

# North and West Metropolitan Region Leaving Care Program

## **Improving our response to young people transitioning from state care**

Leaving Care services available from 2009/10 to young people in the North and West Metropolitan Region (N&WMR):

### **Mentoring**

Whitelion Inc provides Mentoring in the N&WMR. The program aims to provide young people transitioning from care with the opportunities to interact with adults in community settings. This helps promote personal relationships that safeguard against social isolation after the young person has left care.

### **Post Care Support Information and Referral Service**

Berry Street provides Post Care Support, Information, Referral and Brokerage for young people in the N&WMR. The program provides support to young people between 16 and 21 years who will require support after leaving state care & assists them with appropriate information, advice and support. The service ensures a culturally appropriate response for Aboriginal young people.

### **Leaving Care Brokerage**

Flexible support funding to respond to the needs of the care leaver population and is used to promote independence and connections for young people. Available to both eligible young people transitioning from state care and those eligible young people who have left care up to 21 years. Contact DHS Placement Coordination Unit (PCU) to apply for brokerage for young people transitioning from state care and Berry Street for young people who have left care.

### **Brokerage Guidelines**

- As part of transition planning an assessment of each young person's specific needs to support transition to independence must be undertaken, and transition support put in place.
- Commonwealth Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA) should be sought for all young people making the transition to independent living. TILA information may be found at [www.tila.org.au](http://www.tila.org.au)

## **Housing and Community Building**

### *Leaving Care Housing and Support Services*

Funding has been made available through the National Partnership Agreements (NPA) on Homelessness for the provision of Leaving Care Housing and Support Services. Wombat Housing and Support Service and The Salvation Army (Crossroads) are the service providers that deliver the *Leaving Care Housing and Support Initiative* in the N&WMR. The service has an early intervention focus targeting young people who are aged 16 to 18 years preparing to leave care who, through transitioning planning and assessment are identified as being at risk of homelessness.

The NPA Leaving Care Housing and Support Initiatives are managed by the Housing and Community Building (H&CB) Division of DHS.

### **Leaving Care eligibility criteria**

All young people who have been in state care between 16 and 21 years and who are or were, on a Custody or Guardianship Order on their 16th birthday, and require assistance in their transition to independence.

### **Transition plans**

All young people in state care must have as part of their best interests plan clearly articulated transition plans at least 12 months prior to them leaving care. The transition plan must demonstrate at a minimum the young person's identified needs, and actions to assist them in meeting these needs in their transition to independence.

### **Contact Details**

Contact the relevant service provider to find out more about referral pathways:

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| Whitelion Inc                                  | 9389 4312 |
| Berry Street                                   | 9450 4700 |
| DHS Placement Coordination Unit                | 9412 2771 |
| Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) | 8388 1855 |
| Wombat Housing & Support Service               | 8327 2222 |
| The Salvation Army Crossroads                  | 9353 1011 |

