



MEDIA ALERT

29 October 2016

Road to independence...journey to success

QLD TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE MONTH

Tuesday, 1 November, is the launch of Queensland's *Transition to Independence Month* (T2I) raising awareness of the needs of young people transitioning from out-of-home care (i.e. foster, kinship or residential care) to independence on their journey towards achieving positive life outcomes. Queensland has the second highest out-of-home care population³ in the country and every year around 500 young people in QLD leave care.

The theme for 2016 is ***“Road to independence...Journey to success”*** highlighting that this time CAN be a positive experience when appropriate planning and supports are in place, including the Next Step After Care program.

While growing up in care, a young person can experience multiple placements in different types of care and a number can approach adulthood without the stable presence or influence of a positive, significant adult in their lives.

ABS data states that most 20-24-year olds live in their family home which is often in contrast to care leavers' circumstances. CREATE's research has shown that some 15-17-year olds (preparing to leave care) can be without adequate planning (64%)² or experience traumatic circumstances such as not having a place to live (35% experienced homelessness in the first year after leaving care)².

CREATE has heard from young people that they feel more secure and confident about facing the challenges of growing up when they have the support of their transition team. This team should be led by the young person and consist of people who the young person identifies as able to assist them in planning or through leaving care (it could include carers, Child Safety Officers and other supportive adults in the broader community).

The power of social media is being harnessed in this year's T2i month awareness campaign, inviting people who work with young people with a care experience to post a photo on social media with a caption about the young person's "best personal quality", along with the hashtag **#t2imonth** via Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

Young people need to have a say regarding their aspirations, their dreams and their goals which set the path of their journey towards adulthood. **If you are a journalist and would like to discuss arranging a media interview with CREATE or a young person, contact CREATE's media advisor, Leigh White via 0431 932 122 or leigh@whitemarketing.com.au** The T2i month launch event will take place at 12pm on Saturday, 5 November, at Riverway Arts Centre, Thuringowa, Townsville. For information please contact Kelly Bucknall at CREATE Brisbane via 07 3317 6020.

CREATE is Chair of "G-Force", a sector-wide work party which has developed several resources to support organisations across Queensland to celebrate T2i Month. The official webpage is: [website www.createyourfuture.org.au/leaving-care/t2i-month-queensland/](http://website.www.createyourfuture.org.au/leaving-care/t2i-month-queensland/)

In 2015, the Queensland Government announced the 'Next Step After Care' supports package for care leavers to access to the age of 21. Next Step After Care info is available via www.nextstepaftercare.com.au/

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CREATE Foundation is the peak body representing the voices of all children and young people in out-of-home care. Learn more at www.create.org.au

Transition to Independence Month is coordinated by **G-Force**, a child protection sector wide working party made up of government and non-government organisations including: Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services; CREATE Foundation; Foster Care Queensland; Peak Care; Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak; Youth Advocacy Centre; Department of Housing and Public Works; Life Without Barriers; Office of the Public Guardian and Career Keys.

*1*Data source: McDowall, J. J. (2009) "Transitioning from care - Tracking progress,(CREATE Report Card 2009)" Sydney: CREATE Foundation.*

*2**Data Source: McDowall, J. J. (2013) "Experiencing Out-of-Home Care in Australia: The View of Children and Young People, (CREATE Report Card 2013)" Sydney: CREATE Foundation.*

*3*** As at 31/12/13 there were 8556 Queensland children and young people in out-of-home care (from the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services website - <http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/about-us/our-performance/summary-statistics>)*

4 Home and Away: the living arrangement of young people. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2009)*