



**Centre for Excellence  
in Child and Family Welfare Inc.**

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## **Report seeks safety net for kids leaving State care**

A new Monash University research report to be launched in Melbourne tomorrow calls for better safety-net support for young people leaving State care in Victoria.

A leaving care forum at the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare will focus on the key findings of *From dependence to independence: Examining the support needs and pathways of young people leaving state care in rural Victoria*.

Among its 12 recommendations, the report calls for ongoing and holistic post-care support, suitable and affordable discrete housing, mentoring programs that address social and skill needs, and employment and vocational support programs.

“We recognise that children and young people in State care have experienced significant trauma and abuse that places at-risk their chances of leading healthy and independent lives post-care. This report highlights the particular challenges for children and young people in rural areas, as well as showing the positive impacts of the programs offered by Whitelion and St Luke’s.

“The report also highlights the need for stronger support for all young people leaving care in Victoria, regardless of their location” said Dr Lynette Buoy, chief executive officer of the Centre, today.

Associate Professor Philip Mendes and researcher Sue Meade based their recommendations on interviews carried out with 19 young people in Bendigo in two stages from December 2008 to April 2010. The report was also informed by focus groups and a comprehensive international literature review.

Mr Paul McDonald, former head of Children, Youth and Families at the Department of Human Services, and now chief executive of Anglicare Victoria, will also present.

The Statewide Leaving Care Practice Forum will be held from 10.10am–1.00pm, Thursday 16 December (tomorrow) at the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, Level 5, 50 Market Street, Melbourne. The Centre is a peak organisation representing nearly 100 member organisations delivering child and family services in Victoria.

**For media comment:**

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