

# Foster care FAQs

## Can I become a foster carer for MDAS even if I'm not Aboriginal?

Anyone can become a foster carer with us. MDAS values diversity and practices inclusivity. As such we welcome and encourage people from all walks of life to become foster carers. Your race, gender, financial status, religious beliefs or sexuality does not affect your ability to become a foster carer.

## What support do foster carers receive?

Our Recruitment and Assessment officer is available to offer any support that you might need to be a successful foster carer.

They will keep in touch with you over the phone or in person at a time that suits you. They'll have a yarn with you to see how things are going and if you need any additional support to ensure that your needs as a carer are being met.

As a foster carer, you will be invited to care-team meetings, where the needs of the child in your care will be discussed. The aim of these meeting is to keep up with the ever-changing needs of the child and address any issues relating to the ongoing success of the placement.

We offer opportunities to enhance your skills and knowledge regarding trauma-informed care, mental health, child development and behavioural management strategies. As these training sessions become available, we will let you know. If you're interested, we are more than happy to register you.

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## Are there different types of foster care?

Yes. We will work with you to determine which placement type is suitable for you.

There are four general placement types:

- **Short term** - which can be from two weeks to six months.
- **Long term** - usually considered when a family is unable to care for their child for an extended period or if reunification is not in the best interests of the child.
- **Respite care** - this placement gives full time foster carers, parents and/or guardians a chance to have a break from their regular caring duties.
- **Emergency care** - the nature of this placement means that you will need to receive a child into your care with little notice. Children placed in your care are usually being removed from immediate harm. During this period an alternative arrangement will be made while the child is with you.

## Do I get any financial support?

Foster carers are entitled to a fortnightly allowance which is paid by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services which is intended to cover the day to day expenses that incur while a child is in your care.

The allowance isn't considered as income therefore it is not subject to testing eligibility for Centrelink payments, annual tax returns or when applying for loans from financial institutions.

For information give MDAS a call on (03) 5018 4100 or 0429 218 414 or you can contact the Care Allowances Helpdesk on 1300 552 319