

Centre for Excellence
in Child and Family Welfare Inc.



Raising
Expectations



INSPIRING YOUR FUTURE



Are you living or have you lived: In foster or residential care?
With grandparents/other family? Permanently with another family?

Want to go to TAFE or Uni? Get in touch today!

There are lots of supports and services to help you study.



Federation 
UNIVERSITY • AUSTRALIA

 **LA TROBE**
UNIVERSITY


SIDNEY MYER FUND



Centre for Excellence
in Child and Family Welfare Inc.

Raising Expectations; *increasing the number of young people leaving care going to university*

Child Aware Approaches Conference - 15-16 May 2017, Brisbane

Theme: Supporting Young People in OOHC to flourish in adulthood



Sidney Myer
SIDNEY MYER FUND

Federation 
UNIVERSITY • AUSTRALIA

 LA TROBE
UNIVERSITY


Supported by
Anglicare Victoria
and
MacKillop Family
Services

Why are we doing it?

- Over 8500 children/young people in care in Victoria
- Low expectations and aspirations; few go on to university
- Not because they can't – because we don't support them to do so
- Reduces quality of/opportunities in life



Aims

- Lift educational aspirations and achievements of young people leaving care
 - Improve the existing knowledge and skills base of the people supporting care leavers to pursue educational pathways towards and within tertiary education
 - Strengthen university supports and services so care leavers can succeed once they are there
 - Wrap around services and supports
 - Outreach to schools, carers and educators
- 

What we know...

Children in OOHC are more likely:

- Not to complete Year 12 or equivalent
- To attend many schools / multiple placements
- To have a disrupted education and suffer the effects of trauma which contribute to serious learning problems/educational challenges (often missing substantial school time)
- To be suspended, excluded or expelled from school
- To be disconnected from their peers



What we know...

Achieving through higher education:

- In Victoria less than 6% of young people who experience care go to university
- 40% of jobs need a higher education qualification
- Graduates earn 55% more during their working lives than those who start work at 18



Improving knowledge and skills base

➤ Understanding the need

- ✓ Mapped training/education for carers and practitioners
- ✓ Conducted online survey and focus groups with carers

➤ What we found

- ✓ Information and training on multiple sites, no strategic approach, uncoordinated, many providers / competitive
- ✓ Survey/focus groups identified the need for:
 - Training needed in trauma informed practice in schools
 - Open and effective communication with schools
 - Information sourcing / sharing
 - Inclusive and flexible learning environment

Responding to knowledge/skills need

- ✓ Education session with 370 Resi Care workers – May 2016 and June 2017
- ✓ Free workshops for kinship and foster carers – *Strategies to support learning for young people who have experienced trauma*
- ✓ Same workshop also offered to practitioners, teachers, other professionals
- ✓ Positive feedback – approx 15 workshops held/scheduled across Victoria to July. More planned.
- ✓ Education forum for Carers on 28 July 2017 – Secretary, DET to open
- ✓ Developing online Education Information Guide for Carers with DET
- ✓ Panellist at National Foster and Kinship Carer Conference – Sep 2017
- ✓ Individualised education advice and information for carers/care leavers/workers

Getting the word out there...

- ✓ Over 35 presentations across the education, welfare and human service sectors
- ✓ Participating in key government/CSO education groups
- ✓ Post school supports/study option content for Kinship and Foster Carer Handbook (DHHS) and Sortli App (Sort Out Your Life) (DHHS/CREATE)
- ✓ Distributed over 400 *Inspiring Your Future* posters and 5000 brochures
- ✓ Webpages: Youth Central, LOOKOUT Education Support Centres, Foster Care Association and newsletters across the sector
- ✓ Centre facilitated network forums - Leaving Care, Kinship Care, Foster Care
- ✓ The Australian, 31 January 2017 - story on a care leaver studying at Fed Uni
<http://cfecfw.asn.au/sites/default/files/University%20degree%20is%20achievable%20with%20some%20useful%20care.pdf>
- ✓ March 2017 - La Trobe Uni released report - *Recruiting and Supporting care leavers in Australian Higher Education* <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/cheedr/care-leavers>

Supporting care leavers

- ✓ Different models:
 - Fed Uni – Care Leaver Coordinator
 - La Trobe Uni – centralised
- ✓ Extensive consultation and awareness raising
- ✓ Mapped existing, relevant wrap-around services to inform support development
- ✓ Embedding services and supports into mainstream uni systems

Supporting care leavers

- ✓ **Fed Uni** – <http://federation.edu.au/care-leavers> - application advice and support, scholarships, guidance/navigating university, advocacy and mentoring, assistance with other support
- ✓ **La Trobe Uni** <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/careleavers> - Student Development Advisors, accommodation support, financial support (bursaries and scholarships), advice with applications, academic and other supports, mentoring

Financial and other supports

- ✓ \$7k scholarships (Fed Uni)
- ✓ \$500 bursaries for commencing students (La Trobe Uni) – until 10 October 2017
- ✓ La Trobe Uni and Fed Uni released Higher Education Guidelines for Student Care Leavers (<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/cheedr/care-leavers>)
- ✓ Outreach to schools. Expanding to alternative schools

- ✓ Limited, difficult to access, hard to identify care leavers/not an equity group
- ✓ Care leavers thinly spread and often don't identify as care leavers

Through the project:

- ✓ Care leavers at Fed Uni can identify on direct applications → link into services and supports
- ✓ From August 2016, care leavers can identify through Victorian Tertiary Admission Centre (VTAC)/Special Entry Access Scheme (SEAS).
- ✓ Data collection will help to make the case to support care leavers who want to go onto higher education

Enrolments at Fed Uni and La Trobe Uni

University	Existing and commencing students - 2016	New enrolments - 2017	Total enrolled in Semester, 1 2017
Federation University	17- 20	80	100
La Trobe University	23*	24	41

Data collection: care leaver students enrolled

**23 students received a bursary in 2016. 16 are still enrolled, 5 completed, 1 took leave of absence, 1 withdrew and 1 has enrolled in Honours in 2017*

Changing environment in Victoria

- ✓ LOOKOUT Support Education Centres
- ✓ Navigator Pilot
- ✓ Zero fee/fee waiver initiative
- ✓ Education Youth Foyers
- ✓ DHHS
 - ✓ Better Futures Pilot
 - ✓ Developing Independence Certificate with Brotherhood of St Lawrence
- ✓ Homestretch
- ✓ Ombudsman Victoria's investigation into school expulsions



Centre for Excellence
in Child and Family Welfare Inc.

Thank you

Joanna Humphries, Project Manager, Raising Expectations

Joanna.humphries@cfecfw.asn.au

