



## Gareth Ward

Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services

### MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 10 May, 2019

#### **YOUTH SET TO GET ON TRACK IN THE RIVERINA**

An early intervention scheme for children aged 10 to 17 will be rolled out in the Riverina Police District, in a bid to stop young people becoming entrenched in juvenile crime.

Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services Gareth Ward said Mission Australia will deliver Youth on Track from July 1, 2019.

“Research shows young people who come into contact with the criminal justice system at a very young age are the most likely to offend for a longer time and at a greater frequency and most likely to receive a custodial order,” Mr Ward said.

“Young offenders who receive targeted, individualised intervention, like Youth on Track, to address the underlying causes of their involvement in crime, are less likely to continue offending into adulthood.”

The Riverina will be the state’s seventh Youth on Track site. Since the scheme commenced in July 2013, approximately 70 per cent of young people who participated have either stabilised or reduced their contact with police. Almost half of participants showed significant improvement in connection with education and their community after just three months.

Member for Cootamundra Steph Cooke said the scheme is an investment in regional communities.

“I’m thrilled to welcome Mission Australia to the electorate to deliver Youth On Track, a program which throws the one-size-fits-all approach out the window, providing targeted and innovative interventions to help get young offenders back on the right path,” Ms Cooke said.

Member for Wagga Dr Joe McGirr welcomed the Government’s focus on early intervention.

“We should be doing everything we can to address juvenile crime in our communities. I look forward to working with the State Government to achieve great outcomes for young people in our community,” Dr McGirr said.

The implementation of Youth on Track in the Riverina Police District is another example of the NSW Government’s investment in reducing reoffending across the state.