



**David Elliott**  
Minister for Corrections  
Minister for Emergency Services  
Minister for Veterans Affairs

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Friday, 23 September 2016

### **VETERANS TO MENTOR JUVENILE DETAINEES**

Returned soldiers and other military personnel will have the opportunity to mentor young offenders in custody, providing positive role models and helping to reduce the rate of reoffending.

Minister for Veterans Affairs and Minister for Corrections David Elliott today announced a \$600,000 investment in a two-year demonstration of the mentoring program in Western Sydney and the Mid North Coast.

Veterans will provide guidance and support during the final six months of a young person's sentence and the first six months of their release from custody. Mentors will also be available for young people who are on community-based orders.

The Veterans Young Offender Mentoring Program, in coordination with the NSW RSL, will match mentors with about 40 young people each year, providing opportunities to develop a young person's social skills, self-esteem, and help them reach their potential.

"Every family knows a young person who is a bit of a tearaway and has now made something of their lives. Veterans have discipline, resilience and a dedication to service, which makes them perfect mentors," Mr Elliott said.

"Unfortunately, some young people don't have positive role models in their life and I hope that this program will help to fill that void, as well as complement the other positive work being done by Juvenile Justice.

SHINE For Kids will run the program, provide training and carry out relevant criminal record and Working with Children checks.

It builds on the success of the Stand As One mentoring program by SHINE for Kids at Frank Baxter Juvenile Justice Centre. SHINE have an established record supporting children, young people and families with relatives in the criminal justice system

To apply, visit the RSL website at [www.rslnsw.org.au](http://www.rslnsw.org.au).