



Strategic Plan 2022 – 2027



The Strategic Planning Journey

The journey commenced with CREATE seeking feedback from children and young people in each state and territory via surveys, meetings and Youth Advisory Groups. Surveys were conducted with key stakeholders within the out-of-home care sector, our CREATE teams and Business Areas. The surveys were collated and a thematic analysis conducted to identify the key priorities as potential focus areas for the future. The results were presented to teams and discussed broadly to determine a course of action for the future. Young people have actively participated throughout the process.



Introduction



Emily Paul

**CREATE Foundation
Young Consultant,
National Influencing
Committee Member**

I've been involved in shaping up this Strategic Plan and I am proud to have been a part of the process. My experiences with CREATE have allowed me so many opportunities to harness my voice as an advocate and an adult coming out of living within the out-of-home care system. Through trust and relationship building with CEOs, sector organisations, young people and advocates, I've achieved a lot. CREATE has encouraged my ideas, whilst supporting so many other young people in their pursuit for systematic change and individual excellence. Working alongside the CREATE marketing team, Board and CEO to support and speak up for children at risk will forever be a highlight in my early career and business. It has given me the career boost that helps me feel like an adult working towards meaningful change, supported by creative people, and that I am leaving my mark on the system that left its mark on me.



Adina Gunnis

**CREATE Foundation
Young Consultant,
National Influencing
Committee Member**

Over the past 10 years, I have grown up with the CREATE Foundation supported by dedicated staff. It's a privilege to be a part of such an incredible organisation and to share my years with those who have become like family. Not only does CREATE Foundation lead the way for advocating for children and young people with a care experience, but it empowers and teaches them to speak up and advocate for themselves and on behalf of all affected by the child protection system.

I have experienced first-hand, CREATE's mission creating a better life for children and young people in care. Not only have I been EMPOWERed and CONNECTed, I have also been provided countless opportunities to use my experience to CHANGE the child protection system. Being able to complete Speak Up training, co-facilitating workshops, sharing my story to the media and being a member of the National Influencing Committee are just a few of the opportunities I have been afforded as a young person with a care experience.

I look forward to the next five years and seeing the actions and progress that CREATE Foundation can achieve with the voices of children and young people guided by the 2022-27 Strategic Plan.



Margaret White AO

Patron, CREATE Foundation

A new Strategic Plan is an exciting opportunity for any organisation to review and reset and to identify and refresh goals and reflect on what success will look like.

It is a tremendous honour to be a small part of CREATE. Its achievements have been extraordinary, grounded in highly praised and rigorous research given effect by a talented and dedicated team. But above all, young people with a care experience have been integral to that achievement and the reputation for excellence that CREATE's work engenders.

In this difficult and vital area of social policy CREATE sought from its inception to learn from young people themselves what needed to change in the sector if they were to be loved, safe, healthy in mind and body, and have educational and career opportunities to flourish which are their right.

This next five-year Strategic Plan into which, itself, so much planning and listening has gone, will reach high and in so doing will challenge and inspire government and institutional policy makers to do the same.



Richard Hill

**Chairman,
CREATE Foundation**

As we navigate the 20's it is plain to see that the impact of COVID will be with us for some time. With this backdrop in mind we created our new Strategic Plan. It's broad and ambitious, but considered given this current environment.

From the feedback provided by children and young people across the country we know that overwhelmingly mental and physical health has been their top priority and will continue to be so over the span of this Strategic Plan. We retain our focus on young people transitioning to adulthood, and will review our progress in states committed to supporting young people transitioning to adulthood to have the option of remaining in current placements with carers where appropriate and desired. Importantly and with renewed enthusiasm we'll continue to advocate to bring the remaining two states in line with our quest to ensure all young care leavers have these options. We're also invested in advocating for changes to legislation to raise the age of criminal responsibility to a minimum of 14 years in each jurisdiction.

Our relationships globally and across the Australian sector are flourishing and our intention is to continue to build on these to draw attention to, and highlight the issues facing young people and will promote how resilient and resourceful children and young people are. CREATE's Board, and team are enthusiastic, skilled and ready to take on the new challenges to advance the interests of children and young people with a care experience within this next five-year plan!



Jacqui Reed

**Chief Executive Officer,
CREATE Foundation**

I am pleased to present CREATE Foundation's five-year Strategic Plan, 2022-27. It's been a 12-month process with children and young people walking alongside our team on the journey to develop our key goals for the future.

The plan sets out the pathway for action for the organisation over the five-year span. It gives the CREATE team the direction and inspiration to continue leading the sector and advocating for, and supporting vulnerable children and young people with a care experience especially First Nations children and young people across all eight Australian states and territories.

Our over 20-year history as a systems' advocate enables us to confidently act as a conduit to amplify the voices of children and young people. Our rich history of being an effective and considered advocate stands us in good stead to embrace the challenges before us, and support children and young people to have a voice and be heard. Notwithstanding this commitment we aim to sharpen our focus on supporting First Nation children and young people and their over representation within the care system.

CREATE played a significant role in developing the National Out-of-Home Care Standards and measuring their effectiveness. Our new plan is aligned with the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031 and is mindful of the impact that the COVID Pandemic has had, and will continue to have upon the care population. CREATE is committed to working within its Youth Risk Management Strategy to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children and young people it serves.

Our organisation influences decision makers and provides opportunities for those with a care experience to have a say and be heard. Our aim is to offer hope and support for a better future.

Our team is committed to affect change built on the courageous voices of children and young people.

I'm proud to introduce this new Strategic Plan and am eager to see what our future holds!





Karen Dini-Paul

Cultural Advisor, CREATE Foundation

Karen Dini-Paul has established herself as a well-respected professional within the Far North Queensland community. Karen is Aboriginal, a descendant of the Arrernte People of Alice Springs which, coupled with her Italian heritage, has given her a strong sense of self and a source of cultural pride.

After graduating from university, she commenced working with young parents where she realised she wanted to support others to make positive changes in their lives. Karen now has more than 30 years' experience in the community services sector where she has worked in various roles. Throughout this time, she has gained firsthand experience from grass roots service delivery to program design, implementation and evaluation, and organisational development and governance.

Karen has been working closely with CREATE's CEO and the CREATE team as a consultant since 2019 providing advice and practical support around a wide variety of issues including the development of CREATE's Commitment Statement to First Nations Children and Young People embedded within the Strategic Plan.



"It has been a pleasure working with the CREATE team as they do extremely important work and they are always looking for productive and effective ways to engage and hear the voices of First Nations children and young people in care to make their experiences in the care system safe and nurturing".

Karen Dini-Paul



Commitment to First Nations People

CREATE Foundation recognises First Nations peoples as the traditional custodians of Australia including its lands and waterways. CREATE supports a just and equitable Australia where respect for First Nations peoples is afforded, and where all Australians can move forward together in the spirit of equity and justice.

CREATE Foundation respects the rights of First Nations peoples to maintain their culture and to be involved and participate in decisions that affect their lives and future in a manner consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. CREATE is committed to improving the lives of all children and young people with a care experience and acknowledges the impact of colonisation and the stolen generation in the community and the resulting impact of the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people within the out-of-home care system.

Our commitment to improving the lives of First Nations children and young people is contained within our

Strategic Plan. We reviewed our capacity and resources, and consulted with First Nations people and agencies to explore how we would express our commitment to First Nations children and young people. We wanted our practice and commitment to be seamless and inclusive, rather than having two documents sitting side by side. We felt that an integrated Strategic Plan was an attractive alternative to having a stand-alone document such as a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). We recognise that there are many ways for individuals and organisations to express their commitment to First Nations peoples and CREATE will continue to explore how best we do this.

Our commitment is to offer an inclusive service, and range of programs and activities to First Nations children and young people and this is articulated within this plan with clear and measurable strategies to ensure our commitments are actioned. This plan includes three pivotal focus areas: relationships, rights and respect.



CREATE is also committed to ensuring that its programs and activities are inclusive and that the participation of First Nations Children and Young People is in proportion to their representation in the care population.

Strategic Priorities 2022 -27

CREATE had a humble beginning, the brainchild of our founder Jan Owen, who in her garage in suburban Brisbane determined that she needed to provide opportunities for children and young people with a care experience to have a say in decisions that affected their lives. Since the early nineties this dream started to shape as a reality, with groups and agencies popping up in all states and territories. In 1999 CREATE became incorporated as a national entity and has been supporting children and young people now for well over 20 years. Our key mantra of Connect to Empower to Change has never wavered and is the glue that binds all that we do and aspire to.

Unfortunately, we are in a growth industry with the numbers of children and young people within the care system steadily growing over the years. The impact on children and young people within the care system during the COVID Pandemic has exacerbated their disadvantage and increased their vulnerabilities.

We now support over 45,000 children and young people who are in care through no fault of their own in Australia today of whom around 40% are First Nations children and young people. Given First Nations children comprise 5 to 6% of the total population, this represents a gross over representation in out-of-home care. Our commitment and approach to our work has placed CREATE at the forefront of initiatives that consistently strive to improve the lives of children and young people within the out-of-home care community.

Utilising our partners, and building strong relationships with First Nations organisations including peak body SNAICC will assist us to leverage every opportunity to affect positive change and is a proven way of operating for us at CREATE.

Demand for our services and support has never been higher and in this next five-year period we will focus on building our capacity to respond to this ever-growing need and prioritising the engagement and support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

Our Vision

All children and young people with a care experience reach their full potential.

Our Mission

Creating a better life for children and young people in care.

To do this, we:

CONNECT children and young people to each other, CREATE, and the community to

EMPOWER children and young people to build self-confidence, self-esteem and skills that enable them to have a voice and be heard to

CHANGE the care system, in consultation with children and young people, through advocacy to improve policies, practices and services and increase community awareness

Core Principles

- Children and young people are the centre of the work we do
- Our practice is inclusive and respectful of culture and diversity
- Our advocacy is independent and driven by the voices of children and young people
- We believe that meaningful participation is essential for engaging children and young people
- Partnerships with Government, NGOs and individuals are important to success
- We are enthused by creativity and fun
- We invest in our people
- We provide a safe and inclusive environment for children and young people where they are safe, respected and have opportunities to have a say, free of judgement and prejudice

Our Strengths

Connections – Building strong and respectful relationships with children and young people and encouraging participation.

People – Valuing and investing in our team, and acknowledging their skills and experience.

Breadth – Delivering a broad range of programs, activities and opportunities to hear the voices and build the capacity of children and young people across all eight jurisdictions with a very small but incredibly dedicated team.

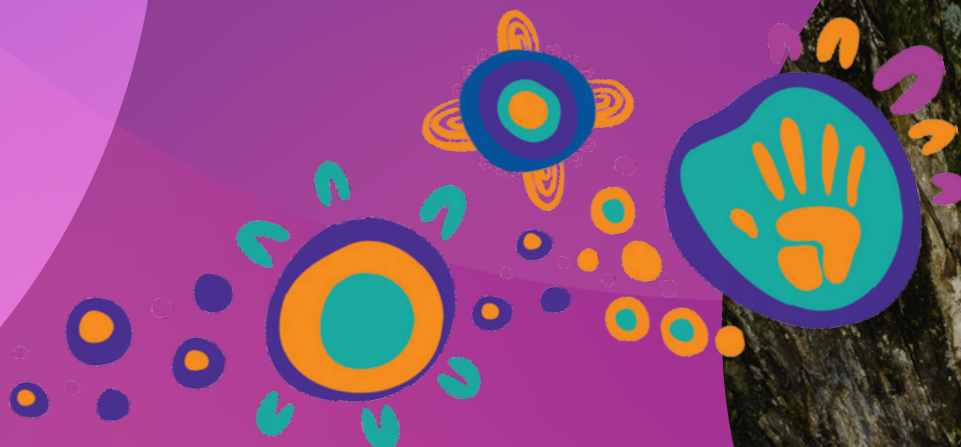
Collaboration and partnerships - Building and maintaining partnerships within the out-of-home care sector and with the corporate sector for over 20 years.

Strong cultural capabilities – Creating strong connection and relationships with First Nations community organisations and peak bodies in representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people and advocating for systemic change.

Dynamic – Being nimble, flexible and proactive in meeting the needs of children and young people and taking opportunities as they arise to further our goals.

Innovation – Utilising our consultations and research with children and young people to inform the sector, and facilitate new and creative solutions to improve the lives of children and young people.

Celebrating diversity – Embracing the richness of diversity of our team and the children and young people we represent.





Children and young people are connected to each other, their Community and CREATE.

connect

children and young people to each other, CREATE and their Community.

Increased funding and ensure appropriate levels of funding within Service Agreements to meet targeted growth over the next five years.

Strategic diversification of income, including fee for service and CREATE Your Future licensing of programs from both government and nongovernment sources.

Consistent positive external financial audit results.

Efficient and effective financial processes are in place to minimise duplication and maximise available resources.

Return on investments maximised.

Young people from all cultural backgrounds are appropriately supported to participate and engage with the sector in a respectful and meaningful manner.

CREATE's Youth Participation Training Package is utilised by the sector to provide appropriate support and hear the voices of children and young people to express their views.

Increased staff involvement in training and development programs.

CREATE is engaged with the sector at a global level to advance the interests of children and young people with an out-of-home care experience.

organisational sustainability and development

to build a viable and contemporary organisation responsive to emerging and future needs of children and young people with a care experience.

Maintain 70% retention of permanent staff.

Positive staff satisfaction surveys.

Demonstrated positive connection to CREATE's organisational culture.

Managers and teams are aware of their responsibilities and are equipped to ensure that they are assessing and mitigating risk to children and young people, employees and the organisation.

Children and young people are empowered to have a voice and what they say is responded to.

Children and young people are made aware of their rights through state and national charters and human rights instruments.

Young people have access to culturally appropriate tools and programs to confidently transition to independence and adulthood.

empower
children and young people to build self-confidence, self-esteem, and skills that enable them to have a voice and be heard.



Government and the nongovernment sector are better informed about the issues affecting children and young people with a care experience's health and wellbeing, with special attention to First Nations children and young people.

CREATE influences government policy and potentially legislation to better meet the needs of children and young people with a care experience so that they have similar levels of health and wellbeing to that of the general population.

Review the effectiveness of current initiatives in jurisdictions committed to increasing the age of support for young people transitioning to remain in placement or be supported to at least 21.

NSW and QLD – secure placement options for young people to remain in current placement or placement support to at least 21.

Promote the voices of children and young people to decision makers to affect positive change.

Young people are afforded basic human rights and treated in the criminal justice system as children not criminals.

change
the care system, in consultation with children and young people, through advocacy to improve policies, practices and services, and increase community awareness.



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