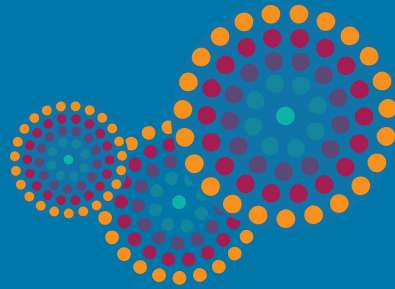




**FOSTER CARE**  
ENQUIRY PACK



## **Acknowledgement of Country**

We acknowledge the Aboriginal nations of this land; its many Custodians who continue to care for Country, and the way in which Country has cared for her people. We acknowledge the history of this land and the stories of resilience and survival which make up Indigenous Australia. We give thanks for Aboriginal Elders and knowledge keepers of each generation including the many Aboriginal communities which contribute to the life of our region. May we walk gently on this land and commit ourselves to Reconciliation.

## **Reconciliation and Aboriginal Children in Care**

Anglicare is committed to Reconciliation with Indigenous Australians. This means that the priority for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children in care will always be for them to return home. If this is not possible, Anglicare commits to ensuring that strong relationships with their family and community are always maintained.

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**“It’s not a job, it is a fulfilling journey of love and devotion given by you, but also given back to you. To me, there is no greater enrichment in life than knowing you have made a difference in a child’s life.”**

- Anglicare Foster Carer





Thank you for your interest in becoming a carer with Anglicare. Please find enclosed information that will support you in understanding more about caring and how Anglicare can support you in your caring journey.

**\*\* Someone from our carer support team will be in touch with you via phone or email in the coming days \*\***

## **You Can Make A Difference**

As carer you are an invaluable member of the team around a child, sometimes known as a care team. Your main role is to provide a nurturing, stable home to the child or young person in your care. You are also expected to support their identity by promoting a connection to their family and culture and to help them to keep a record of the important times in their life. You will also act as an advocate for the child or young person in your care and you can help to ensure that their views are included in decisions that are important to them.

# Sanctuary

The Sanctuary Model is an evidence-supported care model that supports people who work in stressful human services and care delivery environment. The Model supports foster carers and Anglicare staff to provide mindful, safe and therapeutic practice in order to achieve positive growth and change for everyone in our Anglicare community.

Sanctuary is an 'everybody model': it benefits clients, staff, volunteers and foster carers alike by supporting the development of coping skills and resilience, in the face of stress and adversity.

## The Seven Sanctuary Commitments

The set of values that Sanctuary outlines as a way to lead Anglicare communities toward relationships and skills that build resiliency are called the Seven Sanctuary Commitments.

**Growth and Change:** Encouraging hope, meaning and purpose.

**Open Communication:** Enhancing self – correcting skills, teaching healthy boundaries.

**Commitment to Democracy:** Building a community where each person's opinion and voice is heard.

**Commitment to Nonviolence:** Building and modelling safety skills

**Commitment to Emotional Intelligence:** Recognising, respecting and managing feelings

**Commitment to Social Responsibility:** Building social connections, skills and healthy attachments.

**Commitment to Social Learning:** Building and modelling cognitive skills.



SANCTUARY INSTITUTE AUSTRALIA



**COMPASSION** – In the spirit of loving service we offer care and understanding to those in need.  
*(see Jesus’ teaching in Luke 10:29-37)*

**INCLUSIVENESS** – We serve all people with a spirit of openness because we share a common humanity.  
*(see Jesus’ teaching Mark 2:15-17)*

**INTEGRITY** – We are committed to personal and corporate honesty, fairness and transparency.  
*(see Jesus’ teaching in Luke 16:10)*

**DIGNITY** – We respect the intrinsic value of all people and acknowledge their capacity for self-determination.  
*(see Jesus’ teaching in Mark 12:31)*



## **What is Out-of-Home Care?**

(also known as **Permanency Support Program** or **Foster Care and Kinship Care**)

Children and young people are sometimes unable to live safely at home. This can happen for a variety of reasons including family violence, homelessness, drug or alcohol abuse, mental health issues, disability or abuse and neglect. Out-of-home care (OOHC) refers to alternative accommodation for children and young people who are unable to live with their parents.

A goal of the Anglicare Permanency Support Program (PSP) is to make sure that children and young people spend shorter time in care, either by returning children home safely or where this is not possible, finding them other permanent homes.

Anglicare Case managers work with a child and the people who love and care for them to identify the best permanency goal for that child and to attain that goal as soon as possible. Achieving permanency for children and young people is the priority of the program because evidence from research and practice tells us that children and young people who have safe, stable homes have a better chance at leading an independent, fulfilled life as an adult.



## Being a Carer

We want children to experience safe, continuous and stable living arrangements, lifetime relationships and a sense of belonging.

Sometimes this happens for children when they are restored to their families after a period in care, during which they and their families were supported so that the child could return home safely.

Other times it happens when carers provide long term care; that builds on rather than competes with children's relationship with their own families.

## Types of Care

### Respite care

This involves care provided for regular short stays (e.g. one weekend a month). It gives children and young people and their carers a break and provides a positive experience for the child.

### Emergency care

This is the care of a child for a very short period from one night to one month while decisions are made about longer term care options for the child.

### Interim / restoration care

Interim care is limited in time, can be anywhere from a few weeks to 2 years, while decisions are made by the court about the best long term arrangement for a child or young person.

When children move on from interim care they may return to their parents, move to live with extended family or a permanent care arrangement. This is usually done in a planned way to ensure a smooth transition

During interim / restoration care, the carer has an important role in promoting the child's connection with their parents and extended family.

## **Therapeutic Home Based Care**

Therapeutic Home Based Care (THBC) is a type of care that involves the provision of 1:1 homebased care to high needs children and young people. THBC differs from other types of care as children and young people receive the therapeutic services determined by the Ten Essential Elements of the Intensive Therapeutic care (ITC) system. Examples of why a child or young person may require THBC includes a range of complex behaviours related to the child or young persons experience of developmental trauma or children and young people with high medical needs or having a diagnosed disability - or a combination of these.

## **Kinship Care**

Kinship care is a type of care where the carers are known and familiar to a child or young person or their parents. They may have a pre-existing relationship with the child, or be a member of the child or young person's extended family. Kinship carers can provide any of the types of care outlined above, excluding Caring with a view to Adoption.

## **Long Term Care**

This type of care is for children who cannot live with their parents for the foreseeable future and need a care arrangement until circumstances change or they turn 18 years. Children needing this type of care have usually experienced significant trauma and the court has intervened stating they are unable to return to the care of their parents. Carers will need to work together with Anglicare, the child's family and others in decision making about the child.

Children in long-term care maintain connections with their parents, family and kin. Carers are an important part of supporting these connections.

All long term care arrangements should have a view to supporting legal permanency



### ***Caring with a view to guardianship***

After establishing a relationship with a child a carer can apply, to become the child's guardian until the child turns 18 years. This application requires further assessment and the support of Anglicare and the department. This is an Order that is made by the court if the carer can demonstrate they are able to meet the child's needs without support from an agency. An important part of the guardianship process is demonstrating the connection between the child and their parents, family and kin.

### ***Caring with a view to open adoption***

After establishing a relationship with a child a foster carer can apply to adopt the child (please note: adoption is not appropriate in kinship care). This application requires further assessment and the support of Anglicare and the department. This is an order that is made by the court if a carer can demonstrate that they are able to independently meet the needs of the child without the support from the agency. An important part of the adoption process is demonstrating the connection between the child and their parents, family and kin.

## **What are the criteria for being a carer?**

### **Age**

Anglicare does not have rigid requirements regarding the upper age limit for carers but is focused on the health and wellbeing of the carer related to the type of care they may be provide, and the age of the child or young person they may care for.

The minimum age of a carer is 21, on occasions there may be exceptions to this requirement related to the individual carer's life experience or particular family situation.

### **Relationship Status**

Anglicare actively promotes the recruitment of single people as well as couples including those who are married, living in de facto arrangements and couples living in same sex relationships to be carers.

For those people who are in a relationship and applying together, there is an expectation that they will have been in a relationship for a minimum of 12 months and have been living together for at least 6 months.

### **Children in the home**

Where there are existing children residing in the home of the carer, it is recommended that there is a two year age gap between the youngest child in the home, and the eldest child the carers are able to care for. For this reason, carers will generally not be authorised if they have a child under two years old.

### **Fertility (where infertility is an issue)**

Carers need to demonstrate an acceptance of their infertility and an understanding of the impact of infertility upon each of them as an individual and as a family. As such in order to be considered for long term care, prospective carer/s should have concluded fertility treatments for a minimum of 12 months prior to progressing their application. If you feel you are ready to commence caring we would welcome a further discussion with you regarding your fertility journey.

## **Health**

It is important that carers are healthy (both physically and mentally) to ensure that they are able to meet the needs of children and young people. All carers are required to complete a health self-assessment and a medical check with their GP as part of the assessment process.

Anglicare strongly encourages all foster and kinship carers to be vaccinated against COVID-19. We also recommend that carers be vaccinated for other common illnesses such as Influenza and Whooping Cough (Pertussis).

If you smoke, you are required to adopt practices which limit children and young people's exposure to smoking. This would include not smoking inside, in a vehicle or confined spaces. Anglicare policy is also that ideally we would not support children aged under 3 years living with smokers.

## **Religious beliefs and supporting culture**

Anglicare encourages those from diverse backgrounds and beliefs to become carers. Anglicare tries to "match" carers and children based on particular needs, skills and characteristics. Anglicare does not require Authorised Carers to hold or practice particular religious beliefs to care for a child. However, carers must be able to encourage and support the beliefs and practices of children and young people in their care.

Anglicare is committed to ensuring children and young people from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds are cared for by people within their family, or who share their cultural background. Anglicare supports Aboriginal children also being supported by Aboriginal Community Controlled Agencies. If you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, we encourage you to consider applying to an Aboriginal Agency in the first instance. If you are uncertain, we would encourage you to talk with the Local Carer Support Team.

## **Work arrangements and financial support**

Carers may be employed in full-time, part-time, or casual work, unemployed, stay-at-home parent, or retired. The type of care a Carer can provide, (i.e. respite, temporary or long term), depends on the amount of time an carer is able to give to the child/ren in their care. For example, it may be possible to work full or part-time with a school aged child, but may not be possible for a child with more complex needs or very young children.

Anglicare Carers are considered as volunteers and therefore not entitled to employee benefits such as wages, holiday pay or long service leave. A carer allowance is paid to Authorised Carers to help support the child or young person. This allowance will help meet the day-to-day expenses of caring for a child or young person and is not considered as taxable income

## **Space in your home**

Carers should have adequate, safe and stable accommodation for a child. Anglicare believes that a separate bedroom is appropriate for a child in care. We understand that not all families have the ability to accommodate separate bedrooms for children. In some cases it may be appropriate for siblings to share a bedrooms.

Carers do not need to own their home, however Anglicare will be looking to understand the stability of your current accommodation and how there would be adequate stability, space and privacy for a child or young person.

## **Residence/Citizenship**

If you would like to provide long term or permanent care, one authorised carer must be a permanent resident or a citizen of Australia. This is to ensure stability for a child or young person in care.

If you are on a temporary visa, or are not a permanent resident, then emergency, interim or respite care are options that you could consider



## **Probity Checks**

All carers are required to undergo a variety of probity checks, these checks are mandated by legislation and include a NSW Working with Children Check, a National Criminal Record Check, and a NSW Community Services Check, which explores the carers history with the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ, previously known as FACS or DoCS). If you have been a carer or an applicant with another agency, Anglicare are also required to undertake checks with those agencies.

You don't need to do anything now regarding these checks, and the team will take you through these further if you decide to progress to the next step.

## **First Aid**

Anglicare supports all carers to be able to meet the needs of children and young people including if they have an accident or illness. We require carers to obtain a minimum "Caring for Kids" first aid certificate from St Johns Ambulance (other certified First Aid training is also suitable). This is something that you can complete after you apply to become a carer.

# The Process of Becoming a Carer

Becoming a carer involves a number of steps.



## STEP 1 - Enquiry

Once you have enquired and received this pack, we encourage you and members of your household to read it thoroughly. Our team will follow up with you to ensure that you have received this pack and to assist you with any further questions you may have

Note: If you have received this pack but have not yet lodged an enquiry, we encourage you to reach out to us via the online enquiry form, email or phone us via the details on page 18.



## STEP 2 - Information Sharing Session

Following your enquiry, if you are still interested in becoming a carer, the team will follow up with you to arrange an "Information Sharing Session". The "Information Sharing Session" gives you and the people in your household an opportunity to meet with the team from Anglicare and ask any additional questions you may have.

At this session we will also want to find out more about you and will provide you with an application form and talk to you about the next stages of the process and discuss the required background checks.





### **STEP 3 - Assessment and Training**

After this session you can decide whether you wish to continue the process of becoming a carer by participating in a training program and a series of assessment conversations. The assessment conversations are not something you pass or fail. We work with you to discover together whether caring is a suitable option for you at this time.



### **STEP 4 - Approval**

Once you have been approved as an Authorised Carer, you will be approached when a child or young person is matched with the type of care you can provide. As a carer you receive ongoing training and support from our agency.

## Our Locations

Anglicare NSW South, NSW West & ACT has more than 50 locations which provide a range of community services for individuals and families in all stages of life.

Our foster care office locations include Liverpool, Nowra, Moruya, Bega, Wagga Wagga and Albury. To become a foster carer with Anglicare, you must live within a 1.5-2 hour drive from any of our foster care office to ensure our team can best support you.

Please note: due to the proximity to Anglicare Sydney, our offices in Liverpool and Nowra operate under the name St Saviours rather than Anglicare NSW South, NSW West & ACT.

## Submit an Enquiry

If you have received this pack but have not yet lodged an enquiry, we encourage you to reach out to us via the online enquiry form, email or phone us. To submit an enquiry, scan the QR code below or visit [www.anglicare.com.au/carerenquiry](http://www.anglicare.com.au/carerenquiry)

**P** 1300 990 770

**E** [fostering@anglicare.com.au](mailto:fostering@anglicare.com.au)



**SCAN THIS QR CODE TO SUBMIT A  
FOSTER CARE ENQUIRY FORM**



## Albury

1/ 564-566 Olive Street  
Albury NSW 2640

**P** (02) 6075 9300

## Bega

78 Auckland Street  
Bega NSW 2550

**P** (02) 4475 0900

## Liverpool

1/106 Moore Street  
Liverpool NSW 2170

**P** (02) 9612 3900

## Moruya

50 Campbell Street  
Moruya NSW 2537

**P** (02) 4475 0900

## Nowra

74 Berry Street  
Nowra NSW 2541

**P** (02) 4422 0488

## Wagga Wagga

6-12 Church Street  
Wagga Wagga NSW 2650

**P** (02) 6937 1555



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