

MEDIA RELEASE



One in six young Australians are carers

Young Australians find themselves a year behind in schooling, socially isolated, and sit behind their peers when it comes to future career opportunities – all because they care for a loved one.

More than 16% of teenagers in Australia are acting in a caring role for someone with a long-term health condition or chronic illness, according to a [new survey](#) from The Australian National University (ANU).

The [survey](#) asked 16–17-year-olds from across the country about their caring responsibilities.

Lead author Professor Ben Edwards said unlike in the adult population, where females are far more likely to be in a caring role, just over half (51%) of young carers are male.

“A significant percentage of those surveyed who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander also reported being a young carer,” Professor Edwards said.

“Around 32% of young carers also identified as having a disability.”

Professor Edwards and his team also asked the cohort of young carers about their future career and study aspirations.

“Previous research has reported that because of their caring responsibilities, young carers’ educational outcomes are compromised, so we felt this part of the survey was significant,” he said.

“71% of young carers aspire to complete at least one type of higher education. The majority – 60% – want to study at university. While one in 10 want to go to TAFE or complete an apprenticeship. It’s important for us to consider how many of them are able to realise these goals, and what support they might need to do so.”

Carers Australia CEO Annabel Reid said young carers face unique challenges that often go unseen, balancing the demands of caring for a loved one with their own education, work, and personal development.

“Their contributions are invaluable, yet they often sacrifice their own opportunities and wellbeing,” she said.

“Recognising and supporting young carers is not only a matter of fairness but a necessity. We must ensure they receive the resources, recognition, and support they need to thrive, both in their caring roles and in their own lives.”

Carers Australia runs the [Young Carers Network](#), which connects young carers with their peers and with support, and administers the [Young Carer Bursary](#), to help young carers stick to their education paths. We also regularly consult with young carers as part of our national advocacy to improve outcomes for Australia’s 3 million carers.

MEDIA RELEASE



ENDS

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 who cares for someone who 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 Carers Australia on 0428 948 415 or email communications@carersaustralia.com.au.