

## MEDIA RELEASE

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creating a better life  
for children and young  
people in care

# CREATE WELCOMES LAUNCH OF THIRD ACTION PLAN TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE

CREATE Foundation welcomes today's launch of the next instalment in Australia's first-ever national plan of action to address the continuing increase in child abuse.

Launched by Minister for Social Services, the Hon. Christian Porter MP, and titled the *Third Action Plan (2015-18) of the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020* CREATE will continue its work with the National Coalition informing the Third Action Plan. Ms Noelle Hudson, CREATE Foundation's National Policy and Research Manager, representing CREATE looks forward to supporting *Strategy 2: Helping young people in out-of-home care thrive into adulthood*.

CREATE Foundation is a national peak body representing the voices of children and young people with an out-of-home care experience. The Australian Government reported **increased rates** of children in substantiations, on care or protection orders, and placed in out-of-home care during the past six years. An independent voice for children and young people has never been more vital than today to bring about positive systemic change to keep children safe.

Ms Hudson commented that CREATE's international research and independent consultations with children and young people with a lived experience of the child protection system revealed that without adequate planning and supports, care leavers experienced significantly poorer life outcomes comparatively.

*"Our research highlights the fact that 67% of respondents were not aware of any official leaving care plan, which means they are not adequately equipped to navigate their way to independence," said Ms Hudson.*

*"When young people don't have a plan the risk of homelessness, under-employment and joblessness, and diminished education opportunities is greatly increased. Hence, CREATE Foundation is encouraged that the Third Action Plan recognises the importance of the "Transition to Independence" process and improving support, resources and facilitation of young people's successful transition to independence."*

CREATE remains vigilant and committed to improving the lives of all children and young people with an out-of-home care experience, and to the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020.

### national new south wales office

CREATE Foundation Limited ABN 69 088 075 058

A Level 3, 630 George Street Sydney NSW 2000 | T 02 9267 1999

 1800 655 105  [www.create.org.au](http://www.create.org.au)  [facebook.com/CREATEfnd](https://facebook.com/CREATEfnd)  @CREATEfnd

CREATE looks forward to this opportunity to convey the voices of children and young people into the plans and actions, along with working with the Commissioners for Children and Young People and the Department of Social Services to improve the lives of children and young people with a care experience.

**Media Enquiries: Leigh White 0431 932 122 | [leigh@whitemarketing.com.au](mailto:leigh@whitemarketing.com.au)**

## Background

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 and be dependent on social assistance.**

- 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). *Transitioning from care (CREATE Report Card 2009)*. Sydney: CREATE Foundation.

CREATE's 2013 Report Card revealed:

- 36% of children and young people are split from their brothers and sisters in care
- 31% attend 3 or more primary schools and have greater rates of suspension
- 35% have 5 or more caseworkers during their time in care
- 67% are not aware of any official leaving care plan

Data source: McDowall, J. J. (2013). *Experiencing out-of-home care in Australia: The views of children and young people (CREATE Report Card 2013)*. Sydney: CREATE Foundation.

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