

Supporting Sibling Connection - A Guide for carers and caseworkers

Participant Information Sheet

About CREATE Foundation

CREATE Foundation is the national peak body for children and young people with an out-of-home care (OOHC) experience. We represent the voices of over 45,000 children and young people currently in care, and those who have transitioned from care up to the age of 25.

Our vision is that all children and young people with a care experience reach their full potential and our mission is to create a better life for children and young people in care. To do this we:

- **CONNECT** children and young people to each other, CREATE and their 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.

We achieve our mission by facilitating a variety of programs and services for children and young people with a care experience and developing advice to governments and the sector to advocate for a better care system and improved outcomes for children and young people.

For more information about CREATE, please see our website: <https://create.org.au/>

About the Project

The South Australian Department for Child Protection has engaged CREATE Foundation to co-design a guide for carers and caseworkers to support strong sibling relationships for children and young people in OOHC. The Guide will draw on findings from CREATE's consultation on Sibling Connection in South Australia. See our [Key Messages Document on Sibling Connection](#) for a summary of this consultation.


CREATE will co-design this guide with children and young people with a care experience in South Australia across three group sessions, to better understand what factors young people feel will help with building and maintaining relationships with their siblings, and to capture their advice to carers and caseworkers.

The Guide will help to shape future practice with caseworkers and carers to improve the experiences and outcomes of children and young people in relation to their relationships with their siblings.

Timeframes

The group sessions will run from (DATES), with a view to finalising the Guide by late June 2024. Details for the sessions including dates, time and venue will be confirmed shortly.

Expression of interest for participants



In early February 2024, CREATE will run an Expression of Interest (EOI) process where children and young people age 12 – 18 years with a care experience can register if they want to participate in the group sessions.

You will need to meet the requirements below to be able to participate in the sessions.

- Aged between 12-18 years old
- Must have siblings
- Be in an out-of-home care placement that includes residential care, family-based care such as foster care or kinship care, Supported Independent living
- Feel comfortable sharing their views and participating in group discussion settings

We want to make sure we include the views and voices of children and young people from all different backgrounds and with different care experiences, and welcome all from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds and Culturally or Linguistically Diverse backgrounds to be a part of these sessions.

Our team will reach out and contact you to confirm if your EOI has been successful. If you have been chosen to participate in the sessions, we will provide you with the details for the sessions, consent form, participant information sheet, session questions and a summary of our key findings from our Siblings Connection report.

We encourage you to read through the information sheet, questions and the summary of key findings before the sessions so your participation can be as meaningful as possible.

What to expect at the sessions

CREATE staff will host 3 separate group sessions with children and young people (aged 12-18 years) to hear about your advice and suggestions around what helped you to connect with your siblings, or what support would have helped.


Two group sessions will be held in person in Adelaide, and one session will be held online to ensure those from regional and remote areas can participate.

We are aiming for up to 10 children and young people at each session. This approach means everyone can also ask us questions if needed and can all take part in discussions with each other.

The sessions will run for about 2 hours.

The sessions will begin by working together on a 'Team Charter' for the session. This is where the facilitator and participants will talk about how to keep the conversation safe for everyone and what this looks like in terms of respectful behaviours. We will get everyone to sign the Team Charter.

The sessions will be semi-structured. This means that the facilitator will have conversations with some questions and input, but it will be a flexible space for the conversation and ideas brought up by you and other children and young people that might be relevant to the topic of sibling relationships. Through these sessions you will not be asked to share your personal experiences, but rather to draw from them to make suggestions around, for example, changes that you would like to see happen, good practices and standards.



We will ask you the following questions about your views and experiences to facilitate these discussions (but you don't have to answer all the questions if you don't want to – you get to choose what information you provide):

- What factors influence sibling relationships?
- What is working well to support children and young people to connect and grow their relationships with their siblings right now?
- What are key concerns for children and young people with regards to their relationships with their siblings? What would help change these things for children and young people?
- How do children and young people participate in decision making processes about their relationships/contact with their siblings?
- What would children and young people like to have more 'say' about and how?
- What do young people believe they need now, to support their relationships with their siblings?

You can choose if you want to be part of the group interview sessions by providing informed consent.

Before joining any sessions, you will need to complete the attached consent form. The Department and carers will also need to provide consent for you if you are under 18 years old.

We will fill out a needs assessment with you, so we know what will work best for you, what to look out for to support your wellbeing, and what might help you best participate in this opportunity.

We will speak to you before starting the co-design sessions about what you can expect and anything else you may need to consider. If there are things you don't understand, you can ask the project team before the sessions and at any time during and after the sessions.

You can choose to not participate before the start of the sessions and can withdraw any time during the sessions.


Being part of this project is voluntary – it is always your choice whether you participate or not. You have the right to say “no” and/or leave at any stage of the group interview sessions. If you agree to take part and you have a reason for not answering some of our questions, you can choose to not provide an answer and move on, although we hope you will want to share as many of your thoughts with us as possible. If you decide you want to stop after the session has begun, you can ask to stop and we will. Then we won't use any of your individual answers or quotes. You can withdraw at any time during the process without any consequences for you.

What happens to the information you give us?

CREATE will take notes during the session, so that we can represent and capture properly your voice and views.

Then, we will use the information we have collected to create the Guide. We will share the draft Guide with you for feedback. After that it will be sent to the Department. Once the department releases the Guide, it will be shared with caseworkers and carers across South Australia, and may be published online.

No names or personal information will be used in the report. Your responses will be anonymous and we will protect your privacy. CREATE values what children and young people say and we try to include as many of the young people's actual words as possible. If something you say is used as a direct quote, your name will not be used—only your age will be given to acknowledge the source of



the comment (e.g., Young person, 14 years). For more information on CREATE's Privacy Policy, go to <http://create.org.au/privacy-policy/>.

If you tell us something that makes us worry about safety

None of your personal details will be given to anyone else UNLESS you say something that makes us concerned about your safety or the safety of another child or young person. If that happens, we will need to report that risk to the relevant authorities to keep everyone safe. However, we will always talk to you about this before taking any action.


Other stuff you might want to know

To thank you for your time and the valuable information you have provided, we would like to offer you a **\$25 gift voucher**. To get the voucher, you will need to put your name and contact details on our voucher payment form at the group sessions, so we can send you your voucher. If you do not wish to receive a voucher, simply record your name (without contact information) to give consent. Your contact details and consent information will be stored in locked files at a CREATE office for 5 years in case we need to look back at it. Note that none of your personal details will be linked to the information you have provided.

Keeping safe and well

If participating in the session raises any issues you would like to talk about with someone, you can talk to CREATE staff on the day, or reach out to your caseworker, community engagement officer or residential care provider. You can also get immediate support by contacting one of the helplines below:

Kids Helpline <i>A confidential and private counseling service specifically for children and young people aged 5 – 25.</i>	Call: 1800 55 1800. 24 hours a day.
Beyond Blue <i>Aims to increase awareness of depression and anxiety and reduce stigma.</i>	Call: 1300 22 4636 (24 hours / 7 days a week) Or chat online/email.
Butterfly Foundation's National Helpline <i>Free, confidential service that provides information, counselling and treatment referral for people with eating disorders, and body image and related issues.</i>	Call 1800 33 4673 (8am-midnight / 7 days a week) Or chat online.
Lifeline <i>Provides 24-hour crisis counselling, support groups and suicide prevention services.</i>	Call: 13 11 14 Text: 0477 13 11 14 (12pm to midnight AEST) Or chat online.
QLife <i>Provides nationwide telephone and web-based services for people wanting to talk about a</i>	Call: 1800 184 527, (3pm – 12am (midnight) AEST/7 days a week).



<i>range of issues including sexuality, identity, gender, bodies, feelings or relationships.</i>	
Suicide Call Back Service <i>Provides 24/7 support if you or someone you know is feeling suicidal.</i>	Call: 1300 659 467 (24 hours a day)
Crisis Care <i>Provides an after-hours response to immediate child abuse and neglect matters, and crisis situations relating to children who are under the Guardianship of the Minister</i>	Call: 131 611 (4pm – 9am (Mondays to Fridays)) (24 hours – Saturday, Sunday, Public Holidays)

Issues and complaints

Your rights are supported by a *Charter for children in out-of-home care* and for South Australia, the *Charter of Rights for children and young people in care (Office of the Guardian for Children and Young People; OGCYP, 2018)*. If you are not aware of the charter, we can give you a copy.

If you are unhappy with your experience during the consultation and want to make a complaint, you can find information about making a complaint and an online form at:
<https://create.org.au/feedback-complaints/>.

If you are still not happy with how you have been treated, you can complain to your local DCP office, and if you are still not happy, you can ask to speak to the Supervisor or local manager.

If the problem still cannot be resolved, you can make a complaint through an [online form](#) or phone the Complaints and Feedback Management Unit on 1800 003 305.

If you would like to find out more about making a complaint about your experiences in care, you can go to the Department's website: <https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/making-a-complaint>

Remember, if you have any questions, you can contact sarah.chew@create.org.au