



2021 Annual Review



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CREATE acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which our company is located and where we conduct our business. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present, and emerging.



Chairman's Foreword

A year of significant achievement at CREATE. Our work in the transitioning to independence space has yielded positive results, and sets the scene for further improvements to the system. Whilst we were not particularly impressed with the lack of progress over the last 10 years in our Post Care Report, we do see significant change on the horizon in recent times.

The team at CREATE has embraced the challenges that COVID has presented, and is richer for it. We've seen innovation in our marketing and IT space, and alternative program / activity delivery has offered new opportunities online which have been received well especially by children and young people in regional areas.

The Internal Audit Reports were warmly received by the Board with a positive result overall across the organisation. The Board are confident that CREATE is poised well for the future.

The Board thanks all the children and young people who give so graciously of their time to CREATE so that together we can advocate for change in the system, and also congratulates the team at CREATE for another stellar year!

Richard Hill
Chairman
CREATE Foundation



From the CEO

What an eventful year this has been. COVID has certainly impacted on all of CREATE's activities, and there has been some incredible learnings on the way. We've proactively engaged in new and exciting ways with children and young people, and used forums such as webinars and Zoom to host our activities. We started with trepidation and now find ourselves in a position where we are confidently working in these forums and engaging productively with the sector and the children and young people we serve. The instability that COVID has brought with it has created many challenges with lockdowns and restrictions a feature of our daily lives. I'd like to acknowledge our state teams who have done an excellent job of offering continuous service to children and young people despite the ever changing environment in which we work. Also, a big thank you to our incredible marketing team who have worked tirelessly to develop new products and take us to a new level of competency in the IT space. Our website has been rebuilt this year and we're impressed with the new functionality and more youthful feel to the site. Thanks to Bridie Mallon from the marketing team for bringing this larger than expected project to fruition.

There have been some considerable advocacy wins with our continued work in the "transition" space for young care leavers. The Post Care Report was well received and Dr McDowall presented the report for the first time via webinar with over 262 participants. The report highlighted some wins over the 10 year period we reviewed, with educational outcomes at the forefront. Disappointingly, many other areas such as housing, and having a transition plan showed little improvement. CREATE's platform to advocate for increased placement stability to 21 has been relentless, with some notable improvements this year. We were encouraged that during COVID the Victorian Government announced significant funding to support the Homestretch Program, essentially offering stability of placement to 21 for all young care leavers. Minister Donnellan showed exceptional leadership and actively prioritised the needs of vulnerable young care leavers. The Northern Territory are in the process of amending legislation to enshrine support to 21, and Western Australia have instigated a process for implementing the promises outlined by the Premier in the election campaign to increase support to 21. We're hoping that over the next twelve months we'll see continued improvements in extending placement support to 21 specifically in New South Wales and Queensland.



We also saw an increase in our CREATE Your Future Life Skills Program licenses which effectively assist young people to prepare for independence. Thanks to Andrew Cummings our amazing program developer for his updates of the program this year to reflect an increased focus on culture and disability and for providing exceptional training to our staff and licensees. Also acknowledgement to Erin Laing who manages our SORTLI App, an App designed to support young people during the transition process. The Northern Territory promotional plan was led by Erin and we saw a deeper layer of understanding of the App as a result. Our state and national teams worked tirelessly to advance our advocacy agenda to affect positive change for young care leavers and I'd like to acknowledge the work that the Policy and Advocacy team did for us this year in very challenging times. Thanks to Joseph, Noelle, Jana, Elise and Katie for their continued and unwavering support during the year.

The organisation hosted its third national internal audit this year with pleasing results in each jurisdiction and overall. Well done to the states and business areas who continue to strive for excellence to ensure that CREATE is well positioned to be a viable and sustainable organisation into the future. Beck Ketton managed the audit process during COVID which was an exceptional effort requiring a lot of patience and flexibility to get the job done. Well done Beck!

A special mention goes to Cathy Carnovale, our Victorian State Coordinator, who celebrated her 15 year anniversary of being with CREATE in January. Congratulations Cathy!

Children and young people have been at the forefront of our work and are the reason we continue to do what we do. To all of the young people who supported CREATE this year, and to those who participated in programs and activities a huge thanks for your continued passion to improve the system for others.

We end the year on a high note, after overcoming many challenges and look to the future with enthusiasm for what opportunities it might hold for children and young people.

Jacqui Reed
Chief Executive Officer
CREATE Foundation

Vision, Mission and Core Principles



Core Principles (what we value)

- Children and young people are the centre of the work we do
- Our practice is inclusive and respectful of culture and diversity
- Our advocacy is independent, non-partisan, evidence based and driven by the voices of children and young people
- We believe that meaningful participation is essential for engaging children and young people
 - Partnerships with government, NGOs and individuals are pivotal to success
 - We are enthused by creativity and fun
 - We invest in our people
- We provide a safe and inclusive environment for children and young people where they are safe, respected and have opportunities to have a say free of judgment and prejudice.



Vision (what we hope for)

All children and young people with a care experience reach their full potential.



Mission (what we do)

Creating a better life for children and young people in care. To do this we;

- Connect** children and young people to each other, CREATE and their community to
- Empower** children and young people to build self-confidence, self-esteem, and skills that enable them to have a voice and be heard to
- Change** the care system, in consultation with children and young people, through advocacy to improve policies, practices, and services, and increase community awareness.

CREATE's Role

CREATE Foundation is the national consumer body for children and young people with an out-of-home care experience.

CREATE represents the voices of the 46,000 children and young people who are in statutory care, and those who have transitioned from care, up to the age of 25.

To achieve our mission of improving the lives of children and young people in care, we facilitate a variety of programs and services for children and young people with a care experience, and develop policy, research, and reports to advocate for a better care system. CREATE is the only independent, national advocacy body whose policy positions are directly informed by children and young people with a care experience.

Our work is guided by our 2018-2021 Strategic Plan, which was developed in consultation with children and young people with an out-of-home care experience. Our Strategic Plan demonstrates our commitment to ensuring the voices of children and young people are at the centre of what we do and that their voices inform our advocacy through evidence-based consultation and research. Over the past three years we've made incredible progress on our Strategic Plan goals, exceeding many of the targets we set ourselves, including;



Goal

Achieve a minimum 10% increase in new members in clubCREATE (baseline 16,741)



Achieved

82% increase achieved, with 13,662 new members



Goal

Maximise our communication platforms to connect children and young people to CREATE



Achieved

Increased our social media following by 46%



Goal

Complaint processes are designed to ensure the safety of children and young people, and are accessible and responsive

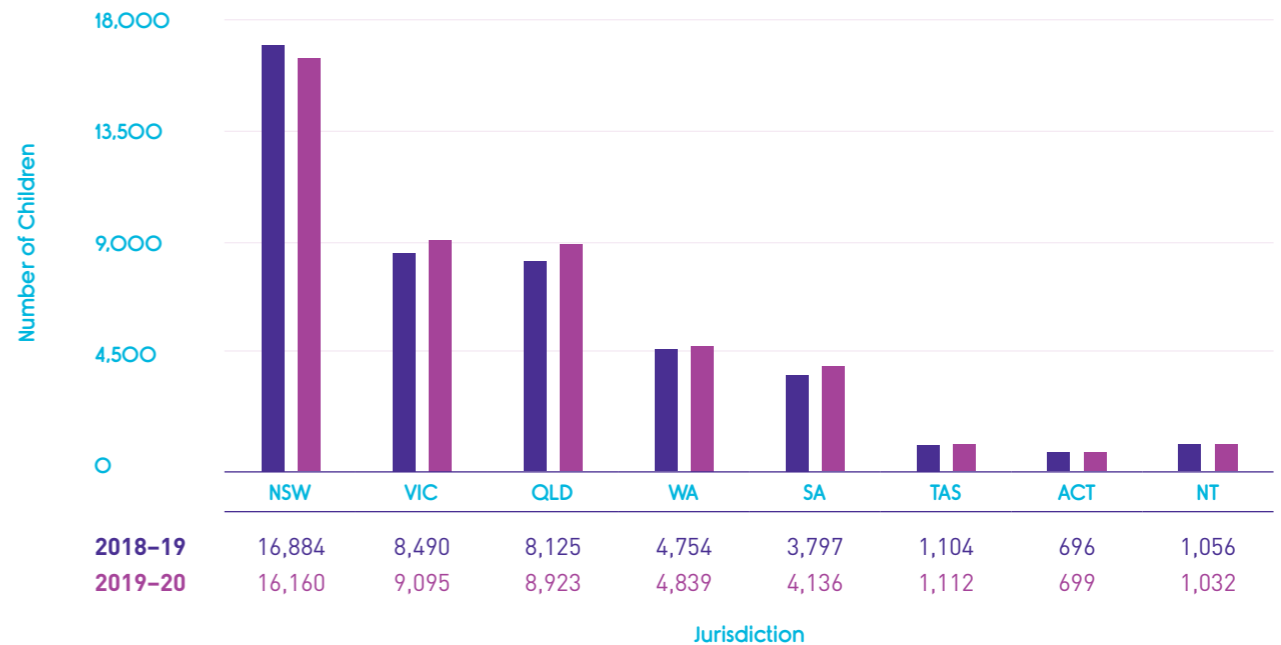


Achieved

In 2020 CREATE produced a Best Practice Guide for Complaints Handling



One important focus in CREATE's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan was addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the out-of-home care system. To do this CREATE has built relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies, and has strived to empower and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to share their voices so their voices may reach key decision makers. CREATE remains dedicated to ensuring our work is culturally relevant and helps us to amplify the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.



Source: AIHW, 2021, Data tables: Child Protection Australia 2019-20

Across Australia, the majority of children and young people in out-of-home care (92%) were living in home-based care and 7% were living in residential care. Of those in home-based care, 54% were in relative/ kinship care, 37% were in foster care, and 1% were in other types of home-based care. This varied across jurisdictions. Victoria had the highest number of kinship care placements (75%) compared to the Northern Territory who had

the least (28%). However, almost 35% of children and young people in the Northern Territory were living in other home-based care placements, such as with family day care providers. South Australia also continues to hold the highest proportion of children in residential care (14.5%) compared to New South Wales with the least (2.9%) (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2021).

Table 1: Children and Young People in Out-of-Home Care, by Placement Type and Jurisdiction

Type of Placement	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	Total
Foster care	40.8	17.8	48.9	39.3	36.2	52.3	40.6	29.4	37.3
Relatives/kin	54.1	75.0	38.3	53.2	48.3	41.0	53.9	25.5	53.6
Other home-based care	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.3	34.8	1.3
Family group homes	0.2	0.0	0.0	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
Residential care	2.9	4.7	12.8	4.3	14.5	6.4	5.0	7.5	6.6
Independent living	0.9	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	n.p	0.0	0.1	0.4
Other/unknown	1.1	0.1	0.0	0.5	0.0	n.p	0.1	2.8	0.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: AIHW, 2021, Data tables: Child Protection Australia 2019-20, Supplementary Data Table S5.3

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people continue to be overrepresented in the care population. During 2019-20 there were 18,900 First Nations children reported to be living in out-of-home care in the last year, making them 11 times more likely to be in out-of-home care than non-Indigenous children (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2021). While

each jurisdiction has adopted the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle in legislation and policy, only 63% of Indigenous children were placed with Indigenous or non-Indigenous relatives/ kin or other Indigenous caregivers in 2019-20 (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2021).

Child Protection Landscape

Throughout 2019-20 there were 46,000 children and young people living in out-of-home care across Australia (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2021), a 2.4% increase since the previous year. The distribution of children and young people living in out-of-home care shows that the greatest number of children and young people in care are living in New South Wales and the least are living in the Australian Capital Territory.



Connect

Connecting children and young people to each other, CREATE and their community.

COVID-19 has meant that this year has been one of isolation for many people, meaning connection has been more important than ever. Although the way we connect may have changed, our commitment to connecting children and young people with a care experience through our clubCREATE program has remained as strong as ever.

clubCREATE

clubCREATE membership

clubCREATE is open to children and young people aged 0 to 25 with a statutory care experience across Australia. It allows members to build relationships with each other, engage within their community, and access CREATE's many programs and services. clubCREATE once again saw a considerable membership increase this financial year, with 5,676 new members joining our clubCREATE program. This increase is in part due to a new information sharing agreement with the Australian Capital Territory, thanks to ACT Together. This new agreement means CREATE now has information sharing agreements in five of eight states and territories, with existing agreements in Tasmania, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia. A huge thank you to everyone who has assisted CREATE to reach so many children and young people across Australia through these agreements.

To address the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the out-of-home care system, CREATE works hard to ensure we remain culturally relevant. Children and young people who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander make up over 34 percent of clubCREATE members, with over 30 percent of new members over the last financial year identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Joining clubCREATE

When a child or young person joins clubCREATE they're given a Welcome Pack with a membership card, sticker pack, wristband and information on the care system, their rights and CREATE's programs. They also receive clubCREATE magazines four times a year, a card on their birthday, and invitations to be part of CREATE's events, activities and programs. With CREATE unable to use volunteers due to the COVID-19 pandemic, clubCREATE members 12 and under now receive printed, colourful birthday cards rather than the hand-decorated cards our hardworking volunteers previously created, while clubCREATE members 13 and over receive a colourful, personalised birthday email.

5,676 New Members

30,403 Members to Date

1,715 New Indigenous Members

10,345 Indigenous Members to Date



clubCREATE in a year

In our clubCREATE magazines, we asked members what they loved most about CREATE and they said:

“Getting the magazines in the mailbox, addressed to me! I loved my birthday card too.”

– Male, 9

“I love that they give you opportunities to speak and be heard. They never judge.”

– Female, 15

“I can connect with other foster kids.”

– Male, 11



6,897

Welcome Packs distributed



57,607

clubCREATE magazines distributed (hard and e-copy)



21,665

Birthday cards and messages sent



clubCREATE magazines

CREATE produces and distributes magazines to our clubCREATE members around Australia every three months. The magazines are divided into two versions, one for our members aged 12 years and under, and one for members aged 13 to 25 years old. The magazines allow our members to keep connected to one another by reading stories about other children and young people in care, while also providing information about being in care, and featuring fun stuff like competitions, recipes, and jokes. The magazines also include a ‘Round-Up’, providing members a summary of what has been happening and what events are coming up in their state or territory. clubCREATE members aged 5 to 18 receive a hard copy of the magazine in the mail unless they indicate they wish to receive

the magazine electronically. clubCREATE members under 5 and over 18 years receive an electronic copy of the magazine by email unless they indicate they wish to receive a hard copy.

The magazines are a critical component of ensuring that clubCREATE members are informed about CREATE’s advocacy work and how their voices are being used to improve the care system. This is why the content of the magazines is driven by both CREATE’s Influencing Committee, which guides CREATE’s advocacy work, and an editorial committee of young people who ensure that the magazine is created in collaboration with those who have a lived experience of the care system.

E-Marketing

	👍	🐦	in	📷
June 2017	4,946	5,009	707	464
June 2018	6,229	5,316	943	859
June 2019	7,281	5,487	1,216	1,058
June 2020	8,666	5,675	1,963	1,358
June 2021	9,440	5,729	2,590	1,810

- facebook.com/CREATEfnd
- @CREATEfnd
- youtube.com/CREATEfnd
- CREATEfnd
- CREATE Foundation

ACT’s Video Project

COVID has meant a lot of changes over the last year. For many children and young people it meant not being able to see their siblings due to lockdowns and border restrictions. CREATE’s ACT team secured a COVID-19 grant that allowed us to create two new animated video resources using CREATE’s mascot Gus to teach children about complicated issues. The first video helps children understand how they can stay connected to their siblings when they can’t see them and what to do if they wish to see their siblings more. The second talks about mindfulness in way that’s age-appropriate and understandable for children.



37k

views on YouTube

11%

increase overall in social media channels

22%

increase in e-news distribution

Due to COVID, CREATE had a greater focus on developing digital content such as videos. This caused a significant increase in our reach on video platforms, with CREATE’s YouTube channel receiving 37,200 views in the 2020-2021 financial year. CREATE’s social media following grew 11% this year across its four major platforms. Our websites continued to deliver strong results in terms of audience numbers, with the CREATE website achieving an average of 5,773 visits per month, and the CREATE Your Future website achieving an average of 1,901 visits per month. Our email subscriber list has continued to grow steadily, with our subscriber list growing by 22% in this financial year.

Connection Events

Connection Events provide children and young people with a care experience an opportunity to connect with their peers at fun activities. These events don't only provide clubCREATE members with a fun day out, but they are also a way for children and young people to feel less isolated and stigmatised for having a care experience. With COVID causing restrictions on face-to-face gatherings, CREATE teams across the country developed new, innovative ways to host the Connection Events impacted by these restrictions. These included parties over Zoom, online cooking competitions, and online movie hangouts with food delivered to participants.

Queensland's Cooking Competition

The annual Child Protection Week (CPW) Dinners are a highlight for many of our young people. Despite social distancing regulations, CREATE in Queensland still wanted the opportunity to connect with children and young people and their support networks over food and games in a fun, relaxed environment. After some consultation with young people we decided to use the opportunity to try something creative that would open up the door for participants who would not usually be able to attend our physical CPW events.

This led to us hosting three CPW events in 2020. Over three nights the team delivered Regional, North Queensland and Brisbane Online Dinner Parties with special guests and games. Each household was asked to pick a recipe to cook and share the results on the night to be judged by our special guests. The groups also played "Vegetable Trivia" and had an opportunity for everyone to share what they are grateful for. The events weren't only fun for participants, but also extremely successful for CREATE. With an attendance rate of 84%, this was one of our most successful events to date.



“It was great for our daughter to see other children as she is feeling rather isolated from children during COVID... It also gave us the opportunity to explain to her that there are other children like her who can't live with their birth families. So, thanks very much.

– Carer after a CREATE event

CREATE's Cultural Work

This year CREATE reaffirmed its commitment to delivering services that are culturally safe and appropriate by making cultural awareness training a priority for all staff. Our State Coordinators and National teams participated in cultural training run by Elaine Tanaka, and online cultural awareness training was made available to all staff through YOUR MOB LEARNING. We also increased our online focus on cultural material, with interviews with sector leaders such as Isaiah Dawe of ID Know Yourself, as well as interviews from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Young Consultants.

In a year plagued by a pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, many events had to be postponed or moved to online platforms. Despite this, CREATE are extremely proud to have been able to run Connection events and attend community events that celebrated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This included the 2020 NAIDOC Week. The theme for NAIDOC Week 2020 was Always Was, Always Will Be, symbolising how First Nations people cared for and occupied Australia long before European settlement. After being postponed due to COVID, CREATE teams were excited to hold NAIDOC Week events across Australia in November. One such event was held in Western Australia, where a local Noongar dancing group performed a dance for NAIDOC Week's opening ceremony. Of the dancers involved, all but two were clubCREATE members.

CREATE also celebrated National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day on August 4th. Children's Day is a day where the community unites to show support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and to learn about the importance of culture, community and family. In New South Wales, our team attended a Children's Day event at the Aboriginal Medical Centre in Orange. The event involved two dance troupes, didgeridoo playing, art and bead making.





Empower

Empowering children and young people to build self-confidence, self-esteem, and skills that enable them to have a voice and be heard.

Empowerment activities and programs give children and young people the chance to build their self-confidence and self-esteem by connecting with their peers and enabling them to have a voice and be heard. CREATE's key empowerment programs include Youth Advisory Groups, Speak Up, and CREATE Your Future.



Youth Advisory Groups

CREATE's Youth Advisory Groups (YAGs) are a youth empowerment program that gives young people between 10 and 25 with an out-of-home care experience an opportunity to have their voices heard. YAG meetings are held regularly across all states and territories and are a platform for young people to talk about issues they are facing in the care system and to contribute to the development of resources, programs, and government and organisational policies. With COVID causing many of our events and programs to move online, YAGs have become even more accessible for young people, with some young people requesting online YAGs to continue even with the easing of COVID restrictions.

“I love CREATE and the work you do and I don't mind travelling to your programs even when it takes over 3 hours for me to get home. May I please request that you continue to hold online YAGs post lockdown as sometimes I have Uni and I am unable to travel.

– Young Person



Victoria's Ministerial Youth Advisory Group

The Victorian Ministerial Youth Advisory Group (MYAG) was established in 2019, and is a unique and important example of high level youth participation. MYAG consists of roughly 15 young people with a care experience, aged 14 to 22. They meet bi-monthly with the Victorian Minister for Child Protection, Luke Donnellan and are co-chaired by a lived experience young person aged 22 or over. MYAG provide advice about how to most effectively reform the care sector.

In its second year, MYAG provided crucial insights into the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns on young

people in care. Other topics discussed included providing adequate sexual health education, supporting sibling relationships and better employment opportunities. MYAG received praise in Parliament from the Minister for its role in helping to convince the Government to roll out Home Stretch extended care to all young people in foster, residential and formal kinship care. In the latest state budget, a further request was granted: Home Stretch funding and post-care support is now available to young people from a permanent care background, the Victorian universal eligibility for this program is the first of its kind in Australia. Expect MYAG to continue kicking goals in 2021-22.

CREATE's National Youth Advisory Group

CREATE's National Youth Advisory Group (NYAG) project, funded under the Youth Advocacy Support Grants Scheme (YASGS), provides young people with a care experience the opportunity to advise the Federal Government on key issues that affect their lives.

For the first stage of the NYAG project, CREATE's state and territory teams held Youth Advisory Group meetings with approximately 50 children and young people in care to discuss education and employment. After each state and territory YAG, CREATE staff selected one participant to represent their state or territory at NYAG. NYAG brings together state representatives to share experiences across jurisdictions and advocate together on education and employment solutions. The outcomes of these discussions are captured in a report that includes the experiences, issues and solutions discussed by young people in care.

“It's important for educators to actually be aware and educated on the background, being trauma informed and those things that makes a big difference in the classroom for young people.

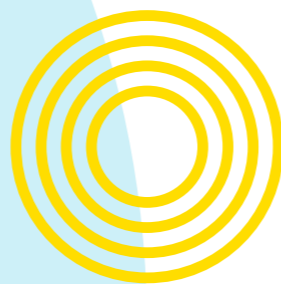
– Female, 21

“I had to fight for my education and fight for everything and tell myself I am worth so much more than what they can see. We can achieve a lot more if people believe in us and see the potential in all of us.

– Female, 23

“Support is scarce for integrating into employment, especially when juggling mental health, education, housing, financial issues at the same time.

– Male, 20



Speak Up

Speak Up (SUP) is an empowerment training program that teaches young people leadership and speaking skills. Over three levels, SUP training aims to build on the advocacy and leadership skills of young people as experts with lived experience of the system, empowering them to become CREATE Young Consultants. As Young Consultants they will be able to represent CREATE to effectively voice their opinions into policy, media, and other feedback mechanisms within the out-of-home care system.

CREATE's 2021 Girls Camp

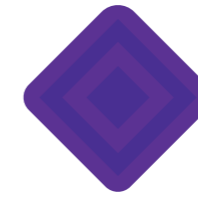
In January 2021 CREATE's Western Australian team held an overnight camp for females between 14 and 17 who have an out-of-home care experience. The camp, which was funded by the Moore Foundation, allowed the 11 young women who attended to connect with other young women who shared similar experiences within the care system, be introduced to inspiring guest speakers and organisations that can support them, and build their confidence, leadership skills and knowledge of their rights.

Our camp's attendees participated in level 1 and level 2 of Speak Up, where they improved their knowledge and skills around rights, leadership, communication, boundaries, public speaking and advocacy at a state level. Attendees were also joined by AFLW Fremantle Football Club player Sabreena Duffy, who has a care experience of her own. Sabreena gave an inspirational and empowering speech before running a team building training session. The camp was an incredible success, and when attendees were asked on their feedback forms whether they would recommend the program to others, all nine people who answered the question stated that they would.

“The camp was an incredible success, and when attendees were asked on their feedback forms whether they would recommend the program to others, all nine people who answered the question stated that they would.

CREATE Your Future

The CREATE Your Future (CYF) program provides young people aged 15-25 with skills and knowledge to feel supported in their transition from care to independence. Through a range of practical workshops centred around life skills, decision-making and self-awareness, the CYF program aims to enable young people to be equipped with abilities that will enable them to excel when they leave care. In addition to achieving skill-based competencies, such as managing finances, being healthy and navigating the rental housing market, young people are also guided through the steps required to think critically, make informed and independent decisions, and understand their identity and role in the community.



CREATE Your Future Grant Scheme

Each year CREATE run the CREATE Your Future Grants Scheme, where young people between 15 and 25 with a care experience can apply for grants that help them in their transition to adulthood. This year CREATE offered two types of CREATE Your Future grants; grants for driving lessons or tests, and IT grants to receive a laptop. These grants help young people increase their independence, provide greater accessibility to employment and educational opportunities, and support young people through their studies.



Awarded 35 grants to young people across Australia.



Of these 16 grants were provided for driving lessons or tests.



And 19 grants were provided for laptops.

Tasmania's Camp

In January, CREATE held a state-wide camp in the Northwest of Tasmania for 14 children and young people who were interested in being more involved with CREATE. These young people were new to participating in CREATE empowerment programs.

During camp, the young people had the opportunity to complete CREATE's Speak Up program and the chance to meet new people, make new friends, gain more confidence and become Young Consultants. During Speak Up Level 1, the young people learnt about advocacy, the importance of strengths based communication and who's who in the care system. The young people came away from camp with the skills to better advocate for children and young people with a care experience, and an increase in confidence and self-awareness.

The young people also completed a CREATE Your Crib CREATE Your Future workshop. This workshop explored the topic of housing and focused on providing young people who are transitioning into independent living with the skills and knowledge to assist them in exploring and planning to find their future homes.

During camp, the young people also participated in a variety of games and activities which focused around developing better team building skills, greater confidence and leadership skills.



CREATE Your Future Licensing

Our CREATE Your Future (CYF) licence program continued to grow this year. This year Catholic Care Hunter Valley and MacKillop Family Service joined Life Without Barriers, Churches of Christ (Queensland), YFS Ltd (Queensland), Key Assets and the South Australian Department for Child Protection in obtaining a licence.

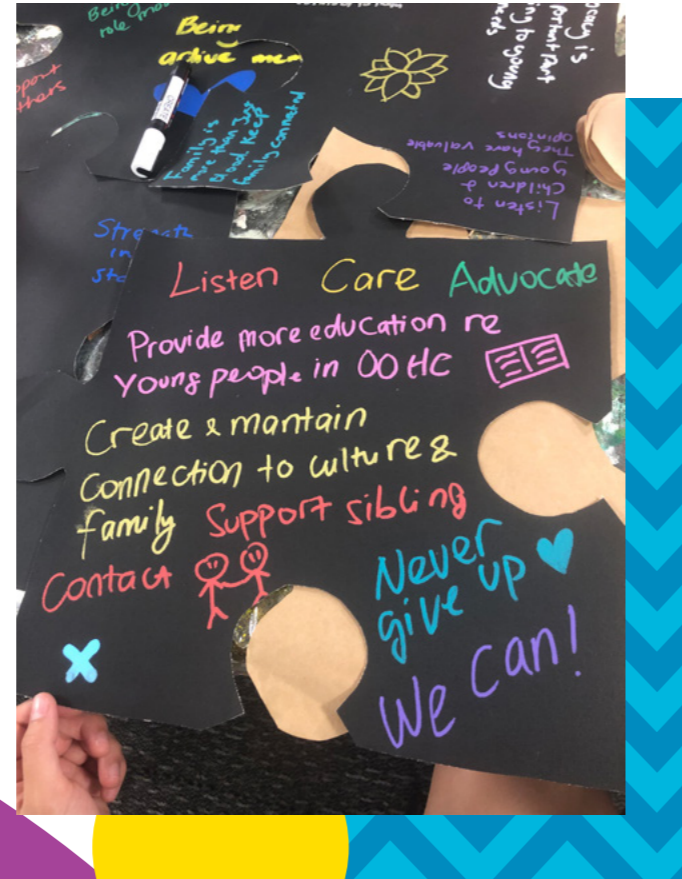
CREATE is thrilled to see the CREATE Your Future program having a greater reach and we would like to thank these organisations for their investment in a proven program that helps young people build skills, confidence and knowledge they need to successfully transition to adulthood.

The CYF licence includes a suite of materials covering eight themes, intensive training in the CYF program, presentation and facilitation skills training, and practical support from experienced CYF facilitators.

“I definitely think CREATE Your Future should be made more available to young people, because you don't get always taught skills in foster care placement. CREATE Your Future gives you another chance to learn things that you aren't taught about, and you can't learn these things at school. – Sharna, CYF participant

Hour of Power

The Hour of Power (HOP) is a youth forum that enables young people with a care experience to have their voices heard by decision makers in the out-of-home care sector. The event started in Victoria in 2015 and has become a well-recognised opportunity for young people with a lived experience of the care system to be able to share their stories, insights and ideas directly to those who have the power to change the system. This year our Victorian HOP covered topics such as impacts of constant change on education, the benefits of being in nature on camps, housing and mental health services exclusively for young people in out-of-home care. Not only we were lucky enough to host a face-to-face HOP in Victoria despite the instability of face-to-face events from COVID, but we were able to host our first ever HOP in another state, with South Australia holding its first HOP in February.



South Australia's first Hour of Power

After being postponed due to COVID, our South Australia team held their first ever Hour of Power (HOP) on February 19th 2021. This HOP saw CREATE Young Consultants speak to a distinguished panel of sector professionals about transitioning from care and post care support, sibling connection and cultural identity. Young Consultant Sonja spoke about the realities of transitioning from care, highlighting key statistics from CREATE's 2021 Post Care Report. Tricia shared her experience entering care as the carer for her younger siblings only to be separated, while Nick shared a positive example of how regular sibling contact made a big difference to their relationship. Brooke, a proud Kaurna and Nyigina woman, spoke of growing up with no knowledge of her mob and how important it had been to discover her cultural identity.

South Australia's first HOP led to commitments, actions and recommendations from each of our panel members. This included written commitments from Cathy Taylor, Chief Executive of the Department of Child Protection, on how the Department will be responsive to children and young people and privilege their voice and lived experience, how sibling placements and connection will be prioritised, and how improvements will be made for connection to culture for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.



“Everyone spoke of commitment to change the system. They really seemed to be listening to us.”

– HOP Young Consultant, 24

Sortli



Sortli (short for Sort Your Life Out) is a mobile app for young people to help them with their transition to independence. The app offers young people step-by-step guides to help them navigate issues like relationships, education and employment, finances, identity, legal matters, housing, health and living skills.

Sortli is constantly updated with new information and services available to help young people so that it stays relevant for when young people need it. It continues to evolve and develop in consultation young people.

- ▶ 9,500 downloads to date
- ▶ An average of 450 – 500 users per month
- ▶ Available in Western Australia, Northern Territory, South Australia, Queensland and Victoria



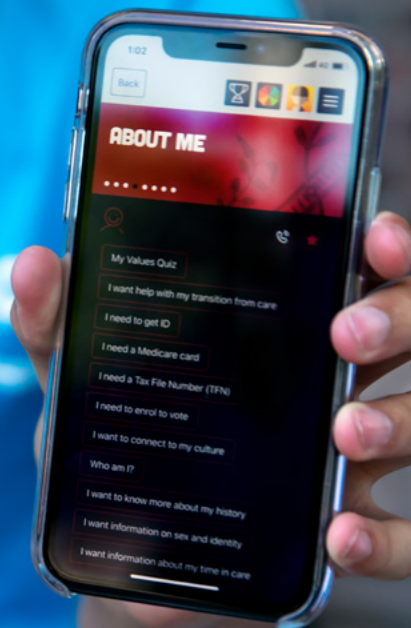
How it started

How it's going

Being able to access different organisations for help is easy and can be a real life saver for those struggling.
– Female

It allows for a place without bias to find most information on what you will need in life.
– Male, 15

It's an app that's a work in progress all the time and it's an app that benefits a lot of young people.
– Male, 24



Change

Change the care system, in consultation with children and young people, through advocacy to improve policies, practices, and services, and increase community awareness.

CREATE works to provide children and young people with the opportunity to share their experiences and participate in the decisions that shape the delivery of child protection services throughout Australia.



Policy and Advocacy

Children and young people with a care experience are the experts of the child protection system and are central to everything that we do at CREATE. We listen to children and young people's experiences and perspectives and ensure their voices are heard and taken seriously by key decision-makers. Through our research and consultations with children and young people, we capture their experiences and identify the areas that are working well and what needs improving. We convey these key messages and findings within our reports, submissions, position papers, best practice guides, stakeholder meetings, conferences and media correspondence. This valuable work contributes towards the positive changes we seek within legislation, policies, practice and service delivery that are relevant to our sector.

Submissions

During the last financial year, CREATE has been on the front foot to communicate young people's voices at both the state and federal levels. Submissions are crucial advocacy tools that allow us to influence legislation, policy and practice.

Throughout 2020-21, CREATE has provided 12 submission responses each of which have been informed by the opinions, views and lived experiences of those in care. One submission in particular, was submitted to SNAICC to inform the development of the 10-year Successor Plan of the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020 focusing on ending the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care. Within this submission, CREATE highlighted the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people with a care experience in regards to greater youth participation, prevention and early intervention supports, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community leadership and service delivery.

Other submissions made this year include:

- National Parliamentary Inquiry into Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence
- QLD Child Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020
- National Child Safety and Wellbeing Information Sharing
- NSW Child Protection and Social Service Systems Inquiry
- National Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- TAS Child Safe Organisations Bill 2020
- NSW Statutory Review of the Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014
- QLD Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021
- SA Children and Young People (Safety) (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2020
- National Turning the Tide: Designing a new plan to address the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out-of-home care
- National Strategy to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse
- VIC Establishing a 10-Year Strategy for Social and Affordable Housing

Position Papers

CREATE's Position Papers are an important tool underpinning our advocacy work. They provide a summary of the evidence, articulate our position on key issues within our sector, and outline the actions we are calling for to improve the lives of those in care to help them be heard and reach their full potential.

This year, our position papers have been refreshed with a new look to ensure they are user-friendly and engaging. We have also been in the process of reviewing and updating our suite of position papers so that they remain current and reflect contemporary trends and practice issues. This year we have updated:

- Sibling Placement and Connections in Out-of-Home Care
- Feedback and Complaints Processes in Out-of-Home Care

Consultations

State/ Territory Consultations

- Complaints Processes in Queensland
- Participation in Out-of-Home Care in New South Wales
- Participation in Residential Out-of-Home Care in South Australia
- Supporting Care-Experienced Young People in Western Australia with their Educational Pursuits
- Sibling placement, contact, and connection the views of young people in out-of-home care in Tasmania
- Extending Support to 21 for Young People in Out-of-Home Care in Western Australia
- Housing: The views and experiences of young people with an out-of-home care experience in the Northern Territory

Fee-for-service Consultations:

- COVID-19 The views and experiences of young people with an out-of-home care experience in Tasmania
- COVID-19 The views and experiences of young people with an out-of-home care experience in the Australian Capital Territory
- The Benevolent Society: Young Parents Think Tank (NAT)
- COVID-19 The views and experiences of young people with an out-of-home care experience in Victoria
- Citizen Researchers: Young People Listening to Other Young People with a Care Experience in South Australia
- Life Without Barriers: Intensive Therapeutic Care: The views and experiences of eight young people with an Intensive Therapeutic Care placement experience with Life Without Barriers in New South Wales

Best Practice Guide

Children and Young People as Decision-makers: Encouraging Participation in Out-of-Home Care



CREATE'S 2021 POST CARE REPORT

On May 25th CREATE launched our latest report, Transitioning to Adulthood from Out-of-home care: Independence or Interdependence. The report is a follow up from our 2009 report, Transitioning from care: Tracking progress: CREATE Report Card 2009, and compares the outcomes for young people transitioning to independence in Australia after 10 years of National Standards. The report summarised the findings of our post-care survey, in which we asked 325 young people with an out-of-home care experience about their experiences with leaving care. Topics covered in the survey included respondents' care experiences, education, employment, finances, accommodation, family contact, parenting, health, youth justice involvement, preparation for leaving care, and support since transitioning to independence. For the first time in CREATE's history, our 2021 report launch was hosted online via a webinar.

This change in format was due to the pandemic, but gave CREATE the opportunity to open the report launch to more attendees in a more accessible format. At our report launch included a panel of CREATE's Executive Director of Research, Dr Joseph McDowall, and some of our incredible Young Consultants, Emily, Adina and Andre. After Dr McDowall presented his findings from the report, each of our Young Consultants shared their experiences of transitioning to independence, as well as their ideas for how to improve the transitioning process.

The report highlighted five key areas of concern, including support for transitioning, issues with caseworkers, issues with carers, placement stability and safety, and involvement of young people in decision making. These are some of our findings:



57%
of survey respondents had completed Year 12



37%
of respondents had been involved with youth justice while in care



21%
had been involved in youth justice since leaving care



36%
had a Transition Plan for leaving care



17%
were homeless upon leaving care



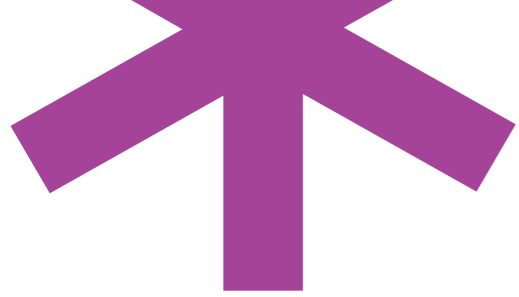
30%
were homeless within a year of leaving care



80%
of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents had not used any culturally aligned support



45/100
was the overall rating of transitioning to independence from our survey respondents



Northern Territory's Roundtable

In April, thirteen CREATE Young Consultants participated in the annual roundtable meeting with executives from Territory Families, Housing and Communities to share their experiences and suggest ways the child protection system in the Northern Territory can be improved. This roundtable focused on connection to culture for children and young people with a care experience, young people's experiences transitioning to adulthood and how young people can be supported to leave care safely.

Young people identified connection to culture as crucial for their sense of identity, belonging and wellbeing. Discussions revealed that connection to culture is strengthened through regular family contact, community visits and time on country, with these needing to be actively supported by case managers and carers, in addition to services provided by Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations.

They also recognised a lack of communication and understanding around their entitlements when transitioning out of care, and a lack of support to rebuild and maintain family relationships. This resulted in young people feeling inadequately prepared and supported to leave care safely, with homelessness and unemployment cited as outcomes. A number of suggestions were made to improve this transition, with the extension of the age of care to at least 21 years of age seen as crucial.

CREATE thanks Territory Families, Housing and Communities for this opportunity to assist with informing the redevelopment of the child protection system in the Northern Territory. We look forward to future opportunities to assist the Department develop and progress the recommendations provided by Young Consultants.

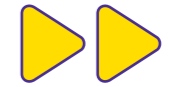


E-safety Workshops in New South Wales

CREATE in New South Wales on behalf of ACWA, the Association of Children's Welfare Agencies spoke with young people in three e-safety workshops, between June 26th and July 5th. Commissioned by the Australian Government e-Safety Commissioner, the sessions were instrumental in getting valuable insights from young people on the following: Steps for keeping safe online, social media platforms most likely to influence and be accessed by children and young people in care, identity and its impact on online usage, the lack of trust, support and education of the adults in their lives. Gus, CREATE's mascot was identified as one of the modes for delivering e-safety messages by young people.

The highlight for the CREATE team was when majority of the participants choose CREATE over teachers, police and other adults in their lives as preferred when asked "Who are young people likely to receive the safety messages from?"

Strategic Plan Objectives



CREATE has been incredibly busy advocating for a better system to improve the lives of those living in out-of-home care across Australia. This year, there were several state elections in Queensland, the Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory, Western Australia and Tasmania, and CREATE took these opportunities to raise our key strategic priority areas. These included young people's right to a supported placement within the care system until 21 years, transition support up to the age of 25 years, placement stability and having young people's voices front and centre in decision-making processes. Our Influencing Committee continued to develop and implement strategies to advance these priority areas with the perspectives of two Young Consultants.

A major achievement for the final year of our Strategic Plan saw the release of CREATE's National Post Care report which highlighted the voices of 325 young care leavers, and shared these insights nationally with CREATE's first ever online webinar. Our webinar also provided a unique opportunity for three Young Consultants to share their stories and respond to a live Q&A. Complementing resources such as our Post Care Key Messages and First Nations resources were also released alongside the report.

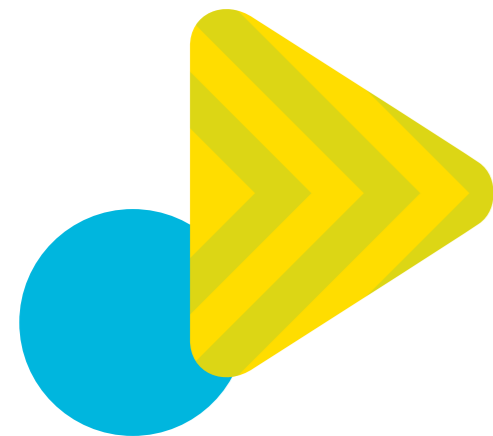
Further opportunities to hear from children and young people in care were provided through our consultations. This year in particular, CREATE was commissioned to conduct a National Youth Advisory Group (NYAG) project which focused on young people's experiences on Opportunity and Security (including education and employment). Another opportunity saw Young Consultants representing their state and territories at a consultation with the National Children's Commissioner. This event sought young people's input to inform changes to the national out-of-home care policy, called the 'Successor Plan to the National Framework'. We also promoted the voices of children and young people with a care experience at the National Forum for Protecting Australia's Children.

At a national level, CREATE is a supporter of the Family Matters campaign, a national initiative to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people grow up safe and cared for in family, community and culture.

CREATE is pleased that our advocacy has contributed to some systemic changes that young people and sector allies have been calling for. The Victorian government has extended care for all young people in Victoria to 21. The Western Australian government has also committed to extending care to 21 after a successful Home Stretch trial, and the Northern Territory recently committed to support care leavers until 21 and will be enshrining this in legislation. This would not have been possible without the voices of the many talented and resilient young people whom which CREATE works with and represents.

Other achievements this year include:

- The release of CREATE's second Voices in Action podcast
- Supporting a Young Consultant to feature on a collaborative podcast with EPIC (Ireland)
- Supporting a Young Consultant to speak at the Youth Futures Summit panel discussion
- CREATE Community Service Announcements featured on radio for T2A month and our 'Snap that Stigma' campaign
- Advancing the global voice at the Care Leavers Convention based in India, and supporting one Young Consultant to present
- CREATE chairing a presentation celebrating Care History Month with WhoCares? Scotland
- Published an article titled, 'Extending Out-of-Home Care Support to 21 Throughout Australia' in Parity: Australia's national homelessness publication
- Twelve responses to national and state-based inquiries

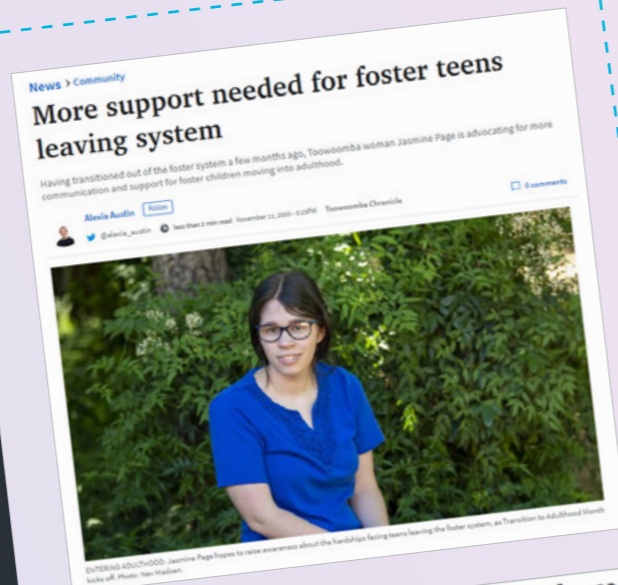
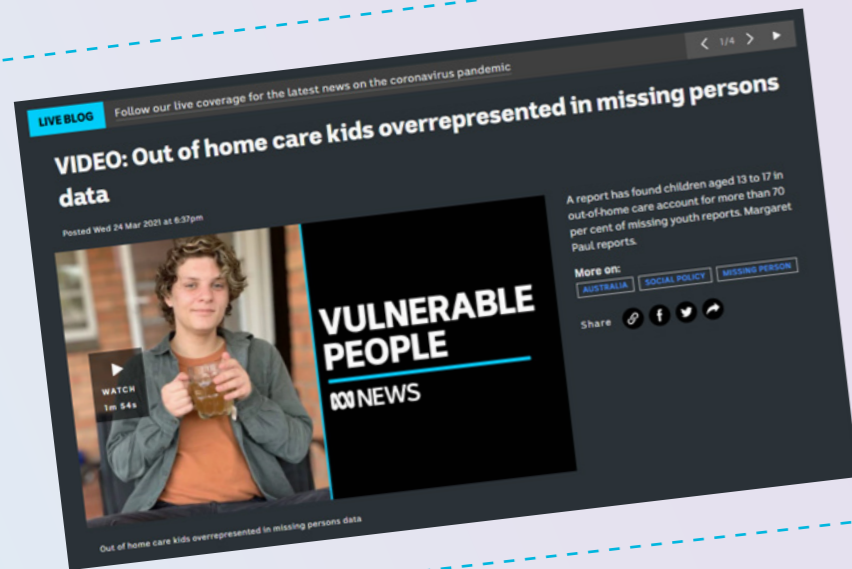


CREATE in the Media

CREATE's media advisor, Leigh White, has been supporting young people and the leadership team in securing media coverage in emerging formats, niche publications and large national broadcast outlets. For the first time ever, with Leigh's guidance, CREATE branched out to utilise a news distribution service for the major Post-Care Report launch and this was a very effective campaign, reducing cost and effort of individual interviews by sharing broadcast news grabs for outlets to access. This also built powerful connections for the organisation with smaller, cultural and remote radio outlets, and for these remote or marginalised communities CREATE's messages are needed most.

CREATE's reputation amongst media outlets as the thought leader and authority on out-of-home care and transitioning is built on over a decades constant cooperation and support for balanced reporting on the care sector and young people's experiences within. This year CREATE spoke on the continued collective push to make it 21, with only New South Wales remaining, after sustained advocacy in this area. CREATE also provided comment in complex areas of youth justice and missing person's reports.

This year CREATE was featured in 53 media articles, including articles, videos and radio interviews with ABC, The Drum, Triple J Hack, Koori Radio and RN Breakfast with Frank Kelly.



Awards

Finalist
Mission Australia Young Changer Award
Western Australia, Darcy Garrett



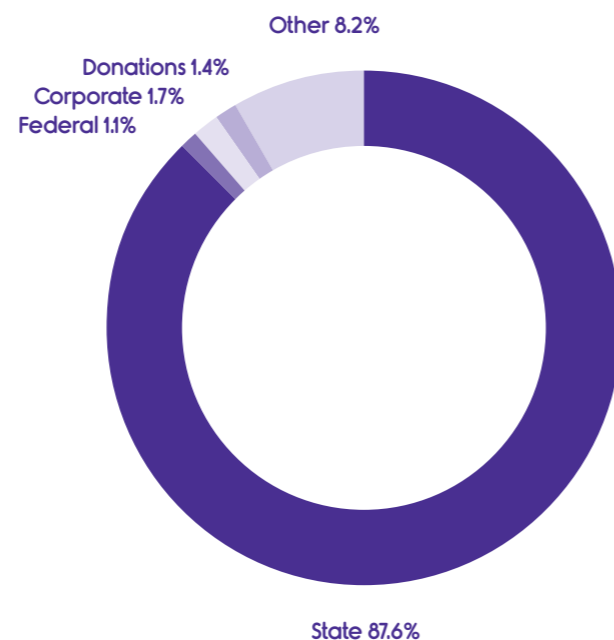
Finalist
Aboriginal Health Council Of WA Positive Achievement Award
Western Australia, Leanne McGrath

Special Commendation
PeakCare Awards "woke" and "sic" Awards
CREATE Foundation, Queensland



Financial Overview 2021

Income Stream



	2021	2020	2019	2018
Total funding	6,427,617	7,555,998	6,752,284	8,109,238
Percentage increase	(15)%	12%	(17)%	30%
Total expenses	6,620,008	7,426,566	7,035,863	7,960,174
Percentage increase	(11)%	6%	(12)%	29%
Retained earnings	433,435	625,626	496,394	779,973
Percentage increase	(31)%	26%	(36)%	24%

The table shows a decrease of 15% in funding over the past year with CREATE's expenditure on programs and services decreasing by 11%.

The decrease in funding is due to lower support received during the year through corporate sources and donations. However, there has been continued support from State and Territory governments through the renewal of service agreements in New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland and Victoria. During the year, there was also increased funding through fee for service and the CREATE Your Future Program Licences.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions the company's service delivery method has remained flexible between face-to-face programs and remote online delivery.

In 2021 there was a deficit of \$192,391 (2020 surplus of \$129,432) taking retained earnings down to \$433,435. The 2021 budget was a deficit budget with a plan to invest part of the retained earnings to focus on stability and to limit further changes to the staffing structure.

CREATE would like to acknowledge and thank all its supporters during the last financial year. The support received has enabled CREATE to continue to improve the care systems and provide quality services to children and young people with a care experience.

CREATE looks forward to continued support from its corporate partners, the community, government and stakeholders.

Jecelyn Anjani
National Finance Manager

Statement of Financial Performance

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021\$	2020\$
Services revenue		
State and Territory grants	5,633,275	5,839,328
Federal grants	67,518	-
Corporate grants and conference	111,414	1,116,986
Donations	87,394	117,513
CYF licensing and consultancy fees	423,614	347,059
Other revenue		
Interest revenue	8,678	33,944
Profit on disposal of fixed asset	3,492	-
Sundry revenue	92,232	101,168
TOTAL revenue	6,427,617	7,555,998
Expenditure		
Accommodation and travel expense	104,305	196,994
Consultancy fees	297,211	440,415
Depreciation and amortisation expense	341,354	255,301
Employee benefits expense	4,508,825	4,566,965
Insurance	51,844	52,185
Lease finance charges	75,950	80,407
Payments to young people	145,672	118,152
Postage and couriers expense	98,041	144,953
Printing and stationery expense	111,787	125,446
Rental and outgoings	234,697	197,913
Resources	65,537	134,254
Telephone and internet expense	64,673	84,906
Venue and food costs	187,720	640,580
Other expenses	332,392	388,095
TOTAL expenditure	6,620,008	7,426,566
(LOSS)/PROFIT before income tax	(192,391)	129,432
INCOME tax expense	-	-
(LOSS)/PROFIT for the year	(192,391)	129,432

The above information has been extracted from the audited financial statements, a copy of which is available on request.

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2021

	2021\$	2020\$
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,594,897	1,731,768
Receivables	92,814	23,054
Prepayments	88,653	71,276
	1,776,364	1,826,098
Non-current assets		
Cash on deposit	134,992	134,992
Plant and equipment	105,390	149,464
Right-of-use lease assets	472,435	524,085
	712,817	808,541
TOTAL assets	2,489,181	2,634,639
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Payables	1,351,588	1,281,611
Lease liabilities	239,099	229,154
Provisions	158,689	147,211
	1,749,376	1,657,976
Non-current liabilities		
Lease liabilities	235,270	273,914
Provisions	71,100	76,923
	306,370	350,837
TOTAL liabilities	2,055,746	2,008,813
NET assets	433,435	625,826
EQUITY		
Retained profits	433,435	625,826
TOTAL equity	433,435	625,826

The above information has been extracted from the audited financial statements, a copy of which is available on request.

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021\$	2020\$
Cash flows from operating activities		
Receipts from grants and customers	7,165,467	7,340,109
Interest received	12,569	36,735
Payments to suppliers and employees	(7,044,070)	(7,733,584)
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities	133,966	(356,740)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchases of plant and equipment	(19,798)	(62,182)
Proceeds from disposal of plant and equipment	9,545	-
Payments for non-current investments – cash on deposit	-	(3,483)
Net cash outflow from investing activities	(10,253)	(65,665)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Payments relating to principal element of lease liabilities	(260,584)	(248,403)
Net cash outflow from financing activities	(260,584)	(248,403)
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	(136,871)	(670,808)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	1,731,768	2,402,576
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	1,594,897	1,731,768

The above information has been extracted from the audited financial statements, a copy of which is available on request.



Year Ahead

The next year is an important one for CREATE, the development of a new three-year Strategic Plan will be completed and will guide us into the future. CREATE engages with children and young people to inform the plan and shape our goals. We look forward to exploring new ways of working, and utilising the learnings from working in a COVID environment to expand our capacity to offer more opportunities through remote and online engagement.

Our team are poised well to enter a new year filled with optimism for the future, and our enthusiasm is buoyed by the remarkable children and young people we serve. The Voices in Action Conference will be held in Adelaide and our theme

Resilient, Resourceful, Remarkable captures the culture at CREATE, and mood of the conference. It will bring together young people, practitioners, decision makers and researchers and will create opportunities to exchange ideas, discuss issues and identify solutions.

We are excited to enter a new phase of our journey and look forward to the year ahead!

Jacqui Reed
Chief Executive Officer
CREATE Foundation

Government Funding Bodies

Australian Government



Australian Government
Department of Social Services

Department of Social Services

State and Territory Governments



Department of Communities and Justice (NSW)



Territory Families (NT)



Supported by



Community Services Directorate (ACT)



Government of Western Australia
 Department of Communities

Department of Communities (WA)



Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (QLD)

SUPPORTED BY



Departments of Communities Tasmania (TAS)



Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (VIC)



Government of South Australia
 Department for Child Protection

Department for Child Protection (SA)

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Leadership Committee



Jacqui Reed
CEO CREATE Foundation



Rebecca Ketton
National General
Manager Operations



Linda James
Development
Operations Manager



Tracey Shaw
Development
Operations Manager



Jecelyn Anjani
National Finance
Manager



Noelle Hudson
National
Influencing Manager

Locations

Sydney National Office

Level 1, 12 Union Street
Parramatta NSW 2150
T 02 9267 1999

Brisbane National Office

Level 1, 3 Gregory Terrace
Spring Hill QLD 4000
T 07 3062 4860

Australian Capital Territory

Corner Cooyong Street
and Scotts Crossing
Civic Square ACT 2601
T 02 6232 2409

New South Wales

12 Union Street
Parramatta NSW 2150
T 02 9267 0977

Northern Territory (Alice Springs)

Suite 4/5, Level 1, Anangu
House, 44 Bath Street
Alice Springs NT 0870
T 08 8953 8358
F 08 8953 8358

Northern Territory (Darwin)

11/16 Malak Crescent
Malak NT 0812
T 08 8945 9993
F 08 8945 5757

Queensland (Brisbane)

15 Lever Street
Albion QLD 4010
T 07 3317 6020
F 07 3317 6026

Queensland (Cairns)

86 Anderson Street
Manunda QLD 4870
T 0421 068 254

South Australia

28 North Street
Adelaide SA 5000
T 08 8212 8898

Tasmania

32 Church Street
North Hobart TAS 7000
T 03 6224 9822

Victoria

325-327 Queensberry Street
North Melbourne VIC 3051
T 03 9918 0002
F 03 9918 0006

Western Australia

353 Newcastle Street
Northbridge WA 6003
T 08 6336 9726

Staff

Aarthi Croning
Amanda Fazl
Amanda Scott
Amy Duke
Amy Jasper
Andrew Foley
Angela Massey
Anita Chaplin
Anna Cerreto
Apajok Biar
Ashley Adams
Belinda Tome
Bethany Strange
Bill Fulton
Bridget Hutchings
Bridie Mallon
Carly Cindric
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Charlotte Beaumont-Field
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Stacy Klousia
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Tracey Shaw



CREATE Foundation Limited

ABN 69 088 075 058



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1800 655 105 is a free-call number that young people in care and their carers can use. However, there may be fees charged if calling from a mobile.