

EXTENDING CARE FROM 18 TO 21: TOWARDS AN AUSTRALASIAN EVIDENCE BASE

ACWA 2018

DR IAIN MATHESON – RESEARCH CENTRE FOR BETTER OUTCOMES FROM FOSTERING AND RESIDENTIAL CARE
PAUL MCDONALD – ANGLICARE VICTORIA



Oranga Tamariki Act 1989

Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989

386AAD Young persons entitled to live with caregiver up to age of 21 years

- (1) This section applies to a young person (as defined in **section 386AAA**) who is, or has been for a continuous period of at least 3 months after the date that is 3 months before their 15th birthday...
- (2) The young person may, at any time up to the age of 21 years, request support from the chief executive to remain or return to living with a caregiver after they turn or have turned 18 years.
- (3) The young person is entitled to be supported by the chief executive to remain or return to living with the caregiver with whom they are or were living immediately before they turn or turned 18 years.
- (4) The young person is entitled to be supported by the chief executive to live with another caregiver ...
- (5) If a young person is living with a caregiver and the caregiver is no longer able or available to have the young person living with them, the young person is entitled to be supported by the chief executive to live with another caregiver.

Other countries with some existing or similar provision, or being introduced



Formal 18 to 21 provision

- UK
- US
- Canada

Informal, or flexibility on age of leaving care

- Republic of Ireland, Portugal, Spain, France, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Hungary, & Romania

Objectives for today



Report on a study about the international evidence base on extending care from 18 to 21:

1. Evidence on **whether** extending care works, for **whom**, and **why**;
2. Evidence in relation to design considerations in **how** to extend care; and
3. Towards establishing an Australasian evidence base.

Study methods



The study collected and analysed published information from:

- international evidence-based programme 'rating' websites
- systematic reviews
- research reviews
- literature reviews from selected organisations
- **major research or evaluation studies, and**
- **select Transitioning from Care research experts.**

Finding 1: Four robust overseas studies show extending care works

- **Midwest Study of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth**
- **Right2BCared4**
- **Staying Put: 18 Plus Family Placement Programme**
- **Extending Foster Care to Age 21: Measuring Costs and Benefits**



**Loughborough
University**

Centre for Research
in Social Policy

 **CHAPIN HALL**
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



Washington State Institute for Public Policy

110 Fifth Avenue SE, Suite 214 • PO Box 40999 • Olympia, WA 98504 • 360.654-9800 • www.wsipp.wa.gov

Finding 2: 'Works' best for...

	MidWest Study	Right2BCared4	Staying Put	WSIPP
Education*	✓ (not degrees)		✓	✓ (attendance)
Training/employment*			✓	x
Earnings	✓			x
Delayed pregnancies	✓			x
Reduced justice involvement	✓ (women)			✓ (arrests)
More positive transitioning	✓	✓	✓	
Housing	✓ (delay in homelessness)		✓ (less instability)	
Males involved in lives of their children	✓			

Finding 3: Works because...



- Continuity & stability
 - Nurturing environment
 - Young people empowered
 - Helps EET engagement
 - Closer to the experiences of others
 - Greater transition control
 - Mitigates risks
 - Organisational cultural shifts
- (Munro et al., 2011, 2012).

Finding 4: Not all the same



- Duty, power, or non-statutory?
- Placement or arrangement?
- Inclusion of residential care?
- For all or for some?
- New placements too?
- Option to return before 21?
- Conditions?
- Stand-alone measure?

Finding 5: Design considerations



- Non-Anglo-American countries
- A right for all, or an investment in some?
- Clarity on particular form
- Possibility of permanency
- Not a short-term reprieve
- Premise of high quality foster care system?
- Fostering system impacts?

Finding 6: Not magic, but important for care leavers



- Some very positive evidence, but early days & evidence base still limited
- Likely to 'transplant' to Australasia
- Will need to be funded
- English Staying Put implementation learning
- Co-design opportunities
- Plan, act, observe & review
- Formative & summative evaluation

Towards an Australasian extended care evidence base?



1. What do we know already?
2. What's the evidence on the status quo?
3. What do young people want?
4. What can we learn from overseas experiences?
5. How can research best support Australasian policy, design, implementation, practice, and evaluation?

Questions?

Thanks

For a copy of the presentation or to contact me, please email
ian@mathesonassociates.co.nz