

MEDIA RELEASE



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How you can support young carers this National Carers Week

Some young people find themselves in circumstances that call for them to deal with difficult and complicated responsibilities. Young carers are people under the age of 25 who have obligations to care for others, often towards friends or family members. While there were [235,000 young carers](#) in Australia in 2018, many young people do not realise that they are young carers, seeing their caring role as part of their relationship with the person they support. This lack of recognition can make it harder for young carers to be supported by the people around them.

The experiences of young carers are valuable, unique, diverse and multifaceted. [Research](#) into young carers shows how common it is for them to struggle with competing responsibilities towards their education and the needs of others. This can be a significant source of stress, to the detriment of their social and psychological development. People around young carers can help by creating environments that support them.

- **Employers and managers** - Like anyone else, young carers need to be able to pursue careers and livelihoods that let them participate in other aspects of their lives. However, only [48.1% of carers](#) felt that they could discuss their care responsibilities with their supervisors when needed. This proportion was lower amongst young carers. Do your staff know that they can be open with you about their circumstances without risking their hours or job security? Employers can support young carers by ensuring they can accommodate diverse needs amongst staff, including offering arrangements such as flexible hours, rostering in-advance or with minimal last-minute changes, and working from home.
- **Teachers and educators** - Education is something that people manage alongside their other responsibilities in life. It is estimated that [over 5%](#) of people aged 15-24 assume care responsibilities, which often begin earlier than the teen years. Young carers often face high levels of [pressure](#) on their time, mental health and emotional capacity. Educators can help relieve this by ensuring that staff can [recognise young carers](#), facilitating access to supports such as the [Young Carer Bursary](#) and [Young Carers Network](#), and accounting for flexibility on matters such as deadlines and attendance that can be affected by care responsibilities.
- **Young people** - Carers need good support networks around them. If any of your friends or loved ones are young carers, you can help by being part of that network. That might look like making sure they know that they can talk to you about their home life without fear of judgement. Or you might plan to socialise in ways that work with people's care responsibilities, whether that means spending time at the carer's house so that they can have friends around while being available to provide support, or planning outings that give carers a break.



- **Families** - If you're a parent and you have a disability, mental health or chronic condition, or care responsibilities for other family members, your children could be young carers. Being aware of supports for young carers such as those available through the [Carer Gateway](#) or [state-based carer organisations](#) and can also assist with this, as can encouraging everyone in the family to look after their own wellbeing as well as that of the person receiving care.

This National Carers Week, events will be held all over the country to support, celebrate and advocate for carers from Sunday 16 to Saturday 22 October 2022. There are millions of reasons to care about carers, and millions of ways to get involved in #nationalcarersweek. Find out more at www.carersweek.com.au

About Carers Australia and the National Carer Network

Carers Australia is the national peak body representing Australia's carers, advocating to influence policies and services at a national level. The National Carer Network, which consists of Carers NSW, Carers ACT, Carers Victoria, Carers Tasmania, Carers SA, Carers WA, Carers NT, and Carers Queensland, deliver a range of essential carer services across states and territories.

About carers

Carers Australia uses the term 'carer(s)' as defined by the Commonwealth [Carer Recognition Act 2010](#). The term should not be used loosely and without context to describe a paid care worker, volunteer, foster carer, or a family member or friend who is not a carer.

An informal, unpaid carer is a family member or friend caring for someone who has a disability, chronic or life-limiting illness, is frail aged, has a mental illness, alcohol or other drug related condition. Informal carers are distinct from paid support workers who are colloquially also called carers but are under a contract of employment with remuneration and other benefits of employment. Conversely, family and friend carers perform their caring duties without remuneration.

For media enquiries please contact Alison Brook, CEO of Carers Australia, on (02) 6122 9955.