

MEDIA RELEASE

27 August 2019

creating a better life
for children and young
people in care

CREATE calls for real investment – to improve outcomes for today’s children in care

CREATE Foundation is the national consumer body representing the voices of children and young people with an out-of-home care experience (including kinship care, foster care and residential care).

Since 1999, CREATE Foundation has been committed to promoting the urgent need for improvements to the out of home care system.

Over 45,000 children and young people are currently placed in out-of-home care across Australia.

CREATE’s “Out of Home Care in Australia: Children and Young People’s Views of the National Standards” Report (2018) found that 76% of young people over 15 are not aware of having a leaving care plan and over a third will experience homelessness within 12 months of leaving care. <https://create.org.au/publications/2018-create-report/>

Alongside the work of the *National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2009–2020*, CREATE has been responsible for developing a holistic framework of nationally consistent leaving care tools to better prepare young care leavers. These include:

- Life Skills Training: CREATE Your Future Life Skills Workshops
- CREATE your future Grants scheme administered to young people to enable them to reach their full potential through provision of small grants
- Leaving care website – CREATE Your Future: www.createyourfuture.org.au
- Transition from care App: Sortli App (Sort Your Life Out)
- Transitioning from care resource kits: Go Your Own Way Kits

For more information go to www.create.org.au or contact a state office.

CREATE Chief Executive, Ms Jacqui Reed has dedicated her professional working life to improving the lives of vulnerable children with a care experience. Beginning her career as a Children’s Counsellor, and then Child Safety Officer through to her current role, Jacqui reflects that, as a sector, it’s an interesting situation we find ourselves in.

“For years we’ve seen continued poor results for young people post care, we talk about change, we know what is needed, but unfortunately the wheels of change seem elusive,” said Ms Reed.

“What is really mystifying is that it makes fiscal sense to ensure that young care leavers are supported during and post their transition from care, an investment now is one for the future.”

national new south wales office

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Young people named wanting more support as the number one issue in a soon to be released report on their views of life post care.

After years of advocacy and many pieces of research outlining young people's views of the care system never before has there been such a groundswell of support and spotlight on the process of transitioning from the care system. It's been a long time coming.

It's not rocket science to figure out that paying a carer who has developed a positive relationship with a young person, where the young person wants to remain in that environment to be able to stay.

The cost to society and importantly, to the young person, is too high when the system literally jettisons them out of care when they turn 18.

There is a heavy burden on the system to support vulnerable young care leavers, who are often not equipped well to live independently, and it makes no sense not to embrace the call to widen the age range that a young person can remain in a placement that is supporting them!

CREATE Foundation is currently celebrating their 20th birthday in 2019! For more information on CREATE and their research, visit: www.create.org.au

Key statistics on the care sector in Australia:

- 45,800 children were in out-of-home care across Australia at 30 June 2018
- Young people in out-of-home care are 16 times more likely to be under a youth justice order than the general population
- 35% of young people experience homelessness within the first year of leaving care
- 46% of males have been involved with the justice system since leaving care
- 29% of young people who have left care or preparing to leave care are unemployed
- 36% children and young people in care do not live with any of their siblings who are also in care
- Most young people will have between 3 and 6 caseworkers
- 76% of young people in care over the age of 15 don't have or are unsure if they have a leaving care plan

McDowall, J. J. (2018). Out of Home Care Children and Young People's Views After Five Years of National Standards

For further comment from CREATE's CEO Jacqui Reed and/or a young person with care experience please call Leigh White 0431 932 122 & hello@leighwhite.com.au

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