

Youth on Track

Referrer Factsheet

How does the scheme work?

Youth on Track is an early intervention scheme for 10 to 17-year olds that identifies and responds to young people at risk of long-term involvement in the criminal justice system.

The Department of Communities and Justice has funded non-government organisations to implement the scheme since 2013. Currently, Youth on Track operates in the following sites:

- Mid North Coast (Bulahdelah to Nambucca)
- Coffs Clarence (Coffs and Grafton area)
- Hunter (Lake Mac to Port Stephens)
- Blacktown (incl. Mt Druitt and Quakers Hill)
- Central West (Dubbo, Cowra, Orange area)
- New England (Tamworth, Armidale area)
- Riverina (Wagga Wagga, Tolland, Gumly Gumly and Bourkelands area)

Youth on Track provides police and other eligible agencies with an opportunity to refer young people, considered to be at medium or high risk of re-offending, to a support service without requiring a court order. Engagement in Youth on Track is **voluntary**.

Once a young person is eligible and referred to the scheme the Youth on Track Service Provider provides one-on-one case management and evidence-informed interventions focusing on the underlying causes of the young person's involvement in crime.

Youth on Track works with the young person on their behaviour and attitudes, engaging with school, who they hang out with, alcohol and other drug issues and family support.

Why Youth on Track?

"The referral process to Youth on Track is simple and the case management is effective. I have found Youth on Track to be a valuable resource for my work and for the young offenders in the area."

Police Youth Liaison Officer

Benefits of Youth on Track:

- experienced caseworkers
- an offending risk and need assessment tool to guide case plans
- one-on-one case management
- evidence based offence-focused behavioural and family intervention
- links to support services including education, employment, health and other community services
- participants have a reduction in formal contacts with police
- participants have a reduction their risk of re-offending
- participants improve their engagement with family and education

Eligibility criteria?

NSW Police, local schools, Youth Justice, Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health, solicitors Community Services, Out of Home Care providers, the Family Referral Service, Headspace and other mental health services, can make a **discretionary referral** for young people who are thought to be at high-risk of re-offending. The young person must:

- be 10 to 17 years old
- have at least one formal contact with police (caution, charge or Youth Justice Conference)
- have offended in, live or go to school in a Youth on Track site area
- have offending risk factors (such as truancy, child at risk reports, pro-criminal peer association, family history of domestic violence, and substance abuse)
- have no current or prior supervised court order or spent time in custody on a control order.

Automatic referrals are made by the Youth on Track Screening Officer by screening data contained in the NSW COPS database. Young people who have at least two formal contacts with police and who are assessed as having a 60% or greater likelihood of offending may be referred. The offence must occur in one of the Youth on Track site areas.

How can you be involved?

Identify suitable young people. Follow the referral process flowchart and complete a referral form.

Where possible when making referrals to Youth on Track **inform the young person and their carer of the referral and encourage them to participate.**

Information should be provided by you to the Youth on Track service provider once the young person has been referred.

Police should provide the Youth on Track provider with any information of safety concerns in relation to the young person and/or their home environment.

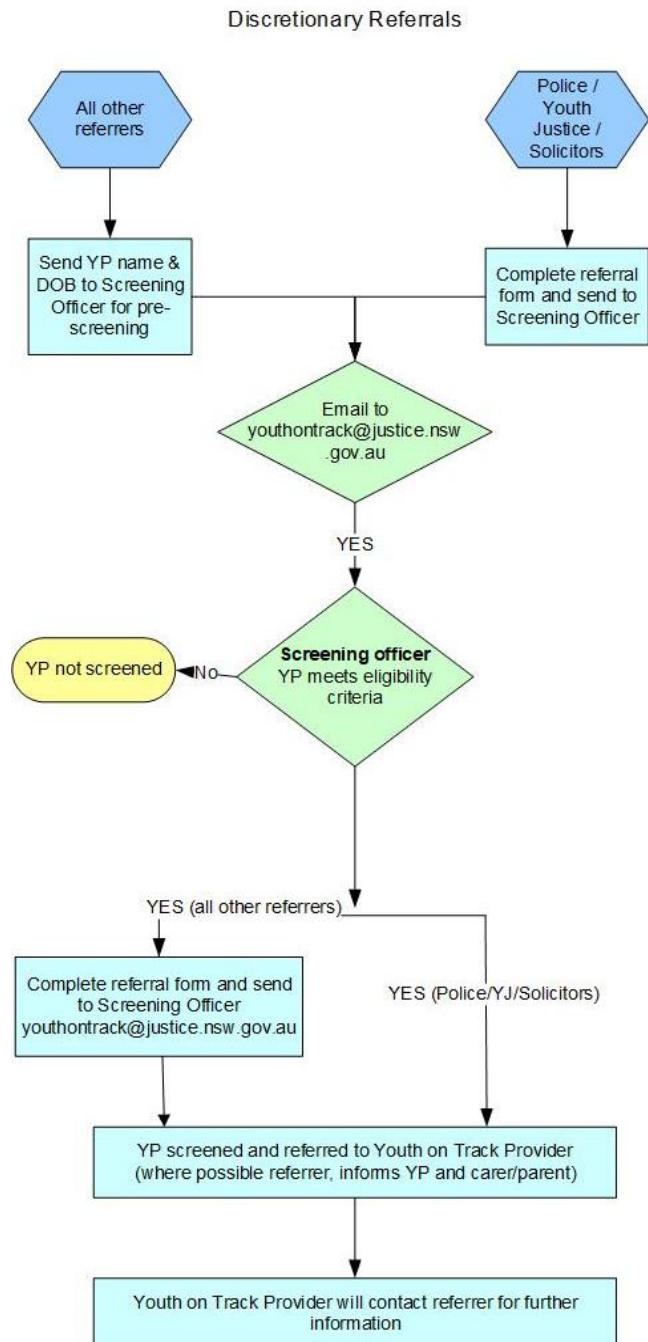
Information sharing between Youth on Track, referral agencies and other service providers is authorised under Chapter 16A of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*. This is for the young person's safety, welfare or wellbeing or where this will ensure the safety and wellbeing of others.

Contact Youth on Track

Youth on Track Service Providers

- Hunter (02) 4033 4911
- Blacktown (02) 8886 6300
- Mid North Coast (02) 6589 5000
- Central West (02) 6884 8526
- Coffs Clarence 0427 317 595
- Riverina (02) 6932 7500
- New England:
 - Armidale / Glen Innes: 0428 533 483
 - Inverell / Tenterfield: 0429 145 176
 - Tamworth / Gunnedah: 0427 181 536
 - 0429 056 247
 - 0429 120 506

Screening and Referral Flowchart



For more information

Youth on Track Unit

- Telephone: (02) 6623 4216
- Email: youthontrack@justice.nsw.gov.au

Visit the website at

www.youthontrack.justice.nsw.gov.au