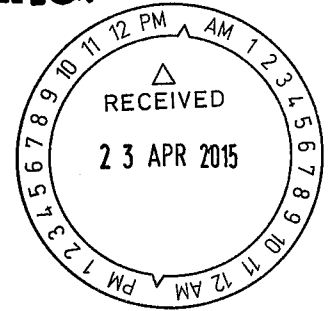




# Feed The Little Children Inc.

Registered Charity No: 21223

Hon Simon O'Brien MLC  
Chairman - Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs  
Parliament House Perth Western Australia 6000  
env@parliament.wa.gov.au



Dear Mr O'Brien MLC,

**Ref: Petition No 82 – Food security capacity building project in Broome**

Please accept this letter as our submission regarding issues raised in our petition; we also advise that we have not taken any complaints to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations (Ombudsman).

Feed The Little Children Inc. (FTLC Inc.) was incorporated in 2011 and registered as a charity to support and assist in maintaining the household food security of our highly disadvantaged children. The primary aim of FTLC is establishing risk management based protocols to reduce the number of Aboriginal children coming into contact with the justice system due to preventable property crime matters. The principal objective, is to free significant State resources consumed in this volume crime area, for redirection to higher risk crime including methyl-amphetamine distribution, assault, robbery and others that impact on community safety and State resources. Meanwhile, there are strong indications of further multiple, positive outcomes of this project that require empirical measurements to mine their prospective benefits.

The strategic crime preventive project called FTLC Inc. is based on the direction of founder, Clint Durham M.A., a former WAPOL regional volume crime expert and serving military intelligence analyst who observed first-hand the disturbing data representing Aboriginal children rotating through the doors of police stations, courts and justice institutions for over 17 years. His observations led him to hunt for potential causal factors and indicators to support strategic solutions through a Masters level research project. A statistically significant nexus of poverty and neglect was identified as the 'Centre of Gravity' for juvenile offenders along with an appalling range of associated harmful outcomes for them and their families.

FTLC Inc. is an incorporated association supported by the Broome community, Nyamba Buru Yawuru along with many organisations and private donors, preparing approximately 300 hot nutritious meals twice a week for delivery to 100+ homes in the city of Broome. The recipients, of which 75% are between 0-10yrs, are mainly from single parent Aboriginal families struggling to maintain household food security due to a range of complex issues including very low incomes; high costs of living; overcrowding and other historical factors. The organisation has over 60 volunteers from a range of backgrounds and one part time paid employee using a donated kitchen and supplies purchased with donated funds and grants. The emphasis is on providing simple, healthy, nutritious, hot dinners informed by an experienced Broome school canteen manager and a child nutritionist to use rice, pasta or potatoes; beef, chicken or fish to create a casserole, curry, stir fry or pasta dish. Because many children are not used to some vegetables, new vegetables are grated, blended or otherwise disguised in the gravy. Meals are handed directly to children only (including pregnant/nursing mothers) by two groups of volunteers (minimum 2 per group) using a leased van and a private vehicle (both clearly badged with Feed the Little Children name and logo).

## 1. Providing urgent resources and data

We need urgent political support to maintain FTLC current food security project for struggling Aboriginal families children Broome and to extend to other high risk locations. We would concurrently seek support for FTLC to develop research based and evidence measured capacity building opportunities for Aboriginal children (or parents) to help break generational food insecurity cycles through child targeted, Nationally accredited training projects including home vegetable gardens, simple nutritious meal preparation (this is presently partially funded and under development), budgeting skills, conflict resolution skills and others.

FTLC has a demonstrated capacity to achieve pre-determined outcomes during a recent Lotterywest funded 12 month Pilot Project which incorporated an external evaluation revealing the following findings:

*'In the 12 months prior to FTLC starting the average daily rate of juveniles processed for stealing/burglary offences committed on FTLC days (Friday and Saturday) was 28% higher than the other days (Table 2). However this difference was not statistically significant. By the second year of FTLC this trend had*

reversed, with on average 47% fewer offences committed per day on Friday and Saturday than the rest of the week. This difference was *statistically significant*'<sup>i</sup> [emphasis added].

## 2. Conducting a Parliamentary investigation

We seek a thorough investigation to conduct a complete cost benefits analysis of FTLC evidence based community project given the current costs that will continue to be incurred by the State should innovative community/research based types of projects such as this not be supported. While FTLC recent external evaluation has indicated excellent cost effective juvenile crime reductions, other key areas identified as directly linked to the project for benefits include health, education and mental health problems which are found to double in mothers and children when mothers are food insecure (Whitakker et. al., 2006)<sup>ii</sup>.

WAPOL crime data (WAPOL Website) indicates property crime (burglary and theft) still accounts for 47% of all reported offences for 2013-2014 financial year, remaining the most highly reported type of crime in Western Australia. In the Kimberley region property crime accounts for 60.1% of all offences for the 2013-2014 financial year<sup>iii</sup>. Further to these figures, it's estimated by Johnson that a substantial number of crimes are either never detected or never advised to authorities i.e. burglaries - 15% and thefts - 59%<sup>iv</sup> while the WA Justice system's costs per recidivist offender up to the age of 18 is calculated at around \$400,000 per person<sup>v</sup>. The positive risk of impacting on just one percent of our current 300 Broome children who represent in the highest risk group for recidivist offending would result in savings of \$1.2 million to the Justice system alone. These savings would keep FTLC Inc. operational in Broome and also support their expansion to further locations over the next 5 years at a cost of around only \$1000 per annum per child and is critical given the long term impacts on our children and future generations.

## 3. Provide an MOU between relevant government agencies and Feed The Little Children Inc.

We need urgent political support to facilitate and develop MOU to access resources including aggregated health, education and crime data to increase the shared knowledge base of the extent that food security support brings to our highly disadvantaged children and communities. FTLC already has partnerships with a wide range of Aboriginal people, government, NGO, community members and corporate groups and now need political support to create strategic partnerships with Departments of Justice, Education, Health, Aboriginal Affairs, Child Protection and Family Services, and others in order to create a secure means of sharing data that facilitates the prioritisation of risk for highly vulnerable juvenile demographics.

Your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

**Clint Durham** M.A. (Criminal Intelligence)

CEO **Feed The Little Children Inc.**

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23<sup>rd</sup> April 2015

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### References

<sup>i</sup> Marley, JV, Parrish K. Evaluation of "Demonstrating the Benefits of Breaking the Hunger Cycle for Children in Broome". The Rural Clinical School of Western Australia, The University of Western Australia, Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services Inc, Broome WA. p.8.

<sup>ii</sup> Whitakker, R.; Phillips, S.; Orzol, S. (2006). Food Insecurity and the Risks of Depression and Anxiety in Mothers and Behavior Problems in their Preschool-Aged Children, MPHEDIATRICS Vol. 118 No. 3 September 1, 2006, pp. e859 -e868)

<sup>iii</sup> Western Australian Police. All Western Australia 2013-2014 Financial Year Crime Statistics. 2014. [www.police.wa.gov.au](http://www.police.wa.gov.au) (accessed 10/06/14).

<sup>iv</sup> Johnson H. Crime victimisation in Australia: key findings of the 2004 International Crime Victimization Survey: Australian Institute of Criminology Canberra; 2005.

<sup>v</sup> Community Development and Justice Standing Committee. Making Our Prisons Work' an inquiry into the efficiency and effectiveness of prisoner education Perth WA: Legislative Assembly, Parliament of Western Australia, published by Government Printer, State Law Publisher, Western Australia 2010. Report No.: 6.