

CRIME AND JUSTICE BULLETIN

NUMBER 237 | JULY 2021

An evaluation of the youth Bail Assistance Line

Ilya Klauzner**AIM**

To examine the operation of the Bail Assistance Line (BAL) an after-hours bail support service for young people in New South Wales (NSW), including the number of young people placed on bail by BAL and their characteristics, geographical dispersion of BAL services, and how BAL placement impacts the likelihood of incarceration and recidivism.

METHOD

We linked data from NSW Youth Justice on all BAL calls that resulted in a placement plus selected BAL calls that did not result in placements, with the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research's Reoffending Database. This allowed us to measure the offending history, demographic factors, future offending and custodial episodes of 366 cases that involved young people placed by BAL. In examining BAL's reach, we compared characteristics of young people placed by BAL with young people who were granted conditional bail or had their bail denied by police, including young people who came into contact with BAL but were not placed. To examine the impact of BAL on the likelihood of incarceration and recidivism, we compared young people placed by BAL with similar young people who were referred to BAL but were not placed by BAL due to a lack of resources or geographic constraints. We controlled for relevant factors in logistic and Poisson regressions.

RESULTS

BAL places a small but growing proportion of young people. In the first half of 2019, BAL placed 9.4% of 542 cases that were bail denied by police or placed by BAL. Its services are strongly concentrated in urban areas in the Greater Sydney region. BAL is more likely to place female, non-Aboriginal defendants who have breached their bail and who have an AVO against them, than the general youth bail population. BAL is less likely to place young people with two or more prior court appearances, and two or more cautions or custodial episodes. Young people placed by BAL are 10.5 percentage points less likely to be in any form of custody within six months of their contact date, compared with those young people who couldn't be placed due to lack of services. There is no evidence that BAL reduces the likelihood or frequency of future offending.

CONCLUSION

Young people that are placed by BAL are less likely to enter custody, but only a small number of young people are placed by BAL. An expansion of BAL has the potential to increase the number of young people placed but will depend on police referring young people early in the bail process.

KEYWORDS

bail diversion police program evaluation remand young people/ juveniles

INTRODUCTION

Despite their vulnerability and relatively low chance of being sentenced to detention, young defendants are bail refused at a much greater rate than adults. Although these remand episodes are often short in duration, with 60% of young people eventually granted bail by the court (Klauzner & Yeong, 2021), the cost to the individual and the State is significant. The Bail Assistance Line (BAL) is an after-hours bail support service for young people in New South Wales (NSW) which seeks to address the unique barriers that young people face when accessing bail and therefore reduce instances of short-term remand.¹ This bulletin examines the operations of BAL, including its reach, the characteristics of the young people it places and its impact on the likelihood of incarceration and reoffending.

Young people held on remand

After being arrested by police in relation to an alleged criminal offence, a young person can either be remanded into custody while waiting for their matter to be heard or be granted bail to wait for their court date in the community. Young offenders are remanded in custody at alarming rates compared to adults. Between 2015 and 2019, 22.7% of juveniles that appeared before the court had been bail refused by the police compared with 13.8% of adults (Klauzner & Yeong, 2021). This high remand rate is due to the numerous court diversionary options available for young people which mean less serious offences are not subject to a bail decision. Nevertheless, young people on remand represent the majority of young people in custody, with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2020) reporting that two out of every three young people in detention in Australia are unsentenced.

The vast majority of young remandees do not receive a custodial sentence (i.e. a control order) and are typically remanded for very short periods of time. In NSW in 2018/19, 85.9% of youth remandees received a non-custodial penalty and the median length of stay in custody for young people on remand was only one day (Youth Justice NSW, 2020). While the NSW youth custodial population decreased between 2011 and 2019, the decline was much greater for sentenced youth (38.3% or 69 fewer young people) compared with those on remand (27.1% or 61 fewer young people) (NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, 2020a).

Given their vulnerability, it is troubling that young people are remanded at such high rates. Research suggests that young people are more likely to be at risk of physical and psychological harm in custody than adults because they are separated from family and community, their education or employment is disrupted and, if unsentenced, they have no access to therapeutic programs (Richards & Renshaw, 2013). Remanded young people are also at risk of forming negative associations with other young offenders, and establishing delinquent peer groups that could increase a young person's likelihood of future offending (Richards & Renshaw, 2013). Finally, there is strong causal evidence for adults that being held on remand substantially raises the probability of a custodial sentence (Dobbie, Goldin, & Yang, 2018; Rahman, 2019) potentially compounding the negative costs of custody for remanded young people.

In addition to these negative consequences for the individual, remand also represents a significant financial cost to the State. In the 2018-19 financial year, the daily cost of supervising a young person in an NSW youth detention centre was \$1,413.66.² This compares with just \$135.51 for young people who were supervised in the community (SCRGSP, 2020).

Young people often face unique barriers to being granted bail. Stubbs (2010) and Richards and Renshaw (2013), both argue that the absence of suitable accommodation and the absence of a responsible adult or guardian are significant obstacles to bail being granted. Under the Bail Act 2013 No. 26 (hereafter referred to as the Bail Act) authorised justices are able to impose a requirement that a young person has

¹ Short-term remand refers to short custodial episodes that last no more than a couple of days and are due to police refusing bail to a young person who is eventually granted bail when they are seen by a magistrate. Klauzner and Yeong (2021) estimate that of young people who are refused bail by the police, 60% will be granted bail at their first court appearance.

² This, of course, doesn't imply that diverting a young person from custody would necessarily save this amount of money due to the fixed costs of running a youth detention centre.

suitable accommodation before they can be released on bail. Stubbs (2010) argues that the implication of this is that homelessness is a de facto ground for bail refusal. She also argues that relevant government departments are slow to find suitable accommodation resulting in potentially lengthy stays on remand (Stubbs, 2010). Further, young people are often given onerous or inappropriate bail conditions such as curfews, residential conditions and geographical exclusions, which makes it harder for them to meet those conditions and be granted bail in the first instance, and easier for them to breach their bail conditions and be remanded into custody as a consequence of that breach (Stubbs, 2010). Finally, there are arguments that bail authorities hold paternalistic views that result in young offenders being remanded at a greater rate than adults (Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues, as cited by NSW Law Reform Commission, 2005, para 10.54; Richards & Renshaw, 2013; Stubbs, 2010).

The Bail Assistance Line

The Bail Assistance Line (BAL) seeks to address the unique barriers that young people face when bail is being considered and in so doing, reduce instances of short-term remand. BAL is an after-hours³ helpline operated by Youth Justice NSW, 7 days-a-week, from 4pm to 3am. BAL commenced state-wide operations in June 2010 in response to the Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection in NSW in 2008, which recommended that NSW have an after-hours bail placement service similar to the services operating in Victoria and Queensland. BAL is usually staffed with two employees (a team leader and bail coordinator) during its hours of operation.

The primary aim of BAL is to reduce the number of young people on remand in detention centres. BAL tries to achieve this by providing police with credible options for young people who cannot meet their bail conditions. A feature of BAL is that it targets young people who are especially vulnerable. This includes young people who have been charged with a domestic violence assault and may be unable to return home due to an Apprehended Violence Order (AVO)⁴ against them, and also young people who have breached their bail on technical grounds (e.g. breaking their curfew). BAL also targets over-represented groups in remand which include Aboriginal young people, those in out of home care (OOHC),⁵ those with no fixed place of abode, those with disabilities (including intellectual disabilities) and young people under the age of 15. Another focus of BAL is custodial diversion for young people with no prior custody admissions.

BAL achieves its aims in two ways.

1. It partners with service providers in the non-government sector who may be able to provide short-term accommodation, transport and/or case work support to the young people so that they can satisfy the conditions of a bail order. Although the exact support provided varies across providers, crisis accommodation, transportation and case management are normally provided for up to 28 days.
2. Independently of its partnerships with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), BAL works with the police to ensure that all options are exhausted before bail is denied. This involves attempting to link the young person with a responsible adult, family member or other external support, providing police with up-to-date information on a young person's current bail status, and providing guidance to police about all the available options under the Bail Act.

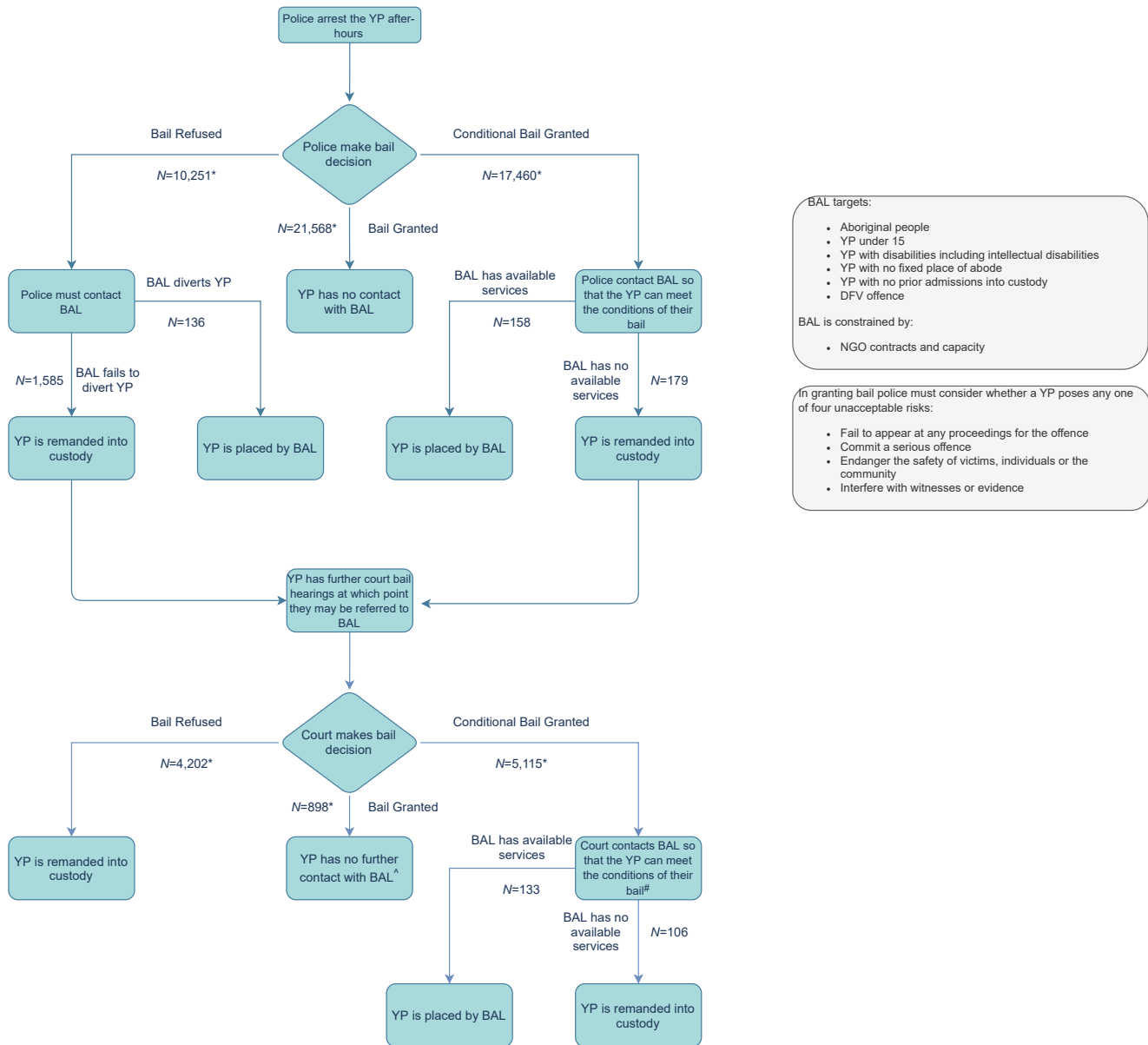
Any interaction with BAL that results in a young person being granted bail is considered a placement. This means there are some young people placed by BAL who never interact with an NGO and receive no further support after their placement, such as those young people that BAL links with a suitable family member.

³ The hotline only operates after-hours, because if a young person is arrested after-hours and denied bail they must spend one night in custody, waiting for their court hearing which normally occurs the next day. If a young person is arrested during regular business hours they normally go before a court on the same day.

⁴ AVOs include Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders, which applies where the people involved are related, living together or in an intimate relationship, or Apprehended Personal Violence Orders, where the former relationships do not apply.

⁵ To try to break the care-criminalisation cycle (see for example Gerard, McGrath, Colvin, & McFarlane, 2018).

Figure 1. Flow chart of how young people connect with BAL



Note. *Numbers include the number of cases with a bail decision at any time of the day.

^ A YP at this stage may have never had contact with BAL if they were arrested during business hours or if BAL decided not to attempt to divert them.

Other organisations may refer YP to BAL at this stage. See Table 2 for a list.

Numbers are indicative and will not be equivalent to tables due to young people that have missing reasons or young people that are placed for a reason other than those represented in the flow chart.

YP = young person, BAL = Bail Assistance Line, DFV = Domestic and family violence, NGO= Non-governmental organisation

Key features of BAL service are illustrated in Figure 1. There are two main pathways through which a young person can be placed by BAL. They are as follows:

1. Referrals - The police intend to grant the young person conditional bail and they call BAL in order to use their services to facilitate bail. The courts and corrections facilities may also refer young people to BAL for the same reason.
2. Diversions - The police intend to remand the young person in custody but must contact BAL, if this decision occurs between 4pm and 3am. BAL advocates on behalf of the young person for police to reconsider their decision and release the young person to bail. This pathway is only applicable to the police bail stage.

BAL's targeting of its vulnerable groups occurs during the diversion pathway. BAL receives a large volume of calls from police who intend to bail refuse young people. As they cannot attempt to divert every single call, BAL generally makes a diversion attempt for young people that meet their vulnerability criteria.

If BAL refers the young person to an NGO, the NGO then makes their own decisions regarding the young person's suitability and the organisation's capacity to meet the young person's needs. If the young person is released to bail through either of the above pathways, then this is considered by BAL to be a placement. An example is provided in the box below to illustrate the BAL referral and placement process.

Example: young person who is in residential out of home care (OOHC) and is arrested for assaulting another resident at the facility.

When charging the young person the police also decide to impose a provisional Apprehended Violence Order (AVO) preventing them from being in close proximity of the assault victim.

The police consider granting bail to the young person but a condition of bail is that the young person has suitable accommodation. The young person is unable to meet this condition because the AVO prevents them from returning to their current residence.

The police call BAL who assesses the young person as suitable to be placed in temporary accommodation with one of their NGO providers. The police grant the young person bail as they are now satisfied that the accommodation bail condition has been met.

Past research

There are numerous bail support programs operating in different Australian jurisdictions that, like BAL, aim to divert young people from remand and/or support them while on bail. However, there is a scarcity of rigorous evaluations of such programs.

Crofts (2014) undertook an early qualitative evaluation of BAL involving 13 semi-structured interviews with stakeholders including the police, NGOs and BAL staff, "to provide an assessment of BAL". He found some positive results including that BAL had good working relationships with the police and service providers, citing interviewees describing BAL staff as "fantastic" and doing an "outstanding job". He provided examples of individual cases where BAL had been successful in diverting young people from custody and re-engaging them with the community.

Crofts (2014) also identified a number of limitations of BAL including a lack of accommodation options in some areas of NSW, lost partnerships with NGOs over time due to withdrawal of funding, and limited police awareness of the services provided by BAL in many Police Area Commands (PACs). He noted a general belief held by police officers that young people should not be "let off" for their alleged offence by being granted bail.⁶ This means that young people with more serious offending histories or other

⁶ Even though police must engage with BAL, police will always have discretion when making the final bail decision.

young people who were otherwise eligible for BAL were not receiving BAL services. As Crofts' study was qualitative in nature, he did not consider the impact of a BAL referral on the likelihood of a young person being imprisoned or reoffending (unlike the current bulletin).

A similar after-hours bail assistance line for young people in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), called the After Hours Bail Support Service (AHBSS), was evaluated by the ACT community service directorate in 2012 (ACT Community Services, 2012 as cited in Willis, 2017). They found that in the first six months of operation, from October 2011 to April 2012, AHBSS reduced the incidence of remand by 17% compared to the equivalent period in the previous year. However, it is possible that factors other than the AHBSS, such as changes in police practices as well as the general trend in crime rates, could have affected the rate of remand between these two time periods. It is difficult to comment on the methodology used in this evaluation, as the evaluation report has not been published.

Willis (2017) also reports promising results for other bail support programs for young people. These programs differ significantly in their operations, but all have similar aims to reduce the number of young people on remand. For example, the Conditional Bail Program in Queensland, which provides intensive support for young people, found a very high program completion rate of 72% (Venables & Rutledge, 2003, as cited in Willis, 2017). Similarly, young people who completed the Metropolitan Youth Bail Service's program in Western Australia, successfully completed their bail orders at a rate of 70% compared to 50% for young people who were granted bail with an undertaking from a responsible person (Richards & Renshaw, 2013). Further, 69% of young people who engaged in Tasmania's Supporting Young People on Bail program received reduced sentences and 56% did not return to court (Save the Children, n.d., as cited in Willis, 2017).

Although the results from these evaluations of bail support programs are promising, many of the outcomes examined are secondary to the primary aims of the programs (e.g. program completions rather than bail refusal or reoffending). Further, most studies that have considered custody and reoffending outcomes do not compare these outcomes with those for other similar groups. We therefore cannot be confident that any observed differences are due to participation in the program.

Richards and Renshaw (2013) identify five main shortfalls of the Australian bail support programs in operation at the time of their review.

1. Only a small number of young people access bail support services. For example, a bail support program in Victoria was only accessed by 40 young people in the 2010-11 financial year.
2. Most bail support services are strongly concentrated in metropolitan areas with limited operations in regional or rural areas.
3. Most bail support programs choose not to engage with young people with complex needs or prior offending histories, which can limit their impact.
4. Increased monitoring of young people in these programs means that they could be more likely to have a breach of bail detected for something that would ordinarily go unreported.
5. The purpose of bail support programs is in many cases ill-defined. Although the primary aim of bail support programs is to divert young people from custody, many also provide case support with the aim of reducing reoffending. Richards and Renshaw (2013) argue that more research is needed to identify the most appropriate model (e.g. whether a guilty plea should be a prerequisite to program entry).

The current study

This study provides descriptive statistics on the young people assisted by BAL who are granted bail, the program's reach and the geographic dispersion of BAL services. This study also evaluates the impact of bail placement by BAL on criminal justice outcomes, including the probability that a young person will be incarcerated or reoffend. The method employed here does not allow us to directly measure the effectiveness of BAL in increasing access to bail. This is because, for a large proportion of the sample,

police contacted BAL after the decision to grant conditional bail had already been made. Instead this study evaluates the impact of being successfully placed on bail by BAL on incarceration episodes (including the index incarceration episode), days in custody and subsequent offending episodes.

While not the primary aim of the service, BAL may also be expected to have an impact on reoffending rates. First, by diverting young people from custody, BAL may assist young people to avoid the negative consequences of custody including forming a delinquent peer group, and severing positive relationships with their community, school and/or employers, all of which can affect future offending. Second, young people that are placed with NGOs can receive case management for up to 28 days. This case management, which will vary by the NGO provider, may help to address a young person's offending behaviour.

Therefore, this study will answer the following key questions:

- How many young people are placed by BAL? What proportion of young people that were denied bail by the police are placed with BAL?
- How do these numbers/proportions vary geographically across NSW?
- What are the demographic and offending characteristics of young people that are placed by BAL compared to those who are not? Does BAL meet its goal of engaging vulnerable groups?
- Does placement by BAL reduce the likelihood of a custodial episode or the number of nights spent in custody?
- Does placement by BAL impact the likelihood of future offending?

METHOD

Data source

Two datasets are used in this analysis. The first was provided by Youth Justice NSW and contains information about all placements by BAL, and certain enquiries to BAL that did not result in a placement. This data is available from June 2010 until June 2019. The dataset contains 2,967 observations of which 463 were placements. Each observation is defined as a separate call or contact regarding a young person. From this dataset we are able to observe the source of the contact (e.g. police/ courts/ caseworker); the suburb of the police station or court; the date of the contact; a short explanation of the nature of the placement or enquiry; and the date of birth of the young person.

The second dataset is an extract from the NSW BOCSAR's Re-Offending Database (ROD). The ROD contains information relating to all criminal matters finalised in the NSW Children's Court, Local Court, District Court and Supreme Court. For this study, only matters relating to people aged below 18 years at the time of charge and who had an appearance where the first charge occurred between 1st of January 2011 and 28th of March 2020 are included.⁷ Reoffending and custody outcomes are measured for finalised matters where the offence date or custody admission date occur before 28th of March 2020.

Seventy per cent (N=2,069) of the observations in the BAL dataset were successfully matched to the ROD, including 380 placements. We then aggregated each observation to the case level, where a case is defined as an appearance that begins when a young person is charged and ends when they are acquitted or sentenced. There are 366 cases with at least one BAL placement.

⁷ Matters without a police charge number were excluded from the analysis.

Variables

For these matched records we can observe the young person's:

- gender;
- Aboriginality;⁸
- the remoteness of their residential area;
- the Socioeconomic Index for Areas (SEIFA) percentile rank of their residential postcode;⁹
- age at the time of contact with BAL.

We can also observe information about their current offence and prior criminal history including:

- the Australia and New Zealand Offence Classification (ANZSOC) code associated with the most serious offence;¹⁰
- whether they were on bail for a previous offence at the time of BAL contact;
- whether they had a community-based order¹¹ or a current Apprehended Violence Order (AVO)¹² against them at the time of BAL contact;
- the police jurisdiction (i.e. Police Area Command or Police District) in which a young person was arrested;
- breaches of bail;
- proven court appearances;
- police cautions;
- custody episodes;
- breaches of justice control orders.¹³

We observe all priors that occurred before the BAL contact. Further, we observe a placement by BAL, which is defined as a contact with BAL that resulted in the young person being granted bail, either because BAL placed them with an NGO or because BAL successfully advocated for their release through other means.

There are an additional 26,017 finalised cases in the ROD extract which did not match to BAL data but where police had either granted the young person conditional bail or refused bail. These observations are used as a comparator in part of the analysis.

8 Whether police recorded the young person as Aboriginal for the index offence.

9 SEIFA scores are a measure of socioeconomic disadvantage based on the defendant's postcode of residence at the time of finalisation. Lower scores indicate more disadvantage. Defendants held on remand at the time that their matter was finalised have missing SEIFA scores in our data. In order to address this issue we create an indicator variable for these defendants to prevent them from dropping out of the regression. Interested readers are directed to Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011b) for more information pertaining to SEIFA scores.

10 ANZSOC codes are used to group offences by type across Australian and New Zealand jurisdictions. Interested readers are directed to Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011a) for more information.

11 This includes supervised and unsupervised bonds, community correction orders, community release orders, juvenile control orders, juvenile probation orders, intensive correction orders, suspended sentences, and children's community service orders.

12 A binary variable that is equal to one if the young person had a final AVO issued against them in the 12 months prior to the contact date, or if they had any AVO (final, interim, provisional) issued in the month prior to the contact date, or if they had a provisional AVO issued on or in the month after the contact date.

13 This includes a breach of a custodial order, breach of a community order, breach of violence order, and breach of ADVO.

Descriptive analysis of BAL's reach

We conduct two main analyses. Our first three research questions are examined descriptively by comparing BAL placements with the general youth bail population. To examine the proportion of young people that are placed by BAL and how they are geographically distributed, we compare the number of BAL placements with:

- The number of young people who were bail refused by the police, either in NSW as a whole or in particular police jurisdictions.

This allows us to examine how many young people BAL is reaching of all young people who are police bail refused. To examine the demographic and offending characteristics of young people and whether BAL has successfully targeted vulnerable groups, we compare BAL placements with:

- Cases where the young person was either granted conditional bail or refused bail by the police.

This allows us to compare how BAL placements differ from the general bail population. We exclude cases where the police granted unconditional bail from the comparison group as BAL targets young people who cannot meet their bail conditions and those who police have decided to remand. Thus, young people granted unconditional bail would not be a relevant comparison group.

Impact of BAL placement on custodial and reoffending outcomes

Empirical strategy

In this component of the study we seek to evaluate the impact of a BAL placement on a young person's likelihood and instances of custody and reoffending. In order to estimate the causal impact of BAL on reoffending and custody, we need to construct a comparison group that serves as a valid counterfactual to those that were placed by BAL.

There are several reasons why this is challenging. First, BAL targets more vulnerable young people, such as young people who are Aboriginal, are aged under 15 years, have a disability (including intellectual disabilities), are in OOHC or have no fixed place of abode. BAL also often prioritises cases that involve AVOs and breaches of bail, because they may be able to assist in providing alternative accommodation or more workable bail conditions in these cases.¹⁴ Second, BAL placements are more likely to occur when police choose to grant conditional bail, and reoffending risk is an explicit consideration in the bail decision. While some of the factors assessed in determining this risk are legal factors, other 'non-legal' factors such as criminal associations, community ties, and disabilities are also in scope. In summary, both BAL targeting and police bail decision-making, which influence a young person's placement on BAL, incorporate factors which are associated with offending behaviour. Simply comparing BAL placements to other young people, and failing to correct for these unobserved factors (e.g. cognitive disabilities, in OOHC, no fixed address) mean that we would attribute differences in offending caused by these factors to BAL.

We minimise these particular selection issues by comparing BAL placements with young people who made contact with BAL but was recorded in our data as not placed due to either a lack of beds or the NGO being closed/not operating in that area.¹⁵ The majority of this comparison group will be bail refused at the initial police bail decision. Our comparison group is valid in evaluating the impact of a BAL placement on measures of custody and reoffending if the lack of available services is unrelated to reoffending risk and the risk of a custodial episode, except through BAL placement.

One concern with this comparison group is that it only includes young people who police intended to grant conditional bail, whereas BAL placements consist of young people for whom police intended to grant conditional bail to and those they intended to bail refuse (see Figure 1). Therefore, the young people

¹⁴ However, one BAL priority group are young people with no prior custody admissions, who are likely to be less vulnerable than an average young person.

¹⁵ An additional observation is included where the young person asked for transport but was no longer needed when offered.

who police intended to bail refuse may be riskier than the comparison group. Fortunately, we are able to distinguish BAL placements by the pathway of contact with BAL in the data. In the Appendix, we show that the results in terms of probability of custody and reoffending are similar whether or not we distinguish between these two groups.

A further concern is that BAL is concentrated in urban areas, which typically have lower crime rates than regional or rural locations (see NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, 2020b, for the exact distribution of crime rates by Local Government Area). Here the comparison group may have a higher reoffending risk than the placement group because fewer services exist in regional areas. We can, however, account for this in the analysis by controlling for the area in which a young person offends.

Outcome variables

We evaluate BAL on the following outcomes:

- The probability that a young person enters custody within 6, 12 and 24 months after the date of BAL contact. This is measured as a binary variable that equals one if a young person spends more than one night in custody for any reason in the respective period which begins on the date of BAL contact, and zero otherwise.
- The number of nights spent in custody within 6, 12 and 24 months of contact with BAL. This is a continuous variable that counts the number of nights a young person spends in custody for any reason in the respective time period which begins on the date of BAL contact. If a young person spends no nights in custody in the respective period, the variable is equal to zero.
- The probability of a reoffence within 6, 12 and 24 months after the date of BAL contact. This is measured as a binary variable that equals one if a young person has a new and proven reoffence within the respective time period after the date of BAL contact and zero otherwise.
- The number of reoffences within 12 and 24 months after the date of finalisation of the related offence. This refers to new and proven offences, and the count includes offences committed between the BAL contact date (exclusive) and the date of finalisation. If a young person doesn't reoffend within the respective time period, the variable is equal to zero.

Descriptive statistics

In Table 1, we report summary statistics for the demographic and offending characteristics of young people placed by BAL and the young people who were not placed due to a lack of services (N=121; henceforth the comparison group).¹⁶ Column 1 shows the proportion or mean of young people that were placed by BAL while column 3 shows the proportion or mean of the comparison group. Column 4 shows the *p*-value from a t-test of equality between the means of the placement and comparison groups.

From Table 1 we see that the placement group has more young people residing in major cities and the most advantaged suburbs compared to the comparison group. The only other statistically significant differences between these groups are that Aboriginal young people and young people with a current AVO are less likely to be placed, while young people already on bail for another offence are more likely to be placed. The similarities between the two groups on all other observable characteristics suggest that young people who were not placed due to lack of services form a useful comparison group for BAL placements.

¹⁶ There are two reasons why the comparison group may seem small. First, the comparison group only includes young people who were referred to BAL from the police and the courts, but BAL could not place. Second, BAL does not record information on every enquiry, meaning not all young people who were not placed due to being in an area where an NGO service was not available, are recorded in this dataset.

Table 1. Characteristics of BAL placements compared with young people not placed due to lack of services

	(1) Placement (%) [N=366*]	(2) Comparison (%) [N=121*]	(3) Difference (p.p.)	(4) Test of equality (p-value)
Panel A: Demographic Characteristics				
Female	33.33	28.10	5.23	.286
Aboriginality				
Aboriginal	24.32	33.88	-9.57	.039
Non-Aboriginal	72.95	65.29	7.66	.108
Unknown	2.73	0.83	1.91	.222
Remoteness Area				
Major City	86.39	55.46	30.93	<.001
Inner Regional	11.94	34.45	-22.51	<.001
Outer Regional	1.11	10.08	-8.97	<.001
Remote	0.56	0.00	0.56	.416
SEIFA				
SEIFA Q1 (Most disadvantaged)	35.25	23.97	11.28	.022
SEIFA Q2	17.49	42.15	-24.66	<.001
SEIFA Q3	25.96	24.79	1.16	.800
SEIFA Q4 (Least disadvantaged)	19.67	7.44	12.23	.002
Missing SEIFA	1.64	1.65	-0.01	.992
Age, years (mean)	15.10	15.18	5.23	.624
Panel B: Current Offending				
Already On Bail	31.15	18.18	12.97	.006
Already On Order	3.83	4.13	-0.31	.880
AVO	28.96	41.32	-12.36	.011
Offence type (ANZSOC code)				
Homicide (01)	0.00	0.00	0.00	.
Assault (02)	34.82	41.23	-6.41	.216
Sexual assault (03)	0.56	0.00	0.56	.426
Dangerous or negligent acts (04)	0.56	0.00	0.56	.426
Abduction and harassment (05)	0.56	0.00	0.56	.426
Robbery and extortion (06)	6.41	3.51	2.90	.246
Break and enter (07)	5.57	5.26	0.31	.900
Theft (08)	7.80	5.26	2.54	.362
Fraud (09)	0.84	0.00	0.84	.329
Drug offences (10)	1.39	2.63	-1.24	.373
Weapons offences (11)	0.84	0.88	-0.04	.966
Property damage (12)	5.85	4.39	1.46	.551
Public order offences (13)	6.13	7.89	-1.77	.508
Traffic offences (14)	0.28	0.88	-0.60	.392
Offences against justice procedures (15)	28.13	28.07	0.06	.990
Miscellaneous offences (16)	0.28	0.00	0.28	.574
Panel C: Prior Offending				
Prior court appearances				
0	55.46	57.85	-2.39	.647
1	21.31	21.49	-0.18	.967
2 or more	23.22	20.66	2.56	.560
Prior cautions				
0	43.44	47.11	-3.66	.483
1	28.69	29.75	-1.06	.823
2 or more	27.87	23.14	4.73	.309

Table 1. Characteristics of BAL placements compared with young people not placed due to lack of services (continued)

	(1) Placement (%) [N=366*]	(2) Comparison (%) [N=121*]	(3) Difference (p.p.)	(4) Test of equality (p-value)
Prior custody				
0	96.17	97.52	-1.35	.485
1	2.46	1.65	0.81	.606
2 or more	1.37	0.83	0.54	.642
Prior breach of bail				
0	86.61	90.08	-3.47	.318
1	4.37	4.96	-0.59	.788
2 or more	9.02	4.96	4.06	.155
Prior breach of order				
0	75.68	77.69	-2.00	.655
1	3.28	2.48	0.80	.660
2 or more	21.04	19.83	1.20	.778

Note. Area variables have 360 and 119 non-missing observations for the placement and comparison groups, respectively. Missing SEIFA is exactly collinear with observations of Remoteness Area that are missing. The offence categories (ANZSOC codes) have 359 and 114 non-missing observations for the placement and comparison groups, respectively.

Statistical analysis

To examine how placement by BAL influences reoffending and custody we estimate the following logistic regression equation:

$$y_{ipt} = \Lambda(\beta_0 + \beta_1 Placement_{ipt} + \gamma X'_{ipt} + \alpha_p + \gamma_t + \epsilon_{ipt}) \tag{1}$$

Where y refers to the outcome variables, which include binary variables that equal one if the young person reoffends or enters custody, and count variables which include the number of offences and nights in custody.¹⁷ The outcome variable is measured for young person i , who committed their offence in Police Area Command (PAC) p , in year t . $Placement_{ipt}$ is a binary variable that is equal to one for young people that were placed by BAL¹⁸ and equal to zero for young people that were put in contact with BAL but were not placed due to lack of services. X'_{ipt} is a vector of controls.¹⁹ α_p is a set of PAC random effects which control for some of the time invariant systematic differences in police practice between PACs.²⁰ This could include differences in police knowledge and opinions towards BAL, as well as the different levels of BAL services across PACs. Finally, γ_t refers to year fixed effects, which control for time varying factors that influence crime across NSW (e.g., changes to economic conditions, the OOH system or bail legislation). ϵ_{ipt} refers to the residual term, and the standard errors are clustered by PAC.²¹

17 The first two outcomes are estimated using logistic regression and the last two outcomes are evaluated using Poisson regression.

18 I.e. The variable is equal to one if within any case, the young person is placed with BAL on any occasion. For example, if on the first appearance a young person was granted bail without placement from BAL and subsequently breached their bail, at which point they were placed by BAL, this would count as a placement.

19 This includes whether the young person was on bail, on a control order, had an AVO against them; their prior court appearances, cautions, breaches of bail and breaches of order; their prior nights in custody; their age at BAL contact, gender, Aboriginal status, remoteness area, and SEIFA quartile.

20 Ideally, we would implement a set of fixed effects which would completely control for all the variation between PACs. However, this would only examine the effect of placement within each PAC. As our sample size is very small most PACs have less than 10 observations, which wouldn't give us enough power to detect any effect due to a BAL placement even if such an effect existed. This is less of an issue with random effects. We also control for other geographical factors like SEIFA and remoteness area.

21 According to Abadie, Athey, Imbens, and Wooldridge (2017) standard errors should be clustered if assignment to treatment is clustered. Here treatment refers to a BAL placement and as figure 3 will show, there is strong geographical variation in BAL placement. Therefore, we cluster standard errors by PAC.

The coefficient of interest is β_1 , which examines the relationship between placement by BAL and our reoffending and custody outcome variables. β_1 is our attempt at an estimate of the average treatment effect on the treated as opposed to an intention-to-treat definition. This is because, by construction, everyone in the placement group is placed by BAL and therefore is granted bail.

β_1 can be interpreted causally only if, net of our controls, PAC random effects and time FEs, there are no other differences between the BAL placement and the comparison group on factors related to risk of reoffending or incarceration, except through participation in BAL. While these differences are minimised by restricting the comparison group to young people who were denied BAL due to lack of services, there may be some factors affecting selection which we cannot completely control for. For this reason, any relationship found between BAL and incarceration or reoffending in this analysis should be considered associative rather than causal.

RESULTS

Descriptive analysis of BAL's reach

Who uses BAL?

The source of BAL calls that result in placements are presented in Table 2. The vast majority of BAL referrals that result in the placement of a young person come from the police (around 70%). Referrals from Youth Justice account for a further 15% of placements, while referrals from youth justice detention centres and courts each account for just over five per cent of placements. Finally, four per cent of placements were classified as 'BAL Diversion Attempt Follow-Up'. This refers to a situation where a young person that BAL could not assist at the police bail stage was followed up. Through the assistance of BAL's services, e.g., accommodation, the young person was placed at a later stage. The high rate of placements from the police reflects the fact that the BAL service largely intervenes at the police stage in order to avoid short-term remand episodes for young people.

Table 2. Source of BAL calls that resulted in placements from January 2011 to June 2019

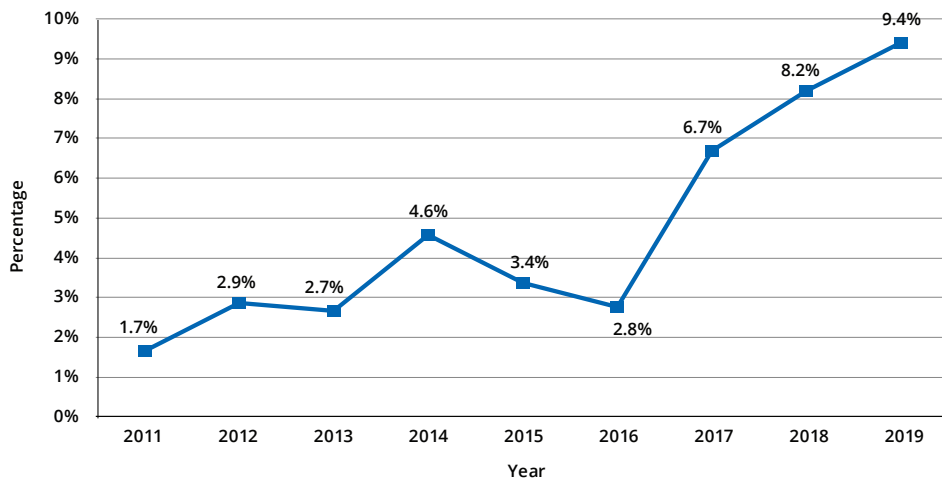
	Number	Percentage
Police	312	69.5
Youth Justice Staff	66	14.7
Detention Centre	26	5.8
Court	24	5.4
BAL Diversion Attempt Follow-up	19	4.2
FACS Staff	2	0.5
Total	449	100.0

Note. FACS is the former NSW Department of Family and Community Services. Youth Justice was known as Juvenile Justice during this time period and was an agency within the NSW Department of Justice. Both agencies are now part of the NSW Department of Communities and Justice. $N=449$ consists of the 366 matched cases to ROD plus the 83 calls that we could not match to ROD.

What proportion of young people are placed by BAL?

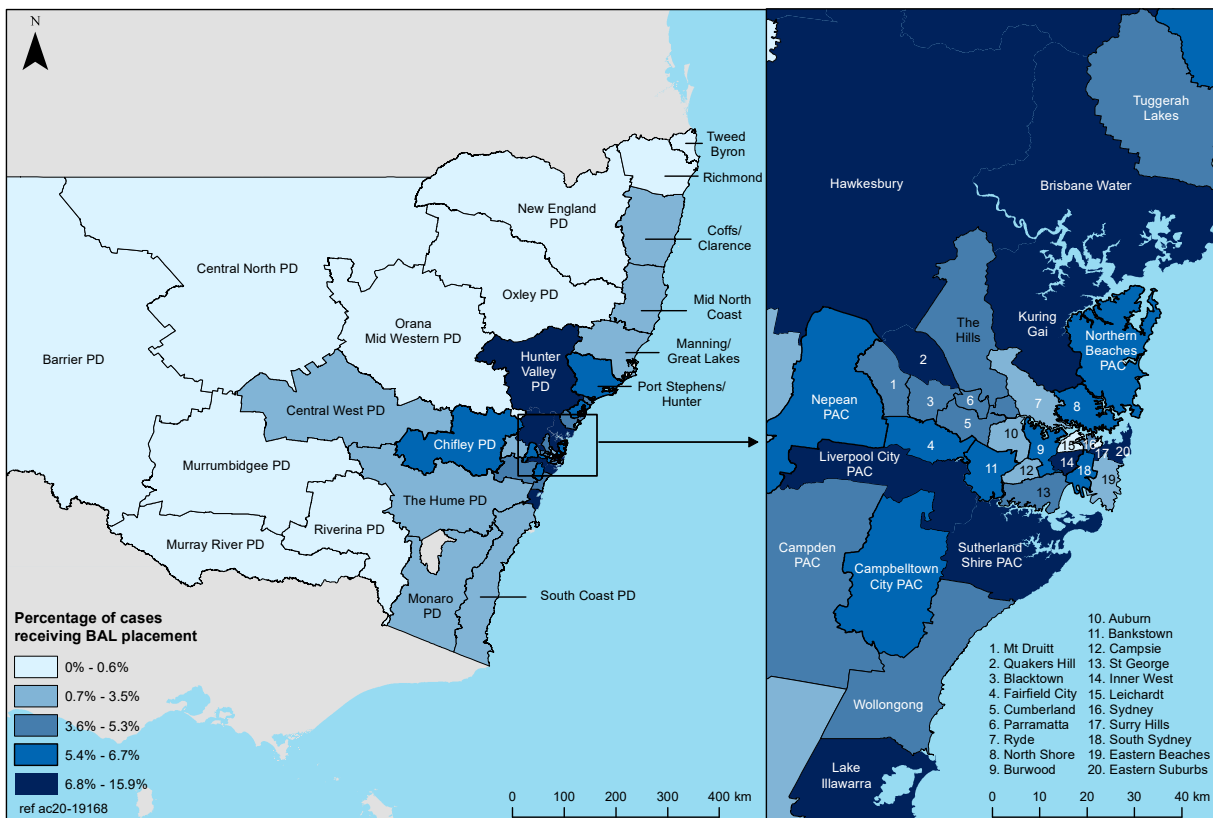
In this section, we examine BAL's reach. Figure 2 examines the percentage of cases involving young people placed by BAL each year relative to all young people refused bail by police in that year. The number of cases that BAL places relative to all cases that resulted in bail refusal is low but has been increasing over time. In 2011, BAL only placed 33 young people out of 1,919 cases (or 1.7%) that resulted in police bail refusal or BAL placement. The proportion placed rises to 9.4% in 2019. The exact proportions and the number of cases involving young people who are placed by BAL and the number of cases that were bail refused can be found in Table A1 of the Appendix.

Figure 2. Percentage of young people placed by BAL of all police bail refusals and BAL placements by year, 2011-2019



Note. 2019 is only until the end of June 2019. The figure shows the percentage of cases involving young people that were placed by BAL out of all cases that were bail refused by the police and all cases placed by BAL.

Figure 3. Percentage of BAL placements by PAC/PD



Note. The map shows the proportion of cases that were placed by BAL out of all cases that were police bail refused in the respective PAC/PD between 2011 and the end of June 2019. The PAC recorded for placements is the PAC that contacted BAL if the young person was placed from the police. Otherwise it is the PAC where the young person was arrested if the young person was placed by the courts, caseworkers or a detention centre.

Placements by BAL are not dispersed equally throughout NSW but are concentrated in areas where BAL has contracts with NGOs. Figure 3 displays a ratemap showing the proportion²² of BAL placements by different Police Area Commands (PACs) and Police Districts (PDs) around NSW. Most BAL placements

22 By the total number of cases that have been police bail refused.

are concentrated in the Greater Sydney area, with the top 8 PACs recording the highest proportion of BAL placements all located in the Greater Sydney region. BAL placements are also high in the Illawarra and Hunter regions, with the Hunter Valley PD and Lake Illawarra PAC having the 9th and 10th highest proportion of placements, respectively. The exact distribution of percentages by police jurisdiction is available in Table A2 of the Appendix.

What are the characteristics of young people placed by BAL compared with those who are not?

Table 3 examines the demographic and offending characteristics of young people placed by BAL and compares them to young people who were bail refused or had conditional bail granted by police. Each observation is a case (i.e. an appearance that begins when a young person is charged and ends with a court finalisation). A case is included in the comparison group if the first police bail decision is conditional bail or bail refusal.²³ Column 1 shows the percentage or mean of the group that were placed by BAL while column 2 shows the percentage or mean of the comparison group. The *p*-value of a t-test is also shown in the final column.

As seen in Table 3, 33% of BAL placements were female, which is much higher than for the population of young people that were bail refused or had conditional bail granted (hereafter referred to as the comparison group). BAL placements were also less likely to involve Aboriginal young people compared with the comparison group (24% vs. 38%). As seen previously, BAL placements were significantly more likely to come from major cities, with 86% of the BAL placement group residing in major cities compared with only 60% of the comparison group (which is consistent with Figure 3). BAL placements are also more likely to come from the least disadvantaged suburbs (20% compared with 10%), and less likely to come from suburbs falling within the 25th and 50th percentile of disadvantage (17% compared with 29%). Finally, those with BAL placements are slightly younger than the comparison group (15.1 vs. 15.5 years old on average).

Table 3. Characteristics of BAL placements compared with all conditional bail or refused bail

	(1) Placement (%) [N=366*]	(2) Comparison (%) [N=27,490*]	(3) Difference (p.p.)	(4) Test of equality (p-value)
Panel A: Demographic Characteristics				
Female	33.33	19.76	13.57	<.001
Aboriginality				
Aboriginal	24.32	37.73	-13.42	<.001
Non-Aboriginal	72.95	59.49	13.46	<.001
Unknown	2.73	2.77	-0.04	.963
Remoteness Area				
Major city	86.39	60.41	25.98	<.001
Inner regional	11.94	27.85	-15.90	<.001
Outer regional	1.11	9.33	-8.22	<.001
Remote/ Very Remote	0.56	2.41	-1.86	.022
SEIFA				
SEIFA Q1 (Most disadvantaged)	35.25	32.36	2.89	.241
SEIFA Q2	17.49	29.36	-11.87	<.001
SEIFA Q3	25.96	22.19	3.77	.085
SEIFA Q4 (Least disadvantaged)	19.67	10.39	9.28	<.001
Missing SEIFA	1.64	5.70	-4.06	.001
Age, years (mean)	15.10	15.51	-0.41	<.001

²³ The same individual can be included in the data multiple times, if they have multiple cases.

Table 3. Characteristics of BAL placements compared with all conditional bail or refused bail (continued)

	(1) Placement (%) [N=366*]	(2) Comparison (%) [N=27,490*]	(3) Difference (p.p.)	(4) Test of equality (p-value)
Panel B: Current Offending				
Already on bail	31.15	14.11	17.04	<.001
Already on order	3.83	24.04	-20.22	<.001
AVO	28.96	20.74	8.22	<.001
Offence type (ANZSOC code)				
Homicide (01)	0.00	0.00	0.00	.909
Assault (02)	34.82	28.71	6.11	.011
Sexual assault (03)	0.56	2.94	-2.39	.008
Dangerous or negligent acts (04)	0.56	1.36	-0.80	.190
Abduction and harassment (05)	0.56	0.92	-0.36	.472
Robbery and extortion (06)	6.41	8.42	-2.02	.171
Break and enter (07)	5.57	11.97	-6.40	<.001
Theft (08)	7.80	11.54	-3.74	.027
Fraud (09)	0.84	0.92	-0.09	.861
Drug offences (10)	1.39	2.33	-0.94	.241
Weapons offences (11)	0.84	0.87	-0.04	.939
Property damage (12)	5.85	5.35	0.50	.675
Public order offences (13)	6.13	8.80	-2.67	.075
Traffic offences (14)	0.28	1.18	-0.90	.114
Offences against justice procedures (15)	28.13	14.48	13.65	<.001
Miscellaneous offences (16)	0.28	0.18	0.10	.656
Panel C: Prior Offending				
Prior court appearances				
0	55.46	50.85	4.61	.079
1	21.31	17.92	3.39	.093
2 or more	23.22	31.23	-8.01	.001
Prior cautions				
0	43.44	35.90	7.55	.003
1	28.69	26.95	1.74	.456
2 or more	27.87	37.16	-9.29	<.001
Prior custody				
0	96.17	90.20	5.97	<.001
1	2.46	5.04	-2.58	.025
2 or more	1.37	4.76	-3.39	.002
Prior breach of bail				
0	86.61	90.53	-3.92	.011
1	4.37	3.83	0.54	.592
2 or more	9.02	5.64	3.37	.006
Prior breach of order				
0	75.68	77.21	-1.53	.488
1	3.28	7.59	-4.31	.002
2 or more	21.04	15.20	5.84	.002

Note. Area variables have 360 and 25,923 non-missing observations for the placement and comparison groups, respectively. Missing SEIFA is exactly collinear with observations of Remoteness Area that are missing. The offence categories (ANZSOC codes) have 359 and 27,471 non-missing observations for the placement and comparison groups, respectively.

Turning to offending characteristics, 31% of young people placed by BAL were already on bail at the time of charge compared with just 14% of the comparison group. However, young people who were placed were much less likely to already be on an order (4% compared to 24%). BAL placements were more likely to be charged with assault and procedural offences, and less likely to be charged with sexual offences and break and enter. Finally, BAL placements were more likely to have 2 or more prior bail breaches and 2 or more breaches of prior orders, as well as more likely to have a current AVO against them. Conversely, BAL placements have fewer prior court appearances, cautions, and custodial episodes.

Impact of BAL placement on custodial and reoffending outcomes

In this section we report the results for equation (1) which examines the impact of BAL on custody and reoffending outcomes. First Table 4 presents the unadjusted means for each outcome for the BAL placement and the comparison groups (i.e. those that could not be placed by BAL due to a lack of services, most of which were bail refused by police). It shows (1) the proportion of custody and proven reoffending episodes within 6, 12 and 24 months of the date of contact with BAL, (2) the mean number of nights in custody within 6, 12 and 24 months of the date of contact with BAL, and (3) the number of reoffences from the date of contact with BAL to 12 and 24 months after the date of finalisation for that offence. Column 4 shows the p-value from a t-test of equality between the means of the placement and comparison groups.

There is a very high incarceration and recidivism rate for offenders in both groups. Among those that were placed by BAL, 52% recorded a custody episode (sentenced or unsentenced) within 6 months of BAL contact and 64% within 2 years. The rate is significantly higher for young people who did not receive a placement due to a lack of services. For this group 64% and 72% recorded a custody episode within 6 months and 2 years, respectively. In terms of reoffending, 47% of those placed by BAL reoffended within 6 months and 80% reoffended within two years. This is slightly higher than our comparison group where 41% and 72% of cases reoffended within the same respective time periods. The nights spent in custody and number of reoffences are similar across the two groups.

Table 4. Comparison of the mean of outcomes between the placement and comparison groups

	(1) Placement (%)	(2) Comparison (%)	(3) Difference (p.p.)	(4) Test of equality (p-value)
Panel A: Within 6 months	[N=366]	[N=121]		
Custody (%)	51.91	63.64	-11.72	.025
Nights in custody (mean)	14.1	13.0	1.16	.696
Reoffence (%)	46.99	41.32	5.67	.278
Panel B: Within 12 months	[N=342]	[N=117]		
Custody (%)	60.82	67.52	-6.70	.197
Nights in custody (mean)	32.2	27.3	4.88	.437
Reoffence (%)	64.33	59.83	4.50	.385
Number of reoffences (mean)	4.64	3.97	0.68	.281
Panel C: Within 24 months	[N=270]	[N=100]		
Custody (%)	64.44	72.00	-7.56	.172
Nights in custody (mean)	71.0	66.3	4.76	.745
Reoffence (%)	79.63	72.00	7.63	.119
Number of reoffences (mean)	7.64	6.94	0.70	.465

Note. The comparison group refers to young people that couldn't be placed by BAL due to a lack of services. Time periods refer to months since the date of BAL contact. The exception is the number of reoffences which refer to months since finalisation, but includes offences committed between the BAL contact date and finalisation.

Table 5. Regressions on outcome variables within 6 months of BAL contact

Model	Poisson		Logistic			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Nights in custody		P (Custody)		P (Reoffending)	
Placement	0.096 (0.184)	0.181 (0.252)	-0.116* (0.060)	-0.105** (0.053)	0.052 (0.056)	0.064 (0.054)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
PAC Random Effects	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Year Fixed Effects	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	482	474	482	473	482	473

Note. Average marginal effects are reported for logistic regression models in columns 3-6. Robust standard errors clustered at the PAC level. The full list of controls and the estimates associated with our controls are shown in Table A4.

* $p < .10$ ** $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$

We show the regression results examining reoffending and custody outcomes within 6 months of contact with BAL in Table 5. We present both unadjusted and adjusted estimates for each of the three outcomes considered. For the Poisson regressions, we report the raw estimates, which can be interpreted as the approximate per cent change in the outcome with respect to the variables shown in the first column (e.g. placement). For the logistic regressions, we report the average marginal effects, which, when multiplied by 100, show the percentage point change in the outcome with respect to the variables shown in the first column.

Looking first at columns 1 and 2 we see that a placement by BAL is not significantly associated with nights spent in custody. However, as shown in columns 3 and 4, a BAL placement is associated with a significant reduction in the probability that a young person will be incarcerated. The adjusted model (see column 4) suggests that a placement reduces the probability that a young person will spend any time in custody within 6 months by 10.5 p.p. This represents a reduction of 16.4% compared to the average rate of incarceration for the comparison group (64%). Finally, in columns 5 and 6, we find no evidence that BAL placement reduces the probability of reoffending.

Table 6. Regressions on outcome variables within 6 months of BAL contact with police as source of placement

Model	Poisson		Logistic			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Nights in custody		P (Custody)		P (Reoffending)	
Placement	-0.042 (0.206)	0.132 (0.379)	-0.165** (0.069)	-0.135* (0.069)	0.008 (0.062)	0.024 (0.065)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
PAC Random Effects	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Time Fixed Effects	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	336	330	336	329	336	329

Note. Average marginal effects are reported for logistic regression models in columns (3)-(6). Robust standard errors clustered at the PAC level. Columns (1)-(2) are Poisson regressions and columns (3)-(6) are logistic regressions. All outcomes are evaluated within 6 months. The sample is restricted to observations where the source of placement or referral was the police. The full list of controls and the estimates associated with our controls are shown in Table A5.

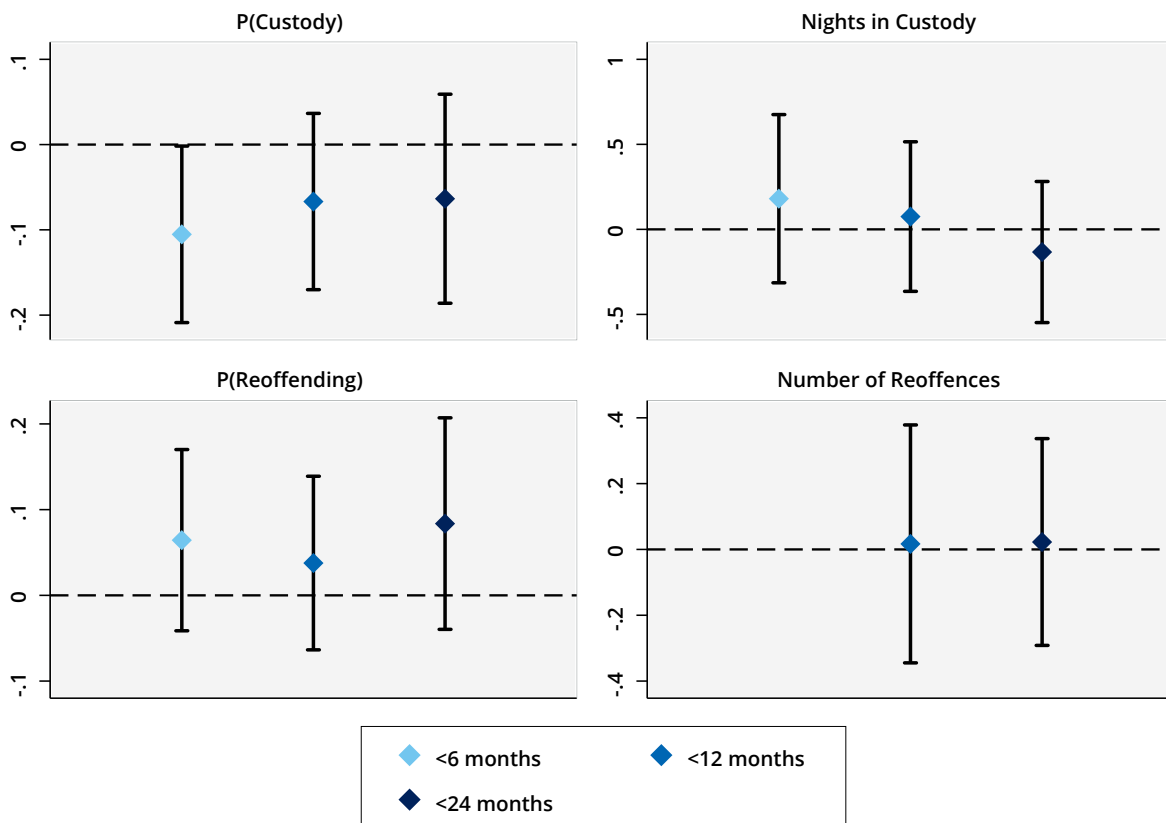
* $p < .10$ ** $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$

Table 6 reports the regression results when we restrict the sample to include only young people who were placed or referred to BAL at the point of the police bail decision (i.e. excluding referrals to BAL from the courts). This represents the largest group of BAL placements and it is also likely to be the stage where BAL has the greatest impact in terms of diverting young people from custody. This is largely confirmed in Table 6. The unadjusted reduction in the probability of custody within 6 months rises from 11.6 p.p. in column 3 of Table 5 to 16.5 p.p. in column 3 of Table 6. Similarly, the estimate adjusted for all the controls increases to a 13.5 p.p. reduction in the probability of custody. Finally, both unadjusted and adjusted estimates of the change in reoffending and nights in custody within 6 months are lower in Table 6 compared with Table 5 but not statistically significant.

Effects using different follow-up thresholds

Figure 4 examines how our custody and reoffending variables vary when looking at the different follow-up periods of 6 months, 12 months and 24 months. The figure shows the estimated difference between the BAL placement and comparison groups, and the 95% confidence interval around this estimate, for four different outcomes: the probability of custody; the number of nights spent in custody; the probability of reoffending; and the number of new offences committed. The percentage point difference is reported for the probability of custody and the probability of reoffending, while an approximate per cent change is reported for the number of nights spent in custody and the number of new offences committed. An estimate below zero suggests that BAL is associated with a reduction in the outcome of interest, while an estimate above zero suggests an increase. If the confidence interval crosses zero, this indicates that the estimate is not statistically significant at the 5% level. The estimates come from the full model shown in equation (1), meaning that all the controls, random and fixed effects are included.

Figure 4. Impact of BAL placement on custody and reoffending outcomes at different follow-up periods



Note. Reported is the coefficient of Placement from the full regressions shown in equation (1). The two plots on the left show the average marginal effects (in percentage points) from logistic models, the two plots on the right show coefficients (in approximate per cent changes) from a Poisson regression. Time periods refer to months since the date of BAL contact. This is with the exception of number of reoffences which refer to months since finalisation, but including offences committed between the BAL contact date and finalisation. The regressions from which the estimates for these figures were obtained are shown in Table A6.

The estimates for the probability of entering custody are consistent across all three follow-up periods. For example, the probability of entering custody within 6 months of contact is 10.5 p.p. lower for the BAL placement group than the comparison group and is 6.4 p.p. lower at the 24 month mark. The reduction at the 24 month mark is still moderate in magnitude though not statistically significant, which may be due to the lower number of observations with a complete 24 month follow-up period. Similarly, the probability of reoffending for the placement group is consistently higher (though not statistically significant) compared with the comparison group across all time periods. Further, although the estimate of BAL's impact on a young person's number of nights in custody drops slightly as the follow-up period lengthens, our estimates are still very close to zero. Finally, our estimate on BAL's impact on the number of reoffences that young people commit is very close to zero when looking at either a 12 month or 24 month follow-up period.

DISCUSSION

This study examined the characteristics of and outcomes for young people placed by the Youth Justice NSW BAL service, including their demographic profile and offending histories, as well as their incarceration and reoffending rates in the period after their initial contact with BAL. Consistent with other bail support programs in Australia (see Richards & Renshaw, 2013) only a small number of young people are serviced by BAL, particularly in rural and regional areas of NSW. For example, just 85 young people were placed by BAL in 2018 even though there were 1,041 young people bail refused by police (or placed by BAL) in that same year. BAL services are geographically concentrated; 86% of young people placed by BAL resided in a major city compared with just 60% of young people who were either granted conditional bail or were bail refused.

Our analysis suggests that BAL is successful in engaging some of its priority target groups. BAL more frequently places young people with an AVO against them and is more likely to place those who have breached their bail conditions. Female offenders also represent a greater proportion of the BAL group compared with the general youth bail population, and offenders placed by BAL are on average slightly younger (15.1 vs. 15.5 years). On the other hand, Aboriginal young people comprise a much smaller proportion of BAL placements compared with the general youth bail population (24% vs. 38%) despite being one of the target groups for the service. The low placement rate of Aboriginal young people may be due to other factors influencing referral rates such as length of criminal history and prior custodial admissions (discussed below). Nevertheless, this result is concerning given Aboriginal young people continue to be significantly over-represented in Youth Justice Centres across NSW.

A notable finding from this analysis is that BAL is less likely to place young people with complex offending histories, particularly those with two or more prior court appearances, prior cautions and prior custodial episodes. This is likely due to BAL's policy of targeting young people with no prior custody admissions as well as the fact that police are much less likely to grant bail to young people with complex offending histories (Klauzner & Yeong, 2021). As Richards and Renshaw (2013) argue, although it is a laudable aim to divert young people who are not yet entrenched in the criminal justice system, young people with complex offending histories are the most likely to have their bail denied. Any bail support program that can successfully intervene with this group will have a much greater impact on youth remand rates.

A novel aspect of the present study is its consideration of broader criminal justice outcomes for people placed by BAL versus those who were not. We find evidence that BAL placement is associated with a decreased probability of incarceration in the six months following the bail decision. The reduction of 10.5 p.p. or around 16% is modest but similar in magnitude to the reduction in remand found for the ACT's after hours line (Willis, 2017), and this rises to a reduction of 13.5 p.p. if restricted to young people who were placed at the point of the police bail decision. Further, the effect appears to be persistent over time, with a moderate (though not statistically significant) reduction in detention likelihood still evident 24 months after the initial BAL contact. However, we find no statistically significant difference between the BAL placement and comparison groups in the number of nights a young person spends in custody.

We also find no evidence that BAL is associated with a reduction in reoffending among young people. In fact, the estimates we find of the effect of BAL on reoffending are slightly positive (though not statistically significant), which could be due to the increased opportunity to reoffend among the BAL group given they are less likely to be incarcerated than the comparison group. The lack of a reduction in reoffending is perhaps not surprising given that reduced reoffending is not the primary aim of the BAL service. BAL partners with NGOs who provide case management for young people but not all young people are placed with NGOs, meaning some young people do not receive ongoing support.

The current study has several limitations worth noting. First, young people were not randomly allocated to the treatment and the comparison groups. The comparison group used in the analysis was carefully selected to minimise the risk that the comparison and BAL placement groups differed on characteristics that affect the likelihood of incarceration and/or reoffending. However, it is possible that not all factors have been accounted for, which would render our estimates more associative than causal. Second, our study did not directly examine how effective BAL is in obtaining bail for young people. Instead it considered outcomes for young people already placed by BAL and hence those that have already been granted bail. This limitation affects our ability to draw any conclusions regarding the impact of BAL on bail refusal rates. Third, we cannot observe the charge time for our comparison group. As such, the descriptive analysis compares BAL cases with cases where the young person was arrested at any time during the day. If the composition of after-hours cases differs substantially from regular hours, this may bias our results.

Despite these limitations, the results presented here provide some evidence that BAL may be effective in reducing incarceration rates for young people. However, its reach is currently too small and geographically concentrated to be considered a full state-wide alternative to remanding young people in custody. To some extent, demand for BAL services will always be limited since it is only available to young people that are charged between 4pm and 3am (around 50% of Bail court attendance notices for young people; Klauzner & Yeong, 2021²⁴) and for those whom conditional bail is a viable option under the Bail Act. But there are at least two other likely explanations for the low rate of BAL placements. First, there is a demand for BAL services but it is not equipped to deal with all the young people who are referred (e.g. due to lack of beds, transport or staff). This is clearly an issue given our comparison group comprised 121 cases where young people could not be placed by BAL due to a lack of services. Had all these cases been successfully placed, the number of young people receiving the service would have increased by 33%. Even so, the proportion of all bail cases placed would still have been relatively small. If we take the first half of 2019 as an example, the proportion of cases placed would have risen from 9.3% to 12.5%, compared to the number of police bail refusals in that period (assuming a 33% increase in BAL placements).

A second reason is police unwillingness to change their bail decision or unfamiliarity with the BAL process. In his earlier evaluation of BAL, Crofts (2014) reported that some PACs had little awareness of BAL services, and other police officers were reluctant to grant bail even with BAL's assistance. Some support for this was also found in our analysis. Figure 3 shows examples in metropolitan Sydney where adjacent PACs have very different rates of BAL placements, even though it is likely that they have similar access to BAL services. For example, Eastern Suburbs PAC has the highest proportion of BAL placements in NSW, but the adjacent Eastern Beaches PAC ranks 36th in terms of the proportion of BAL placements (12 p.p. lower). There are indications that BAL is attempting to build a more collaborative working relationship with the police. A new memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the two organisations came into effect on the 1st of July 2019. The MOU reinforces BAL's role as a diversionary option for young people, and encourages police to examine diversionary options or conditional bail for young people with BAL. The impact of this MOU on BAL's referrals could not be assessed in the current study but should be monitored ahead of any future decisions to expand the service.

²⁴ Unpublished data from Klauzner and Yeong (2021)

Additional funding to secure the services of local NGO partners may help BAL maximise its reach in areas outside of Greater Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong, and bring the rates of placement in rural and regional areas in line with metropolitan areas. Strengthening BAL's relationship with rural police districts would also be key to increasing BAL's reach outside of metropolitan areas. If the service were to be expanded, it is essential for it to be done in such a way as to enable a robust evaluation of program impact.

However, any expansion in BAL's services will necessarily be limited by the decisions of the police, due to the structure of the bail process. Police already have a bail decision in mind before contacting BAL. Either, they intend to grant conditional bail to the young person and contact BAL to facilitate this, or they intend to admit the young person into custody and must contact BAL before doing so. Therefore, any expansion in BAL must be coupled with a strengthened relationship with the police. To be successful, BAL must both encourage more referrals from the police and address any barriers or hesitancy of police in granting bail to young people.

Although this paper found no evidence that BAL in its current form was associated with a reduction in recidivism, this was not its explicit purpose. Consideration could be given to broadening the scope of BAL to include early interventions that address a young person's criminogenic needs. These types of bail support programs have shown some success in the adult offender population, at least for those focusing on offending related to drug and alcohol abuse (e.g. Lulham, 2009). Any benefits associated with reduced reoffending rates would, however, need to be weighed against the additional costs of providing intensive case management and rehabilitative programs for these young people. Further, there is a risk that if participation in an early intervention scheme forms part of a young person's bail conditions this could contribute to higher rates of bail breaches or harsher sentences if they do not satisfactorily complete the program. Such a program could also be problematic if the young person is eventually found to be not guilty.

This bulletin provides some much-needed evidence on the impact of bail support programs for young people. Although there are many bail support programs operating in Australia that target young people, very few studies have examined their impact on custody and reoffending outcomes. Given the significant financial and social costs associated with incarceration, it is essential that these programs are further researched and evaluated to establish what works to reduce the incidence of short-term remand episodes for young people.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Lydia Hamilton and Nathan O'Brien from the Bail Assistance Line for their extremely helpful comments on the operation of BAL, the context of bail decisions for young people in NSW and for their help in interpreting BAL data. Suzanne Poynton, Clare Ringland, Min-Taec Kim and Evann Ooi from BOCSAR provided exceptional feedback on earlier versions of this draft, as did the two external reviewers and the Youth Justice information unit. I thank Mark Ramsay and Derek Goh for preparing the dataset; Alana Cook for creating Figure 3; and Florence Sin for desktop publishing this bulletin.

REFERENCES

- Abadie, A., Athey, S., Imbens, G. W., & Wooldridge, J. (2017). *When should you adjust standard errors for clustering?* (Working Paper 24003). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2011a). Australian and New Zealand Standard Offence Classification (ANZSOC) (Cat. No. 1234.0). Retrieved 27 Apr. 2020 from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1234.0>

- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2011b). Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) (Cat. No. 2033.0.55.001). Retrieved 27 Apr. 2020 from <http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/seifa>
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2020). *Youth detention population in Australia 2019*. (Bulletin 148). Canberra: AIHW.
- Crofts, T. (2014). *Bail Assistance Line Evaluation Report*. Sydney: Institute of Criminology, University of Sydney.
- Dobbie, W., Goldin, J., & Yang, C. S. (2018). The Effects of Pre-Trial Detention on Conviction, Future Crime, and Employment: Evidence from Randomly Assigned Judges. *American Economic Review*. 108(2), 201-240.
- Gerard, A., McGrath, A., Colvin, E., & McFarlane, K. (2018). 'I'm not getting out of bed!' The criminalisation of young people in residential care. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, 52(1), 76-93.
- Klauzner, I., and Yeong, S. (2021). *What factors influence police and court bail decisions?* (Crime and Justice Bulletin No. 236). Retrieved from NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research website: <https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Publications/CJB/2021-Report-What-factors-influence-police-and-court-bail-decisions-CJB236.pdf>
- Lulham, R. (2009). *The Magistrates Early Referral Into Treatment Program* (Crime and Justice Bulletin No. 131). Retrieved from NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research website: <https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Publications/CJB/cjb131.pdf>
- NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. (2020a). Custody Statistics. Retrieved 05 Aug. 2020 from https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Pages/bocsar_custody_stats/bocsar_custody_stats.aspx
- NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. (2020b). NSW Crime Tool Retrieved 17 Nov. 2020 from <http://crimetool.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/bocsar/>
- NSW Law Reform Commission. (2005). *Young offenders* (Report No. 104). Retrieved 18 Dec. 2020 from: <https://www.lawreform.justice.nsw.gov.au/Documents/Publications/Reports/Report-104.pdf>
- Rahman, S. (2019). *The marginal effect of bail decisions on imprisonment, failure to appear, and crime* (Crime and Justice Bulletin No. 224). Retrieved from NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research website: <https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Publications/CJB/2019-Report-Bail-decisions-on-imprisonment-CJB224.pdf>
- Richards, K., & Renshaw, L. (2013). *Bail and remand for young people in Australia: A national research project*. (Research and public policy series no. 125). Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.
- SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision). (2020). *Report on Government Services 2020*. Canberra: Productivity Commission.
- Stubbs, J. (2010). Re-examining bail and remand for young people in NSW. *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, 43(3), 485-505.
- Willis, M. (2017). *Bail support: A review of the literature*. (Research Report no. 4). Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.
- Youth Justice NSW. (2020). *Young people in custody*. Retrieved 21 Dec. 2020 from http://www.juvenile.justice.nsw.gov.au/Pages/youth-justice/about/statistics_custody.aspx

APPENDIX

What proportion of young people are placed by BAL?

Table A1 accompanies Figure 2 and shows the proportion of young people placed by BAL each year, as well as the size of the placement and refused bail groups.

Table A1. Proportion of cases placed by BAL by year

	Number of cases		
	Proportion	Placements	Refused Bail + Placements
2011	.017	33	1,919
2012	.029	47	1,622
2013	.027	36	1,347
2014	.046	48	1,053
2015	.034	36	1,061
2016	.028	26	945
2017	.067	70	1,043
2018	.082	85	1,041
Jan to Jun 2019	.094	51	542
Total	.041	432	10,573

Note: 2019 is only until the end of June 2019. 'Refused bail' refers to the number of cases that were bail refused plus the number of cases that were placed by BAL.

Table A2 accompanies Figure 3 and shows how BAL placements vary by police jurisdiction.

Table A2. Percentage of BAL placements by PAC/PD

	Percentage	Placements	Refused Bail + Placements
EASTERN SUBURBS PAC	15.94	11	69
SUTHERLAND SHIRE PAC	13.16	20	152
HAWKESBURY	12.31	8	65
BRISBANE WATER	10.36	20	193
SURRY HILLS	10	4	40
QUAKERS HILL PAC	8.85	10	113
LIVERPOOL CITY PAC	8.45	18	213
KURING GAI	8.33	6	72
HUNTER VALLEY PD	7.34	8	109
LAKE ILLAWARRA	7.18	13	181
INNER WEST PAC	6.96	8	115
SOUTH SYDNEY PAC	6.72	9	134
NORTH SHORE PAC	6.58	5	76
FAIRFIELD CITY PAC	6.53	13	199
NORTHERN BEACHES PAC	6.43	9	140
NEPEAN PAC	6.33	20	316
BURWOOD PAC	6.25	6	96
LAKE MACQUARIE	5.98	14	234
CAMPBELLTOWN CITY PAC	5.91	22	372
CHIFLEY PD	5.8	8	138
BANKSTOWN	5.69	12	211
PORT STEPHENS-HUNTER PD	5.65	14	248
WOLLONGONG	5.29	9	170
MT DRUITT	5.16	24	465

Table A2. Percentage of BAL placements by PAC/PD - continued

	Percentage	Placements	Refused Bail + Placements
PARRAMATTA	5.15	10	194
BLACKTOWN	4.9	18	367
CAMDEN PAC	4.62	3	65
CUMBERLAND PAC	4.42	8	181
NEWCASTLE CITY	4.4	11	250
ST GEORGE PAC	4.35	8	184
SYDNEY CITY PAC	4.31	11	255
TUGGERAH LAKES	4.29	10	233
THE HILLS	3.57	3	84
RYDE PAC	3.45	3	87
SOUTH COAST PD	3.38	7	207
EASTERN BEACHES	3.29	5	152
MID NORTH COAST	2.29	5	218
AUBURN PAC	2.16	3	139
CENTRAL WEST PD	1.71	4	234
BLUE MOUNTAINS	1.56	1	64
THE HUME PD	1.56	2	128
COFFS/CLARENCE	1.5	5	333
CAMPSIE	1.27	1	79
MANNING/GREAT LAKES	1.27	3	237
MONARO PD	1.27	1	79
TWEED/BYRON	0.62	1	161
RICHMOND	0.46	1	218
NEW ENGLAND PD	0.29	1	348
BARRIER PD	0	0	117
CENTRAL NORTH PD	0	0	159
KINGS CROSS	0	0	26
LEICHHARDT	0	0	60
MURRAY RIVER PD	0	0	186
MURRUMBIDGEE PD	0	0	100
ORANA MID WESTERN PD	0	0	509
OXLEY PD	0	0	284
RIVERINA PD	0	0	250
Total	4.04	416	10,309

Note: Data is from Jan 2011 to June 2019. Observations differ from Table A1, due to some observations having a missing PAC/PD. The PAC recorded for placements is the PAC that contacted BAL if the young person was placed from the police. Otherwise it is the PAC where the young person was arrested if the young person was placed by the courts, caseworkers or a detention centre. 'Refused bail + Placements' refers to the number of cases that were bail refused plus the number of cases that were placed by BAL.

Differences between Referrals to BAL and Diversions by BAL

In Table A3, I replicate Table 6, but now distinguish between 'Referred' which refers to young people that were referred to BAL by the police and then placed and 'Diverted' in which BAL successfully advocated for the police to change a bail refused decision regarding the young person. The 'diverted' group may be riskier in terms of reoffending risk than the comparison group which are all referrals from the police. If this were the case, the effect of BAL placements would be underestimated in Tables 5 and 6 as BAL placements would be compared to a less risky group.

Table A3. Regressions on outcome variables within 6-months of BAL contact, distinguishing between referrals and diversions

Model	Poisson		Logistic			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Nights in custody		P (Custody)		P (Reoffending)	
Referred	-0.00909 (0.220)	-0.100 (0.457)	-0.144** (0.0704)	-0.135* (0.0692)	0.0293 (0.0714)	0.0255 (0.0663)
Diverted	-0.0789 (0.294)	0.464 (0.410)	-0.180** (0.0759)	-0.122 (0.0761)	-0.0168 (0.0695)	0.0263 (0.0789)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
PAC Random Effects	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Time Fixed Effects	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	335	329	335	328	335	328

Note. Average marginal effects are reported for logistic regression models in columns (3)-(6). Robust standard errors clustered at the PAC level. Columns (1)-(2) are Poisson regressions and columns (3)-(6) are logistic regressions. All outcomes are evaluated within 6 months. The sample is restricted to observations where the source of placement or referral was the police. Controls refer to the same controls as used in Table 5.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

If coefficients on Referred are similar to the coefficients on Diverted, this suggests that these groups do not differ systematically on their baseline risk of custody and reoffending. This is what is found on the adjusted estimates on the both the probability of custody and reoffending within 6 months in columns (4) and (6), where both the estimates on referred and diverted are very similar. The adjusted estimates regarding nights in custody differ slightly but both are imprecise and statistically insignificant. Therefore, the fact that the placement group is composed both of referrals and diversions seems to matter little for the results.

Regression Tables

The following tables accompany select tables from the main paper. Table A4 shows the full regression results from Table 5 including the estimates for controls; Table A5 shows the full regression results from Table 6 including the estimates for controls; and Table A6 shows the regression estimates that are used in Table 7.

Table A4. Full regression results from Table 5

Model	Poisson		Logistic			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Nights in custody		P (Custody)		P (Reoffending)	
Placement	0.096 (0.184)	0.181 (0.252)	-0.116* (0.060)	-0.105** (0.053)	0.052 (0.056)	0.064 (0.054)
Source: Police		-0.335* (0.200)		-0.179*** (0.045)		-0.092* (0.056)
Bail breaches=1		0.783** (0.357)		0.207* (0.111)		-0.068 (0.091)
Bail breaches>=2		0.541* (0.304)		0.256** (0.101)		0.108 (0.091)
AVO		-0.025 (0.236)		-0.025 (0.049)		-0.000 (0.045)
On order		0.229 (0.441)		-0.160* (0.093)		0.145 (0.159)
On bail		0.233 (0.270)		-0.014 (0.055)		-0.055 (0.048)
Prior court=1		0.828*** (0.280)		0.123* (0.066)		0.116** (0.056)
Prior court>=2		1.536*** (0.346)		0.259*** (0.094)		0.320*** (0.081)
Prior caution=1		0.371 (0.311)		0.000 (0.047)		0.056 (0.051)
Prior caution>=2		0.529 (0.330)		0.049 (0.072)		0.127* (0.072)
Prior breach=1		-0.897 (0.549)		-0.059 (0.162)		0.088 (0.157)
Prior breach>=2		-0.583* (0.333)		-0.114 (0.086)		-0.047 (0.065)
Prior nights in custody		0.003*** (0.001)		0.001* (0.001)		-0.001 (0.001)
Age		-0.164*** (0.062)		-0.018 (0.012)		0.003 (0.012)
Female		-0.758*** (0.262)		-0.004 (0.042)		-0.0384 (0.0380)
Aboriginal		0.267 (0.248)		0.009 (0.048)		0.018 (0.046)
Unknown		0.761 (0.498)		-0.080 (0.135)		-0.263** (0.124)
Inner regional		0.747* (0.400)		0.176*** (0.065)		0.115 (0.073)

Table A4. Full regression results from Table 5 (continued)

Model	Poisson		Logistic			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Nights in custody		P (Custody)		P (Reoffending)	
Outer regional		-0.280 (0.984)		-0.014 (0.107)		-0.113 (0.111)
Remote		-18.64*** (1.033)		0 (.)		0 (.)
SEIFA Q2		-0.254 (0.364)		0.021 (0.066)		-0.055 (0.067)
SEIFA Q3		0.033 (0.311)		-0.021 (0.059)		0.032 (0.069)
SEIFA Q4		-0.227 (0.414)		0.054 (0.060)		-0.010 (0.068)
PAC Random Effects	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Year Fixed Effects	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	482	474	482	473	482	473

Note. Average marginal effects are reported for logistic regression models in columns (3)-(6). Robust standard errors clustered at the PAC level. Columns (1)-(2) are Poisson regressions and columns (3)-(6) are logistic regressions. All outcomes are evaluated within 6 months. * $p < .10$ ** $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$

Table A5. Full regression results from Table 6

Model	Poisson		Logistic			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Nights in custody		P(Custody)		P(reoffending)	
Placement	-0.0419 (0.206)	0.132 (0.379)	-0.165** (0.0689)	-0.135* (0.0694)	0.00833 (0.0618)	0.0235 (0.0645)
Bail breaches=1		0.956 (0.723)		0.219 (0.171)		-0.111 (0.116)
Bail breaches>=2		0.490 (0.441)		0.383*** (0.125)		0.311** (0.126)
AVO		0.290 (0.264)		0.0192 (0.0632)		-0.0438 (0.0525)
On order		-0.00763 (0.623)		-0.159 (0.142)		0.0461 (0.221)
On bail		0.559 (0.369)		0.0112 (0.0732)		0.0278 (0.0730)
Prior court=1		0.848** (0.368)		0.142* (0.0728)		0.0670 (0.0656)
Prior court>=2		1.592*** (0.342)		0.344*** (0.105)		0.230* (0.119)
Prior caution=1		0.243 (0.405)		0.00757 (0.0579)		0.145*** (0.0562)

Table A5. Full regression results from Table 6 (continued)

Model	Poisson		Logistic			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Nights in custody		P(Custody)		P(reoffending)	
Prior caution>=2		0.338 (0.418)		0.0223 (0.0798)		0.128 (0.0781)
Prior breach=1		-1.108* (0.655)		0.0111 (0.227)		-0.0133 (0.214)
Prior breach>=2		-0.377 (0.396)		-0.0999 (0.0857)		-0.0466 (0.0910)
Prior nights in custody		0.00519*** (0.00149)		0.000483 (0.000608)		-0.000659 (0.000488)
Age		-0.195** (0.0805)		-0.0227* (0.0137)		-0.00804 (0.0165)
Female		-0.426 (0.303)		-0.000502 (0.0588)		-0.0395 (0.0520)
Aboriginal		-0.0850 (0.252)		0.00318 (0.0615)		0.0164 (0.0549)
Unknown		1.064 (0.660)		-0.120 (0.151)		-0.286** (0.140)
Inner regional		0.419 (0.571)		0.109 (0.0828)		0.142* (0.0757)
Outer regional		-0.173 (1.020)		-0.118 (0.114)		-0.128 (0.124)
Remote		-21.81*** (1.120)		0 (.)		0 (.)
SEIFA Q2		-0.248 (0.472)		0.0141 (0.0774)		-0.0571 (0.0792)
SEIFA Q3		-0.246 (0.374)		-0.0541 (0.0816)		-0.0114 (0.0808)
SEIFA Q4		-0.172 (0.515)		0.0254 (0.0856)		0.0575 (0.0833)
PAC Random Effects	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Time Fixed Effects	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	336	330	336	329	336	329

Note. Average marginal effects are reported for logistic regression models in columns (3)-(6). Robust standard errors clustered at the PAC level. Columns (1)-(2) are Poisson regressions and columns (3)-(6) are logistic regressions. All outcomes are evaluated within 6 months. The sample is restricted to observations where the source of placement or referral was the police.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A6. Regression results accompanying Figure 4

Model	6 months			12 months			24 months				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
	P(Custody)	P(Reoffending)	Nights in Custody	P(Custody)	P(Reoffending)	Nights in Custody	Number of reoffences	P(Custody)	P(Reoffending)	Nights in Custody	Number of reoffences
Placement	-0.105** (0.0528)	0.0644 (0.0539)	0.181 (0.252)	-0.0668 (0.0527)	0.0377 (0.0517)	0.0753 (0.224)	0.0168 (0.184)	-0.0635 (0.0625)	0.0837 (0.0630)	-0.133 (0.212)	0.0226 (0.160)
Bail breaches=1	0.207* (0.111)	-0.0675 (0.0906)	0.783** (0.357)	0.195* (0.109)	0.0858 (0.147)	0.981*** (0.332)	0.402* (0.238)	0.236** (0.105)	0.167** (0.0766)	0.709 (0.432)	0.397 (0.280)
Bail breaches>=2	0.256** (0.101)	0.108 (0.0909)	0.541* (0.304)	0.273*** (0.0891)	0.0743 (0.147)	1.012*** (0.337)	0.159 (0.233)	0.210 (0.141)	0 ()	0.420 (0.506)	-0.00916 (0.266)
AVO	-0.0252 (0.0490)	-0.000127 (0.0447)	-0.0250 (0.236)	-0.0164 (0.0527)	-0.0120 (0.0510)	0.0947 (0.218)	0.104 (0.137)	-0.0108 (0.0580)	-0.0217 (0.0540)	-0.0868 (0.195)	0.106 (0.0989)
On order	-0.160* (0.0925)	0.145 (0.159)	0.229 (0.441)	-0.106 (0.128)	0.115 (0.152)	-0.480 (0.464)	-0.100 (0.452)	-0.0965 (0.166)	-0.00735 (0.235)	0.0929 (0.515)	0.0756 (0.350)
On bail	-0.0136 (0.0545)	-0.0551 (0.0479)	0.233 (0.270)	-0.00330 (0.0602)	-0.0859 (0.0699)	0.0896 (0.273)	0.218 (0.160)	0.0653 (0.0768)	-0.0385 (0.0874)	0.0162 (0.264)	0.167 (0.182)
Prior count=1	0.123* (0.0655)	0.116** (0.0563)	0.828*** (0.280)	0.151*** (0.0586)	0.137** (0.0604)	0.884*** (0.260)	0.454*** (0.158)	0.193*** (0.0636)	0.0789 (0.0600)	0.846*** (0.224)	0.382** (0.163)
Prior count>=2	0.259*** (0.0943)	0.320*** (0.0809)	1.536*** (0.346)	0.313*** (0.0532)	0.374*** (0.0628)	1.499*** (0.280)	0.663*** (0.178)	0.291*** (0.0649)	0.216*** (0.0529)	1.035*** (0.311)	0.227 (0.234)
Prior caution=1	0.000178 (0.0470)	0.0564 (0.0512)	0.371 (0.311)	-0.0126 (0.0501)	0.00440 (0.0575)	0.504* (0.300)	0.196 (0.163)	-0.0211 (0.0519)	0.0152 (0.0448)	-0.133 (0.340)	0.0562 (0.131)

Table A6. Regression results accompanying Figure 4 (continued)

Model	6 months			12 months			24 months				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
	P(Custody)	P(Reoffending)	Nights in Custody	P(Custody)	P(Reoffending)	Nights in Custody	Number of reoffences	P(Custody)	P(Reoffending)	Nights in Custody	Number of reoffences
Prior caution>=2	0.0490 (0.0718)	0.127* (0.0715)	0.529 (0.330)	-0.0125 (0.0590)	0.0968* (0.0582)	0.641** (0.321)	0.271 (0.177)	0.0155 (0.0655)	0.130** (0.0568)	0.512 (0.356)	0.297* (0.169)
Prior breach=1	-0.0589 (0.162)	0.0881 (0.157)	-0.897 (0.549)	-0.0586 (0.171)	0.0614 (0.187)	-0.334 (0.486)	0.123 (0.286)	0.0511 (0.212)	-0.103 (0.220)	0.513 (0.506)	0.165 (0.328)
Prior breach>=2	-0.114 (0.0864)	-0.0471 (0.0647)	-0.583* (0.333)	-0.117 (0.0746)	-0.0684 (0.0664)	-0.523* (0.284)	0.00997 (0.172)	-0.0380 (0.0886)	-0.000673 (0.0785)	-0.370 (0.306)	0.0758 (0.190)
Prior nights in custody	0.00122* (0.000694)	-0.000981 (0.000771)	0.00254*** (0.000880)	0.000446 (0.000600)	-0.000620 (0.000420)	0.00301*** (0.00111)	-0.00286* (0.00160)	-0.000519 (0.000521)	-0.00113** (0.000460)	0.00244 (0.00161)	-0.00170 (0.00124)
Age	-0.0184 (0.0121)	0.00287 (0.0120)	-0.164*** (0.0619)	-0.0218 (0.0133)	-0.00437 (0.0121)	-0.182*** (0.0579)	-0.0787 (0.0554)	-0.0205 (0.0148)	-0.0239 (0.0169)	-0.145** (0.0682)	-0.105** (0.0490)
Female	-0.00443 (0.0417)	-0.0384 (0.0380)	-0.758*** (0.262)	-0.0399 (0.0491)	-0.0918 (0.0576)	-0.923*** (0.296)	-0.215 (0.161)	-0.0661 (0.0605)	-0.0981 (0.0700)	-1.450*** (0.255)	-0.291* (0.174)
Aboriginal	0.00898 (0.0481)	0.0175 (0.0455)	0.267 (0.248)	0.0879* (0.0498)	0.0990** (0.0419)	-0.0809 (0.192)	0.120 (0.157)	0.1116** (0.0523)	0.0539 (0.0591)	0.0594 (0.222)	0.204 (0.146)
Unknown	-0.0795 (0.135)	-0.263** (0.124)	0.761 (0.498)	-0.0457 (0.140)	-0.107 (0.166)	0.310 (0.570)	0.164 (0.397)	-0.0819 (0.165)	0.0744 (0.132)	0.427 (0.751)	0.152 (0.363)
Inner regional	0.176*** (0.0654)	0.115 (0.0725)	0.747* (0.400)	0.119* (0.0614)	0.0581 (0.0773)	0.625 (0.417)	-0.0713 (0.229)	0.104 (0.0777)	0.104* (0.0553)	0.351 (0.383)	-0.321 (0.241)

Table A6. Regression results accompanying Figure 4 (continued)

Model	6 months			12 months			24 months				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
	P(Custody)	P(Reoffending)	Nights in Custody	P(Custody)	P(Reoffending)	Nights in Custody	Number of reoffences	P(Custody)	P(Reoffending)	Nights in Custody	Number of reoffences
Outer regional	-0.0139 (0.107)	-0.113 (0.111)	-0.280 (0.984)	-0.0976 (0.110)	-0.252** (0.126)	-0.550 (0.634)	-0.722 (0.602)	-0.123 (0.149)	-0.0787 (0.132)	-0.235 (0.708)	-0.778*** (0.293)
Remote	0 (.)	0 (.)	-18.64*** (1.033)	0 (.)	0 (.)	-0.715 (0.548)	0.923*** (0.309)	0 (.)	0 (.)	-1.285** (0.525)	1.235*** (0.319)
SEIFA Q2	0.0208 (0.0656)	-0.0553 (0.0672)	-0.254 (0.364)	0.0275 (0.0646)	-0.0173 (0.0680)	-0.255 (0.351)	-0.163 (0.151)	0.0187 (0.0809)	-0.0106 (0.0879)	-0.326 (0.279)	-0.0877 (0.171)
SEIFA Q3	-0.0211 (0.0593)	0.0320 (0.0686)	0.0328 (0.311)	-0.0119 (0.0665)	0.0131 (0.0604)	-0.00618 (0.349)	-0.204 (0.179)	0.0424 (0.0727)	-0.00213 (0.0640)	0.112 (0.287)	-0.107 (0.170)
SEIFA Q4	0.0542 (0.0601)	-0.00982 (0.0678)	-0.227 (0.414)	0.0635 (0.0655)	0.0290 (0.0718)	-0.253 (0.393)	-0.268 (0.248)	0.0872 (0.0832)	0.0271 (0.0681)	-0.0729 (0.452)	-0.172 (0.228)
Source: Police	-0.179*** (0.0446)	-0.0922* (0.0556)	-0.335* (0.200)	-0.161*** (0.0551)	-0.0568 (0.0653)	-0.274 (0.208)	-0.0103 (0.176)	-0.120* (0.0628)	-0.0496 (0.0633)	-0.458** (0.218)	-0.00647 (0.131)
Time Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	473	473	474	446	446	447	447	358	344	359	359

Note: Logistic regressions report average marginal effects, while Poisson regressions report raw coefficients. Time periods refer to months since the date of BAL contact. This is with the exception of number of reoffences which refer to months since finalisation, but including offences committed between the BAL contact date and finalisation.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$