

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 1 December 2015



CREATE'S HEARING OUR VOICES CONFERENCE

Thursday, 3 December, 2015, children and young people with a care experience will share their stories through art, song, the spoken word and dance at CREATE Foundation's "Hearing Our Voices" Conference in Canberra.

This event enables children and young people who have been removed from their families and placed in out-of-home care to express their voices independently through a variety of mediums. These independent mechanisms for having a voice and being heard are what is vital to the positive transformation of the future care system.

The Hearing Our Voices conference will be attended by a representative group of young people with a care experience performing and sharing their stories, Minister Mick Gentleman MLA will be speaking, and dignitaries include Minister Mary Porter AM MLA, Minister Nicole Lauder MLA, along with sector representatives from government and non-government organisations.

One of the conference speakers, 15 year old Jackie, said "I have a right to say about whatever's going on in my life."


Joseph is a young person with a disability who was placed in care during his early school years, and will perform a powerful song he wrote titled "Not finding love". This is a very personal song and the first one Joseph has ever written and will definitely touch the hearts of guests at this truly memorable event.

Garry Faumui is CREATE Foundation's ACT Coordinator and has worked in the sector for over two decades. Garry said that when he joined the CREATE team and saw the tremendous Speak Up and similar programs in action, it was very encouraging. *"But I also saw a need for young people to have creative expression and how much the young people connect into these mediums."*

"It has been very special to watch their potential as young people unfolding before my eyes. When they have the opportunities as others they fly!"

CREATE Foundation is one of the few non-government organisations of a size and capability flexible enough to move rapidly with care in accordance with the ever-changing needs when serving the child protection sector.

Young people being able to be heard is vital....great news is that the young people's music performed during this special event will be available to download via iTunes and Band Camp websites in the near future.



Event details: 1-3pm on Thursday, 3 December, 2015, at the ACT Legislative Assembly, London Circuit Canberra City. RSVP now to CREATE Foundation's ACT Coordinator, Garry via garry.famui@create.org.au (see attached flyer)

Christmas party this weekend! CREATE not only enables children and young people to have their say and be heard through a range of mediums, but the CREATE Christmas party is taking place for eligible children, young people and their carers at Kamba Adventure Park on Saturday 5 December. Please RSVP to Garry via the above address.

CREATE Foundation is currently running an important and fun awareness campaign called **Paint it Purple** via social media. Make sure you and your team play your part this Christmas in making a difference to the lives of kids in care, while having a bit of fun Painting it Purple! Read more here: <http://create.org.au/support-us/paint-it-purple/>

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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
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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.

Click [here](#) to visit our website to download the full reports.

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