

MEDIA RELEASE

30 August 2023

CREATE Foundation: Shaping a Better Future for Australia's Children during National Protection Week

National Child Protection Week kicks off next week from 3 - 9 September, marking one of the most important weeks in CREATE Foundation's calendar.

CREATE Foundation's CEO, Jacqui Reed, says 'The theme for this year's Child Protection Week continues to be 'every child in every community needs a fair go', which is a great statement, but sadly we know this is not the reality.'

"CREATE Foundation is Australia's only national consumer body dedicated to advocating for the rights of children and young people with an out-of-home care experience. Our vision is that all children and young people with a care experience reach their full potential. We continue to call on all governments to reflect seriously on how their child protection and out-of-home care systems continue to fail to provide adequate support and care to change the trajectories of children's lives. Children and young people with a care experience continue to have poorer outcomes across key areas, including education, employment, housing and health, compared to their peers without a care experiences. It is time for governments to listen to the voices of children and young people and act urgently to improve their care systems."

Child Protection Week is a time for the sector to come together to recognise the resilience of children and young people in out-of-home care across Australia, and to shine a spotlight on the incredible support provided by foster and kinship carers, caseworkers and non-government organisations who work to ensure that children and young people in care across Australia are safe and supported.

As always, CREATE will be hosting a series of events nationally throughout Child Protection Week to highlight the experiences and challenges faced by young people in care, while also celebrating their resilience and achievements.

Key events for Queensland Child Protection Week organised by CREATE Foundation include:

- **Brisbane: Child Protection Week Fancy Dinner, Tuesday 5 September.**

CREATE is honoured to welcome Acting Director-General Kate Connors and Principal Commissioner, Luke Twyford, to attend this event.

- **Cairns: Sunset Celebration, Thursday 7 September**

To be attended by Principal Commissioner, Luke Twyford and Councilor David Eden.

CREATE Foundation invites media representatives to join in these activities and contribute to the collective effort to create a safer, more inclusive environment for young people in care.

For more information about CREATE Foundation's involvement in National Child Protection Week or further comment from CREATE's Chief Executive, Ms Jacqui Reed, and/or a young person with care experience contact:

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About CREATE Foundation:

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.

Key statistics on the care sector in Australia:

- 46,212 children and young people were reported in 2020-21 as living in out-of-home care across Australia (Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2022).
- Young people in out-of-home care are 16 times more likely to be under a youth justice order than the general population.
- 30% of young people experience homelessness within the first year of leaving care. (McDowall, 2020).
- 38% of young people have been involved with the justice system.
- 30% 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.
- 35% of young people in care have five or more caseworkers during their time in care.
- 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*. CREATE Foundation.

McDowall, J. J. (2020). *Transitioning to adulthood from out-of-home care: Independence or interdependence?* CREATE Foundation.

End of Release.

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