

Young Carers Support Program

Program Overview

This program is delivered by Commonwealth Respite Centre on behalf of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). The program provides funding to CRCs to deliver support to young carers at risk of prematurely leaving secondary education or the vocational education equivalent. The aim is to help Young Carers to better manage and balance their education while continuing their caring responsibilities.

Definition of a Young Carer

A young carer is a person aged between 12 – 18 years who is a major provider of care/support for a parent, partner, child, relative or friend who has disability, is frail aged, or has a severe mental or physical condition or alcohol or other substance dependence. The assistance has to be ongoing, or likely to be ongoing for at least 6 months and be provided for one or more of the core activities – communication, mobility, and self-care.

Indications a young carer is at risk of leaving school:

- 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
- considering leaving secondary school or equivalent prematurely

Program Eligibility

Young carers at risk of not completing secondary education or vocational equivalent due to the demands of their caring role are eligible for assistance, and who are:

- High school students;
- Young carers completing secondary education at a vocational institution
- Secondary school students who also have extensive responsibilities within the family and have been assessed as also at risk of not completing their education because of their caring responsibilities.

Direct Respite Services

- Funding of in-home respite care for young carers, to assist them in engaging with their education
- Purchasing school uniforms and school shoes
- Purchasing books and resources directly related to educational activities
- Funding Young Carer to participate in **school** sports related activities and music programs
- Assisting with costs directly related to work experience
- Providing one to one professional tutoring

Duration of Assistance

Young carers may be supported by the program for as long as they meet eligibility requirements, subject to funding constraints and availability of alternative services.

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

When planning respite services, the engagement of parent/s and family is important in meeting the young person's needs.

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

