



**SENATOR THE HON. MARK ARBIB**

Minister for Indigenous Employment and Economic Development  
Minister for Sport  
Minister for Social Housing and Homelessness

**THE HON. JULIE COLLINS MP**

Parliamentary Secretary for Community Services

**SHARON GRIERSON MP**

Member for Newcastle

**6 December 2011**

**CREATE YOUR FUTURE PROGRAM EXPANDS IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

The CREATE Foundation's new Newcastle office was opened today, to support up to 400 young people transitioning from out of home care in the Hunter Region over the next two years.

Minister for Social Housing and Homelessness Mark Arbib, Parliamentary Secretary for Community Services, Julie Collins, and Member for Newcastle, Sharon Grierson, said the Australian Government will provide \$400,000 to the CREATE Foundation.

"The new funding will allow CREATE to extend its CREATE Your Future program to the Hunter region through its new Newcastle office," Senator Arbib said.

"We know that young people in out of home care often find it very difficult to transition to independence – one study showed more than a third of these young people become homeless at some stage of their transition from care."

Ms Grierson said the unique program, developed by young people for young people, will assist 18-25 year olds to improve their life skills at a very vulnerable time of their lives.

"It's about giving these young people the skills to connect to the community for essential support and resources and gain valuable knowledge on living independently," Ms Grierson said.

"In addition they will have the opportunity to get involved in some practical activities such as cooking and writing job applications."

Ms Collins said the Government was working closely with the CREATE Foundation through the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009 - 2020* to provide better support for young people as they move from out-of-home care into independent living.

"The Government is providing an additional \$300,000 over the next three years to the CREATE Foundation nationally to employ a project officer to contribute to the implementation of the including work on improving transitions for young people leaving care," Ms Collins said.

"At the last Standing Council on Community, Housing and Disability Services, Ministers also agreed to a nationally consistent approach to planning for young people leaving out of home care.

This will help young people leaving care to access housing, education and financial assistance, find employment and receive help to develop and maintain their health and wellbeing and independent living skills."

Senator Arbib said the Australian Government provided \$1.2 million over three years to extend the CREATE Your Future program to Perth, Darwin and the Hunter region.

"The CREATE Your Future program will deliver two eight-week intensive life skills programs and eight workshops each year in the Hunter," Ms Collins said.

"The programs are expected to benefit around 200 young people each year, not just in Newcastle but as far south as Windsor and as far north as Taree."

"The Federal Government has also invested \$550 million over five years to the *National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness* to deliver new and better support and accommodation to homeless people across Australia," Senator Arbib said.

"Under the Agreement, 38 of the more than 180 new or expanded homelessness initiatives are specifically targeted to youth including the development of seven Youth Foyer facilities and support for young people leaving home care and juvenile justice.

"We know that supporting young people leaving care is something that the Government cannot do alone and I look forward to working with the CREATE Foundation to help young people."