Bill, the first of its kind in Australia, incorporates shared responsibilities across the Victorian Government to enhance service access and support earlier intervention for children, young people and families at risk of, or already involved with, Child Protection.

The forthcoming Bill obligates every Minister and every Head of Department, and the Police Commissioner, to provide actions and policies aimed at children in Care and those who have left care, (Care Leavers), to 25 years. Further, along with these obligations, every Minister and every Head of Departments and the Police Commissioner are further obliged to table in Parliament will table their actions and progress taken towards children in care and those care leavers to 25 years, every 2 years.

This approach has already been adopted in a number of jurisdictions in Europe, and reflects a recognition that when the State has taken a child into care and is acting as corporate parent *in loco parentis*, it must take care of that child “as a good parent would” (State Government of Victoria, 2005). That means ensuring that they have access to a range of supports and opportunities, and that additional support is provided if required to ensure a positive pathway into young adulthood.

As outlined in the summary provided by the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare (provided as an Appendix to this submission), the corporate parenting legislation adopted across the United Kingdom includes not just child welfare and youth justice services, but also health services, local authorities, educational institutions and government departments (Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, 2025).

Similar multi-agency approaches are adopted in New Zealand, Canada Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands. This reflects the growing recognition of child-centred shared responsibility in corporate parenting.

Corporate parenting responsibilities do not end with state government agencies: the Commonwealth also has role to play in setting national standards, funding services (e.g. disability support), driving cross-system information sharing and analysis, aligning health, disability, mental health, housing, and social services, and providing adequate income support and young people transition into adulthood.

A child-centred, cross agency approach to fulfilling our corporate parenting responsibilities lets us better understand the needs of young people who come into contact with the child safety system and/or the youth justice system and identify areas for improvement in meeting accepted standards of parenting for this vulnerable cohort.

### *Understanding the needs of this cohort*

The cohort of young people in care and young people involved in youth justice share a number of risk factors and vulnerabilities. The evidence is compelling and consistent: children involved in the youth justice system are often children who have previously been victims of abuse, neglect, family violence or cumulative adversity.

Further, national reporting consistently shows that 40–60% of children being supervised by youth justice have a diagnosed disability, with estimates increasing to 60–70% when including undiagnosed neurodisability (Baidawi, 2021). International reviews indicate cognitive disability occurs at rates up to ten times higher in detention than in the general youth population. This pattern is mirrored in child protection, where children with disability are more frequently reported, investigated, placed in out-of-home care, and consequently more likely to enter the youth justice system.

Notably, young people involved in the justice system experience higher than average suicide mortality, with suicide accounting for around one-third of all deaths in large Australian youth justice cohorts. Similarly, as discussed in Anglicare Victoria's report *Someone Else's Problem*, young people in care are five times more likely to have a mental health conditions, thirteen more times likely to experience suicidal ideal or self-harm, and five times more likely to attempt suicide (Anglicare Victoria, 2025).

In 2022–23, national administrative linked data showed that 65% of young people under youth justice supervision had interacted with the child protection system in the previous decade (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2024). This figure is even higher among younger children, those in detention, those with a disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Other data shows that young people who later appear in the youth justice system almost always appear in the child protection system (Sentencing Advisory Council, 2020) *before* their youth justice involvement.

Children who move between family-based care, residential care, and the youth justice system experience a constellation of disadvantage that is well documented across the evidence base. Research shows that more than half of children in the “high needs” cohort have experienced family violence, childhood abuse, poverty, disrupted schooling and household instability long before their first justice involvement, with public systems responding repeatedly to their unmet needs from as early as five years old. Young people’s behaviours are shaped by environments marked by disadvantage, fractured relational networks, and inconsistent therapeutic support, rather than inherent risk or intent (Social Wellbeing Agency, 2023).

The Victoria, a detailed protocol has been developed between the Secretary of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care providers and Victoria Police to “to enable effective and collaborative responses to child abuse and neglect to children who have suffered, or are likely to suffer, significant harm due to physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse or neglect” in an effort to address avoidable contact with the justice system (State of Victoria, 2023). This includes a section on reducing the criminalisation of young people in residential care, and is supported by an overarching guide, the Framework to reduce criminalisation of young people in residential care (State of Victoria, 2020).

The Scottish Violence Reduction Unit —being adopted in Victoria in 2026— demonstrates what is possible when systems treat violence as preventable, not inevitable.

The VRU model:

- identifies children early using multi agency data
- responds long before offending occurs
- builds protective relationships
- coordinates health, education, policing and community support
- significantly reduced youth violence and gang involvement

For at risk children this approach provides what is currently missing: a system that intervenes when harm begins, not when the justice system is triggered.

*How do we better fulfil our corporate parenting responsibilities?*

Understanding the vulnerabilities of young people and the crossover between young people coming into contact with the child safety system and the youth justice system, helps us identify key areas of responsibility of the corporate parent.

- A focus on family preservation, reunification, placement stability and therapeutic living environments within the child safety system.

- Mental health support to address cumulative harm, trauma and drivers of offending.
- Disability support, including access to supports for neurodiversity and ensuring that children in care have equitable access to NDIS supports.
- Improved access to and targeted support to strengthen participation in education and training (e.g. Anglicare Victoria’s TEACHaR program)
- Access to income support – Youth Allowance still applicable for many care leavers even though they have no choice but to live independently with the same costs and liabilities as adults.
- Housing: we know that a significant proportion of young people leaving care and young people leaving the youth justice system exit into homelessness, and despite recent investment there is no dedicated fund to increase the supply of housing for young people. Lack of parental support or references in a competitive housing market makes accessing independent housing. The lower youth allowance exacerbates this problem as it makes housing for young people unviable for social housing providers

It is well known that family plays a critical role in the lives of young people involved in youth justice. A third of young people surveyed in a Victorian Youth Justice Review identified family as the main driver for serious or violent offending (Armytage, 2017). It is well known that family plays a critical role in the lives of young people involved in youth justice. A third of young people surveyed in a Victorian Youth Justice Review identified family as the main driver for serious or violent offending (Armytage, 2017). It follows, then, that working with families is a key factor in delivering lasting outcomes, however for most youth justice involved young people there are limited opportunities for family work.

Therefore, effective corporate parenting also needs to incorporate cultural engagement and connection to Community and access to evidence-based programs that work with the young person and their family. For example, Functional Family Therapy – Youth

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## TEACHaR

*TEACHaR (Transforming Educational Achievement of Children at Risk) \*\* is Anglicare Victoria’s specialist education support program for vulnerable children and young people aged 4–18, originally developed for those in out-of-home care. The program provides intensive one-to-one support delivered by qualified teachers who work flexibly with children, carers and schools to re-engage students in learning. TEACHaR focuses on improving school attendance and engagement, strengthening confidence and attitudes to learning, and building literacy and numeracy skills, with support provided in homes, schools or online depending on need.*

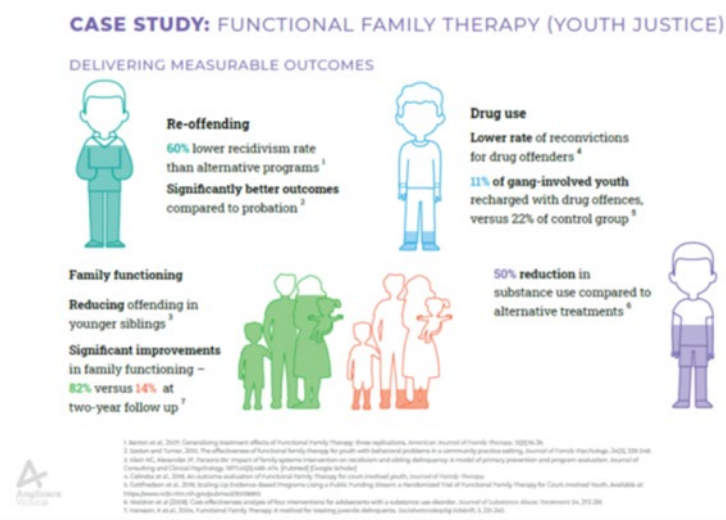
*The program is trauma-informed and strengths-based, recognising the impact of disrupted care, family violence and developmental trauma on learning. Alongside direct teaching, TEACHaR works collaboratively with schools to build understanding of children’s needs and support more inclusive education responses. The model has been independently evaluated and expanded across Victoria, supporting children in foster, kinship and residential care to achieve outcomes closer to their peers.*

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Justice, an internationally recognised program, addresses family functioning as a way to improve health and wellbeing and reduce justice engagement.

A rapid review of examples of youth justice approaches worldwide shows that there are a significant number of evidence-based, non-custodial alternative approaches to managing youth justice issues, including

- Norway’s Konfliktråd (Restorative Mediation Council): Community-based restorative justice and youth contracts.
- Youth Offending Teams (YOTs, UK): Multi-agency teams for early intervention and rehabilitation.
- Youth Inclusion Support Panels (YISPs, UK): Early intervention for high-risk youth.
- Restorative Justice (UK/Norway): Victim-offender mediation and community reintegration.
- Multisystemic Therapy (MST, US/UK/Australia): Intensive family and community-based intervention.
- Functional Family Therapy (FFT, US/Australia): Family therapy for high-risk youth.
- Yumba-Meta (Queensland): Indigenous community-controlled housing and support.
- Anglicare Victoria’s FFT-YJ pilot: Functional Family Therapy for youth justice.
- Victorian Youth Crime Prevention Program (YCPP): Case management and early intervention.
- COMPASS program: Developed by Anglicare Victoria, Vincent Care, and others, supporting care leavers with housing, mental health, and education, though with limited measured impact on youth justice outcomes.
- Kitchen Table Talks (UK): Parent peer support groups shown to reduce youth violence and weapon carrying.
- Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM, US): Joint protocols for dual system involved youth, streamlining court and custody processes.
- Multi-Systemic Therapy (UK): Family and peer-focused interventions for trauma and abuse.



- TARGET (UK): Trauma-focused emotion regulation intervention reducing PTSD symptoms.
- Aboriginal Youth Justice Hubs (Victoria): Community-led hubs for culturally safe care, as highlighted in *Wirkara Kulpa*, Victoria's Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy (State of Victoria, Australia, 2026)
- Family Group Conference (FGC, NZ): Culturally integrated restorative practice for Māori youth.

Incarceration has not proven effective in addressing the root causes of youth crime, which are largely linked to social determinants such as educational exclusion, housing instability, trauma, and lack of support for mental health. Current justice responses are costly, and frequently entrench disadvantage, contributing to long-term cycles of criminalisation (McCausland & Dowse, 2022)

**What is the link, if any, between the child safety system and the youth justice system? For instance, do elements of the child safety system operate as a 'feeder system' to the youth justice? What are the factors contributing to children in care entering the youth justice system?**

In 2023–24: 179,000 children (1 in 31) came into contact with the child safety system (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) The statistics for youth justice involvement are far rarer, with approximately 9,224 young people involved with the youth justice system (12 per 10,000) in the same year (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2024).

Young people who have been in care are at least nine times more likely to appear in youth justice compared to young people without contact with child safety system. For First Nations children, the intersection of these systems is even more severe, as they are 17 to 24 times more likely to be involved in both the child safety system and youth justice system (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2025) . Further, the deeper a young person moves into the child safety system (i.e., investigation → substantiation → order → out of home care), the higher the probability of youth justice contact.

A study of South Australia's youth justice system found young people within youth justice experience extremely high rates of adverse childhood experiences (ACE), with 89% exposed to both maltreatment and household dysfunction and 88% reporting four or more ACEs. These cumulative adversities are closely tied to widespread trauma symptoms, substance use, and behavioural difficulties, underscoring the need for developmentally informed and trauma-responsive approaches (Malvaso, 2022).

These adversities can manifest as:

- escalating distress and behaviours
- absconding from placements
- school refusal
- association with older or anti-social peers
- mental health concerns.

These factors can shape later behaviours and increase vulnerability to police contact. These young people often have complex, unmet needs, including undiagnosed disability, mental health issues, and developmental delays, yet they receive inadequate support from health, education, and social service systems (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2024).

In a family home, many of these behaviours would be managed informally. However, in care settings these behaviours are often policed, leading to unnecessary charges and early justice involvement. School disengagement, placement instability, and the absence of consistent, trusted adults exacerbate risk, while fragmented systems fail to intervene early or address root causes. Harsh bail laws and punitive responses serve to pull young people deeper into the system rather than supporting their recovery and wellbeing.

For young people with a disability, developmentally inaccessible processes increase the likelihood of breaches, remand, and cycling through custody. Across the evidence base, disability consistently increases the likelihood of progression from child protection to custody, reflecting system failures to recognise and accommodate neurodisability.

Their trajectories, when unaddressed, lead to some of the poorest outcomes of any group in Australia—avoidable harm that carries a significant financial burden across multiple government portfolios, from crisis health care to corrections.

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### *Diagrama (Spain)*

*Diagrama re-education centres are run by the not-for-profit Fundacion Diagrama who are now responsible for the care of 70% of young people in youth justice in Spain.*

*The core focus of Diagrama is rehabilitation. Staff are considered educators who teach social skill and most are tertiary educated – including psychologists, social workers and teachers. Security staff are on-site but act only as a last resort in incident management. A full day of education and activities occurs every day in a normal and engaging environment. Family and community are heavily involved.*

*Diagrama employs far fewer staff than usually required in youth justice centres. As a result, Diagrama costs significantly less than secure children homes or detention centres.*

Experiences of information sharing) communication and engagement between government agencies in relation to ‘dual order’ youth offenders.

Children who move between child protection and youth justice interact with more than just two systems. Often, they navigate a complex ecosystem including child protection, education, disability supports, mental health, family violence services, police, courts, residential care providers, and sometimes primary health or alcohol and drug services. The complexities of each system, worker time constraints, limitations in data and difficulties in aligning and sharing data and information across agencies make developing a wholistic view of a client’s needs and interactions and collaborating to identify the most effective interventions can be difficult.

Both child protection and youth justice staff work in crisis-driven environments, juggling high caseloads with court requirements and crisis response. Difficulties in recruiting and retaining experienced staff across both sectors are also well documented. This environment of high demand and high risk can result in available staff time focussing on the most pressing issues. This can sometimes be at the expense of the file reviews, supervision, family engagement, service engagement, therapeutic consultations and other activities

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#### Case Study – Functional Family Therapy

*Kate\* first came into contact with the youth justice system at 14 years old with presenting complexities related to poly-substance use, absconding, criminal offending and frequent periods of remand. However, Kate’s contact with Child Protection started long before this, with the first report regarding Kate occurring when she was less than 12 months old. When Kate was 16 years old she was referred to Anglicare Victoria’s FFT program due to concerns around Kate’s living arrangements upon release from custody. Kate’s grandmother, who with it was assumed Kate would live, presented as tired and frustrated with a lack of service support and Kate’s escalating behaviour.*

*During the initial FFT intervention, Kate was dismissive of support, stating that there were no issues to address. The FFT Practitioner struggled to engage both Kate and grandmother. The FFT Practitioner advocated for strong care team involvement to wrap around the family and starting the intervention before Kate was released from custody, which included transporting grandmother to and from sessions. Over time (approximately 3 months) FFT Practitioner’s persistence resulted in Kate engaging well with the FFT program, learning new life skills, and the FFT Practitioner was able to successfully advocate for Kate to participate in multiple day releases to ‘practice’ her newly learned skills at home with her grandmother prior to being formally released. Concurrently, the FFT Practitioner worked closely with Kate’s grandmother to create a care support plan, recognising multiple points of support she could engage when things became difficult with Kate.*

*The FFT program worked holistically with Kate and her family to reduce the likelihood of additional contact with the youth justice system, equipping both Kate and her family with the skills and resources needed to impact real change.*

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needed to foster the strong cross-agency communication and collaboration. Further, recognition of “crossover” status often requires manual file review. This makes it very difficult for those working directly with the child to identify and develop the most effective responses, intervene early and provide timely therapeutic responses.

## Embedding trauma-informed practice

Youth justice interventions reflect conditions set by the court. This focus ensures that a child is aware of what will ‘get them in trouble’ however rarely focuses on the holistic needs of the child nor does it centre a trauma informed approach to care.

Boyd et. Al’s recent research looking at the extent to which youth justice practice models are trauma-informed found only “modest alignment between South Australia’s youth justice case-management policies and key principles of trauma-informed practice” and suggested that “jurisdiction-wide strategic planning and the development of policy” are necessary to enshrine trauma-informed principles (Boyd, Mercer, Day, Pilkington, & Malvoso, 2025).

Front line workers often carry heavy caseloads, experience high turnover, and have limited access to specialist clinical support. In practice this means that families or kin are rarely engaged in the youth justice system.

Youth justice workers are key drivers of change, but they need trauma-informed training, manageable caseloads, and real access to specialist supports to shift outcomes.

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### *The Missouri Model*

*Thirty years ago, Missouri made a statewide, systemwide shift in their approach. They closed down youth prisons, replacing them with smaller, treatment-oriented programs close to young people’s local communities.*

*Like Diagrama, the Missouri Model provides safety through relationships and supervision rather than coercion. Trauma-informed treatment focuses on internalising change rather than behaviour control. Education and life skills are a part of treatment, and family are involved throughout. Four levels of care are offered including day treatment centres, non-secure homes through to secure facilities.*

*The Missouri model boasts a long-term recidivism rate into the adult system of only 6.6% within 3 years. Evaluation of the model also found it was one-third cheaper than a comparator state and young people were 4.5x less likely to be assaulted under the mode.*

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The experiences of non-family based (residential) care workers, foster carers and kinship carers in dealing with children in care who are known to the youth justice system and/or youth offenders.

Carers — whether kinship carers, foster carers, or residential care staff — play a critical role in the lives of children with complex trauma histories and intersecting experiences across the child safety and youth justice systems. Across the literature and lived experience evidence, a consistent picture emerges of carers operating within systems that make providing stable, therapeutic environments difficult.

Carers within residential care settings work shift work to care for the children in the house (often 4 at a time) across a 24/7 roster. Within their role they are effectively the parent tasked with managing household dynamics, logistics, following up basic care requirements and building a relationship with each child. Their role is one of the most complex within the welfare service, but required qualifications and salaries are generally low compared to other professions with a similar level of risk and responsibility.

Within residential settings, carers describe environments marked by high staff turnover, children’s placement instability, complex household dynamics, difficulty accessing specific training, and limited access to therapeutic supports, which collectively undermine children’s stability and compound trauma-based behaviours. Studies highlight how these system gaps contribute to placement disruptions, escalating behaviours, and the phenomenon of “care criminalisation,” where behaviours that would normally be managed within a family home instead lead to police involvement, charges, and court appearances (Colvin, 2020) (Wales, 2025).

Kinship and foster carers are volunteers performing a critical role in caring for children and preventing their entry into residential care. Kinship carers can often have children of their own or other children in the home, and though supported are not professionally trained in managing complex or challenging behaviours. Better supporting this crucial part of the child safety system, including strengthening the training, support, supervision they receive will strengthen the system as a whole.

All carers supporting children involved with Child Protection (CP) and Youth Justice (YJ) describe navigating systems that are slow to respond, poorly coordinated, and crisis-driven. They report delayed communication from statutory agencies, frequent changes in case direction, and a lack of clarity around who is leading planning or decision-making.

These experiences align with research showing that residential care workers and kinship carers often feel excluded from key decisions despite being the adults with the most daily contact and influence on the young person’s wellbeing (Wales, 2025). The complexity of overlapping legal processes and conditions—including child protection

orders, youth justice conditions, and family court-related requirements—creates further confusion and emotional burden for carers already operating under significant strain.

Those carers caring for children in their homes sometimes express feeling unsafe in their own homes, concerned for the safety of other children, and overwhelmed by the responsibility of managing high-needs young people without adequate information or support. Kinship carers—often grandparents—experience particular hardship due to lower financial assistance, limited training, and expectations that they will assume care automatically, despite their own health, financial, and emotional constraints (Borenstein, 2025).

The emotional toll on carers is significant: feelings of isolation, fear, grief, and exhaustion are common as they attempt to provide stability within systems that are reactive, fragmented, and inconsistent. Information about children’s histories, risks, and needs is often delayed or withheld, further compromising safety and trust. These issues heighten distress for carers and directly impact children, whose experiences of instability, disrupted attachments, and unmet therapeutic needs increase their risk of justice involvement and poor long-term outcomes (Wales, 2025) (Colvin, 2020).

Carers often experience a simultaneous tension between concerns about safety within the home — including their own safety and that of other children — and an ongoing sense of responsibility and empathy toward the young person, coupled with uncertainty about the most appropriate ways to support them.

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### *Wraparound Milwaukee*

*Wraparound Milwaukee provides coordinated, cross system services in lieu of youth detention or residential placement outside the home. To be eligible the young person must have been involved in in at least two of the mental health, child protection, special education, or youth justice systems and be at risk of psychiatric hospitalization, residential care placement or youth detention. Blended funding across departments enables flexibility to respond to the young person and family’s needs and a flat monthly fee incentivises community care rather than residential admissions.*

*Since the creation of Wraparound, the average daily residential treatment population in Milwaukee has dropped by 71 percent, from 375 youth to 110 youth, while the average length of stay in residential treatment has dropped from fourteen months to four months (Kamradt, 2014). Research shows that the recidivism rate for youth remains low at around 14-16% (Kamradt and Goldfarb, 2015).*

## The experiences of children in family-based and non-family-based (residential) care who have also been in the youth justice system.

The most powerful insights into the experience of youth justice involvement come from young people themselves.

Lived-experience accounts—such as those captured through *Ngaga-dji* (Koorie Youth Council, 2018)—highlight how children in residential care describe feeling unsafe, unheard, over-policed, and disconnected from family, culture and community, with many identifying that the system’s responses compounded rather than alleviated harm.

Similarly, the *Feeling Supported, Not Stuck* (Victoria Legal Aid, 2025) report shows that children in crisis are frequently met with legal responses rather than therapeutic support, with intervention orders applied to children as young as ten, including those with disabilities or trauma histories, in ways that escalate their justice involvement rather than addressing underlying needs. The voices and insights of these firsthand accounts provide clear reform directions.

Children who enter the youth justice system often find that the deeper they go, the more punitive, and developmentally inappropriate the system becomes. While diversion for low-level or first-time offences can be a relatively straightforward court process, children who progress to stricter orders, remand, or custody face increasingly harsh conditions that do little to support their rehabilitation. For those held on remand or in custody, daily life can involve repeated lockdowns, limited or no visits, extended periods confined to their rooms due to staff shortages or incidents involving others. The experience can deepen and reinforce trauma, rather than address it. There is often limited access to education, programs, or therapeutic support. Opportunities to build independence, develop skills, or plan for their future are sparse.

As a result, many young people describe leaving custody feeling unprepared, unsupported, and disconnected. The lack of consistent exit planning, wrap-around supports, and meaningful reintegration pathways means that release often comes without the tools children need to stabilise, re-engage with community, or navigate life safely. Instead of providing safety, rehabilitation, or hope, these conditions frequently entrench the trauma, disconnection, and disadvantage that contributed to their justice involvement in the first place.

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## The Corporate Parenting Model in the Scotland, England, Wales, and Northern Ireland

	Scotland	England	Wales	Northern Ireland
Establishment & Duration	<p>Established in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014</p> <p>Duration: 12 years</p>	<p>Established in Children and Social Work Act 2017</p> <p>Duration: 7 years, but principles have been applied informally in practice for ~15 years</p>	<p>Introduced under Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014</p> <p>Duration: 12 years</p>	<p>Formalised in Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 [with guidance updated by Dept. of Health/Dept. of Education in 2008 and later]</p> <p>Duration: 28 years (formalised duties updated over time)</p>
Legislation	Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014	Children and Social Work Act 2017	Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014	Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
Scope (Who is a Corporate Parent?)	Local authorities, NHS boards, Ministers, Police, Prison Service, universities/colleges	Local authorities, NHS bodies, schools, police, probation services, prisons	Local authorities, health boards, police, courts, colleges	HSC Trusts, Education Boards, government departments
Key Principles	<p>12 Corporate Parenting Principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Act in best interests</li> <li>2. Promote wellbeing</li> </ol>	<p>8 Corporate Parenting Principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Act in child's best interests</li> <li>2. Promote education</li> <li>3. Promote health</li> </ol>	<p>Rights-based principles aligned with UNCRC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best interests</li> <li>• Participation &amp; co-production</li> </ul>	<p>Focus on life chances, stability, education, wellbeing, inclusion, participation.</p>



		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Strive for stability</li> <li>4. Anticipate needs</li> <li>5. Listen to and involve children</li> <li>6. Provide support to reach potential</li> <li>7. Promote equality and opportunity</li> <li>8. Promote health</li> <li>9. Encourage participation</li> <li>10. Work collaboratively</li> <li>11. Be proactive</li> <li>12. Plan for transitions</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Plan for stability &amp; transitions,</li> <li>5. Advocate for children</li> <li>6. Listen to children &amp; act on views</li> <li>7. Work across agencies</li> <li>8. Prepare children for adulthood</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellbeing</li> <li>• Equality</li> <li>• Stability</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Preparation for adulthood.</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Bodies</b>	<b>Central Body</b>	Local Authorities / Councils	Local Authorities / Councils	Local Authorities / Councils	HSC Trusts
	<b>Health</b>	NHS Boards	NHS & CCGs	Health Boards	HSC Trusts
	<b>Education</b>	Schools, universities, colleges	Schools, universities, colleges	Schools, universities, colleges	Education Authority / Boards
	<b>Justice</b>	Police, Scottish Prison Service	Police, Probation, Youth Justice	Police & Youth Justice Services	Police, Youth Justice, DoJ
	<b>CYP Participation</b>	Children in Care Councils, Youth Participation Officers	Children in Care Councils (CiCC)	Children in Care Councils	Children in Care Councils, Participation Forums



	<b>Govt /Oversight</b>	Scottish Government, Ministers	Department for Education	Welsh Government, Ministers	Department of Health / Department of Education
	<b>Monitoring</b>	External Audits, Scottish Govt. Oversight	Ofsted / ILACS	Care Inspectorate Wales	Dept. of Health / HSC monitoring
	<b>Other</b>	CELCIS (Training, guidance, research)	Local advisory boards, Pracsas (consultancy), CiCC support	Co-production facilitators, local advisory groups	HSC Boards, advisory groups for care leavers
<b>Strategy &amp; Implementation</b>		<p>Corporate Parenting Plans detail objectives, actions, engagement methods, indicators for health, education, wellbeing, participation, stability. Plans are reviewed regularly.</p> <p>Local and national reporting where progress informs future policy and implementation.</p>	<p>Local authority corporate parenting strategies are often linked to Local Offer for care leavers. Planning involves cross-agency coordination where outcomes are focused on education, health, housing, and transitions.</p> <p>Inspected under ILACS.</p>	<p>Corporate Parenting Strategies are embedded in children's services planning include objectives for participation, wellbeing, housing, education, health.</p> <p>The Code of Practice guidance Part 6 provides structured framework.</p> <p>Periodic review and consultation with children.</p>	<p>Corporate parenting integrated into children's services plans. Trusts and HSC Boards develop strategies for supporting looked-after children and care leavers (includes participation, education, wellbeing, transitions).</p> <p>Reporting via statistics and HSC accountability structures.</p>
<b>Including the Child's Voice</b>	<b>Legal Requirement</b>	The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 explicitly emphasises that corporate parents should "take account of the views, wishes, and feelings of the	Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, local authorities and other corporate parents must have regard to the views, wishes, and feelings of children in care and care leavers.	The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 embeds children's participation as a statutory duty, aligning strongly with the UNCRC.	<p>The law expects children's views to be sought in matters affecting their care and life chances.</p> <p>The corporate parenting</p>



		<p>child”.</p> <p>The Act also refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which Scotland has incorporated into its policy frameworks, giving children the right to express their views and have them taken seriously.</p>	<p>The Children Act 1989/2004 also underpins the right of children to be consulted in matters affecting them.</p>	<p>Corporate parents must actively seek and take account of children’s views in planning and delivering services.</p>	<p>duties come from the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, later reinforced by guidance and strategies from the Department of Health and Department of Education.</p>
	<p><b>Mechanisms</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Parenting Plans must include how the organization will engage with care-experienced children.</li> <li>• Many local authorities have Youth Councils or Children in Care Councils, which meet regularly with staff and decision-makers.</li> <li>• Participation Officers or Champions are appointed to ensure young people’s voices are heard in planning and evaluation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Almost all local authorities have Children in Care Councils.</li> <li>• Statutory guidance instructs corporate parents to involve children in designing services, reviewing plans, and monitoring progress.</li> <li>• Care-experienced young people are often involved in recruitment and training of staff, influencing policies, and evaluating service quality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children in Care Councils are widespread and linked to local authority governance.</li> <li>• Young people are consulted on service design, placements, and corporate parenting strategies.</li> <li>• Guidance emphasizes co-production, where children and young people are partners, not just consultees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children in Care Councils and care-experienced forums operate across trusts.</li> <li>• Statutory guidance requires corporate parents to listen to, record, and respond to young people’s input.</li> <li>• Participation is integrated into reviews of care plans and corporate parenting strategies.</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance suggests direct consultation, surveys, focus groups, and co-production of services and strategies with care-experienced children.</li> </ul>			
	<b>Enforcement / Monitoring</b>	Annual reporting, guidance compliance	Ofsted inspections, annual reporting	Care Inspectorate Wales, reporting	Trust inspections, reporting
<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Report(s)</b>	<a href="#">Caring for our children and young people: Update on Scotland's Corporate Parenting 2018-21</a>	The <a href="#">Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS)</a> framework assesses how local authorities exercise corporate parenting duties as part of broader evaluation of looked-after children and care leaver services.	N/A	N/A
	<b>Strengths</b>	<p>Corporate parents are using multiple routes to engage with care-experienced children.</p> <p>Many authorities produce annual reports and plans, embedding corporate parenting into broader service planning.</p> <p>Some indicators suggest improved outcomes in areas such as</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A



		apprenticeship participation.			
	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<p>Inconsistent measurement: over 200 different indicators were collected, making cross-sector evaluation difficult.</p> <p>Outcome gaps remain between care-experienced children and peers in key areas (health, housing, education, etc.).</p> <p>Some corporate parents struggle to embed participation and data use consistently.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>Modifications</b>	<p>Evolved guidance, integrated UNCRC, and aligned with The Promise.</p>	<p>Refined statutory guidance and inspection frameworks.</p> <p>Sheffield City Council moved away from the language of corporate parenting to develop the <i>Community Parenting Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers 2023-2026</i></p>	<p>Updating its Code of Practice to strengthen evaluation and participation.</p>	<p>Adjusted guidance for life chances and participation but no major legislative overhaul.</p>
	<b>Links</b>	<a href="#">Corporate Parenting Policy &amp; Overview</a>	<a href="#">Applying Corporate Parenting Principles</a>	<a href="#">Consultation on Corporate Parenting</a>	<a href="#">Children Looked After Co-operating to Safeguard</a>



	<a href="#">Statutory Guidance on Part 9 (Corporate Parenting)</a> <a href="#">Statutory Guidance (Scotland Act)</a>	<a href="#">Local Government Resource Pack</a> <a href="https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/social-care/children/community-parenting-strategy">https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/social-care/children/community-parenting-strategy</a>	<a href="#">Corporate Parenting Code of Practice</a>	<a href="#">Children and Young People</a>
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### Other countries implementing the Corporate Parenting Model:

- **New Zealand:** The Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) uses frameworks for statutory care of children, emphasising cross-agency responsibilities.
- **Canada:** Provincial child welfare agencies often adopt multi-agency responsibilities for children in care, reflecting similar principles.
- **Europe:** Countries like Denmark, Norway, and the Netherlands implement cross-agency obligations for children in care, sometimes referencing “corporate parenting” or “public parenthood” models.