



Care Leavers Australia Network

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Care Leavers Services Welcomed but Redress is Still Essential

Care Leavers of Australia (CLAN) congratulates Berry Street and Relationships Australia on being awarded the right to provide new services for Victorians who grew up in orphanages, children's homes and foster care.

"This is a critical service which is long overdue," said CLAN President, Leonie Sheedy. "Many vulnerable children left in the hands of the Victorian Government, churches and charities were sexually abused, physically assaulted, exploited as cheap labour and denied what they most needed – their family, love and nurturing. When you harm a child you have a harmed adult. There are many hurt and damaged adults who desperately need these services."

The input of Care Leavers will be critical to the success of the new service. CLAN is keenly disappointed that, as the national peak support service provider and advocacy body, CLAN was not part of the winning submission.

"However, we are more than willing to co-operate with the new service and to provide expert consumer input into the implementation and ongoing monitoring of the facility. Care Leavers expect to be treated with sensitivity and respect and we will not tolerate anything less.

"We offer our expertise to the new service," continued Ms Sheedy, "to make sure it lives up to the standard Care Leavers require. We expect the new service provider to consult and work with the survivors of these appalling childhood experiences so that clients get what they need."

Concluding, Ms Sheedy said CLAN's Victorian members - numbering in their hundreds - will continue the struggle to get justice for the crimes committed against them as children in care.

"Those of us who had the misfortune to have the Victorian Government as our legal parents will not give up. The victims should not have to go to court to relive their tragic abuse. CLAN will continue to push for a State inquiry to make sure that past perpetrators are exposed and brought to justice and that a scheme for redress is introduced."

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