

MEDIA RELEASE

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QLD T2A MONTH 2021 CREATE SAYS “HAVE A CONVERSATION, HOST AN EVENT & GET RESOURCED”

With over 8,923 children and young people currently in care in QLD, more than 1800* of these young people will leave the Queensland child protection system annually. Each November, the sector comes together to highlight the needs of young people as they make the journey from the child protection system to adulthood, experiencing positive life outcomes along the way. Known as T2A Month, special events are held across the state, for young people with a care experience, carers and workers in the sector.

Leaving care is often an enormous task, especially for an 18-year-old, involving finding accommodation, seeking employment, building support networks, accessing services, learning to budget, sorting out transport needs, starting bank accounts, locating important documents and much more.

The theme of 2021 T2A month is “Hopes and Dreams” which every young person has a right to build. Yet, without support from community, family, carers, government and service providers, young people are at risk of homelessness (30% become homeless within a year), joblessness (29%) or not completing their education.

Some young people make this transition with little help at all. CREATE Foundation says that all young people need support, networks and resources in their journey to adulthood. In T2A Month CREATE encourages child protection workers, support services and carers to “**Have a conversation, host an event and get resourced!**”

The T2A Launch event will take place on Wednesday 3rd November at Dream World theme park and is an event for young people with a care experience, carers and workers in the sector. CREATE Foundation’s Club Create membership includes over 500 Gold Coast children and young people in care. Gold Coast resident, Caroline (22) has a foster care experience and will be MC’ing the T2A month launch event. When Caroline turned 18 at first it was fun celebrating, but the harsh reality set in quickly and she was living in survival mode, having to choose between attending classes or going to work, having little or no choice every day.

When asked about T2A month Caroline said: “*T2A month is a message to all kids in care that we see them, we acknowledge and understand their problems and the struggle transitioning to adulthood. There is also an **unwritten promise to young people** soon to transition that we recognise it is not fair and they must have as close to a “normal” life as possible, not being left desperate without options and having to couch surf to have a roof over their head.*”

“*And on the Gold Coast in particular, the rental prices have gone through the roof*” added Caroline, “*it’s practically impossible to find safe and secure housing and there is nowhere to go after you turn 18.*”

LEFT TO FIGURE IT ALL OUT

ON THEIR OWN

“We need all young people to have access to housing and supports to 21, because I don’t know anyone who moved out at 18 and didn’t need extra support, like being able to go back and say to an adult, ‘I need help with this’ or ‘can you help me read through this document’. Growing up in care, we do not get that kind of support and are expected to figure it all out on our own! There is no-one to even celebrate little day to day wins with.” added Caroline.

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 develops policy and research to report on and advocate for a better care system.

CREATE Foundation’s Chief Executive, Ms Jacqui Reed, shared that, *“There is plenty of time to preparing for transitioning from the age of 15, yet there is also an opportunity to ensure that anyone working with or supporting a young people are encouraging them to access the vast range of resources available for the best outcome.”*

“The range of resources includes digital or printed booklets, so there is something for everyone, plus the free “Sortli” app, Next Step Support website, and the ‘Go Your Own Way Kit’ booklets which link everyone needing access to services and supports. Unfortunately, not everyone is aware of the resources and we urge the sector to get resourced.”

EVENT INFORMATION: T2A Month (Queensland) Launch Event takes place at Dreamworld theme park on the Gold Coast, Wednesday 3rd November, 2021. For more information and this event and all T2A month events, visit: [CREATE Your Future Events tab](#)

For more information about CREATE visit our website www.create.org.au

For further comment from CREATE’s Chief Executive, Ms Jacqui Reed, and/or a young person with care experience contact Leigh White, CREATE Communications Advisor, via (m) 0431 932 122 or leigh.white@create.org.au

Source: *Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (June 2020)

<https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/about-us/performance-evaluations/our-performance/ongoing-intervention-phase-permanency-planning/exiting-out-home-care>

Key statistics on the care sector in Australia:

- 45,996 children and young people were reported in 2019-20 as living in out-of-home care across Australia (*Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2021*)
- Young people in out-of-home care are 16 times more likely to be under a youth justice order than the general population
- 30% of young people experience homelessness within the first year of leaving care (*McDowall, J. J. (2020)*).
- 46% of males have been involved with the justice system since leaving care
- 29% of young people who have left care or preparing to leave care are unemployed
- 36% children and young people in care do not live with any of their siblings
- 35% of young people in care have five or more caseworkers during their time in care
- 67% of young people in care over the age of 15 are not aware of having a leaving care plan

McDowall, J. J. (2018). Out-of-home care in Australia: Children and young people’s views after five years of National Standards. Sydney: CREATE Foundation

national new south wales office

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