



# WE LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS VE

## Introduction to CARE

Children and Residential Experiences – or **CARE**– is an evidence based, trauma-informed model adopted by Life Without Barriers across our Out of Home Care programs. Developed by the *Bronfenbrenner Translational Research Centre at Cornell University*, the CARE model is research based and the evidence supports that CARE creates the conditions for positive change in children's lives.

CARE is designed to influence the way we think about working with children. It focuses on our relationships to help our children and young people in care to build new competencies and it will guide the interactions of our staff, and our foster carers, with children and their families.

This means:

- First and foremost, all of our decisions are based on what is in the *best interests for the children and young people in our care*.
- CARE guides our thinking and responses with children, carers, families and each other.
- CARE principles are incorporated into all of our processes, systems and program activities
- CARE highlights the importance of us planning with children, young people, carers and families for a better future.

***Everybody does well if they can.*** By working together we can create conditions for positive changes in the lives of children and young people. CARE gives us all a shared language and a shared understanding so we can foster consistency in our practice and work together towards a common goal.

## Essential Components

CARE is organised around six principles related to attachment, trauma recovery and ecological theory. The **six CARE principles** which underpin the model are:

### **RELATIONSHIP BASED**

Good relationships form the foundation of the work we do. Healthy child-adult developmental relationships support children to build capacity for future positive relationships.

### **DEVELOPMENTALLY FOCUSED**

Every child and family is unique and special. We individualise our services to every child and family's specific needs. We design our services, activities and opportunities for (and with) children with their developmental level in mind, to build their self-efficacy and self-belief.

### **FAMILY INVOLVED**

Families are important and know their children best. We value family input and recognise that the best outcomes are achieved when we are all working together and strengthening family relationships and connections. We want families to be a part of our team and participate as much as possible in the lives of the children and young people in our care.

### **COMPETENCY CENTERED**

We want children and young people to experience success. We want to help them develop whatever skills are necessary to live healthy, engaged lives in their communities. We work with

## CARE PRINCIPLES



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children and young people to help them to learn to solve problems, achieve personal goals and increase motivation to learn new skills.

## **TRAUMA INFORMED**

We know that many children and families have experienced trauma in their lives, including the trauma of living away from each other. We want to build supportive environments where children can feel safe, and activities, routines, expectations and interactions take into account the impact of overwhelming stress and trauma on a child's development.

## **ECOLOGICALLY ORIENTED**

Our surroundings can help us grow and change. We work to make our environments both emotionally and physically safe, supportive, friendly and caring for children and young people and their families to participate, grow and develop.

The goals of CARE include:

- Improving the relationship quality between staff, carers and children and young people
- Increasing the use of trauma-informed practices at Life Without Barriers
- Improving social and emotional functioning among our children and young people
- Improving contact and family involvement of children, young people and their families
- Reducing the number of high-risk behavioural incidents
- Increasing LWB's capacity to collect, analyse and use data in decision making

## **CARE helps us think differently about how we motivate and teach people new behaviours**

Change is never easy. CARE offers us new and different ways to create the conditions for change in children and young people, based on the CARE principles. For a child or young person to change, they must be able, willing and ready. We focus first on building healthy relationships that encourage the child to take risks in a supportive environment. We also know research shows that "internal motivation" works best. Internal motivation is when the person recognises the good feelings that come from meeting goals and making safe, healthy, choices. CARE gives us the tools to help people meet those goals.

## **Where can I find more information?**

Your local LWB team can provide you with additional resources and support on any specific areas about CARE you'd like further information on.

***We're in this together.*** Your feedback is important to us. Please tell us if you have an idea, feedback or think there is something we could be doing better. We want our team to work together to support our children and young people to be successful.

## **CARE PRINCIPLES**

relationship based | developmentally focused | trauma informed | family involved | competence centred | ecologically oriented