

MEDIA RELEASE

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Refurbished mobile phones donations helping WA youth exit the criminal justice system

Last week, Hello Initiative facilitated their 60th refurbished mobile phone donation to a young person involved in the West Australian youth justice system.

Their major project, Mobile Support sees [Hello Initiative](#) (HI) working with key referral agencies to identify young people who would benefit most from support in accessing a mobile phone and mobile credit.

Since September 2019, the newly established not-for-profit has sourced one hundred and twenty-three (123) phones from the largest WA e-waste recycler and IT Asset Management business Total Green Recycling (TGR).

Hello Initiative was born out of a desire to equip young people in justice in WA with the tools to make the right choices. During their short existence, they've already established major referral pathways through frontline justice organisations [Aboriginal Legal Service](#), [Metropolitan Youth Bail Service](#) and [Beyond YJS](#).

These agencies identify young people suitable for referral and submit their details to HI for assessment. If HI deems a young person suitable, a mobile phone is distributed to the provider and a mobile account is activated and supported for that young person.

A support worker at ALSWA said, *"When young people don't have access to a phone, the only way we can contact them is to drive out to their homes, which is time-consuming... Hello Initiative has allowed us to spend our time more productively. Hello Initiative has improved client participation in our program by allowing young people to stay connected to their support workers."*

Reusing better for the environment

Total Green has been operating for over twelve years and through their IT Asset Management branch, recovered 500,000 items for reuse.

Refurbishing and reusing IT electronics such as laptops and mobile phones can be up to 25 times better for the environment than recycling and 125 times better than landfilling when considering the CO₂-e emissions avoided in the mining, recycling and manufacturing processes used making new products.

TGR has previously partnered with charities such as GIVIT to facilitate technology donation on behalf of their clients, who seek to reuse, rather than recycle their equipment.

Items that otherwise would have been shredded then provide job opportunities for disadvantaged social groups like in case of Aboriginal communities with the previous [donation from the Department of Finance](#) coordinated by GIVIT.

Circular partnerships for local communities

TGR and Hello Initiative plan to double the number of young people in WA equipped with the tools to make the right choice by the end of 2020.

"It costs the Department of Justice approximately \$1,000 per day to keep a single young person in custody in WA. Many of these young people end up in custody for preventable reasons such as missing an appointment with their case officer. We believe this can be easily mitigated by giving young people a mobile phone and basic training on how to use it, so they can keep in contact with their support workers, properly fulfil their sentencing requirements and stay on the right track" says Ashleigh Small – co-founder and CEO of Hello Initiative.

Michael Coghill – co-founder and director of Total Green Recycling – said, *"The partnership with HI was a no brainer. With causes that already have sustainability as one of their values, it's easy to align and brainstorm ways to involve others in order to amplify our impact. It's a great example of how we could start rebuilding our local circular economy by partnering up with and supporting our local community."*

If you're interested in donating mobile phones to Hello Initiative, please contact Ashleigh at ashleigh@helloinitiative.org.au or (+61) 0428 164 731.

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About Total Green Recycling

Total Green Recycling is a Western Australian family business dedicated to finding the best and most sustainable recycling solutions for the 90+ materials that can be recovered through its process. To learn more about Total Green Recycling's campaign to end e-waste and to sign the petition, visit www.totalgreenrecycling.com.au/petition.

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