

# Minda

1966 – 1991

**Other Names:**

- Minda Remand Centre
- Minda Juvenile Detention Centre

## Details

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The Minda Remand Centre was opened in Lidcombe in May 1966, by the Child Welfare Department. It was a shelter and remand centre for children appearing before the children's courts. Minda comprised a court and separate residential sections and schools for boys and girls aged between eight and 18, who stayed on average four weeks. In 1976, when Taldree opened, Minda became a facility for boys aged 18 to 20. In 1991 Minda became a Juvenile Justice Centre, under the control of the Department of Juvenile Justice.

Minda was gazetted as a place of detention for children or young persons under the *Child Welfare Act* on 25 March 1966 and opened on 6 May. It was one of several remand homes (or shelters) in New South Wales where juveniles appearing before the courts could be held in custody. The word 'Minda' is an Aboriginal word that means 'shelter'.

In general, children or young persons were detained in shelters while awaiting transfer to an institution. Metropolitan shelters were also used to accommodate any institution inmates who were brought to Sydney for medical or psychological treatment. According to research done by the staff of the Northern Territory Department of Health, it was a place where children from the Northern Territory were sent.

Minda was on eight and a half acres of land on Rookwood Road, next to Lidcombe State Hospital. It comprised a children's court and child guidance clinic, senior and junior boys' sections, a girls' remand section, boys' and girls' schools, manual training rooms and a medical section for girls, which included a venereal diseases clinic (reflecting attitudes of the time, there was no venereal diseases clinic for boys). The boys' section held 60 and the girls' section held 30.

Louise Ellis, who spent time at Minda around 1970-1972, wrote to Find & Connect to share her memories of her time there, and the building:

*Minda was a pretty boring set up, tall brick walls ... you entered through a path that was between the boys and girls sections into the processing office and there were small holding rooms and the isolation cells in that block. In the other section you had the kitchen dining area and outside of that was a yard and the entrance to the dormitory. The dormitory was two or three sections of beds with low walls between sections and at one end was an office with [a] glass window so officers could look into [the] dormitory. Next to that there were one or two single rooms where the very violent were lock[ed] in, away from everyone else for the night, and off the main dormitory was the bathroom toilet area.*

In 1976 Taldree opened and became a remand centre for young boys. Minda was then a remand centre for boys aged 18 to 20.

Criminologist Christine Howlett has written that the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody reported that, in 1981, an Aboriginal detainee died in Minda, from heart failure. The Commissioner was concerned that youth workers at the Centre were not trained to deal with a boy under physical and emotional stress, or to provide resuscitation.

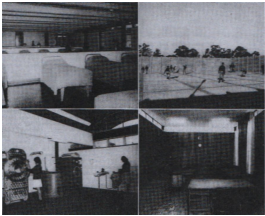
In 1990 the Children's Court was removed from the complex. The following year Minda passed to the Department of Juvenile Justice and it became a juvenile justice centre. It was closed and demolished in 2003 and replaced by the Juniperina Juvenile Justice Centre, for young women.

## Gallery

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**Athletics Day, Minda Remand Centre**



**Minda dormitory, laundry, recreation area and courtroom**

**Description:** This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1965.



**Minda main entrance**

**Description:** This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1966.

## More info

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### Chronology

- **Minda (1966 – 1991)**
  - Minda Juvenile Justice Centre (1991 - 2003)

### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [Department of Child Welfare and Social Welfare, State Government of New South Wales \(1970 - 1973\)](#)  
Date: 1970 - 1973
- [Department of Youth and Community Services, State Government of New South Wales \(1973 - 1975\)](#)  
Date: 1973 - 1975
- [Department of Family and Community Services, State Government of New South Wales \(1988 - 1991\)](#)  
Date: 1988 - 1991
- [Child Welfare Department, State Government of New South Wales \(1923 - 1970\)](#)  
Date: 1966 - 1970
- [Department of Youth and Community Services, State Government of New South Wales \(1976 - 1988\)](#)  
Date: 1976 - 1978

- [Department of Youth, Ethnic and Community Affairs, State Government of New South Wales \(1975 - 1976\)](#)
- [Department of Health and Community Services, State Government of New South Wales \(1991 - 1992\)](#)

### Related Events

- [Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, Commonwealth of Australia \(1987 - 1991\)](#)  
The death of an Aboriginal boy at Minda in 1981 was considered by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

### Related Glossary Terms

- [Child Guidance Clinic \(1930s - current\)](#)

### Related Organisations

- [Ormond School \(1980 - 1984\)](#)
- [Parramatta Girls Training School \(1946 - 1974\)](#)
- [Kamballa \(1974 - 1983\)](#)  
Kamballa was closed in March 1983 and its functions, and residents, were transferred to the Minda Remand Centre.
- [Metropolitan Boys' Shelter \(1911 - 1983\)](#)  
In 1974, when Taldree opened as a remand centre for junior boys, boys aged 18 to 20 were transferred from the Metropolitan Boys' Shelter in Albion Street to Minda.
- [Taldree \(1974 - 1980\)](#)  
When Taldree opened, junior boys were transferred out of Minda to Taldree.
- [Minda Children's Court \(1966 - 1990\)](#)  
Minda Children's Court was part of Minda.

## Resources

- Quinn, Peter E, [Unenlightened efficiency: the administration of the juvenile correction system in New South Wales 1905-1988](#), 27 March 2006
- Green, Christina, [The Life of Riley](#), 2014
- Boyle, Brian, *The Child Welfare Schools: Recollections of these unique schools and the men and women who taught in them often under considerable difficulty*, 1996
- [Ken Buttrum interviewed by Gail Winkworth in the National Library of Australia's Children and the State oral history project \[sound recording\]](#), 15 October 2009
- F.E., *Statement in the matter of the Salvation Army Eastern Territory's Handling of Claims of Child Sexual Abuse: Statement and annexures of FE*, 11 March 2014

## Records

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For more information and to access your records, follow the links below:

### Records

- [Minda records, State Archives NSW \(1966 - 1984\)](#)
  - [Departmental Records relating to State Wards, New South Wales \(1918 - current\)](#)
  - [Detainee files, Department of Juvenile Justice \(1985 - 1992\)](#)
  - [Children's Court information, Department of Juvenile Justice \(c. 1980 - current\)](#)
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