



ChilOut

children out of immigration detention
www.chilout.org

ChilOut - Children Out of Immigration Detention

<http://www.chilout.org/>

December 2015

Thank You from ChilOut!

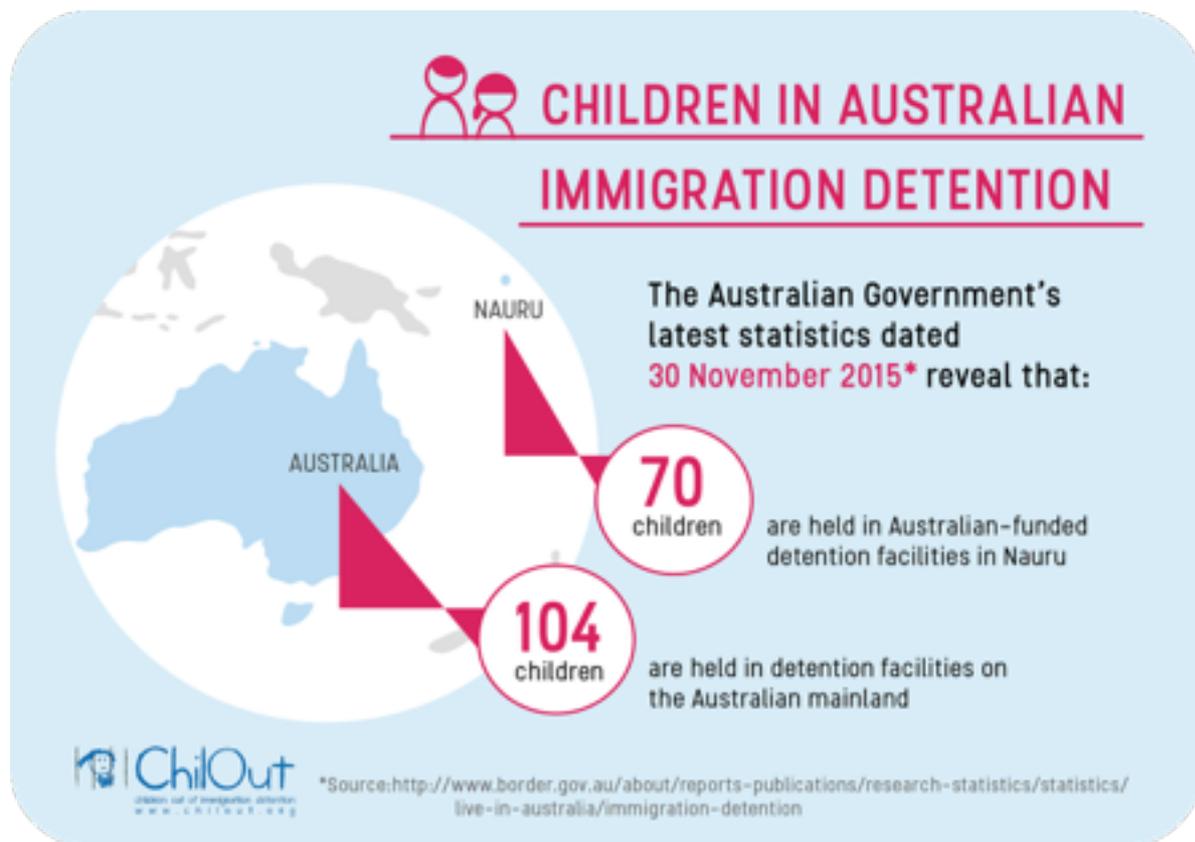
As we near the end of 2015, we want to take this opportunity to thank all of our wonderful supporters. As a result of your generosity and support, our campaigning and community outreach has been bigger than ever this year and, importantly, the number of children in detention is less than it was a year ago. Without you, we would not have been able to continue and expand our vital work fighting for the rights of children in immigration detention. We hope that you continue to support us in 2016 and that together we achieve our goal of ending the arbitrary and prolonged detention of children who come here seeking Australia's protection.

We also want to say a huge thank you to everyone who attended our comedy fundraiser nights in Melbourne on 29th November and Sydney on 17th December. Both nights were a huge success with packed theatres and non-stop laughs thanks to our talented comedians. We especially want to acknowledge and thank Terri Psiakis and Nadine von Cohen, two long-standing and very dedicated ChilOut supporters, who took the initiative to organise these fundraising events and spent long hours making sure each night was an enormous success. Our sincerest thanks also to the Howler Theatre in Melbourne, the Giant Dwarf Theatre in Sydney, and all of our hilarious comedians whose generosity meant that all the proceeds from the events were donated directly to ChilOut.

Help Us Make 2016 the Year All Children Are Out of Detention

ChilOut is a very small community organisation and relies on the generosity of its committed volunteers and supporters to carry out its work. With the help of donations received over the past year, we have been able to expand our Youth Ambassadors Program, reinvigorate our schools speaking program and conduct greater numbers of meetings and follow-up communications with politicians seeking to convince them to bring about law and policy reform. However, we still have a long way to go until all children are released from detention. We also want the law changed so that children can never again be locked up indefinitely. We need your help to continue this work in 2016. Please support us by making a donation at www.chilout.org/donate. All donations over \$2 are fully tax-deductible.

Current Situation for Children in Detention



In last month's newsletter, we informed you about the Bill initiated by Senator Hanson-Young that was passed in the Senate and mandated the release of all children from detention on the Australian mainland. However, the Bill needed to be passed by the House of Representatives to be made law and, unfortunately, when Federal Parliament broke for Christmas the Bill had still not been debated or passed in the House of Representatives. This means that the children who remain in immigration detention centres in Australia will not be released before Christmas. Christmas is an especially hard time for the children in detention. Though most children look forward to the holidays, for children in detention it is a part of the year they dread. Usually children in detention attend school during the day, but the holiday break means that they cannot leave the detention centres at all. Since Border Force took over this year, we have been told that children are not even allowed to leave detention centres for short day excursions, which were previously run by staff from local community groups.

Campaign to Mark the 25th Anniversary of Australia Ratifying the Child Rights Convention

17 December 2015 marked 25 years since the Australian Government ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which sets out the basic rights that all children around the world are entitled to. Children in immigration detention are denied a staggering number of these rights and Australia is failing in its obligations to these children. ChilOut used an infographics campaign via social media to mark this anniversary and highlight how children who come to Australia seeking asylum are

having their rights denied to them by the Australian Government every day. The campaign featured the voices of children who are currently in detention. For those who don't follow ChilOut on social media, you can see all the infographics from this campaign on our [website](#).

Applications Now Open for ChilOut's 2016 Youth Ambassador Program!

The year is nearly over which means ChilOut is searching for its 2016 Youth Ambassadors. Our annual Youth Ambassadors Program is an exciting and unique opportunity for young people aged between 16 and 24 to speak up against the detention of children. The Program involves former refugees and Australian-born young people coming together to advocate for the rights of children in immigration detention. Past Youth Ambassadors have visited detention centres, communicated with children in detention, given presentations about the issue at schools and community events, spoken to the media, and met with politicians to ask them to bring about positive change. This year's Youth Ambassadors have been incredibly active and inspiring – you can learn more about their work by watching this short [video](#).

At the start of the Program, all Youth Ambassadors participate in a two-day training course in Sydney. If this sounds interesting to you or someone you know, please [take a look](#) at our website for more information. Applications close on Friday 19 February 2016 and all interested young people are invited to complete a short application form (located on our website) and submit a 1-2 page CV. If you have any questions about the Program or would like to submit an application, please email us at: team@chilout.org. The Program is proudly supported by the Planet Wheeler Foundation, Australian Communities Foundation (B B & A Miller Fund) and Mercy Foundation.

Intern at ChilOut in 2016

ChilOut is looking for a university student to intern with us 1 to 2 days per week, commencing in early 2016. The successful applicant will work under the supervision of ChilOut's Campaign Coordinator at ChilOut's office in the Sydney CBD and will support our work to end child detention. We ask that you commit to working with us for a minimum of three months. Internship activities will include research, communications, contributing to our campaigns, helping to organise events, and drafting papers and submissions. This is a great opportunity to make a real difference to the lives of vulnerable children and would suit a student who is seeking to pursue a career in international or national advocacy work, community engagement, communications, social justice, human rights and/or law. If you are interested in applying, please email a copy of your CV and a cover letter explaining your interest to: team@chilout.org.

Again, we would like to thank all of you for your generous support over the past year and we wish you and your families a joyful holiday period and a safe and peaceful new year!