

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## Labor commits to tripling educational support for struggling young carers

“Senator Claire Moore’s announcement in Melbourne yesterday that a Labor Government would triple the funding for the Young Carer Bursary Programme is most welcome,” said CEO of Carers Australia, Ara Cresswell.

“A great many young carers of family members with disabilities, chronic illness, mental illness, or who have serious substance abuse problems, face multiple challenges in their young lives. Many come from single parent, low income households. The additional responsibilities of providing both physical and emotional support to a family member in need, as well as attending to the needs of siblings and helping to keep the household running, leaves young carers time poor, stressed out and socially isolated from their peers.

“Their education – seriously affecting their future prospects - is often the first casualty of these combined challenges.

“The Young Carer Bursary Programme, which has been running for two years, is designed to provide financial assistance to young carers to address at least one of their problems – struggling with the costs of participating in education on top of their other expenses.

“In 2016 over half the Bursary recipients had been caring for more than five years, nearly 80% were the main carer of a family member, and a third were providing such care for more than 40 hours a week.

“The grants of up to \$3000 can be used to best meet the needs of successful applicants. The grants allow a young carer to do things like access the internet from home, to meet the costs of transport to and from study, to purchase books or other resources, to participate in school excursions, and to get additional tutoring where their education has fallen behind as a result of the varied stresses of providing care.

“Unfortunately the current funding available was only able to support a third of eligible applicants (333 young carers) in 2016. Labor’s commitment will do much to address the shortfall and improve the life prospects of these young people.”

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