Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

Education Awards 2025

The Centre's inaugural Education Awards recognise the exceptional work carried out by educators, out-of-home-care caseworkers, and child protection practitioners who advocate for and champion care-experienced children and young people's educational needs and success.

The Centre is also proud to be making a separate award to a care-experienced young person who has demonstrated exceptional dedication and commitment to their education.

The Education Awards will be launched at the Centre's forum *Opening Doors, Changing Lives: Celebrating the power of education for care experienced children and young people.* The forum will be on Wednesday, 25 June.

Nominating a professional or young person is a fitting way to recognise and celebrate their outstanding achievements! Winners of the professional categories will each receive a $300 voucher towards professional development opportunities delivered by the Centre's Workforce Learning and Development Team. The winner of the Raising Expectations Award will receive a $1,000 bursary prize courtesy of the Allan and Gill Grey Foundation.

The nomination process is simple and won't take long to complete!

Nominations **can be submitted via a form here.**



cfecfw.org.au @CFECFW
03 9614 1577
Level 5/50 Market Street, Melbourne, 3000

Award judging criteria and eligibility

Powering Potential: Educator excellence award

For an educator who has demonstrated outstanding dedication and commitment to their role, leading to positive changes in the lives of children and young people in out-of-home care. Such an educator will demonstrate:

1. The ability to create a learning environment in which care-experienced students can thrive
2. Success in supporting care-experienced children and young people to have a voice and be heard
3. Success in supporting care-experienced children and young people to make informed choices about their education
4. Commitment to improving colleagues' understanding of trauma and its manifestations and how to respond effectively to students with care experience.

Eligibility

Open to any individual currently employed in a:

- Victorian Government funded kindergarten program OR
- Victorian public, private or independent primary or secondary school

Child Protection Education Champion Award

For a child protection practitioner who goes above and beyond to advocate for and support the educational needs of care-experienced children and young people. Such a professional demonstrates:

1. The ability to form strong and trusting relationships with care experienced children and young people
2. Advocacy for children and young people which elevates their voice and effects positive change in their education journey
3. The ability to develop collaborative and communicative relationships with the child/ young person's education setting
4. A commitment to the various agreements for children in out-of-home care (The Partnering Agreement/ Early Childhood Agreement for Children in out-of-home care), including driving/engaging with Student Support Group meetings and Individual Education Plans.

Eligibility

*Open to any individual currently employed in the:

- Department of Families Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection program

Out of Home Care Education Advocate Award

For an out-of-home care caseworker or associated professional who champions and advocates for the educational needs and success of children and young people in care. Such a professional demonstrates:

1. The ability to form strong and trusting relationships with care experienced children and young people
2. Advocacy for children and young people which elevates their voice and effects positive change in their education journey
3. The ability to develop collaborative and communicative relationships with the child/ young person's education setting.
4. The provision of practical supports to assist the young person with their educational success.

*Open to any individual currently employed by a:

- Victorian organisation providing foster care or residential care OR
- Victorian based contracted case management for children in out-of-home care, including kinship care programs

Raising Expectations Award

For a care-experienced young person (aged 12 to 28) who has demonstrated exceptional dedication and commitment to their education, overcoming challenges to unlock future learning opportunities. This young person demonstrates

1. Demonstrated commitment to education (including young people engaged in secondary education, vocational education and higher education). Please note: this criterion does not require a young person to have achieved high academic marks/grades. Instead, eligible young people will have shown commitment to their education journey despite any challenges they may have faced.

*Open to any individual who:

- Has a current or previous out-of-home-care experience (any type of care, for any length of time). This includes foster care, kinship care, residential care and some forms of lead tenant arrangements
- Has demonstrated commitment and dedication to their education (any level of education, including post-secondary)
- Is aged 12 to 28 years

General information

Who can nominate?

- Colleagues
- Caregivers
- Care-experienced young people (self-nominations are accepted)

Nomination form

Applicants must clearly specify the Award being applied for and complete all relevant sections on the nomination form.

Referees

One referee should be provided for each nomination. For the professionals' awards, this referee should be a supervisor who can endorse the exemplary conduct of the nominee. References for short-listed nominees will be checked.

Finalist notification

Finalists will be notified 1-2 weeks prior to the *Opening doors, Changing Lives Forum* via email. It is preferable that finalists are available to attend on the day - Wednesday 25th June 2025 (noting that the award ceremony commences in the afternoon session). Finalists will receive a **free ticket** to the event.

The awards

The 3 Professional Award Category Winners will each receive:

- A $300 voucher towards professional development opportunities delivered by the Centre's Workforce Learning and Development Team

The Raising Expectations Award winner will receive:

- $1,000 grant with support from the Allan and Gill Grey Foundation.

The decision

The judging panel will consist of care-experienced young people, who will judge winners based on how well the nomination meets the relevant award criteria outlined above. Depending on the volume of nominations, staff from the Centre's Education Team may shortlist nominations based off these criteria, to then go before the judging panel.

The Awards judging panel will consider the information provided on the nomination form and any supporting documentation supplied.

Privacy statement

Private and personal information supplied will be used by the judging panel to assist their decision making only. Information will not be disclosed or used for any other purpose without the express consent of the person to whom the information relates, unless otherwise required by law.

The Centre will seek permission to share photos of shortlisted nominees prior to the event, including using their images in promotional materials.

Please refer to the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare Privacy Policy at www.cfecfw.org.au for further information.

To apply

All nominations must be received by 11:59pm, **Sunday June 15, 2025**

The nomination forms can be accessed here.

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