

## HOW DO I BECOME A FOSTER CARER?

<b>Contact</b>	you contact our agency and we register your inquiry
<b>Information pack</b>	we send you an 'Information Pack for Potential Carers'
<b>Registration of Interest</b>	you register your interest in becoming a carer using the 'Registration of Interest' form
<b>Information Session</b>	you participate in an 'Information Exchange Session' with your family, agency workers and an experienced carer
<b>Carer Application</b>	you complete an 'Application to Become a Foster Carer' form
<b>Training</b>	you complete a training course
<b>Assessment</b>	you participate in assessment sessions
<b>Checks</b>	checks are undertaken regarding your: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• health</li> <li>• accommodation</li> <li>• background and criminal record</li> <li>• personal references</li> </ul>

### DECISION

Application is Approved	Application is not Approved
<b>Carer Agreement</b> if your application is approved you will be asked to sign a Carer 'Code of Conduct' Agreement	<b>Appeal</b> if your application is not approved you can appeal the decision
<b>Matching</b> when a child or young person is matched with your family, you decide whether to accept the placement	
<b>On-going Training</b> our agency provides on-going training	
<b>On-going Support</b> our agency provides on-going carer support	



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## Foster Care



www.pathfinders.ngo

## WHO ARE WE?

Pathfinders Ltd is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee operating across the New England and Northwest Tablelands and Mid North Coast of New South Wales. Pathfinders operate a number of programs and services based in promoting youth and family welfare.

These programs include a Women's & Youth Refuge, Residential Out of Home Care, Supported Independent Living, Family Support Service, Youth Accommodation Services, Family Referral Service and Non Placement Support Services.

Pathfinders program, Pathways have an established Out of Home Care program in Armidale and Inverell, group homes, intensive and generalist foster care.

*We are currently seeking people interested in becoming foster carers in our communities.*

### **Pathfinders Vision**

Thriving communities, in which all fully participate and develop freely through mutual trust and acceptance.

### **Pathfinders Mission**

To empower people to live with hope and equal opportunity to achieve their potential.

## WHAT IS FOSTER CARE?

### **Why are children placed in Foster care?**

Children are placed in foster care when their families are not able to care for them. This could be because of abuse, neglect, drug and alcohol problems, physical or mental illness, domestic violence, family breakdown or any other reason that means a parent is not able to care for their child.

### **Who can be a foster carer?**

Many different types of people make good foster carers. We need carers from a range of backgrounds in order to meet the needs of children requiring care. Foster carers must be at least 21 years old and can be single women or men, cohabiting, married or same-sex couples, with or without children.

### **Can I be a foster carer if my children still live at home?**

Yes. It can depend on the age of your children and the needs of the child you foster. Children who need care may have complex needs and require a great deal of time and attention. Fostering a child is a big change, so it is important to talk to our caseworker about your particular situation.

### **Can I be a foster carer if I work?**

Yes. It can depend on the needs of the foster child and the type of care you are providing. A carer with school aged children and adolescents can work full time, pre-school and younger children may need someone at home.



## WHAT TYPES OF FOSTER CARE ARE THERE?

### **Temporary Care**

Sometimes children come into temporary care due to parental illness, crisis or family breakdown. The goal is often to restore these children to their families over a period of time.

### **Permanent Care**

Children in permanent care have been placed in care by the Court usually to age 18, these children/young people, require stable long term placements to help them reach their full potential.

### **Intensive Support Care**

Some children/young people who come into care require a high level of support due to a range of issues. These children can be challenging and require dedicated carers who have no young children of their own.

### **Respite Care**

Caring for children can be challenging. Respite care allows full time carers to have a break. This is a good way to experience fostering if you are not ready for a full time commitment.