



## Fact Sheet:

# The Voices of Children and Young People in Out of Home Care



We are working to make the out of home care experience better for children and young people, their families, and carers.

The first step is to describe what children and young people should experience if they are living in out of home care.

Children and young people were asked what out of home care should be like.

This fact sheet outlines clear expectations of what successful out of home care looks like. It draws from the experiences of children and young people, in their own words.

## 1. Being loved and safe

Children and young people live in caring, loving and stable homes.

Children and young people feel safe where they live.

Children and young people have timely decisions made about their long-term home.

*I feel loved and cared for in the home where I live.*



*I feel safe and secure.*



*My long-term home will get sorted.*

“You want to feel loved and be able to discuss your day, and share things that have happened at school,” 16-year-old, Launceston.

“A home is where you can stay however long you like,” 16-year-old, Hobart.

A place where you feel safe, at home. It’s your safe place. Group feedback, Launceston.

“When carers are good carers and they look after us they should get to be like our mum and dad and we should never have to leave when you have us under 18 year orders – you should make it that way,” young person, Kennerley, Hobart.

“If parents do the right thing they should get their kids back,” child, Kennerley, Hobart.

## 2. Having material basics

Children and young people’s standard of living supports them to reach their potential.

*I have what I need to live a good life.*



*I have a place to live, food to eat and clothes to wear.*



*I can take my personal things with me if I move.*



“It’s important to have help to do sports outside of school, so we are healthy and social; to have some opportunities that other kids have,” 16-year-old, Hobart.

“Some things cost money, which means the young person misses out, like in football,” young person, Devonport.

“Being able to access sport and other activities that you had been able to do before is important for kids – money to pay fees and have gear, transport,” 12-year-old, Launceston.

“It’s important to have a healthy environment to live in, not having junk everywhere or being mouldy,” 11-year-old, Launceston.

### 3. Being healthy

Children and young people receive the help they need to be physically healthy and mentally well.

*I can get help for my health when I need it.*



*I can get support if I'm feeling sad or angry.*



“It’s important to have support in tough times,” young person, Hobart.

Having medical help is important, group feedback, Devonport.

“Having help with maintaining mental health,” 21-year-old, Launceston.

“Counselling should be for everyone,” 13-year-old, Devonport.

### 4. Learning

Children and young people receive the help they need to participate and do well at school and in training.

Children and young people receive the help they need to live successfully on their own when they become independent.

*I can get help with school and training when I need it.*



*I can get information and support to help me become independent.*



“We need to have respect and privacy from teachers at school. Teachers need to treat you like any other kid,” 16-year-old, Launceston.

“Make sure we get help to learn with reading and writing,” 13-year-old, Devonport.

Talk to us about what will happen. Talk to us about homes, support and services – we may not know they exist. Introduce the young person to people in the services so they know who they are. Housing services are essential – it’s tough when you’re still in school. Let us finish college before transitioning. Care should be able to be extended to 21 to let you get yourself together. Group feedback, Hobart.

“Learning how to manage money by saving pocket money to buy presents for other people,” 11-year-old, Launceston.

Someone to call after you turn 18 to give you assistance, help with transition to life on your own, someone to talk to, to show you how to pay bills, budget, with accommodation and a lease... and have support after moving out. It is very hard if you are just dropped when you turn 18. Group feedback, Devonport.

## 5. Participating

Children and young people contribute to decisions about their life, care and future.

Children and young people have the confidence to pursue their goals and manage challenges.

*I have a say in the decisions about my life.*

*I can do things that are fun and be part of the community.*



“Make sure we know what is going on. Talk to us face to face, so we know it is the truth, we can ask questions, and we can provide our views,” 14-year-old, Hobart.

“We should be part of choosing who our carers are or get to move on if we don’t like our carers,” 16-year-old, Hobart.

Sometimes kids aren’t told the outcome of decisions. Listen to kids, help kids understand what is happening when they are new to care. Group feedback, Hobart.

“You need to listen to us and believe us when we tell you stuff and follow up,” young person, Kennerley, Hobart.

Doing things you know and love, enjoying life and being happy... being able to go places, go to friends’ places and do activities that you like... having freedom. Group feedback, Launceston.

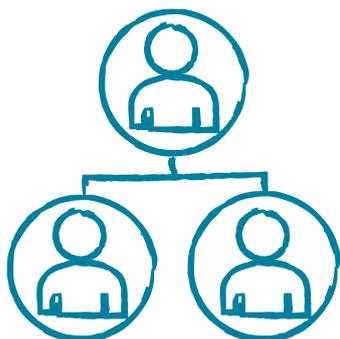
## 6. Having a positive sense of culture and identity

Children and young people have positive relationships with people that matter to them.

Children and young people are able to form their own identity in relation to culture and community.

*I feel like I belong with my carer and with my family.*

*I know who I am and I am proud of my culture and my religion.*



“Feeling a part of the family you are living with, as well as feeling part of your family,” 16-year-old, Launceston.

If siblings don’t live together have visits with them and do fun things with them... make sure they are SAFE! It’s important to be with family or around family... make more visits with family and more activities with family. Group feedback, Launceston.

“Involve the parents in the care experience,” young person, Kennerley, Hobart.

“It’s important to have a relationship with a case manager... having a relationship with a case manager makes a real difference to a kid – including for leaving care, being a mentor,” 21-year-old, Devonport.

“Sometimes kids will be mean when they find out about your background... tell people to stop hating the foster kids,” 12-year-old, Launceston.