

Brighter Futures: Improving outcomes for young people leaving care in the Outer East

Where did we start?

- In 2015, the Outer Eastern Melbourne Children and Youth Area Partnership decided to focus on helping young people in care successfully transition to independence.
- Young people leaving care face a much higher risk of homelessness, substance abuse and disengaging from learning than their peers.
- Yet leaving care planning tends to start late, be uncoordinated, and focused on the essential needs rather than aspirational goals of young people.



The Area Partnership set itself a challenge: *'What if all kids in care were supported to get a part-time job, in the same way we support our own kids?'*

What did we do?

- We decided to trial a new leaving care case conferencing model from April 2016 to improve outcomes for 10 young people in care, while learning and working together to improve the system.



- The Leaving Care Case Conferences start leaving care planning sooner, involve a broad group of stakeholders (from all levels of government, community services and education providers) and are focused on the goals of the young person leaving care.

What happened?

- While it's early days, case conferences have helped young people get employment, mentoring and mental health supports they would have not otherwise received.

but we can do more....

What next?

- We want to scale the case conferences so we can support all children and young people in the Outer East.
- We are beginning to engage with business and philanthropy to identify new employment, housing and community connection opportunities for young people leaving care.
- Next year, we are going to be working with local partners and young people to design a range of leaving care supports that young people, their carers and case managers can draw on locally.
- We want to keep on improving how the system comes together to learn and collaborate for better outcomes for all children and young people in care.

