

Young people leaving care face homelessness without ongoing support

August 28 2013



Young people leaving care need proactive support well into their 20s to prevent them becoming homeless and continuing a cycle of intergenerational homelessness, new QUT research, released today, has found.

The research, conducted as part of the Australian Governments National Homelessness Research Agenda, is the first to examine the experiences of young adults leaving care in Queensland.

Lead researcher Dr Phil Crane, from QUT's School of Public Health and Social Work, said 39,000 children and young people are in care across Australia.

"Other research indicated that a third of young people leaving care will experience homelessness; the advocacy body for children in care, the CREATE Foundation, found about 40 per cent of young people did not know where they would be living upon leaving care," Dr Crane said.

"We studied the experience of 48 young adults, many of whom reported varying levels of support during their transition from care into living independently in the community.

"Of concern, many of these young people told us they felt that the planning that was done for their transition was more ceremonial than genuinely helpful."

Dr Crane said many of the young adults in the study had experienced [trauma](#) and continued to experience substantial practical and personal challenges.

"They had often experienced homelessness before they left care, and many were at risk of being [homeless](#) several years after they had left care," he said.

He said the study found young people needed access to safe and stable housing on leaving care, and ongoing, proactive, flexible and practical support to develop strong social networks, particularly if they had experienced high instability during care.

"The study found there is a strong case for making leaving-care support available to young people from the age of 15 until they are at least 25 years old to ensure they can forge a stable, safe life after care."

Dr Crane said he hoped the Queensland Government would adopt recommendations for post-care support contained in the recent Carmody report of the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry.

"Young adults leaving care need priority access to state government services in education, health, disability services, housing and employment," he said.

The QUT research report "Homelessness and Leaving Care: the experience of young adults in Queensland and Victoria and implications for practice" is available [here](#).

Provided by Queensland University of Technology

Citation: Young people leaving care face homelessness without ongoing support (2013, August 28) retrieved 22 September 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-08-young-people-homelessness-ongoing.html>

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