



MEDIA RELEASE

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CREATE WELCOMES ROYAL COMMISSION FOCUS ON OUT-OF-HOME CARE

CREATE Foundation welcomes today's announcement of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse public hearings into out-of-home care.

Over 40,500 children and young people were in out-of-home care at June, 2013. Children in care are among the community's most vulnerable, especially when you consider over 22,000 young people in care are under 10 years of age.

"As demonstrated by the Commission's Interim Report and evidence provided so far, there is no guarantee that being in care is always a safer place. The Royal Commission's focus on the care system is an opportunity for young people with a care experience to be heard by a national inquiry, on an issue that is unfortunately of great concern, no matter where they are in care," said Ms Jacqui Reed, CREATE Chief Executive Officer.

"When governments intervene to protect a child from serious harm and remove him or her from their family, they have a duty of care to ensure that child's safety and wellbeing."

Victims of abuse, no matter what age, should have access to support. They need to have confidence that the system that is there to protect them, will listen when they need help

"CREATE believes independent complaint mechanisms are critical for children and young people in care to be able to air their concerns, complain and/or seek redress without fear of repercussions," continued Ms Reed.

CREATE Foundation asserts that complaint mechanisms must be child-friendly and independent to encourage children and young people in care to be able to express their concerns and make complaints outside of the organisation that provides and/or funds their care.

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Additional information

In 2012–13 there were 135,000 children receiving child protection services (investigation, care and protection order and/or in out-of-home care) across Australia.

- Just over 40,500 children were in out-of-home care at 30 June 2013
- 43% of those in out-of-home care were in foster care, 48% were living with relatives/kin and more than 5% were in residential care
- 34% of children in out-of-home care were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Child Protection Australia 2012-13.
Canberra: AIHW

About CREATE

CREATE Foundation regularly consults with young people and through this consultation in 2009 revealed a truthful yet somewhat bleak portrait of the reduced life outcomes experienced by children and young people growing up in the care system. The [Report Card](#) revealed that if you've been in out of home care, you are more likely to be undereducated, unemployed, to earn less, become a parent at a younger age, be involved in the juvenile justice system, become homeless, be dependent on social assistance, have mental health issues, attempt suicide, and be at a higher risk of substance abuse².

- 64% do not have a leaving care plan (leaving care plans are a strategy for life after being in the state care system)
- 35% are homeless in the first year of leaving care
- 46% of boys are involved in the juvenile justice system
- 35% completed Year 12 (compared to that of the general population)
- 29% are unemployed (compared to the national average which is 9.7%)
- 28% were already parents themselves

Data source: McDowall, J.J. (2009). CREATE Report Card 2009 – Transitioning from Care: Tracking Progress. Sydney: CREATE Foundation

Click [here](#) to visit the website displaying the CREATE Report Card 2009 – Transitioning from Care: Tracking Progress