



Information for support carers

What support will I receive?

There are a range of people and services you can turn to for guidance and support. In addition to the Department of Child Safety, there are non-government foster and kinship care services and networks of carers that meet to share experiences and support each other.

As a support carer you can also seek assistance from Foster Care Queensland – a non-government organisation that supports carers.

Where can I get more information?

For more information contact your local child safety service centre or call the foster carer recruitment line on **1300 550 877** or visit **www.childsafety.qld.gov.au**

Foster Care Queensland (FCQ) is a community organisation open to all foster and kinship carers. FCQ is committed to informing, supporting, representing and advocating for carers and the children in their care. FCQ can be contacted on **(07) 3268 5955**.

PeakCare is a peak body for community agencies working with foster and kinship carers. If you are interested in knowing if there is a community agency in your local area that works with carers, contact **(07) 3368 1050**.





What is support care?

Support care is an essential respite for foster and kinship carers when they need a break from caring, time to deal with personal matters or recover from illness. Support care is also an important respite for children and young people in care, giving them opportunities to extend their assistance network.

Support carers provide short periods of care, either through regular ongoing planned visits, or in emergency situations that temporarily impact on the carer's ability to provide care.

Support care is suitable for people who can provide short-term care but may not be able to provide ongoing day-to-day care for a child. It can be for a few hours, a weekend or even a few weeks. Support carers determine their own availability, for example, weekends or holidays.

Wherever possible, regular support care should be provided by the same person. Ideally, this will be someone the child already has an existing relationship with, or someone they can develop trust and a connection with.

What allowances do I receive?

Support carers receive a caring allowance for each child or young person placed with them by the Department of Child Safety. The allowance is not considered a 'payment' for caring and it is not a source of income. The allowance is paid in proportion to the number of days or weeks that you care for the child.

You may also be eligible for Commonwealth Government benefits such as the Family Tax Benefit A and/or B, Child Care Benefit, Maternity Payment or Parenting Payment.

What is the approval process for support carers?

Support carers undertake the same training, assessment and approval process as foster and kinship carers. Training gives carers an understanding of the experiences of children in care and how this impacts on their needs. It also helps new carers gain the knowledge and skills to better meet the needs of children in care.

After completing training, prospective carers participate in an assessment process. As part of this assessment process the prospective carer's family and other adult household members, personal history and motivation for becoming a support carer are considered. Support carers and their adult household members are also required to have a 'blue card'.

The Department of Child Safety is responsible for approving all suitable support carers.

What will I need to do as a support carer?

As a support carer you will work with foster and kinship carers, Department of Child Safety staff and non-government foster and kinship care service staff as part of an important team of people committed to providing a safe, stable and supportive environment for the child or young person in care. It is important that children maintain contact with their families so they can develop a sense of their personal history and, where possible, return home.

You will need to support the involvement of the child's family and friends in their life and respect the child's cultural heritage when making day-to-day decisions about their care.