



MEDIA RELEASE  
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## THOUSANDS OF SOUTH AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN & ADOLESCENTS RUNNING AWAY FROM STATE CARE EVERY YEAR HIGHLIGHTS “CRITICAL GAPS” WITHIN THE SA CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM.

Lauren Novak’s recent article, ‘Very traumatised: child runaways fleeing care at staggering rate’ in *The Advertiser*, 17 October, reveals the troubling reality of thousands of children running away from state care each year.

Nadia Berginetti, The Reily Foundation’s CEO said: *“While a significant number of children are returned to care, the fact that so many repeatedly leave care highlights deep problems within the South Australian child protection system.”*

*“While we recognise the efforts of Child Protection Minister Katrine Hildyard and the Department for Child Protection, we also acknowledge the critical gaps that persist. Initiatives like SAPOL’s Blue Rose Project are helpful and making an impact, but without a comprehensive approach that includes therapeutic care and, crucially, involving the voices of families, we risk continuing this cycle,”* said Mrs Berginetti.

Research shows that involving families in child protection decisions leads to better outcomes for children. According to the Australian Institute of Family Studies, family-inclusive decision-making can reduce the time children spend in out-of-home care and increase the likelihood of reunification by up to 25%.

The Reily Foundation works directly with families who have been through the system, and understands the importance of including their voice in shaping decisions about their children’s futures. Reily’s highly experienced social workers provide free support and education to parents – listening to them and empowering them so they are better able to make child-focused decisions and choices.

Mrs Berginetti said: *“Children are not just statistics – they deserve to be heard and supported in safe environments that promote healing, not inflict further trauma. The Reily Foundation remains committed to advocating for systemic change that enables family involvement in decision-making throughout the child protection process.”*



### About The Reily Foundation

The Reily Foundation Incorporated is an independent, not-for-profit organisation offering free education and advocacy support to parents navigating the Child Protection System in South Australia. We are committed to working towards ongoing connection and reunification of families and building parenting capacity by offering practical, solution-focused support, and working with parents to identify and overcome barriers that hinder their ability to care for their children.

### Contact

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