

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOSTER CARERS WELCOME NEW FOSTER CARE PILOT

The Foster Care Association of Victoria today welcomed the announcement of a new foster care pilot program by the Minister for Families and Children, the Hon Jenny Mikakos.

The new pilot program, Treatment Foster Care Oregon, will be established in the Bayside Peninsula and Southern Melbourne areas by foster care agencies Oz Child and Anglicare.

Acting CEO of FCAV, Leigh Hillman, said today that Treatment Foster Care Oregon has the potential to address placement instability of children and young people residing in the Out of Home Care system in Victoria.

“For some children and young people, the intense degree of trauma they have experienced before entering Out of Home Care requires equally intensive support and care on a 24/7 basis to address their most challenging needs. FCAV hopes that that this new program can stem the tide of placement breakdown in the foster care system by stabilising these children and young people who would otherwise spend their lives in a cycle of instability and placement change.”

FCAV believes the pilot will also be advantageous for foster carers who may eventually assume longer term care of children and young people after completion of their Treatment Foster Care Oregon placements, and hopes this then assists foster carers to extend their caring years rather than leaving due to lack of support and burn out.

“We know that one of the major reasons for placement breakdown lies with the lack of early therapeutic intervention and support for children and young people upon their entry into Out of Home Care. Should these kids be unable to return home on completion of the program, they will now have a greater chance of remaining with their next foster carers in the long term, having had the opportunity to work through their traumas effectively”, Ms Hillman said.

“FCAV will also be advocating for increases to care allowances that enable foster carers to more effectively meet the day to day needs of children and young people in their care – we currently estimate this shortfall to be around \$88 a week – so that placement breakdown doesn’t occur due to financial stress upon carers”.

Leigh Hillman, A/ Chief Executive Officer, Foster Care Association of Victoria.

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