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## Queensland children's advocate nationally recognised

A children's advocate from Queensland has been recognised for her role in improving outcomes for young people in out-of-home care and for helping change the child protection system to better meet their needs.

CREATE Foundation CEO, Jacqui Reed, has raised awareness of the needs of young people in out-of-home care, secured vital program funding and established programs to provide young people with the skills they need to lead successful independent lives.

Ms Reed is one of five finalists in the Social Impact category of the 2015 HESTA Community Sector Awards. The Awards recognise those in the community sector who made an exceptional contribution to social justice in Australia by enhancing the wellbeing of disadvantaged individuals and communities.

"Our programs help young people to develop self-confidence, leadership and public speaking skills that enable them to lead fulfilling lives," she said.

"We also conduct fun activities and camps for young people who may be socially isolated and run training sessions to better equip case workers to connect and assist young people."

Ms Reed was also responsible for the development of research methodologies to engage directly with young people and oversaw the first benchmarking survey measuring the impact of national standards in out-of-home care. Ms Reed is passionate about supporting young people to transition from care to independence successfully, and CREATE Foundation has highlighted the issues young people face during this transition process.

"Our organisation has developed a nationally consistent leaving care kit that aims to inform young people and provide valuable information to help young people transition successfully," she said.

Ms Reed has been involved in advocating for the rights of unaccompanied refugee children. The Northern Territory Government also selected her to be part of an external committee monitoring the response to the Bath Report, which looked into the territory's child protection system.

The Social Impact Award winner will receive \$5,000 in a **ME EveryDay** Transaction Account and a \$5,000 education grant. There are two other categories — Unsung Hero and Organisation. The Unsung Hero winner will also receive \$5,000 in a **ME EveryDay** Transaction Account and a \$5,000 education grant. The Organisation winner will receive a \$10,000 development grant, also courtesy of proud awards sponsor **ME**.

Finalists will be flown to Sydney for the awards dinner on 25 June 2015, where the winners will be revealed.

The HESTA Community Sector Awards are presented in partnership with the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) as part of the ACOSS National Conference 2015 and have been sponsored by ME since they started in 2012.

Learn more about the awards at [hestaawards.com.au](http://hestaawards.com.au)

**MEDIA CONTACT: Luisa Saccotelli 0400 149 901 or Aileen Muldoon 0419 112 503**

**HESTA is the super fund for health and community services, with more than 800,000 members and \$32 billion in assets.**