

Media statement

**24 September 2015**

# “These are our children too” – Children’s Commissioner

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Children’s Commissioner Dr Russell Wills today welcomed the interim report from the Modernising Child, Youth and Family Expert Panel.

“The report makes sad reading, but sets out a promising platform for the next stage of reform - with children at the centre,” said Dr Wills.

“Many of the findings closely reflect what my Office found and reported on last month in *State of Care* 2015 and what others in the sector have been saying for some time.

“Children in the care and protection system have been let down. But this new report makes an important point: we all have a part to play in improving the outcomes of these children. I agree it is not the responsibility of Child, Youth and Family alone.

“Child, Youth and Family social workers, while integral, are just part of these kids' lives. Schools, families, communities, charities, businesses, health providers and other government agencies have the power to change the lives and outcomes for these children. These are our children too.

“What Child, Youth and Family can and must do is listen to children and young people. They can make sure the child’s voice is heard. They can communicate with the other services involved in a child’s care. They can measure and publicly report on care and protection outcomes. They can plan to improve.

“And Government can invest in these children; in young people leaving care, in caregivers, in social workers and their leaders and the systems that support practice. That investment can’t come soon enough.”

“No child should need more than one referral. No child should be abused again, by their parents or while in care. But for this to happen, we all need to do our bit.”

Ends.