



MEDIA RELEASE

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WOMEN'S JUSTICE NETWORK HELPS FEMALE PRISONERS BUILD A BRIGHTER FUTURE

The ABC's Four Corners documentary *Criminalising Women* - aired on 25 February 2019 - investigated why an increasing number of women are going to jail. The program profiled three women - Bekki, Fran and Donna - who were filmed from November 2018 to January 2019.

Criminalising Women profiled the benefits of programs undertaken by organisations such as New South Wales (NSW) based Women's Justice Network (WJN), empowering women impacted by the criminal justice system to create a new path forward.

The WJN Mentoring Program currently has 45 trained volunteer mentors, who are matched with women leaving prison or at-risk of being incarcerated. The Mentoring Program provides individualised case management support to help re-integrate these women into the community and support them to lead productive lives.

In NSW, the number of women going to prison has almost doubled in the ten year period 2011 - 2017. The vast majority of women in prison have been physically or sexually abused. Many have turned to drugs, and then a life of crime. Their chances of rehabilitation are made harder by their struggle to find housing, work and support in the community.

WJN Chief Executive Officer Gloria Larman said "WJN believes that every woman deserves the opportunity to build a brighter future."

"Our evidence-based Mentoring Program empowers women to lead crime-free lives and make a valuable contribution to our community."

"To date, WJN's Mentoring Program has had a 93 per cent success rate for any woman that has engaged in the program for one year or more, successfully reducing recidivism and crime in NSW," Gloria added.

Currently WJN has funding for only 50 mentoring relationships annually, despite there being almost 1,000 women in NSW prisons today and over 2,500 women cycling through prison each year. The annual cost of our Mentoring Program for adults is \$6,000 per annum and we rely on donations to enable us to extend our reach. We invite members of the community to [donate here](#).



WJN mentee case studies

- Bekki was featured in *Criminalising Women* and has been participating in the WJN Mentoring Program for over 24 months. Bekki is now training as an apprentice butcher.
- Fran was featured in *Criminalising Women* and has been participating in the WJN Mentoring Program for over 24 months. Fran now has sourced permanent housing and is seeking employment.
- Ally Jade participated in the WJN Mentoring Program for over 18 months and is currently exhibiting her artwork at the DiversARTy Studio & Gallery in Cromer, NSW.

For further information, please contact:

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About WJN

The Women's Justice Network (WJN) is a diverse community organisation committed to advancing the prospects and wellbeing of women and female youth affected by the criminal justice system. WJN is unique in its service provision and is the only organisation in NSW solely supporting this vulnerable section of the community.