



*Exploring the intersections of
out-of-home care and
disability: Promoting a good
life for young people*

Professor Amy Conley Wright & Dr Susan Collings
Research Centre for Children and Families
28 February 2023



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY



We acknowledge the tradition of custodianship and law of the Country on which the University of Sydney campuses stand. We pay our respects to those who have cared and continue to care for Country.

Tree of Knowledge - pokerwork on kangaroo skin, Lynette Riley, 2010

<http://Sydney.edu.au/kinship-module>



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Overview

- Findings from the research literature on young people with disability in out-of-home care
- Workforce forum (1 December 2022): Messages from the out-of-home care and disability sectors
- Qualitative research with young people – recruiting now
- Developing collaborative practice-focused research on promoting self-advocacy

What do we know about children and young people with disability in out-of-home care?

- Over-representation in care but poorly recorded (In 2021, disability status was only available for 57% of children in OOHC in Australia)
- More likely to have significant needs, challenging behaviours, and placement in residential care
- Children with intellectual disability or autism are more likely to enter care than children without these disabilities
- Boys with disability are more likely than girls with disability to be in OOHC

Key concerns arising from research

- **Voluntary placement and family preservation** – need for supports when families are experiencing crisis including challenging behaviours and parental ill health
- **Placement stability** – longer stays in care and higher rates of placement disruptions necessitate special training, recruitment and supports for carers
- **Leaving care** – lack of access to accommodation, mental health supports, positive relationships
- **Health and education outcomes** - poorer outcomes, lower quality of life and more restrictive placements than other young people in care and young people with disability who are not in care

Workforce forum with disability and out-of-home care sector – Opportunities for practice improvement



Orientation and values

- Human rights perspective

Service delivery and leadership

- Data collection and information sharing
- Disability-positive service approaches

Children and Families

- Cultural safety
- Centring children's voices

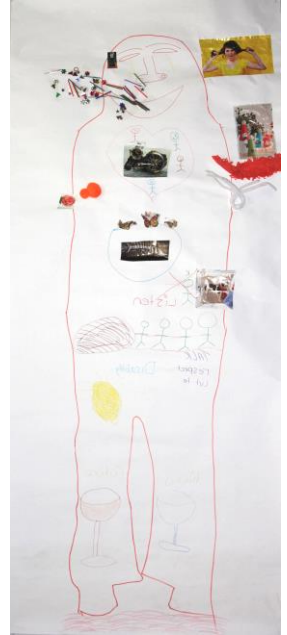
Next steps: Hearing from young people with disability

We are recruiting young people (ages 16-29) to share their experience of service integration and support during their time in care

To ensure this is safe and accessible, we will use arts-based method called body mapping

This will be facilitated by an arts therapist with a disability background

People respond to questions verbally and by adorning a life size outline of their 'body'.



Collaborative research on self-advocacy for youth with disability in out-of-home care



Voice



Choice



Rights

Developing practice-focused research with out-of-home care and disability organisations on how to promote self-advocacy, agency & empowerment

Connect with us

Research Centre for Children and Families
Sydney School of Education and Social Work
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Website:

<https://www.sydney.edu.au/arts/our-research/centres-institutes-and-groups/research-centre-for-children-and-families.html>

Email: rccf.research@Sydney.edu.au

Email to register for our mailing list