

## MEDIA RELEASE

12 August 2021

### **NOW IS THE TIME FOR GOVERNMENT TO LISTEN TO FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES ON KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER, SAFE AND SUPPORTED!**

CREATE Foundation calls on the Australian Government to listen to the voices of First Nations Peoples and learn from its historical mistakes. Current statistics demonstrate an alarming realisation that we are not learning, we are not listening. We know this because today, right now, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are 11 times\* more likely to be in the out-of-home care system.

It is reported that about 1 in 18 (18,900) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were in out-of-home care at 30 June 2020, which is 11 times\* the rate for non-Indigenous children.

Greens Senator for Victoria, Lidia Thorpe stated via her [Twitter account](#), “Scott Morrison announced that \$75,000 reparations to survivors of the Stolen Generation on the same day Closing the Gap reports that First Nations kids are 11 times more likely to be in out of home care. The Stolen Generation never stopped, the process of child removal just evolved.”

CREATE agrees that the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people cannot continue, and if the Australian Government is genuinely aiming to “Close the Gap” then, as a nation, it is time to engage meaningfully with Indigenous communities to identify the resources required to empower them to keep their families safe, connected and out of the care system.

Ms Jacqui Reed, CREATE’s Chief Executive, states, *“The central focus for the Australian government needs to be on listening to and supporting Aboriginal families to care for their children. This issue cannot be a secondary priority and as complex as the contributing factors are, in this day and age they should not be insurmountable.”*

CREATE calls for the Australian government to listen to the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, communities and leaders to ensure that families are safe and together.

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). CREATE develops policy and research to report on and advocate for a better care system.

For more information please visit the CREATE website at [www.create.org.au](http://www.create.org.au)

**For further comment from CREATE’s Chief Executive, Ms Jacqui Reed, and/or a young person with care experience contact Leigh White, CREATE Communications Advisor, via (m) 0431 932 122 or [leigh.white@create.org.au](mailto:leigh.white@create.org.au)**

\* Reference:

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2021). Child protection Australia 2019-20. Child Welfare series no. 74. Cat. no. CWS 78. AIHW. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/c3b0e267-bd63-4b91-9ea6-9fa4d14c688c/aihw-cws-78.pdf.aspx?inline=true>

### **Key statistics on the care sector in Australia:**

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1. 44,906 children were in out-of-home care across Australia as at June 30, 2019 (AIHW 2020)
2. Young people in out-of-home care are 16 times more likely to be under a youth justice order than the general population
3. 35% of young people experience homelessness within the first year of leaving care
4. 46% of males have been involved with the justice system since leaving care
5. 29% of young people who have left care or preparing to leave care are unemployed
6. 36% children and young people in care do not live with any of their siblings
7. 35% of young people in care have five or more caseworkers during their time in care
8. 67% of young people in care over the age of 15 are not aware of having a leaving care plan

McDowall, J. J. (2018). Out-of-home care in Australia: Children and young people's views after five years of National Standards. Sydney: CREATE Foundation.

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