



Become a foster or kinship carer

All children and young people have a right to be safe, valued and educated, and to live at home with a caring family.

Foster and kinship carers open their hearts and homes to children and young people who are unable to live at home with their own families because of abuse or neglect.

Foster carers care for children and young people of different ages, cultural and religious backgrounds. They may provide care for one or two nights, a few months, or even years depending on the child or young person's situation and the carers' capacity.

Who can be a carer?

Anyone over the age of 18 years can apply to become a foster or kinship carer. We need carers who are male or female, single or a couple, married or in a defacto relationship. Many different people are needed as carers so we can best match the needs of children and young people needing care.

What are the different types of care?

There are different types of care that you can provide for a child or young person, and you can choose the level of commitment you are able to make based on your own family situation.

Foster carer — a foster carer is approved by Child Safety to care for a child or young person in their own home for short or long periods of time.

Kinship carer — a kinship carer is a relative, family member or another significant person in a child or young person's life who is approved by Child Safety to care for them in their own home.

Other types of care include respite care, emergency care and intensive foster care. For more information about the different types of care, go to www.qld.gov.au/becomefosterkinshipcarer

Do you want to become a carer?

Bringing other people's children into your family can be very rewarding but it may not always be easy. Becoming a foster or kinship carer is a big decision for any family and it's important to talk with your family and consider the changes and challenges involved in caring for a child or young person.

What is the role of the Queensland Government?

The Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (Child Safety) is the lead child protection agency in Queensland and is required by law to ensure children are safe from abuse, neglect and harm in their homes.

The *Child Protection Act 1999* allows Child Safety to protect children and young people at risk of abuse or neglect by finding safe and caring places for them to live, depending on their needs.



How do you become a carer?

There are a number of steps to becoming a foster or kinship carer. You'll need to complete an application form and undertake an assessment and some training before you are approved by Child Safety as a carer.

During the assessment, many things are considered including your family situation and the people living in your home, personal history checks and the reasons why you want to become a carer. A household safety study and criminal history checks are undertaken, and you and your adult household members will need to have blue cards.

How are carers supported?

If you become a foster or kinship carer you'll be supported in many ways. Community-based foster and kinship care services and Child Safety will work with you to meet the needs of children in your care.

You can ask for assistance from Queensland Foster and Kinship Care, an organisation that represents and supports foster and kinship carers. Carers also receive support from local carers, other families and their community.

Allowances and benefits

Foster and kinship carers receive a fortnightly caring allowance to help with the costs of caring for children in their home. Respite carers receive the allowance in proportion to the amount of time they provide care for a child.

This covers basic household expenses, food, clothing, gifts, pocket money and entertainment for children in care. An additional allowance may be provided for children with high, complex or extreme support needs. Other reimbursements for child related costs are also available to carers.

Carers may also be eligible for Commonwealth Government benefits, such as the Family Tax Benefit Part A, Family Tax Benefit B, Child Care Subsidy, Parental Leave Pay or Parenting Payment. For more information, call Centrelink on 13 61 50 or visit www.servicesaustralia.gov.au.

Who do you contact for more information?

Call the Foster Carer Recruitment Line on 1300 550 877.

Visit www.qld.gov.au/becomefosterkinshipcarer to find out more about the different types of care and how to become a foster or kinship carer.

The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) is an interpreting service for people who do not speak English. Call 131 452 or visit www.tisnational.gov.au