

MEDIA RELEASE

**Minister for Community Services
Minister for Women
The Hon. Linda Burney MP**



Tuesday, 29 September, 2009

HELP TO GET YOUNG PEOPLE 'ON THE ROAD'

Young people in foster care in NSW will receive help to obtain their driver's licence through \$30,000 of new funding from the NSW Government, Minister for Community Services Linda Burney announced today.

Ms Burney said 1,390 young people are eligible for this support.

"Learner drivers need many hours of driving practice with experienced drivers to develop the skills they need to be safe on the road," Ms Burney said.

"For many young people in care, securing the practice, resources and finances to get a licence, is a dream. This is because they don't have family support or networks."

Ms Burney said that sadly, educational, social and health outcomes are often poor for children and young people who have been in out-of-home care.

"By helping vulnerable young people obtain their driver's licence, this program will get them on the road to independence and open doors to career, education and social opportunities," she said.

"For young people, a driver's licence revs up their chances of getting a job.

"This funding from the NSW Government will go to CREATE to administer."

Jacqui Reed, Chief Executive Officer of the CREATE Foundation, a national peak body that supports young people in care, said that young people in care have highlighted the difficulties around getting a driver's licence.

"With support from the NSW Government, CREATE can now help young people get on the road," she said.

Michael, who is 18-years-old, grew up in care and relies on friends and public transport to get around.

"Being able to access paid driving lessons would help heaps because it means I wouldn't have to find someone to teach me," Michael said.

"Paying for lessons is out of my reach. Having a licence would open the door to full-time employment, as well as being able to go and see family and friends when I want to."

Applications for the driving program will open in October. For an information pack, email CREATE Foundation at nsw@create.org.au or visit www.create.org.au.

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