



Rights, Voices, Stories

Activity Report

2021–22

HOME

Acknowledgements

The Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians across the lands, seas and skies where we walk, live and work.

We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as two unique peoples, with their own rich and distinct cultures, strengths and knowledge. We celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures across Queensland and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

The QFCC recognises the rich and resilient cultures that continue to sustain and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We respect the right to self-determination and the critical importance of continuing connection to kin, Country and culture in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The QFCC acknowledges the special rights of children which are recorded in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)*, guided by its four principles:

- the right of all children to survival and development;
- respect of the best interests of the child as a primary consideration in all decisions relating to children;
- the right of all children to express their views freely on all matters affecting them;
- and the right of all children to enjoy all rights of the CRC without discrimination of any kind.

This publication was prepared by QFCC Youth Researchers.



The Queensland Family and Child Commission

The Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) is a statutory body of the Queensland Government. Its purpose is to influence change that improves the safety and wellbeing of Queensland's children and their families. Under the *Family and Child Commission Act 2014*, the QFCC has been charged by government to review and improve the systems that protect and safeguard Queensland's children.

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The QFCC values your feedback



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Background

The *Rights, Voices, Stories* project is how the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) is delivering recommendation 8 of *Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: Review of the foster care system*, which requires a more outcomes-based account of the experiences and perspective of children and young people who rely on child protection services to stay safe and well.¹

The review found that most child protection system data relates to activities occurring within the system, with very little focus on the experiences of the children and young people who interact with it. There is even less focus on their perspectives, what really matters to them, and whether they feel included and enjoy the same rights as their peers who live with their families.

The review argued that 'the QFCC is uniquely placed to seek and report on the views and experiences of children and young people and their families.' More outcomes-based reporting will make it easier for everyone involved with the system to understand how it is working, where there are issues and what needs further action.

What we are doing to deliver the recommendation

We are a group of 11 young people with lived experience of the Queensland child protection system. We were recruited by the QFCC to identify what matters to children and young people like us and should be monitored by the QFCC as part of the *Rights, Voices, Stories* project. We want to see a focus on outcomes for children, rather than outputs of the system. By measuring what matters to children and young people, we are putting children and their rights at the centre and empowering them to make a difference.

We believe children and young people should have a lead role in identifying their own needs and reflecting on the outcomes and experiences that matter to them.

We started by coming together for a 3-day workshop to discuss what matters most to children and young people involved with child protection. While each of our individual experiences were different, we all agreed that rights and accountability for upholding rights were the key messages that we wanted to communicate. This was the basis for the *Our rights matter* framework and its key themes:

- Identity
- Stability
- Health and wellbeing
- Feeling safe and loved
- Equity and fairness.

You can read more about our framework and how we developed it in the *Rights, Voices, Stories* project report: [Identifying what matters to children and young people involved with the Queensland child protection system](#).

This report describes the work we have done in 2021–22, and our priorities for 2022–23.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE
MUST BE SUPPORTED TO KNOW
THEIR RIGHTS & HOW TO
FIGHT FOR THEM

OUR RIGHTS MATTER

MY VOICE IS
THE SOURCE OF
TRUTH!

IDENTITY

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE
KNOW WHO THEY ARE, WHERE THEY
ARE FROM & HAVE A POSITIVE SENSE
OF SELF IDENTITY & HAVE SELF-ESTEEM.
THEIR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE
CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM DOES
NOT DEFINE THEM.

EARLY ACCESS TO
BIRTH CERTIFICATE &
OTHER IDENTIFYING
INFORMATION

PHOTOS
THROUGHOUT
LIFE

HELPED TO
UNDERSTAND
WHY THEY WERE
INVOLVED WITH
THE CHILD PROTECTION
SYSTEM

SUPPORTED TO
UNDERSTAND
CULTURE, &
THE CHILD/YOUNG
PERSON CHOOSES
IF/HOW TO BE
INVOLVED

FULL ACCESS
TO FILES

RESPECTED AS
AN INDIVIDUAL

SAFE TO EXPLORE
GENDER IDENTITY,
SEXUAL ORIENTATION
& SPIRITUALITY

STABILITY

WHILE THEIR LIVING ARRANGEMENTS
MAY CHANGE, CHILDREN & YOUNG
PEOPLE EXPERIENCE STABILITY IN
OTHER AREAS OF THEIR LIVES.
THEY ARE SUPPORTED TO MAINTAIN
CONNECTIONS THAT ARE
IMPORTANT TO THEM.

PROVIDE COMFORT
& SENSE OF CONTROL
OF OWN SITUATION

CONSISTENCY
OF HEALTH CARE
PROVIDER &
SUPPORT
SERVICES

CONSISTENCY OF
CASE MANAGEMENT

KEEP SENTIMENTAL
POSSESSIONS

DECISIONS TAKE
DEVELOPMENTAL
AGE & INSTABILITY
INTO ACCOUNT

FINDING & MAINTAINING
A HOBBY OR INTEREST TO
PROVIDE A SENSE OF
CONNECTION

STAY AT THE SAME
SCHOOL, EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION
& CARE PROVIDER

SUPPORTED TO MAINTAIN
DESIRED SOCIAL, SIBLING &
FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

CONSISTENT, TRUSTED
PEOPLE AVAILABLE FOR
ADVICE & SUPPORT

ADEQUATELY PREPARED
FOR CHANGES WITH AN
OPPORTUNITY TO INFLUENCE
DECISIONS

MAINTAINING A
CONNECTION TO
RELIGIOUS OR
CULTURAL GROUPS

HEALTH & WELLBEING

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE THEIR
MENTAL, PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL &
DEVELOPMENTAL HEALTH NEEDS,
ASSESSED, TREATED/SUPPORTED &
REVIEWED AT APPROPRIATE
INTERVALS, INCLUDING AT
THEIR REQUEST.

COMPREHENSIVE
HEALTH CHECKS
AT APPROPRIATE
INTERVALS WITH
EARLY INTERVENTION

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
PROVIDED TO ALL CHILDREN
& YOUNG PEOPLE UPON
ENTERING CARE

SUPPORTED TO HAVE
FUN, PLAY, PARTICIPATE
IN SPORT, RECREATION &
EXTRA CURRICULAR
ACTIVITIES

GUIDED PATHWAYS
TO ACCESS SUPPORT
SERVICES

RESPECTFUL
RELATIONSHIP
INFORMATION,
EDUCATION &
SUPPORT

APPROPRIATE
TREATMENTS PROVIDED
AT NO COST

CARE IS TRAUMA
INFORMED

SEXUAL HEALTH &
PUBERTY INFORMATION
EDUCATION & SUPPORT

PERSONAL HYGIENE
INFORMATION, EDUCATION
& SUPPORT

SAFE & LOVED

BEING SAFE & LOVED MEANS THAT A
CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON LIVES IN AN
ENVIRONMENT THAT CULTIVATES A
FEELING OF 'HOME' WHERE THEY FEEL
SECURE, KNOW THEY ARE HEARD &
UNDERSTOOD, ARE SUPPORTED & ARE
ABLE TO LEARN & GROW.

A SAFE PLACE THAT
FEELS LIKE 'HOME'

BASIC NEEDS
ARE MET
(SHELTER, FOOD
& CLOTHING)

SUPPORTED &
PROVIDED WITH
RULES, BOUNDARIES
& MORALS TO SUPPORT
HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

UNDERSTANDING OF
RACIAL IDENTITY &
STIGMA

FEEL & BE LOVED
BY PEOPLE THEY
CAN TRUST

LISTENED TO &
TAKEN SERIOUSLY

SAFE TO BE A
CHILD, ALLOWED
TO MAKE MISTAKES
& LEARN FROM THEM

SUPPORTED TO
STRIKE & REACH
GOALS & FULL
POTENTIAL

EQUITY & FAIRNESS

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE ARE
ENTITLED TO FAIR & EQUAL TREATMENT
IN THE HOME, WITH THE SAME RIGHTS,
EXPECTATIONS & ENJOYMENT AS ALL
(OTHER) CHILDREN WHILE SUPPORTED
TO PREPARE FOR LIFE AS AN
INDEPENDENT INDIVIDUAL

TREATED THE SAME
WAY AS OTHER CHILDREN
& YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE
HOUSEHOLD

SUPPORT TO
ACCESS DRIVING
LESSONS & OBTAIN
A LICENCE

TIMELY & APPROPRIATE
RESPONSES TO REQUESTS
FOR SUPPORT & TIMELY ACTIONING
OF THOSE REQUESTS

PROVIDED WITH THE
SAME RESOURCES &
EQUIPMENT AS
PEERS:

□ PERSONAL HYGIENE ITEMS
□ CLOTHING
□ SCHOOL UNIFORM
□ BOOKS
□ SPORTING GEAR

NO LIMITS ON ACCESS
TO TOOLS TO SUPPORT
YOUNG PEOPLE WHEN
THEY LEAVE CARE

LIFE SKILLS INFORMATION,
EDUCATION & SUPPORT

SYSTEMS & INDIVIDUALS WITHIN SYSTEMS ARE ACCOUNTABLE
FOR UPHOLDING THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN & YOUNG
PEOPLE, & ACTING WHEN THERE ARE ISSUES

ACCOUNTABILITY

THIS ISN'T LIMITED TO CHILD SAFETY OFFICERS, AS IT
INCLUDES MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS, COMMUNITY VISITORS,
EDUCATORS, CARERS & SERVICE PROVIDERS.

Youth researcher profiles



Brittany, 22

About me

I am currently based in Toowoomba as a Disability Support Worker and am studying Bachelor of Human Services majoring in Child and Family Studies. I have a black Toy Cavoodle named Willow.

Why I became a youth researcher

Having the chance to influence change is always an amazing opportunity. Without people speaking up, change does not happen.

What I've learned

I have learned a lot about myself personally and professionally while working on this project.

Rights, Voices, Stories has allowed me to put my passion for creating a better system for children and young people into action. I have learnt that my voice matters.



Caroline, 23

About me

I live on the Gold Coast and am currently studying a Bachelor of Psychological Science. I currently work in the out-of-home care sector.

In my down time, I enjoy spending time in nature and reading books.

Why I became a youth researcher

I believe that change needs to happen, and a big part of that change is hearing young people's perspectives to inform the changes needed. I am also passionate about creating a better life for little people and young adults who are currently engaged in the out-of-home-care sector.

What I've learned

Since becoming a youth researcher, I have learned a lot about myself and that I am able to work with others to create meaningful change.



Grace, 20

About me

I live in Logan and am currently studying suicidology. I'm also a Youth Advisor on the QFCC Youth Advisory Council, where I advocate for improving mental health support and access for young people.

When I'm not studying or working, you can find me taking naps in the sun with my cat.

Why I became a youth researcher

I wanted to amplify the voices of young people with out-of-home experiences, and back them up with my own experiences as a researcher and in non-traditional care.

What I've learned

Since becoming a youth researcher I've learned about how diverse the out-of-home care experience is, and further realised how important it is to include people with out-of-home care experiences in the development of policy and legislation that impacts them.



Lucas, 23

About me

I am an outgoing, talkative and easy to get along with small business owner. I love my family, especially my nieces and nephews. I also love my cars, and one of my hobbies is

working on my favourite—my 1987 Holden VL.

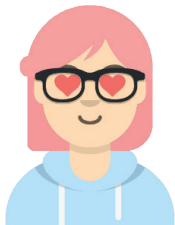
Why I became a youth researcher

I became a youth researcher to come together with others to make a change. I want people to stand up, listen and make change to get the outcomes that are needed.

What I've learned

The biggest thing I've learned is that you can come together as a group with people who have been in the same system as you but have very different experiences. I learnt a lot from the group of youth researchers and their time in the system.

Youth researcher profiles



Marie, 20

About me

I live in Hervey Bay, with my little pup Milo. I'm a fantastic support worker throughout the week and a nanny on the weekend. My favourite colour is teal. I love listening to music and going to the beach.

Why I became a youth researcher

I wanted to make a change and becoming a youth researcher is one of the best ways to do this. I wanted to use my lived experience to help others out.

What I've learned

I've learned that becoming a youth researcher isn't always easy, you learn a lot about yourself and a lot about others. But to make a difference you have to put in the hard work. I've learnt I'm not alone in all this, that there are others like me out there who sadly didn't have all good experiences either.



James, 21

About me

Hello, my name is James. I'm currently 21 years old. I use he/him pronouns and I'm a youth researcher!

Why I became a youth researcher

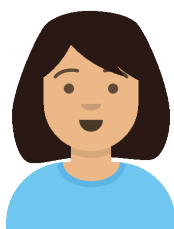
I am driven to help people any way I can. Life is hard when you have no support and when I was in out-of-home care, I had no help. I gritted my teeth in silence and thought that I wasn't allowed to ask for help because I wasn't like others. So, I believed if I had my say in this project, that the team and I could work together to make a difference.

What I've learned

The project focused on the issues that young people face during out-of-home care with a collective group of people who had similar yet different experiences. We wrote a report that outlined those issues we face. I've been very honoured working with my team in the Queensland Family Child Commission as it opened a pathway to let young individual's voices not only to be heard but acted upon. I am really proud of my team and this project. It is a big step forward for future generations and hopefully will see the change needed to improve out-of-home care.



Aimee



Janice, 19



Jesse, 24



Miriel, 24



Terry, 25



Our year in review

11 youth researchers

- 4 males, 7 females
- From Cairns, Rockhampton, Hervey Bay, Toowoomba, Gold Coast and the Greater Brisbane area
- Representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, CALD, disability and LGBTIQ+
- Diverse experiences in the child protection, youth justice, education, health, mental health and disability systems in Queensland.

Rights, Voices, Stories project report launched on 25 November 2021

18 government and non-government stakeholders attended launch

9 stakeholder meetings conducted post-launch to discuss access to data and information

Some of us have participated in training and professional development webinars and courses about:

- child protection system issues
- gathering and analysing qualitative data
- trauma-informed evaluation
- ensuring every participant in a focus group has an opportunity to share their voice and be heard
- how to manage our own biases when identifying issues and reporting on what we uncover in our research.

Report launch

In preparation for the release of the report, we put together a video about our experience working on *Rights, Voices, Stories*, developing the *Our rights matter* framework and why it is important to us.

We showed this video at the launch of our report. It's also available on the [QFCC website](#).

We launched the *Rights, Voices, Stories* project report at the State Library of Queensland on 25 November 2021. We invited key decision makers and stakeholders from across the sector to attend.

The purpose of the event was to provide an opportunity for us to share our work with stakeholders and seek their support for the next steps of the project.

People who attended the launch were split up into tables (one for each of the 5 themes of our framework) and discussed a theme at each table.

Stakeholders were asked to:

- identify existing information and data sources we could access to understand the issues
- better consider how they can support our work moving forward.

Some of the commitments stakeholders made to support us included:

- providing an opportunity to talk about our work and the project with their broader organisation
- supporting us to find relevant data and information related to the issues identified in our framework
- helping us recruit children and young people to participate in our project.

We have also had the opportunity to contribute to the work of stakeholders. For example, we have been asked to participate in youth forums to discuss new policies, practices and strategies, and to provide feedback on questions in surveys of children and young people.

Stakeholders from these organisations attended our report launch:

- Benevolent Society
- Children's Health Queensland
- CREATE Foundation
- Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs
- Department of Communities, Housing and the Digital Economy
- Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
- Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs Board, Queensland Health
- Mercy Community Services
- Office for Youth
- Office of the Public Guardian
- Public Trustee
- Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP)
- Queensland Police Service
- Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership
- UnitingCare

Stakeholder meetings

We have met with representatives of 9 stakeholder organisations who made commitments at the launch, including:

- Benevolent Society
- Office of the Chief Pratitioner, Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs
- Department of Communities, Housing and the Digital Economy
- Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
- Mercy Community Services
- Office of the Public Guardian
- Public Trustee
- Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP)
- Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership

These meetings have provided great opportunities to go into more detail about the issues we identified in our framework and to shape our thinking about what we will do next.

Stakeholders have often referred us to publicly available sources of information about our issues, as well as data we can request from their agencies. We have also been doing our own desktop research, looking at relevant reports and research papers.

The following pages describe some of the key topics we have been looking at this year for each of our 5 issues.



IDENTITY

At the launch of our report, the Director-General of the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs suggested that full access to case files was a topic we could work on together.

We raised this in our framework because:

- young people don't always know they can request their files
- it can be difficult to navigate the process of requesting files, particularly if a young person is advised to do it through a Right to Information request
- some information in case files can be redacted, so young people don't have a full understanding of why they were involved with the system
- young people might need support when reading their case files.

We have met with the Chief Practitioner of the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs to discuss access to case files. We talked about how young people sometimes receive inaccurate information about how to access their files, and what the Department is doing to fix this. We talked about the type of information young people might want to learn from their files.

There is information about the Time in Care Information Access Service on the [Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs website](#). People with a care experience can complete a free application for a Time in Care report and other documents held by the department, such as birth certificates and school reports. Young people in care or transitioning from care can talk to their Child Safety Officer about accessing this type of information without needing to complete a formal application.

This is something we are keen to talk to young people about in the next phase of the project so we can make practical recommendations to the Department about how to support young people accessing information about them in a way that they feel comfortable with.

We are also talking to the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs about how many 15- to 17-year-olds have a copy of their birth certificate. We are interested in this because young people need proof of identity to open a bank account and apply for a Tax File Number when they start working, and to apply for a Learner Driver Licence.

'Identity is broader than just involvement with the child protection system. Young people need to be respected and empowered to own their identity.'

RVS launch participant



STABILITY

Stability is about more than where you are living. From our own experiences, we know that children and young people living in out-of-home feel unsettled when their placements change, and that instability in where you live can lead to other unwanted changes, such as having to change schools, make new friends in the local area, and change doctors and other service providers.

We think it is important for children and young people to be involved in decisions about changes before they happen, and that where possible, children and young people are supported to keep other areas of their lives stable when their living arrangements change.

The Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs asked us for our feedback on a survey they are conducting with children and young people living in out-of-home care. The survey has lots of great questions about different aspects of young people's lives, including how involved they were in decisions made about them.

We think this is an important way to help young people feel a sense of control and stability, and we look forward to seeing the survey results. In the next phase of the project, we'd like to talk to young people about what stability means to them and get their ideas to improve stability.

We are also interested in children and young people being supported to maintain desired social, sibling and family relationships.

The Office of the Public Guardian Community Visitors raised 16,507 issues on behalf of children and young people in 2020–21.

Of these, 17% related to contact arrangements.

That is, the level of contact between a child or young person and their parents, siblings, or other significant people in their life.

Source: Office of the Public Guardian annual report 2020–21, p. 68.

Contact arrangements are the most common issues raised by children and young people with Community Visitors.

In these cases, the Office of the Public Guardian works with the relevant Child Safety Service Centre and carers to advocate for contact.

'Connection to others is a cornerstone of wellbeing for children and young people, particularly those who are most vulnerable and may be subject to multiple placements. Community Visitors work with children to obtain their views and wishes and ascertain whether their contact arrangements promote their rights.'

Office of the Public Guardian Annual Report 2020–21, p. 18.



HEALTH & WELLBEING

At the launch of our project report, attendees discussed how it can be difficult for young people to navigate the health system to find out about their medical histories, and the medical histories of their birth parents and other biological relatives. One of the attendees said, 'We make it difficult to find things out.'

It can be upsetting for a young person when they don't have this information when they are talking to medical professionals about their health and conditions which are hereditary. While maintaining privacy is important, it is equally important to provide young people with information about their own medical histories, and any hereditary conditions of their biological relatives, and to support them to understand what this information means for them and how they can manage their health and wellbeing.

Young people should be involved in any work health providers do to improve the design of processes to access medical information to make sure they are user friendly and meet the needs of young people.

Another topic we are interested in is mental health services. Our framework suggests that children and young people entering care should be provided with mental health services, as the research shows that this cohort has a high prevalence of mental health issues, and the experience of being removed from families and entering the child protection system can cause further trauma and distress.²

One third of respondents to the QFCC's *Growing up in Queensland 2020* youth survey said they have an emotional or mental health condition. Mental health was the most common response when asked what the most important issue was for young people, with 27% giving this answer.³

However, it can be hard to access mental health services when they are needed. Among the 370 respondents to the QFCC's 2022 community survey who had tried to access youth mental health services in the previous 3 years, 70 per cent (n=258) said they experienced barriers. The barriers included long waitlists (72%), not being able to afford services (49%), not knowing how to get a referral or mental health care plan (22%), not knowing about (20%) or having no services in the local area (19%), not having transport to get to services (13%), perceiving that the services were not culturally appropriate (11%) and having pre-existing relationships with service providers (7%).⁴

'Mental health issues can affect anyone, but young people involved with child protection are particularly vulnerable. They should have priority access to youth mental health services when they enter care, and any other time they need them.'

QFCC Youth Researcher



SAFE & LOVED

We have had a lot of interesting discussions this year about what we mean by feeling safe and loved.

Some of these conversations have been about expressing love through words or physical contact, like hugs, and how professional boundaries might interfere with this happening. But to us, feeling safe and loved is much bigger than this.

If a child or young person feels safe and loved, they will know that even if they mess up or get into trouble for something, they will still have a home to go to after school that day. They would not have to worry about getting a message saying they aren't going to live with that carer anymore.

Being listened to and taken seriously makes someone feel safe and loved, because it shows they are respected and that they have value.

We have also had some tricky conversations about how we can measure feeling safe and loved.

The Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs is asking children and young people in care who respond to their survey about whether they feel loved by someone. In the next phase of our project, we plan to talk to children and young people about what feeling safe and loved means to them, and what gets in the way of those feelings.

New Zealand's Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy talks about love in its vision. Its aims are that children and young people:

- are loved, safe and nurtured
- have what they need
- are healthy and happy.

Feeling loved is being measured by the percentage of young people who feel that they are loved by the people who look after or care for them on the 'WhatAboutMe?' Youth Health and Wellbeing Survey. Feeling safe is being measured by the percentage of young people who feel safe at school, at home, at work, online, in the community, where they live.

'Policies, procedures and rules get in the way of kids feeling safe and loved.'

RVS launch participant



EQUITY & FAIRNESS

When developing the *Our rights matter* framework, we talked a lot about feeling different from other kids, either in the households we were living in, or our friends at school. Many of us actively hid that we were involved with child protection services, because we didn't like being singled out. Sometimes the processes involved in getting permission for things can make children and young people in care feel singled out, and they can even miss out on things their peers are doing if these processes take too long.

We would like to talk to representatives from the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs and the Department of Education about the current processes for kids in care getting permission to go on school excursions and participate in other school activities and camps. We would then like to talk to children and young people about their ideas to improve processes, so they meet their needs.

Research by the CREATE Foundation has highlighted that young people would like more support with financial planning and obtaining a driver licence.

The Public Trustee attended the launch of our project report, and we had a follow-up meeting. We discussed non-government organisations working with children and young people involved with child protection who receive grant funding from the Public Trustee. We also talked about financial management services provided by the Public Trustee and exploring the child protection history of people referred by QCAT as they need help with financial decision making.

In Queensland, young learner drivers need 100 hours of supervised driving experience recorded in a logbook to be able to book a practical driving test and drive unsupervised. Having a driver licence helps young people to maintain social connections, but also access education and work opportunities. Many young people in care, particularly those living in residential care, have difficulty accessing an appropriate supervisor and vehicle to reach their 100 logbook hours.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads has a Community Road Safety Grants Scheme which provides funding for Learner Driver Mentor Programs. These programs provide a vehicle and supervisor to help disadvantaged young people achieve their 100 logbook hours. We would like to meet with representatives from Transport and Main Roads to talk about how many of their funded programs support young people in out-of-home care (or young people transitioning to independence from care), and opportunities for making young people involved with child protection a priority group for these programs.

'There is a joint responsibility across government, the NGO sector and the community to help young people get ready to prosper.'

RVS launch participant



Priorities for 2022–23

With the development of the *Our rights matter* framework, release of our project report and starting the process to gather existing data, we have completed the ‘development’ phase of our project.

In 2022–23 we move into the ongoing data gathering and reporting phase, and our priorities are:

- increasing awareness (among the sector and general community) about the experiences and perspective of children and young people involved in the child protection system
- gathering data and providing a source of information and evidence to inform QFCC’s oversight function
- recruiting more Youth Researchers to work on the project.



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