

Better Futures and Home Stretch Evaluation



Participant Information

You are invited to take part in a study called 'Better Futures and Home Stretch Evaluation'. We would like to find out about your experience getting support from the Better Futures program.

Our evaluation project asks: "Does this sort of support help young people, or not?" The study will help the department to understand what is working well and what could be done better.

What if you decide to say yes?

We would like to talk to you about receiving support from Better Futures. We will call you (or your carer, if you would like us to), and make a time when we can have a talk.

We will ask for consent from your carer or case worker before you start being part of the study.

We would like to talk to you for about half an hour. We will ask you questions and audio record your answers. Questions might be about things like, what you liked about the services, or things you didn't like that could be improved. You don't have to answer any question you don't want to. If you do not want to be audio recorded, you do not have to. Just tell the contact person and they will write down notes instead.

You will receive a \$50 Coles or Woolworths voucher for your participation.

What if you do not want to do it?

It's your decision to do this or not, and there won't be any changes in the services you get whether you say yes, or no.

If you do participate, you will know that you have helped us to work better with young people in a similar situation to yours.

Illegal activity

The interview does not include questions about illegal activity. During the interview if a participant discloses information about a serious crime, the researchers may notify the relevant authorities. We may also be obliged to notify the police of certain sexual offences you disclose to us.

Privacy, Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information

If you decide you don't want to part of this study, or you say yes then change your mind, this won't affect your relationship with your case manager or the organisation that's providing services to you. You can withdraw from the study up until your discussion has been transcribed into an anonymous document. You can withdraw from the study at this point by advising the CERE research team on (03) 9096 1920 or email: Lisa.Thomson@dhhs.vic.gov.au or joseph.mcdowall@create.org.au. Once the recording is destroyed your data can no longer be identified, and therefore you will not be able to withdraw that this point.

If you decide you would like to be a part of the study, we will securely store the information that we collect from your phone discussion for 7 years, from the date of the discussion.




What happens at the end of the study?

Once we've talked to you and some other young people who receive services like the one you're getting, we'll write a report about what all the young people told us.

We won't use your name in it, or the name of anyone else who talks to us about the services they get. The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing in the Victorian State Government will read it and think about how they could change services to make them better for young people and their families.

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be. If you decide to stop after we begin, that's okay. We will tell your carer/case worker about the study too. The interview will only be conducted with young people aged 16 years or older. Young people aged 16 years and older are able to provide informed consent to participate or not. They do not need guardian consent.

 Who can I contact for more information or to lodge a complaint?

<p>Researcher: Lisa Thomson Centre for Evaluation and Research Evidence Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) 50 Lonsdale St Melbourne 3000 Telephone: (03) 03 9096 1920 Email: Lisa.Thomson@dhhs.vic.gov.au</p>	
<p> Who can I contact to lodge a complaint?</p>	<p>This study adheres to the Guidelines of the ethical review process of Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. Whilst you are free to discuss your participation in this study with project staff (contactable on (03) 9096 1551), if you would like to speak to an Ethics Officer not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Secretariat on (03) 9096 1149 or email research.ethics@dhhs.vic.gov.au</p>
<p> Mail</p> <p> Email</p>	<p>Centre for Evaluation and Research Evidence Team Evidence and Impact Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Level 9, 50 Lonsdale Street MELBOURNE VICTORIA 3000 Abirami.jayawardena@dhhs.vic.gov.au</p>

If you feel like you want to talk to someone about how you are feeling about the discussion, you can talk to someone you trust or call Kids Helpline on 1800 551 800.

If you are still not happy you can complain to The Commission for Children and Young People on 1300 782 978.

Plain language statement for participants

Full Project Title:

Better Futures and Home Stretch Evaluation

Principal Researcher: Dr Lisa Thomson, Centre for Evaluation and Research, DHHS

Associate Researchers: Catherine Gibson, Claire Tennent and Abi Jayawardena

Purpose and Background

The Better Futures program was designed to support the transition from out of care. The purpose of this evaluation is to learn about the experience of being involved in the service, to understand what worked well or could be improved, and to find out whether the Better Futures and Home Stretch programs were effective in achieving outcomes for children, young people and their families or carers.

Procedures

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be invited to participate in a discussion. You can stop participating at any point and for any reason by telling the contact person. You are also free to contribute as much or as little as you like, although we hope you will enjoy participating openly.

We will only ask you questions about the service you were involved in. These questions could be about what you liked and didn't like about the service, or about your opinion on specific activities or parts of the service.

Possible Benefits

Your views and experiences will help improve the delivery of the service you received. However, we cannot guarantee or promise that you will receive any immediate benefits from this project.

Possible Risks

Although there are few risks of participating in this study, some people may find that talking about experiences can be upsetting. The discussions will be conducted in an informal setting and you can decline to answer questions if you choose.

Illegal activity

The interview does not include questions about illegal activity. During the interview if a participant discloses information about a serious crime, the researchers may notify the relevant authorities. We may also be obliged to notify the police of certain sexual offences you disclose to us.

Supports

If you feel distressed at any point during the discussion we will do our best to support you. You are welcome to resume your participation or if you need any additional support you can contact Lifeline 13 11 14 or Kids Helpline on 1800 551 800, or talk to your Better Futures Key worker who can help you access the support you need.

Privacy, Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information

Any information obtained during this consultation that can identify you will remain confidential. If you give us your permission by signing the consent form, we will include your responses, taking out any information that might identify you. Your responses will become part of an evaluation report on the Better Futures and Home Stretch Initiative. This report will be shared within the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and with the service partners. The results may be published in newsletters or journals or other ways which help us to share the information learned to help improve services. We will preserve your confidentiality in any publication. Any case studies will be reported in such a way that it is not possible to identify who it is about.

You have a right to access your own personal information. To do so, you can contact the Centre for Evaluation and Research Evidence on cer@dhhs.vic.gov.au / 03 9096 1583.

We will not report information you provide, however, we are required to notify the relevant authorities, if what you tell us leads us to believe that you or any other person is at imminent risk of harm. If you disclose alleged abuse that has happened to you or someone else, we will follow the procedures of the Department of Fairness, Families and Housing, which may include mandatory reporting.

Ethics

The ethical aspects of this research project have been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Department of Fairness, Families and Housing, which is NHMRC approved. Ethics approval number [XXXXTBC]

This project will be carried out according to the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) produced by the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia. This statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies.