

Pay for failure or invest in success?

Justice reinvestment and a collective impact framework



Just Reinvest NSW is focused on developing a justice reinvestment policy that will work in Australia. To do that, we are using a collective impact framework to provide our roadmap.

Collective impact is the commitment of a group of actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a complex social problem.

The underlying premise of collective impact is strong organisations are necessary but alone, no single individual or organisation can create large-scale, lasting social change, and “silver bullet” solutions to systemic social problems do not exist; they cannot be solved by simply scaling or replicating one organisation or program.

Collective impact initiatives are currently being employed to address a wide variety of issues around the world, including education, healthcare, homelessness, the environment, and community development. Many of these initiatives are already showing concrete results, reinforcing the promise of collective impact in solving complex social problems.

An example of **collective impact in action** is the recent transformation in juvenile justice reform in New York State (2010–2012). New York State took its lead from the successful juvenile justice reforms Connecticut witnessed over the past decade (2000–2010). One of the benefits of collective impact is that ‘lessons learned’ in other settings allow for similar improvements over shorter times.

NEW YORK STATE RESULTS 2010–2012

POLICY CHANGES	QUANTIFIABLE CHANGES
New and stronger relationships across the system	Juvenile arrests drop by 24%
Deeper knowledge of programs and services	Juveniles admitted to detention declined by 23%
Significant policy changes	Juvenile probation intake cases declined by 20%
Commitment to data-driven decision making	Juvenile petitions Killed declined by 21%
Engagement of Local Communities	Juvenile admissions in state placement were down by 28%
Empowerment of new stakeholders	Number of youth in state custody declined by 45%



What does collective impact involve?

There are five elements of collective impact:

Common agenda • Common understanding of the problem • Shared vision for change

Shared measurement • Collecting data and measuring results • Focus on performance management • Shared accountability
Mutually reinforcing activities • Differentiated approaches • Coordination through joint plan of action

Continuous communication • Consistent and open communication • Focus on building trust

Backbone support • Separate organisation(s) with staff • Resources and skills to convene and coordinate participating organisations

What are the benefits of collective impact?

Amplify impact • Offers a holistic approach by channeling the energy of various stakeholders towards solving a problem and achieving long term, systemic change • Provides opportunities to influence the system from within and outside by coupling advocacy with action

Increase efficiency of resources • Allows more efficient use of funding, especially in times of scarce resources • Enables leveraging of public and private source of funding • Opens channels for organizations to access additional funding against an issue

Drive alignment • Reduces duplication of services • Increases coordination • Embeds the drive for sustained social change within the community

What does justice reinvestment with a collective impact look like?

Key elements of justice reinvestment include the need for it to be place-based, data-driven, supported by a centralised strategic body, and with fiscally sound and targeted measures.

What collective impact offers is a more detailed roadmap, which will be critical in developing what we call 'the Australianisation of justice reinvestment'.

Using this roadmap, cost savings are able to be realised not only through the diversion of resources from Corrective Services and Juvenile Justice, but through the realignment of existing programs and services to reduce duplication and increase efficiency.

These cost savings will then kickstart the justice reinvestment approach. The resulting savings to the Corrective Services and Juvenile Justice budgets will be the basis of its continuation.

Collective impact and justice reinvestment in Bourke NSW

It is this collective impact framework that is shaping the justice reinvestment work Just Reinvest NSW is doing in Bourke, NSW and which, by 2016, will produce the watertight social and economic case for justice reinvestment to be implemented in Bourke.

For more information please visit our website or email info@justreinvest.org.au.