

MEDIA RELEASE

20 November 2017

WE MUST DO BETTER

CREATE'S RESPONSE TO MEDIA ISSUES AROUND NT ROYAL COMMISSION

creating a better life
for children and young
people in care

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 has been actively engaged in providing submissions and evidence to the NT Royal Commission and Board Inquiry into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory. The report was handed down on Friday 17 November 2017. These issues around child detention in the NT are currently achieving significant media attention.

CREATE welcomes the finding of the Royal Commission. "These are significant and historic findings" said CREATE CEO Jacqui Reed today.

"As a nation, we are still way behind on a number of the recommendations of the UNHCR report into Australia's compliance with human rights, particularly the incarceration of children with disabilities, and the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people".

"Whilst these new recommendations bring us to a base line of human rights. These young people need better treatment, stemming from a more informed and empathic response," said Ms Reed.

"Of the 1,032 children in out of home care in the Northern Territory last year, we know that a significant proportion were also subject to youth justice orders and even detention. The report's recommendations highlight that we need to be able to identify the size and characteristics of these so-called 'crossover children' and young people, in order to ensure that they receive the services they need", Ms Reed said.

Previous inquiries have also made similar recommendations, which have not been implemented successfully in the past to affect the necessary change for young people in the NT. We need a solid commitment from government that transcends the political domain and treats this alarming issue as a human rights issue rather than a political one.

ENDS

Key statistics on the care sector in Australia:

- 46,488 children were in out-of-home care across Australia at 30 June, 2016
- 35% of young people experience homelessness within the first year of leaving care
- 46% of boys with care experience have had contact with the juvenile justice system
- 29% of young people who have experienced out-of-home are unemployed
- 36% of children and young people are split from their brothers and sisters in care
- 35% of young people in care have 5 or more caseworkers during their time in care
- 67% of young people in care are not aware of leaving care plans

For further comment from CREATE's CEO Jacqui Reed and/or a young person with care experience please call Andrea Doney 0402050418 and andrea@admarcoms.com.au

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