

MEDIA STATEMENT

19 February 2018

RESPONSE TO RECENT MEDIA ISSUES AROUND CHILD ABUSE ROYAL COMMISSION

REDRESS SCHEME SHOULD BE FOR ALL WHO SUFFERED

The issue of compensation and redress is currently in the Australian media spotlight, as a result of the findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

CREATE Foundation is supporting religious organisations in calling for the redress scheme, for people who were abused in care, to be extended to include those who may have gone on to commit a criminal offence. This extension would ensure all survivors are eligible for redress.

CREATE Foundation is the national consumer body representing the voices of children and young people with a care experience (including foster, kinship and residential care) and made more than a dozen submissions to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse which ultimately found that the out of home care sector was the worst source of abuse in Australia pre 1990.

CREATE CEO Jacqui Reed says that many young people are criminalised just because they were removed into care. “Research from around the world says that young people in care are often at higher risk of being charged with offences, just because of their care experience and their circumstances” she said.

“To make matters worse, many young people who transition from care may face homelessness, unemployment and mental health issues, with little or no support. This makes them extremely vulnerable through no fault of their own”, Ms Reed said.

Ms Reed added that since the release of the final report, the recommendations and follow up are slow to gain traction. This is due in part to a lack of funding to implement the recommendations by the Federal Government.

“States and territories need increased funding now, to ensure they can implement the recommendations from the Royal Commission”, she said. “The safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people is of critical importance and deserves the government and the public’s full attention.”

For more information on CREATE, please visit our website at www.create.org.au

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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

