



Foster care FAQs

We understand that becoming a foster carer is a huge decision for you and your family. Wesley Dalmar is with you every step of the way, supporting you from your initial enquiry, to when/if a child is placed in your care and beyond.

Why do children enter foster care?

Foster care is provided to children and young people up to 18 years of age, as they are unable to live with their own families. Children and young people enter into care for different reasons.

Children and young people are placed in care because they are at risk of significant harm or neglect, or in times of family crisis where the parent or carer voluntarily seeks support for their children. However, this is not the only reason. Children and young people can be placed in care because the parent or guardian is in poor health, unable to secure work or housing, or due to disability and social isolation.

Should I become a foster carer?

There are so many reasons to become a foster carer with Wesley Dalmar. You will be providing a safe, secure and loving environment for very vulnerable, at risk children. You'll become a vital part of a unique mission we have to serve those most in need.

However, it is also about whether or not you can truly provide the support and care to the child in need.

Foster Carer Requirements:

- have space and a spare room in your home for a child or young person
- be able to commit to ongoing learning to develop your skills to support a child or young person in care
- be financially stable
- want to encourage a child or young person to develop their identity, including connection to family, culture, and religion
- be willing to support a child or young person's educational and health outcomes
- be enthusiastic about supporting a child or young person with interests in extra-curricular activities
- be willing to work as part of a team with the child or young person, Wesley Dalmar staff and other professionals.

By being a foster carer, you will be:

- giving vulnerable children the opportunity to experience stability and care
- working with an organisation committed to helping people most in need
- supported financially and provided professional training and ongoing support
- using your skills and passion to raise children beyond your own family
- building stronger, healthier communities by raising strong, resilient children.

Do all the good you can
because every life matters



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What types of foster care options are there at Wesley Dalmar?

Every child or young person has different needs. There are different types of fostering to suit them, including both temporary and permanent care.

Types of temporary care include:

- **Respite** – short stays on a regular basis; sometimes for a few days, a couple of weeks or for one weekend a month. For families in crisis, respite care provides stressed parents or foster carers with a much needed break.
- **Emergency** – being available 24 hours a day for a child in crisis. These placements can be overnight, for a few days until the child can return to family or for longer periods, if needed.
- **Restoration** – being part of the team working with family to ensure successful and sustainable reunification.
- **Short term** – providing care indefinitely while the matter is before court, either working towards restoration or transition to permanent care/adoption.

Types of permanent care include:

- **Guardianship** – Permanent placement with a family member or significant adult in the child or young person's life. Parental responsibility lies with the guardian.
- **Adoption** – The preferred permanent option for children who are unable to return to and live with their family. They legally become part of your family.
- **Permanent Foster Care** – Providing a long-term placement to give children and young people safety, stability and a sense of security. Parental responsibility lies with The Minister until they are 18 years old.

What is the process to becoming a foster carer with Wesley Dalmar?

The first step in becoming a foster carer is to contact our carer recruitment team through our enquiry form. You will then be provided with a detailed information pack.

As you would expect, foster carers are thoroughly assessed before they are authorised to care for children in their own homes. This process includes:

- Attending mandatory training over several days
- Visits to your home to conduct interviews
- A home safety inspection
- Gathering of personal references and medical references, as well as other probity checks, including Working with Children Checks and National Criminal History Checks on all applicants and all household members.

The process is comprehensive and usually takes between three and 12 months, followed by a careful matching process.

Ongoing training and support is provided with Wesley Dalmar to give foster carers the opportunity to meet other carers, get to know the team that will be working with them and develop their skills.