



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**Immediate Release**  
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## **One more hurdle for Children in Care**

In Queensland, there are more than 7900 children and young people in care. Compared to other young people, children and young people in care have:

- Higher rates of earlier onset of sexual activity;
- Higher rates of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and earlier pregnancy;
- Higher rates of sexual abuse; and
- Less recorded access to sexual health services and information.

To begin to address these concerns, Family Planning Queensland and the Department of Communities - Child Safety Services launched the *Children and Young People in Care: Sexual Health Matters* project last year. The project is now drawing to a close.

On June 8, Family Planning Queensland (FPQ) is convening a forum for some of Brisbane's primary stakeholders with key responsibility for young people in care, including foster and kinship carers, child protection professionals and service providers including those in the fields of education and health. FPQ is hoping that this forum will enable key players to discuss and map out future responses to the needs of children in care.

Project Officer Georgina Livingstone asserts: "Young people in care must have access to solid information to make safe choices about their sexual health and relationships. These young people are often forgotten, yet they are the very young people who are most vulnerable and in need of support."

The training and new resources developed as a result of the year-long project have only just begun to address the needs of children and young people in care.

"Much more work remains to be done if children and young people in care are not to be left carrying the responsibility for their own sexual health and relationship needs with only the ad hoc support of well-intentioned carers and workers." states Ms Livingstone.

Family Planning Queensland urges all government and non-government child protection partners to maintain their focus on assessing and meeting the sexuality and relationship needs of children and young people in care.

For more information or to learn more about the *Sexual Health Matters* project, please contact Cecelia Gore, Director of Education and Communication Services on 0411 674 892.

[www.fpq.com.au](http://www.fpq.com.au)

Promoting Healthy Sexuality.