

MEDIA RELEASE

9 October 2018

HOUR OF POWER

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH EXPERIENCE OF FOSTER CARE,
OUT OF HOME CARE, RESIDENTIAL OR KINSHIP CARE
SPEAK WITH POLITICIANS ABOUT IMPORTANT CHANGES
NEEDED IN THE SECTOR

Docklands area, 11 October, 9.15am to 12pm

Library at the Dock, 107 Victoria Harbour Promenade North
Melbourne

In the lead up to the Victorian state election, CREATE Foundation and Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare are hosting an event where young people with an out of home care experience (OOHC) which might include foster care, residential care or kinship care, can present their lived experience and ideas for changes to policy directly to key Victorian politicians.

CREATE acknowledges that the Hon. Jenny Mikakos, Minister for Children and Families, Georgie Crozier MLC Shadow Minister for Children and Families and Nina Springle, Children and Families Spokesperson and the Deputy Leader of the Greens are giving up their time to consult with young people who represent a vulnerable and under-represented sector in order to learn from them and improve policy and advocacy practises as they prepare for the election. Liana Buchanan, the Principal commissioner for children and young people and Justin Mohamed, the Commissioner for Aboriginal children and young people will also attend.

The issue of youth justice is likely to be a strong topic, given recent issues in Australia and in the media, which have had a particular impact on young people with a care experience. CREATE Foundation released its National Youth Justice Report this week. CREATE's Young Consultants are advocating for better intervention between young people and the police, raising the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 14. They are also advocating that all youth justice workers adopt a trauma-informed approach. Young Consultants have identified a critical need for need for an empathic response from all contact points during the justice process.

CREATE's Young Consultants have also spoken passionately about issues around mental health, and the need to be able to access quality free services offering a range of therapeutic interventions and not just those intended for crisis.

CREATE has advocated for many years to raise the legal age of leaving care to 21. Whilst both Labor and Liberal parties have recently announced an extension of support for a

limited number of young people per year, CREATE would like to see this applied to all young people leaving care in Victoria and not just a lucky few.

Since 2015, the Hour of Power has been a unique platform to impact the direction of the out of home care sector.

For further comment from CREATE's Victorian State Coordinator Cathy Carnovale and/or a young person with care experience please call Andrea Doney 0402050418 or andrea@admarcoms.com.au

Media are invited to attend this event. Please RSVP to 0402050418

Key statistics on the care sector in Australia:

- 47,915 children were in out-of-home care across Australia at 30 June 2017
- Young people in out-of-home care are 19 times more likely to be under a youth justice order than the general population
- 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 Victorian State Coordinator Cathy Carnovale and/or a young person with care experience please call Andrea Doney 0402050418 or andrea@admarcoms.com.au

CREATE Foundation is currently conducting a national release of its anticipated *Youth Justice Report* which has uncovered several key findings and made key recommendations to *government, commissioners, guardians & peak bodies*. *A copy of the report is available.*

