

Health and Wellbeing in Tasmania

Good health and wellbeing are important for children and young people in out-of-home care. It helps them to thrive in their daily lives and supports them to achieve positive outcomes into adulthood.

CREATE asked 27 young people with a care experience aged 14 - 17 about what health and wellbeing meant to them and about their experiences looking after their health and wellbeing.

Most frequently, young people rated a low level of concern across all areas of health and wellbeing

52%
rated some level of concern about their engagement in school or learning

60%
of young people felt very involved in decision-making

Carers and friends were the most common sources of support.

Less than 1/3 sought support from caseworkers.



I get asked what time and with whom I'd like to go to health appointments. Mum comes to appointments as support if I want it. (Young person, 15)

There is one teaching assistant for all young people so there is not always help when I need it. Sometimes I bring the work home and mum helps. (Young person, 17)

When caseworkers didn't involve me when I was at paediatric appointments. They would talk about me and make decisions about what they thought was best and not involve me. They would tell me what was happening and it would have been better for them to ask me. (Young person, 14)



Key Messages

Young people thought being healthy and well included:

- Physical health and wellness (e.g., physical activity, good nutrition, good sleep)
- Mental and emotional health and wellness (including support around challenges)
- Having positive and supportive relationships
- Feeling safe
- Having a comfortable and stable home environment
- Having choice in decision-making
- Having access to support when needed
- Having access to and involvement in engaging activities
- Being engaged and supported at school or in learning
- Having their cultural and spiritual needs met.

“It means feeling safe and not having to worry about certain things in the house. Having access to therapists, psychologists, doctors if needed. Having fresh food, shower, and a warm bed. (Young person, 14)

“...spending time with friends at school, being able to see and spend time with cousins, and being able to speak to dad. (Young person, 14)

Most frequently, concerns were expressed about their engagement in school/learning, relationships with biological family members, and mental health. Connection to culture and transitioning to independence processes also needed more support and attention.

Young people valued having a say in decision-making (e.g., having relevant information, time and space to think about choices, and a trusted support person with whom to talk).

Young people wanted one allocated caseworker who took time to build a relationship with them and who had high quality communication skills.

Actions

Ensure that caseworkers have realistic caseloads and adequate skills, time, and space to support young people to access the care and support they need in relation to all areas of their health and wellbeing (including addressing any financial barriers).

Ensure that young people have, and participate in developing, an Education Support Plan; and that those who need extra support can access the supports they require.

Ensure that young people are meaningfully involved in comprehensive transition planning and receive ongoing case management support.

Continue to support community-led decision making and self-determination for First Nations children and young people.

Ensure that health and wellbeing outcomes are monitored and evaluated over time (including timely health assessments).

Consultation
completed in 2023

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