

Young Carer Bursary Program Information Pack

For those who support
young carers



ü

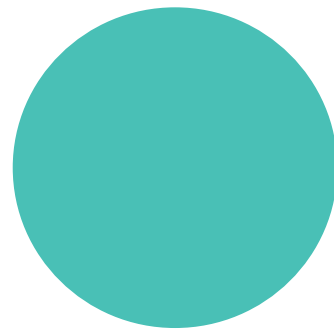


What is Young Carer Bursary Program?

Young Carer Bursary Program is a Carers Australia initiative. It supports young carers to return to or continue with their education by providing financial assistance while studying and managing caring responsibilities.

The program will offer **1,600 bursaries for the 2026 academic year, each valued at \$4,000.**

Young carers across Australia can apply from **10 October until 7 November 2025.**





Who is a young carer?

Young carers are people between 12 and 25 years old who provide unpaid care and support to a family member or friend living with a disability, medical condition (including a terminal or chronic illness), mental illness, an alcohol or other drug issue or is frail and aged.

Some young carers may not identify as a carer. They may be supporting family members and not realise they are in a caring role.

Young carers help with tasks such as:

- Household chores
- Assisting with personal care
- Paying bills or managing household expenses
- Giving medication
- Taking care of siblings, and
- Providing emotional support.

They may be supporting:

- Family members such as a mother, father, sibling, cousin, or grandparent

- A friend
- Partner, or
- Their own child.

Young carers may look after these loved ones every day, every week or occasionally.



Identifying & supporting young carers

Why is it important to identify young carers?

It is estimated that there are 391,300 young Australians aged 12 to 25 who are in an unpaid caring role for family or friends.

As professionals working with young people, this information will assist you to identify and support young carers.

- Young carers often juggle school, employment, and their caring responsibilities, including providing emotional and advocacy support, assisting with medication, physically supporting with showering and other personal care tasks, household chores, and looking after siblings.
- These additional responsibilities make young carers far more susceptible to social isolation, financial and educational disadvantage, unemployment, and poor physical and mental health.
- When young carers are supported, acknowledged, and respected in their own right, they are able to achieve and participate more actively at school and in their community. This is critical in ensuring that young carers have every opportunity to thrive at school and beyond. Supporting young carers will not only improve outcomes for these students but can also help to improve school attendance, engagement, and attainment levels.

What are some signs that a young person is a carer?

There are several signs that a young person may have caring responsibilities. These signs can also be indicators of other circumstances, and it is important not to make assumptions. It is a good idea to use this as a guide to start a conversation that can lead to additional enquiry and support for each young person.

The following are signs that can assist in identifying young carers:

- Punctuality: Arriving late to activities, at school/education, or to social groups with no clear explanation.
- Stress: Exhibiting signs that they are stressed or overwhelmed.
- Isolation: Appearing to be isolated from others or may be experiencing bullying.
- Low attendance: Frequently missing activities with no clear explanation.
- Missing appointments or classes: Often absent to help at medical appointments.
- Regularly checking in on a family member or friend during the day.
- Minimal parental involvement or engagement.
- Attention: Not focusing or engaging during activities.
- Academic performance: Underperforming or showing inconsistent performance.
- Fatigue: Difficulty concentrating and frequently mentioning tiredness.
- Supporting someone at medical appointments: Assisting with translating, collecting, and helping with medicines.

How can my colleagues and I identify young carers?

Identifying that a young person has caring responsibilities is an important step in supporting the young carer. Young carers can be in both primary school, secondary school, or in tertiary education.

Many young people with significant caring responsibilities do not see themselves as a 'young carer'. This is an important consideration for professionals when identifying young carers.

There are a number of ways organisations, teachers or academic staff, and healthcare professionals can raise awareness, educate communities, and support people to identify themselves and others as young carers. These include:

- Data collection during program or activity enrolment or referral that captures carer status.
- Celebrating National Carers Week and hosting activities that raise awareness and start conversations.
- Hosting young carer specific events during key times like Youth Week or NAIDOC week.
- Starting conversations with young people and their parents/guardians where there are signs that someone might be a young carer.
- Displaying posters and materials from Carers Australia and the National Carer Network at your school or organisation.
- Promoting the Young Carers Network and Young Carer Bursary Program in your newsletter or on social media.

What can I do after I have identified a young carer?

- Identify a staff member or support person that the young person feels comfortable with.
- Initiate a conversation with the young person and/or their family (if appropriate) in a safe and confidential place.
- Record if a young person is a young carer in your case notes within your internal IT system or within your internal record-keeping procedure.
- Ask the young person what they think might help.
- Provide resources that may be useful for the young person in a private setting.
- Discuss with the young carer if they would like to apply for a Young Carer Bursary.
- Refer the young carer and/or their parent or guardian to the Carer Gateway.
- Don't forget to check-in with the young carer. Caring can change and evolve, and with this the needs of the young person.

This information was adapted from the Victorian Department of Education's Policy - Young Carers: Identification and Support.





Why should young carers apply for a bursary?

As a young carer, balancing education and caring responsibilities can be difficult. This can lead to financial stress and disadvantage.

The bursary can assist young carers to stay in education while caring for their loved one. The funding can be used towards supporting them in education or training.

The bursary can be used towards:

- Laptops and software
- Stationery
- Uniforms
- School camps
- Transport and accommodation
- Respite care
- Emotional support
- Extracurricular activities
- School fees



How does a young carer apply?

As part of the application, young carers will be required to provide their personal details, complete multiple-choice questions, and respond to two open-ended questions, both of which will focus on their experiences as a young carer.

When supporting a young carer to complete their application, please encourage them to **use their own words in response to the open-ended questions**. Their answers should be a true reflection of their own circumstances. If assistance is being provided, ensure the responses still reflect the young carer's own voice and experience.

Before the application process starts

Make sure the young carer:

- ☐ Has checked that they're eligible for the bursary
- ☐ Has about 30 minutes to complete the application
- ☐ Has their bank account details on hand (or their parent/guardian's)
- ☐ Has an email address for a parent or carer, if they're under 18
- ☐ Has proof of age and identity. They can provide **one** of these if they are 12-17. If they are 18-25, they must provide **two**:

Driver's licence

Passport (Australian or overseas, with details in English)

Birth certificate

Proof of age card

Student ID with date of birth (this should only be provided if they are unable to provide any other proof of age and identity listed here. Carers Australia staff may contact them to be in touch to verify why this is the case if they choose to use this document)

- ☐ Has proof of citizenship or permanent residency. They can provide **one** of these:

Birth certificate

Australian passport

Health Care Card

Medicare card

Citizenship certificate

Residency certificate

Pension Concession card

Permanent residency or humanitarian visa

- ☐ Has proof of intent to study ready. They can download and use our **Proof of Intent to Study** template.

[Download](#)

- ☐ Has proof of caring ready. They can download and use our **Proof of Caring** template.

[Download](#)

Application steps

- ① **Starting the application**
 - Visit www.youngcarersnetwork.com.au/bursary/young-carer-bursary/
 - Click on 'Register' or 'Login' to create a new account or access an existing account.
- ② **Enter the young carer's bank details, or those of a parent or guardian if applicable.**
- ③ **Upload any required documents:**
 - Proof of intent to study
 - Proof of caring
 - Proof of age and identity
 - Proof of citizenship or permanent residency
- ④ **Provide a valid parent/guardian email address if the young carer is under 18, so an automatic consent form can be sent for their signature.**
- ⑤ **Answer all questions.**
- ⑥ **Review the application and submit.**

Key dates

- **Applications open**
 - 10 October 2025
- **Applications close**
 - 7 November 2025 at 23:59 AEDT
 - Support will be available until 17:00 AEDT. If the young carer you are supporting needs assistance lodging their application or encounters any difficulties, please contact Carers Australia as soon as possible.
- **Applicants receive an answer**
 - Carers Australia will aim to notify all applicants by mid to late December 2025.
- **First payment in January 2026**
- **2026 Survey due**
 - June 2026
- **Second payment in June 2026**
 - The second payment is conditional on the young carer completing the survey and continuing to meet eligibility requirements.



How can you support a young carer to apply?

The young carer may need assistance with:

- Internet access
- Understanding the application process
- Understanding and finding the documents required
- Scanning or taking photos of documents and uploading them
- For the education institution or school – helping with providing enrolment or intent to study forms.
- For healthcare professionals – helping the young carer with evidence about their caring role, or providing information to assist with their caring role, such as explaining medication
- Understanding what the next steps are
- Contacting and communicating with Carers Australia – Young Carer Team, or connecting them with organisations that can offer support

The Carer Gateway can also help young carers with applications and connect them and their families to a wide range of programs and supports across Australia. They can be contacted on 1800 422 737 which will connect you with a service provider in your local area.

For general queries, contact the Carers Australia – Young Carer Team:

Email: ca@youngcarersnetwork.com.au

Phone: 1800 756 238



Language services

Carers Australia office hours are 9am – 5pm (Eastern Time), Monday to Friday.

- * If you are supporting a young carer and need the support of an interpreter to contact Carers Australia, call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 (available 24/7).
- * If you are supporting a young carer and/or their family and require assistance due to hearing loss, contact the National Relay Service (NRS) on:

Voice Relay number – 1300 555 727

TTY number – 133 677

SMS relay number – 0423 677 767

For more information about the National Relay Service, visit their website at:

www.accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs

If you would like to view the online application form in your own language, you can use free online tools, including:

Google Translate: translate.google.com

Microsoft Translator: translator.microsoft.com

iTranslate: itranslate.com

Linguee: liguee.com

Frequently Asked Questions

1 Understanding the Bursary

- **What is Young Carer Bursary Program?**

Young Carer Bursary Program is a financial support program for young people who provide care for a family member or friend. It's designed to help young carers continue their education while managing caring responsibilities.

- **How much is the bursary worth?**

Each bursary is worth \$4,000 for the year and is paid in two instalments in January and June 2026.

- **How many bursaries are available?**

For 2026, we're offering 1,600 bursaries.

- **Is the bursary taxable?**

No, the Young Carer Bursary is not considered taxable income.

2 Eligibility

- **How do I know if a young carer is eligible?**

The eligibility criteria for Young Carer Bursary Program are:

- Be a young carer who provides unpaid care and support to a family member or friend living with a disability, medical condition (including a terminal or chronic illness), mental illness, an alcohol or other drug issue or is frail and aged.
- Aged 12-25 years old for the entire time they are receiving the bursary (young carers aged under 12 who are attending secondary school may be eligible and will be considered on a case by case basis).
- Must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident.
- Be living in Australia.
- Studying at high school, TAFE, university, or

another tertiary education institute (*study can be full-time or part-time. Young carers are also eligible if they're being home-schooled and registered with a state or territory education authority*).

- Not receiving any other bursary or scholarship worth more than \$500.

Young carers are not eligible if they hold an advanced diploma, bachelor's degree, or higher.

3 Preparing to apply

- **What documents will young carers need?**

The documents young carers will need at the beginning of the application process are:

- Study details or an intent to study
- Proof of caring

Proof of age and identity, which can be **one** of these if they are 12-17. If they are 18-25, they must provide **two**:

- Driver's licence
- Passport (Australian or overseas, with details in English)
- Birth certificate
- Proof of age card
- Student ID with date of birth (this should only be provided if they are unable to provide any other proof of age and identity listed here. Carers Australia staff may contact them to be in touch to verify why this is the case if they choose to use this document)

Proof of citizenship or permanent residency, which can be **one** of these:

- Birth certificate
- Australian passport
- Health Care Card



- Medicare card
- Citizenship certificate
- Residency certificate
- Pension Concession card
- Permanent residency or humanitarian visa

- **What if the young carer does not have their own bank account?**

They can provide their parent or guardian's bank account details.

- **What if the young carer is under the age of 18?**

They will need to provide a valid parent/guardian email address, so an automatic consent form can be sent for their signature.

4 Application process

- **How does a young carer start their application?**

Visit youngcarersnetwork.com.au/bursary/young-carer-bursary/, register for a new account or log in to an existing one, and follow the step-by-step guide.

- **The young carer I am supporting has forgotten their username or password. What can they do?**

On the login page, click on "Forgot Username/Password" and follow the prompts to reset details.

- **What if the young carer I am supporting can't finish their application in one go?**

You can save your progress and come back later to complete it. Just make sure you submit the application before the closing date (7 November 2025). Note: When completing the open-ended questions, **encourage them to use their own words** so their responses reflect their experiences and circumstances.

5 After applying

- **How does a young carer know if they have submitted their application successfully?**

Once an application is submitted the young carer will receive an email confirmation.

- **How long does it take for an application to be assessed?**

We aim to notify all applicants of the outcome by mid to late December 2025.

- **What happens if the application is successful?**

If the application is successful, we'll email the young carer with further instructions. They'll receive the bursary in two payments throughout the year, January and June 2026.

- **What happens if a young carer is not successful?**

If the young carer is not successful, we'll let them know by email.

The quantity of applications is extremely high, and we understand that there are many young carers out there in need. Unfortunately, we only have a limited number of bursaries available Australia wide, but please encourage the young carer to apply again next year and remain in contact with their local carers organisation to ensure they receive the support needed.

You can also assist them to contact the Carer Gateway at carergateway.gov.au, an Australian Government initiative that provides free support, services, and information for unpaid carers, such as counseling and peer groups, and respite care.

- **What happens if the young carers' situation changes after they submit an application?**

If a young carer will no longer have caring responsibilities or is no longer planning to study in 2026, they are no longer eligible for the bursary. Please direct the young carer, or their parent or guardian (if under 18) to advise the Young Carer Bursary Program team at Carers Australia on 1800 756 238.

Promotional Kit

We've created a promotional toolkit to help you spread the word about Young Carer Bursary Program. We encourage you to share it across your digital platforms and join the conversation online by tagging @YoungCarersNetwork and using hashtags like #YoungCarerBursary2026.

Download the promotional kit [here](#).

Download

Social Media Tiles



Download the promotional kit here.

Download

Facebook Banners



Social Media Profile Overlay



How to use the Facebook Profile Frame:

1. Download the frame

Save the PNG file from the toolkit to your computer or phone.

2. Open Your profile photo

Go to your Facebook profile and click your profile picture. Select **"Update Profile Picture."**

3. Add the frame

Open your profile photo in any editing tool (e.g., Canva, Photoshop, PowerPoint, or your phone's photo editor).

Place the PNG frame on top of your profile picture. Make sure it's centered so your face is inside the circle.

4. Save and upload

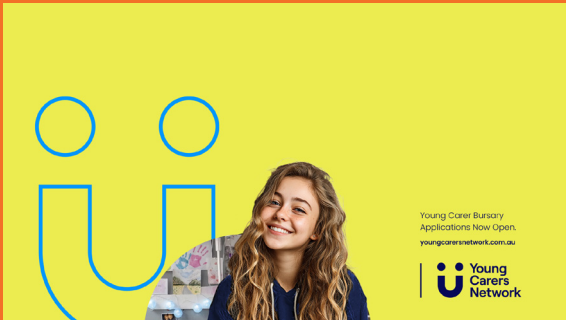
Save the new image (with the frame applied).

Go back to Facebook - **"Update Profile Picture"** - upload the saved image.

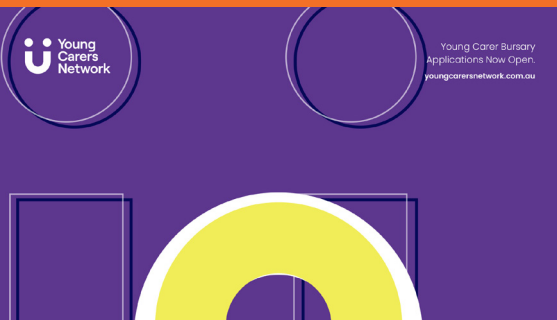
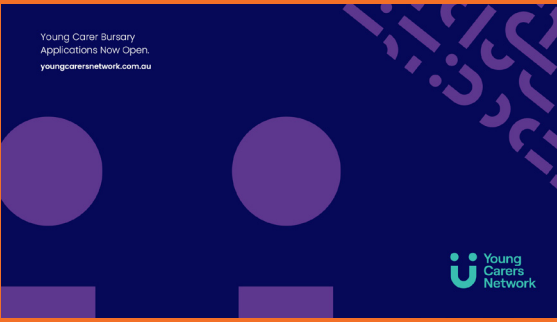
Download the promotional kit here.

Download

Desktop wallpaper



Zoom/Teams Background



Download the promotional kit here.

Download

Email signature block



Young Carer Bursary
Applications Now Open.
Apply Now
youngcarersnetwork.com.au





Young Carer Bursary
Applications Now Open.
Apply Now
youngcarersnetwork.com.au





**Young Carer Bursary**
Applications Now Open.
Apply Now
youngcarersnetwork.com.au



Young Carer Bursary
Applications Now Open.
Apply Now
youngcarersnetwork.com.au



Website Banners



Young Carer Bursary applications open:
10 October – 7 November 2025





Young Carer Bursary applications open:
10 October – 7 November 2025





Young Carer Bursary applications open:
10 October to 7 November 2025

[Apply](#)





Young Carer Bursary applications open:
10 October to 7 November 2025

[Apply](#)



Support for your organisation

The Carers Australia Team is available to assist you and your team in helping young carers and their supporters understand and apply for the bursary.

Our team can offer the following information and support:

- Present at your staff meeting or event (virtual)
- Provide a PowerPoint presentation and facilitation notes for your team to lead a session with clients, participants, students, or community groups
- Advise on questions relating to eligibility or the application process
- Share stories of young carers from our campaigns and programs: youngcarersnetwork.com.au
- Promote youth and family-focused events.

We want to hear from you

We enjoy hearing about your positive experiences and how Young Carer Bursary Program has made a difference in the lives of young carers.

We value your feedback and encourage you to contact us if there is anything we can do to improve your experience.

You can send your story or feedback to:

Email: ca@carersaustralia.com.au

Postal Address:

PO BOX 5300

Braddon ACT 2612



Connect with us

To subscribe to Young Carers Network and receive notifications about Young Carer Bursary Program, as well as young carer events and opportunities, click the link below:

youngcarersnetwork.com.au

To subscribe to the Carers Australia newsletter and keep up to date on programs, news, and events for carers, click the link below:

carersaustralia.com.au/news-media/our-newsletter

Phone: 02 6173 2620

Email: ca@youngcarersnetwork.com.au

Website: www.youngcarersnetwork.com.au

Facebook: Young Carers Network

X: @CarersAustralia

YouTube: Carers Australia

Instagram: @youngcarersnetwork

Carers Australia

Carers Australia is the national peak body representing Australia's unpaid carers, advocating on their behalf to influence policies and services at a national level.

Our vision is an Australia that values and supports the contribution that carers make both to the people they care for and to the community as a whole.

Carers Australia advocates:

- For policy and service actions that support the caring role and enhance the health, wellbeing, resilience and financial security of carers.
- For the inclusion of carers as a priority group within mainstream and specialist service programs.
- To have caring recognised as a shared responsibility of family, community, business and government with the aim of achieving improved outcomes for carers.



#youngcarerbursary2026

Young Carers Network is a Carers Australia initiative.

This project is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health,
Disability and Ageing.