

MEDIA RELEASE



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Welcome additional support for young carers undertaking study

Carers Australia welcomes the Australian Government's announcement of nearly \$10 million of increased funding to support young carers to continue their education.

Auspiced by Carers Australia, the Young Carer Bursary Program offers financial assistance to carers aged 12 to 25 to help with educational needs and resources and reduce their need to undertake paid work at the same time as their study and caring duties. The bursary program has supported more than 9000 young carers to date.

"More than half of Australian carers experience financial stress each year, such as being unable to pay bills on time, going without meals or having to ask for financial assistance," said Carers Australia CEO Alison Brook.

"Our 2022 Carer Wellbeing Survey revealed that these rates are even higher for young carers, who are juggling their studies with their caring duties, often in addition to paid work."

"Young carers who have accessed the program tell us the bursaries have helped to relieve the financial pressures they experience so they can focus on their studies, develop academic and workforce-ready skills, balance competing demands, and also improve their emotional, social and mental wellbeing."

The additional Australian Government funding means Carers Australia can offer nearly 60% more bursaries, with plans to support 1592 young people in the 2023 and 2024 program rounds.

"It also means we can raise the annual funding amount to \$3768, an increase of around 25%, which is essential given the cost-of-living pressures impacting carers. This is the first bursary payment rise since the program started in 2014," Ms Brook said.

Current 2023 bursary recipients will also receive the higher level of funding, and Carers Australia will be able to provide bursaries to applicants who were approved during the 2023 round but were not allocated a place in the program due to the limited funding then available. Carers Australia will contact these young carers to inform them of the increased funding and provide advice on obtaining the additional funds.

Applications for the 2024 Young Carers Bursary Program can be submitted from 18 July to 12 September 2023.

To be notified when the program opens, young carers can subscribe to our [Young Carers Network mailing list](#) or our [Carers National News e-newsletter](#).

Testimonials from former Young Carer Bursary Program recipients:

- “...when I was in Pakistan[,] I did not get the opportunity to study for many reasons. Firstly my Dad did not earn a lot of money for my school fees. Another reason is that there were not a lot of schools for girls to study, and was also too dangerous to study. I am very lucky to live in a wonderful country and have a wonderful opportunity to study. My promise is that I will always try my best and give all my ability to my studies and work.”
- “I am a young carer for my mum who has mental health issues, grandma who has a number of medical issues and two young brothers with autism. Receiving the bursary greatly helped me achieve my goal of completing year 12, it paid for my school fees, books and a myki card. I truly do not believe that I would of graduated without the bursary.”
- “My stepfather was diagnosed with motor neuron disease in 2018 and has deteriorated rapidly over the last few years. During this time, I have progressed from study as a HSC student to university. I was really conflicted, the need for study and to get a job was high, however, the progressive nature of his disease meant that time wasn’t on my side. The Young Carer Bursary allowed me to buy educational resources like an iPad and textbooks. It reduced financial pressure on my family, while allowing me to continue care and spend meaningful time with him.”

Full testimonials are available on the [Young Carer Network website](#).

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

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

For media enquiries please contact Angel Hellyer, National Director Communications, on 0428 948 415 or (02) 6122 9900.