

# Foster and kinship care

## *Allowances and benefits*



### Commonwealth Government benefits

As a foster or kinship carer, you may be eligible for the Commonwealth Government benefits. The Family Tax Benefit Part A is the most common payment to help families with the cost of raising children. It is income-tested and is paid per child. Family Tax Benefit B provides extra financial assistance for single income or sole parent families.

You may also be eligible for the Child Care Benefit, Maternity Payment or Parenting Payment.

Contact your nearest Centrelink office for further information or the Family Assistance Office on 13 6150 or visit [www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)

For more information contact your local child safety service centre or call the foster care recruitment line on **1300 550 877** or visit [www.childsafety.qld.org.au](http://www.childsafety.qld.org.au) You can also contact Foster Care Queensland on **(07) 3268 5955**.

## About allowances

Foster carers and kinship carers receive a fortnightly caring allowance, which is a contribution toward the costs of caring for the child or young person placed with you by the Department of Child Safety. It covers items such as food, clothing, household provisions, gifts, pocket money, entertainment and other everyday costs of caring for a child.

The allowance is not considered a 'payment' for caring and it is not a source of income. It is a reimbursement toward the real costs of providing care. Respite carers receive the allowance in proportion to the amount of time they provide care for a child.

The caring allowance is not subject to tax and should not be cited as income for any purpose, such as yearly tax returns, applications for Commonwealth benefits or when applying for loans from financial institutions.



## Other financial support

In addition to the foster and kinship care allowance, financial support is available at the start of a child's placement with you, when costs are likely to be high. A one-off start-up allowance is provided to carers when a child stays in a placement for five consecutive nights or more.

Carers also receive a one-off establishment payment when a child comes onto a finalised Child Protection Order. An additional allowance is provided to carers if the child is assessed as having high support needs.

Assistance may also be available to carers for reimbursement of substantial additional costs when they form part of the case plan for the child in care. It is important that these costs are approved by the manager of your child safety service centre before you purchase goods or services.

Approved foster carers and kinship carers are also eligible to receive the Foster Carer Card. The Foster Carer Card assists carers in their day-to-day caring duties by providing access to a range of business discounts throughout Queensland.

### Payment schedule as at 1 January 2009\*

Carer payments (as at January 2009*)	Frequency of payment	0 - 5 years	6 - 10 years	11+ years
Fortnightly caring allowance	fortnightly	\$401.91	\$432.98	\$470.67
Start-up allowance	one-off	\$86.60	\$86.60	\$86.60
Establishment payment	one-off	\$432.98	\$432.98	\$432.98
High support needs allowance	fortnightly	\$144.00	\$144.00	\$144.00
Regional remote loading (10 per cent)	fortnightly	\$40.19	\$43.30	\$47.07

\* All payments and allowances are indexed in January each year in line with the consumer price index (CPI).