



Australian Government

**Department of Families, Housing,
Community Services and Indigenous Affairs**

**Part C: Application Information for
Young Carers Respite and Information Services –
Respite Component**

Preface

The Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA or the Department) has a suite of documents (the **Program Guideline Suite**) which provide information relating to the program. They provide the key starting point for parties considering whether to participate in the program and form the basis for the business relationship between FaHCSIA and the funding recipient.

They are:

- **Part A: Program Guidelines** which provides an overview of Program and the Activities relating to the program;
- **Part B: Information for Applicants** which provides information on the Application, Assessment, Eligibility, Selection and Complaints processes; Financial and Funding Agreement arrangements.
- **Part C: Application Information** provides specific information on the Activity, Selection Criteria, Performance Management and Reporting. This part should be read in conjunction with the Draft Funding Agreement for the Activity and the [Standard Terms and Conditions](#).
- The **Application Form** which is completed by applicants applying for funding during a selection process.

FaHCSIA reserves the right to amend these documents from time to time by whatever means it may determine in its absolute discretion and will provide reasonable notice of these amendments.

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Program Overview

1.1 Disability and Carers

The Australian Government helps to support carers of people with disability or severe medical condition, or frail aged, through programs and services, and benefits and payments for carers.

The *Support for Carers* Program provides support to carers of people with disability, through funding to organisations that deliver services for carers.

Under *Support for Carers* the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) funds a number of services for carers of people with disability, including respite, support information, referral and advice for young carers who need support to complete secondary education and peer support for parents of children with disability or chronic medical condition.

There are two activities in the *Support for Carers* Program:

- Young Carers Respite and Information Services; and
- MyTime Peer Support Groups for Parents of Young Children with Disability.

1.2 Program Outcomes

Outcome 5: Disability and Carers aims to provide an adequate standard of living, improved capacity to participate economically and socially and manage life transitions for people with disability and/or mental illness and carers through payments, concessions support and care services.

Program 5.5: Support for Carers program aims to provide peer support, respite and information services for carers to help them balance their care responsibilities with social participation and, in the case of young carers, completion of their education.

The Program delivers a flexible range of services to meet the individual needs of carers, care recipients and their families, including engaging with priority groups of Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse carers, to support their cultural needs.

2 Activity Overview

The *Young Carers Respite and Information Services* activity assists young carers who need support to complete their secondary education or vocational equivalent due to the demands of their caring role.

The activity has two components:

- *Respite services* – assists school aged young carers to access respite and age appropriate support. These services are delivered by 53 Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres (Centres).
- *Information, referral and advice services* – supports young carers up to and including 25 years with information, advice and referral services, including referral to counselling. These services are delivered by Carers Australia and the network of state and territory Associations.

This is a targeted measure and seeks to supplement existing programs and services, not replace them.

The Australian Government will provide almost \$24 million over three years, 2010-13, to continue providing services nationally.

2.1 Aims and objectives

Centres are funded to deliver the respite component, *Young Carers* activity, to assist young carers needing support to complete secondary education or the vocational education equivalent. The measure aims to help them to better manage their education and caring responsibilities.

The objectives of the *Young Carers* activity include:

- providing young carers with a clearly identifiable and accessible single point of contact for information and advice on the full range of respite care services and other assistance available in their area;
- purchasing, organising or managing the delivery of respite care or other age appropriate support that is tailored to the individual needs of young carers and their care recipients;
- facilitating appropriate respite service responses in order to:
 - ensure equitable access for young carers across and within regions or areas to a range of services;
 - improve young carers' access to respite care on a planned basis or in emergency or unplanned situations; and
 - improve access to respite services and support for Indigenous young carers and those from a cultural and linguistically diverse background.

2.2 Participants/clients/recipients/target group

2.2.1 Target Groups

The activity targets young carers who need support to complete secondary education or vocational equivalent due to the demands of their caring role. They are:

- students completing secondary education;
- young carers completing secondary education at a vocational institution; or
- primary school students and secondary carers, who also have extensive responsibilities within the family and have been assessed as also struggling to complete their education because of their caring role.

2.2.2 Definition of Young Carer

A young carer is defined as a person, up to and including 25 years, who provides regular and sustained care and assistance to another person without payment for their caring role (a pension or benefit is not considered to be payment for the caring role).

2.2.3 Activity Definition

As respite and carer support services target young carers who need support to complete their secondary education, under the *Young Carers* activity a young carer is defined as a person, mainly 18 years and under, who is a major provider of care and support for a parent, partner, child, relative or friend, who has a chronic illness, disability, mental illness, alcohol or other substance dependence or who is frail aged.

Assistance has to be ongoing, or likely to be ongoing, for at least six months and be provided for one or more of the core activities of communication, mobility and self care, (for example, being understood by family or friends, getting into or out of bed, eating).

Indications that a young carer is struggling with the demands of school and caring include:

- frequently missing school;
- having no time to complete homework;
- feeling very distracted when they are at school and experience limited connectedness with their school community; or
- considering leaving secondary school or equivalent education prematurely.

2.2.4 Ineligible Young Carers

Young carers undertaking university or other tertiary level courses are not eligible for assistance under the activity. Students taking courses at a vocational institution that are not for the purpose of completing their secondary school equivalent education are not eligible.

2.3 Funding for the activity

The Australian Government will provide almost \$24 million in 2010-13 for the Young Carers Respite and Information Services activity. In 2010-11 almost \$7.4 million will be provided to the Centres located across Australia to deliver respite and carer support services.

3 Services

This activity provides a mix of services, both direct and indirect (carer support) to meet the needs of young carers. Young carers identified as meeting the activity's eligibility criteria are able to access two types of respite support:

- direct respite – flexible hours of in-home respite care; and
- carer support (indirect respite) – activities or support that reduces stress and meets young carer's more immediate and short-term needs.

Each young carer's needs must be assessed, taking into account the complexity and priority of need and balancing it against available funding. Centres should ensure that services or support cannot be provided through other programs, local services or community groups.

Young carers must not be charged for any direct respite or carer support services they receive.

Services purchased from other organisations are considered by the Department as subcontracting arrangements, not brokered services. The Funding Agreement, Schedule I, now reflects this change through the inclusion of the text:

'We acknowledge that a large number of subcontractors are used to provide the services specified under the Activity and therefore we authorise you to engage them or purchase goods/services from them without seeking our approval'.

3.1 Direct Respite Services

When direct respite is an appropriate support for a young carer, Centres will purchase services that provide the young carer with quality alternative or substitute care for the person for whom they care. Alternative care may be provided in the home or suitable accommodation.

In-home respite care may be needed to allow the young carer the opportunity to attend after school, holiday or sporting activities, tutoring etc.

Where in-home respite services are not available, Centres are to make other appropriate arrangements.

3.1.1 Service Agreements for Direct Respite Services

While each Centre's auspice may have its own legal requirements for subcontracting agreements, Centres must enter into a formal service agreement that includes provisions for subcontracting direct respite services, in whole or in part, to a third party.

A Centre may subcontract direct respite services if it:

- records the subcontractor's name, address, legal status, relevant qualifications and details of the service to be subcontracted.
- acknowledges that Centres remains responsible and accountable to the department for the provision of any subcontracted services.

Before subcontracting services, Centres are strongly advised to seek their own legal advice, to ensure that their obligations under the service agreement are not compromised. The subcontracting arrangement must ensure that the subcontractor has at least the same obligations as those that apply to the Centre under the service agreement, including any provision relating to confidentiality, permitted disclosure, insurance requirements and privacy of information. For example, a Centre may ask the subcontractor to sign a deed of confidentiality to reflect its own requirements, as outlined in its service agreement.

Service agreements to subcontract direct respite services must include the following “elements”:

- unit costs
- description of the services to be provided
- description of the roles and responsibilities, including protocols for escalating issues, of the Centre and the subcontractor
- standards to be met.

Centres must ensure that subcontractors do not outsource or sub-subcontract to a third party any obligations without first getting FaHCSIA’s written consent.

3.2 Carer Support

While direct respite provides valuable assistance in specific circumstances, young carers may need a range of other forms of carer support that provide a ‘respite effect’.

Many young carers prefer time out for recreation or social activities and often need shorter and more frequent assistance. Carer support (indirect respite) may be provided to meet the more immediate needs or circumstances that are putting the young carer at risk of leaving school.

In determining what support should be funded, decisions should be based on a formal needs assessment of each young carer and carer support services provided that are within the intent of the guidelines.

The following services are examples of appropriate carer support activities and Centres are encouraged to be flexible in their approach to determining the most appropriate services. Please note, these examples are not intended as a checklist of entitlements for each young carer.

- Domestic assistance (e.g. house cleaning, cooking meals);
- Transport to social or support activities;
- Tutoring;
- Activities during school holidays;
- Social support (e.g. sports groups);
- Material support (e.g. school books, school uniforms, sports uniforms, school camps);
- Young carer camps;
- Peer support with other young carers;
- Skills development (e.g. cooking, budgeting, stress management);
- Mentoring; and
- Purchase of appliances or other equipment may be considered on a case-by-case basis up to \$2,000, where all other options for support have been exhausted and where the relevant purchase would significantly reduce the stress of the young carer. For items exceeding this amount, Centres must seek written permission from the FaHCSIA State and Territory Office Funding Agreement Manager.

3.1.2 Service agreements for Carer Support (Indirect Respite)

The Department acknowledges that due to the nature of carer support services it may not be feasible to enter into a formal service level agreement. Examples may be music lessons, provision of transport etc.

In these situations parental permission should routinely be sought before a carer under 18 years of age accesses carer support services; however this may not be appropriate in all circumstances.

Common law:

- A person under 18 has the legal capacity to consent to receiving carer support services provided the child or young person has sufficient intelligence and maturity to understand the nature of the service and any consequences in participating.

Statute law:

- In some jurisdictions there are relevant laws that override the common law. In these jurisdictions service providers should ensure that treatment they provide to persons under 18 years of age does not breach the relevant law.

It is advisable that funding recipients develop and implement policies addressing carer support (indirect respite) service provision to children and young people under the age of 18 years of age. These policies should address:

- confidentiality and privacy provisions for service users under 18 years of age and release of information forms
- funding recipient obligations to:
 - inform clients and carer support provider about duty of care responsibilities and mandatory child protection reporting requirements;
 - ask under 18 year old service users if they agree to their parent(s) or guardian(s) being informed about the services being delivered; and
 - use of support persons for under 18 year olds during service provision as the preferred option and support person waivers where applicable.

Before purchasing carer support services, Centres are strongly advised to seek their own legal advice, to ensure that their obligations under the service agreement are not compromised.

3.3 Ineligible services

There are some activities that, while they may benefit young carers, are outside the parameters of the *Young Carers* activity, for example, funding family holidays or making payments directly to family members or friends to provide respite.

Centres should contact their Funding Agreement Manager in the FaHCSIA State or Territory Office for advice about appropriate activities.

3.4 Duration of Assistance

Young carers may be supported by the activity for as long as they meet eligibility requirements.

It is recognised that their caring role may be ongoing and that young carers require flexible support. They may require periods of intensive assistance and need to be able to move in and out of the activity as their circumstances change.

Services can be provided during the school term and school vacations.

In the event that a care recipient passes away and the young carer requires support, Centres may continue assisting the young carer until other appropriate services or supports are in place.

4 Service Delivery

4.1 Elements of Effective Practice

The following principles were identified in the 2008 Young Carers Respite and Information Services evaluation as effective practice in supporting young carers. These elements are:

- **Choice:** offer a range of services, both indirect and direct and allow young carers to choose activities and services that will best meet their respite and support needs. The issues faced by young carers may be complex or simple, as young carers have variable family situations and caring roles. Available services could include: recreational opportunities; personal support (informal and formal counselling); domestic assistance; tutoring; and in-home respite.
- **Outreach and networking with key 'first-to-know' referral agencies:** it is necessary to work with key referral agencies including schools, health services and disability services to access young carers. Young carers commonly do not think of themselves as carers, nor do they know where to go for extra support and rarely actively seek help.
- **Establish formal referral and intake procedures:** to ensure that referral pathways work efficiently and effectively and so that referral agencies are assured young people are being supported as needed.
- **Use a case management approach (case planning):** to identify young carers' needs, ensure that appropriate services are provided and on-going support needs are identified and strategies put in place to provide them.

- **Take a whole family approach:** consult with the young carer's family when planning respite services. Engagement of parent/s and family is important in meeting young carer's needs.
- **Offer intensive personal support (where needed):** young carers highly value independent advice and emotional support and such support assists them to manage their caring responsibilities.

4.2 Targeting Resources

Centres are required to make decisions about the allocation of services and funds, based on their estimate of the relative need of young carers.

The primary consideration is the needs of the young carer. Assessment of relative need for services will take into account the intensity of care required by the care recipient and other factors related to the needs and circumstances of the young carer and the nature of the caring relationship.

These factors include:

- the availability of other informal support to the young carer, such as other family members, friends or volunteer groups;
- the availability of other services to support the young carer and/or care recipient, for example, home help, delivered meals or disability support services;
- the availability of other Government funded programs and services, for example Youth Connections;
- the young carer's own physical and mental health status;
- the young carer's study and workload demands;
- other demands on the young carer, such as other family responsibilities or the number of people cared for; and
- the circumstances of the carer's family.

4.3 Activity links and working with other agencies and services

Centres are encouraged to develop links with other agencies and services that complement services provided by Centres. Where appropriate, Centres are encouraged to refer young carers to their local Carers Association to gain maximum outcomes for young carers.

Centres are also encouraged to develop partnerships with local organisations and services to develop broader expertise and connections with a range of service providers.

When subcontracting or purchasing services, Centres should ensure on-funded service providers are aware of the need for managing each young carer's situation in a manner that is sensitive to their needs and the needs of the care recipient.

Service providers should also be aware of accountabilities and standards in relation to providing in-home care.

4.4 Outreach

Outreach and networking activities that promote services, assist in identifying young carers and attract clients should be planned and implemented by Centres throughout their region of operation.

The extent of outreach activities should be proportional to a Centre's current capacity to meet demand. Where Centres have waiting lists or are close to capacity, promotion may be reduced to limit further increasing demand.

Outreach activities include targeting young carers from Indigenous and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

For activity purposes, a young carer may be defined as CALD where they have particular cultural or linguistic affiliations due to their:

- place of birth or ethnic origin
- main language other than English spoken at home
- proficiency in spoken English.

5 Young Carers Resources

The department manages and distributes a suite of Young Carers resources, which are available to Centres and Carers Associations free of charge.

The Department uses an automated ordering system. Centres are able to order young carer resources directly from the warehouse, National Mailing and Marketing (NMM).

As the program's contracted service providers, young carers should be referred to Centres and Associations and it is their role to provide the resources and talk to young carers about the information as part of their support.

Therefore, the form has been categorized into resources for:

1. young carers or care recipients only – limit of 20 per order;
2. promotional activities – limit of 200 per order; and
3. targeted promotional activities – limit of 200 per order.

Should you require additional resources please provide an explanation, including who the activity or event is aimed at and how the resources will assist the target group. NMM will refer this information to the department who will use it to assess your order.

5.1 How to order

Centres are required to place their orders directly with National Mailing and Marketing (NMM).

To place an order please complete the young carer resource order form, and forward to NMM via one of the following method:

Fax	Telephone	E-mail
(02) 6260 2770	1800 050 009	fahcsia@nationalmailing.com.au

Please note that NMM will only process orders received from Centres and Carer Associations. Please do *not* on-forward NMM contact details for young carer resource orders to other organisations. While it is important to raise awareness of young carers and to support organisations that, in turn, support young carers, there is a limited budget to produce and distribute the products.

If you are working with another organisation and you consider that the organisation would make appropriate use of the resources, please order on their behalf.

For enquiries or to obtain a copy of the order form Centres should email requests to:

youngcarerskit@fahcsia.gov.au

5.1.1 Development of New Resources

As the Department provides these resources free of charge, Centres must not use *Young Carers* activity funding to develop other resources or reprint existing ones.

If Centres consider there is need for a local resource to be developed using *Young Carers* funding, you must first seek approval from your Funding Agreement Manager in the FaHCSIA State and Territory Office.

6 Specialist requirements

Centres must comply with obligations under Clause 19 – Vulnerable Persons, Police Checks and Criminal Offences of the Terms and Conditions regarding working with vulnerable persons. The Terms and Conditions explain the requirements and obligations on the Centres and their on-funded providers regarding Police Checks for any person, including contractors, prior to their engaging with young carers.

Centres should contact their Funding Agreement Manager in the FaHCSIA State and Territory Office if they need further clarification regarding their Funding Agreement obligations.

6.1 Privacy and Confidentiality

Centres must comply with the privacy and confidentiality requirements covered in the Funding Agreement.

Centre must have policies and procedures to manage privacy and confidentiality for young carers, families, staff and other interested parties. Centres must also have mechanisms for the storage of confidential information.

7 Activity Performance and Reporting

Centres are required to report on progress and outcomes in meeting specific Performance Indicators (PIs). These requirements are outlined in the Schedule of the Funding Agreement. Centres must report on outcomes in meeting the following PIs and corresponding targets.

7.1 Program Performance Indicator

Each Centre will contribute to meeting a performance indicator under *Support for Carers*:

The number of young carers at risk of not completing secondary education assisted with respite services.

Centres will continue to report the number of young carers assisted in the progress reports. The combined result of young carers assisted by the *Young Carers* activity will be reported in the department's Annual Report, at Senate Estimates and in reporting to the Minister and external agencies.

7.2 Activity Performance Indicators

As outlined in the Funding Agreement, each Centre has a target for the following PIs. Achievement against the target will be reported in the progress reports.

- **PI 1** – *Proportion of young carers assisted from Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds*

Target: 2-8% Indigenous and 5-15% CALD. Where the upper limit of the range has been achieved and/or exceeded in the previous year, this percentage is your target.

Where Centres have high Indigenous or CALD populations, it is important that Centres continue to strive to support a high percentage of young carers from the priority groups.

- **PI 2** – *Percentage of young carers satisfied that the services they received met their needs.*

Target: 80% satisfaction

This Performance Indicator will require Centres to conduct a Customer Survey, either through a paper Customer Satisfaction Survey or as a telephone survey.

Centres are required to survey a sample of young carers in order to report against this Performance Indicator in the Twelve Month Progress Report. The sample required is proportional to the number of young carers assisted in the previous year:

Number of young carers assisted in the previous financial year	Sample required
2-20	80%
21-50	50%
51-100	35%
101 or more	25%

Centres may ask other questions seeking feedback about their service delivery practices and those of their service providers.

The only requirement is that the survey asks the following question in order to report results for this Performance Indicator:

“Did the services you received meet your needs?”

Young carers must rate services according to the following scale:
(0) not met; (1) partly met; (2) fully met.

A response to either (1) or (2) would be counted as satisfied.

7.3 Reporting

Centres are required to submit a progress report every six months in accordance with the Funding Agreement. The report details progress in promoting and delivering the activity, performance data and funding expended.

An audited financial statement is also required at the end of each financial year. The department does not provide a financial acquittal template.

8 Application Process

8.1 Overview of the Application Process

At present there is **no selection process** for the *Young Carers* activity.

The Young Carers Respite and Information Services Program was a 2004-05 Budget measure. The Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) conducted a competitive open selection process for organisations to operate as Respite Centres. FaHCSIA utilised the established infrastructure of the Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres (Centres) to deliver the *Young Carers* activity.

The activity is managed by FaHCSIA, working closely with the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) and complements the National Respite for Carers Program that DoHA administers. DoHA's Operational Manual establishes the administrative and compliance framework under which Centres operate. However, FaHCSIA Program Guidelines and Funding Agreement must be applied by Centres when using Young Carer Program funds.

8.2 Selection Criteria

At present there is **no selection process** for the *Young Carers* activity.

If a selection process is to be conducted for this activity existing funded recipients will be provided with advice regarding the type of selection process to be applied.

8.2.1 How to submit an application

To apply for selection under this process, applicants will need to complete the application form and respond to selection criteria as detailed at above. Applications must be received by the closing date and time as detailed at 3.6.

The Department will not issue Application Forms or accept completed applications by fax.

8.2.2 Questions and Answers during the Application period

The Department will only respond to requests for information that seek clarification of issues to allow them to better understand the requirements of the Application Form and Application Guidelines.

8.2.3 Questions after the application period

The Department will not accept or respond to any applicant's requests for information or correspondence about the status or progress of their application during the assessment phase.

8.2.4 Closing date and time

At present there is **no selection process** for the *Young Carers* activity.

8.2.5 Application Acknowledgement

At present there is **no selection process** for the *Young Carers* activity.

9 Special Conditions applying to this Activity

Not applicable.

10 Contact information

The primary contact for the *Young Carers* activity is the Funding Agreement Manager in the FaHCSIA State and Territory Office. Any enquiries in relation to the activity should be directed to that person in the first instance.

Appendix A – Other Programs and Services

1. Young Carers Website

The Young Carers website is maintained by the national office of Carers Australia and provides information for young carers, care recipients and teachers. <http://www.youngcarers.net.au/>

2. Carers Australia

Carers Australia provides information for all carers and care recipients. <http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/>

3. Carer Allowance

Carer Allowance is an income supplement available to people who provide daily care and attention at home to a person with disability or severe medical condition. For more information see the FaHCSIA website: www.fahcsia.gov.au

4. Personal Helpers and Mentors Program

The Personal Helpers and Mentors Program assists people aged 16 years and over whose ability to manage their daily activities and to live independently in the community is severely impacted as a result of a severe mental illness. For more information see the FaHCSIA website: www.fahcsia.gov.au

5. Youth Connections

The Youth Connections program provides a holistic approach to servicing young people at risk including support for individual young people and the broader community.

The Youth Connections program aims to provide support to young people to remain at school. Youth Connections Providers will work with young people to link them with support services in their regions.

For more information or a list of providers visit the website at: www.youthconnections@deewr.gov.au

You can further information on the Australian Government youth programs that are administered by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations on their website:

www.deewr.gov.au/Youth/OfficeForYouth/YouthPrograms

6. Children of Parents with a Mental Illness

Children of Parents with a Mental Illness (COPMI) aims to promote better mental health outcomes for children (0 - 18 years) of parents with a mental health problem or disorder.

The program provides mainly online information and referral services for children of parents with a mental illness as well as their teachers and families.

<http://www.copmi.net.au/>

7. Centrelink's Financial Information Service

Centrelink's Financial Information Service (FIS) is an education and information service available to everyone in the community. FIS helps people to make informed decisions about investment and financial issues for their current and future financial needs.

<http://www.centrelink.gov.au/>

8. The Australian Child & Adolescent Trauma, Loss and Grief Network

A collaborative network to promote development and understanding in the field of child and adolescent trauma, loss and grief. The network offers key resources to help understand and respond to the diverse and complex needs of children, adolescents and their families.

<http://www.earlytraumagrief.anu.edu.au/>