

**LIFE
WITHOUT
BARRIERS**



Care 2 Thrive

An enhanced foster care program

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What is Care 2 Thrive?

Care 2 Thrive is an enhanced therapeutic foster care program developed to provide a safe, stable and supportive family-based care environment for children and young people transitioning from residential or other non-family-based care arrangements. The program offers increased therapeutic and practical supports, specialist training and coaching in evidence-based models and programs with an enhanced tax-free foster care reimbursement.

The program supports children displaying pain-based behaviour to positively alter their experiences of relationships and improve the stability and consistency of family and community connections. The program is based on providing the opportunity for children and young people to thrive through a return to family-based settings and supportive networks, creating

the opportunity for healing through normalised childhood experiences.

With a step-down model of support, as the child or young person's needs stabilise over a 12-to-18-month period, the Care 2 Thrive program will actively engage with the child's family and community, while listening to the child's wishes, to work towards sustainable permanency options. In exceptional circumstances, the Care 2 Thrive model may continue beyond 18 months. These permanency options may include:




- Family restoration
- Kinship care (stability within current kin placement or transition to kin)
- Longer term family-based care (stability within current placement or transition to another)
- Transition to independence.

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How is Care 2 Thrive different from other foster care programs?

Care 2 Thrive is unique in that it has been developed specifically to support children and young people currently living in non-family-based care arrangements and those experiencing significant placement instability.

In addition to increased therapeutic and practical in-home support, carers will receive an enhanced foster care allowance for the period they are engaged with the program and while a child is placed in their care. This will support the requirement to meet the increased daily care costs and for carers to be fully available to build relationships, engage therapeutically and support care plan goals for a child or young person with complex support needs.

	Care 2 Thrive	General Foster Care
Children & Young People in care 	Specifically developed for children and young people currently living in residential or other non-family based care arrangements and those experiencing significant placement instability.	No specific cohort or age of children and young people.
Supports 	Increased therapeutic and practical in-home support and coaching matched to the needs of the child or young person.	Less intensive support.
Reimbursement 	<p>Carers receive an enhanced allowance to help cover the anticipated out-of-pocket costs associated with providing care for children with complex behaviour, high medical needs and disability.</p> <p>Enhanced reimbursement amounts differ depending on the arrangements made in your state or territory.</p>	Carers receive a tax-free allowance to help cover the anticipated out-of-pocket costs associated with caring for children with less intensive needs.

What supports do Care 2 Thrive Carers receive?

Both the child and the carer will have access to individualised wrap-around therapeutic supports as appropriate to their holistic needs.

Practical support can also be provided and may include transporting, tutoring and household chores as required. The service will engage appropriately skilled and qualified staff to support the development and coordination of individually tailored therapeutic support and care plans. This support may include scheduled times outside of business hours and will also include weekends as determined through the therapeutic care plan. Direct support hours will range between 5 and 15 hours per week and will be provided in a variety of environments (inside the home, outside the home, at school, at office) dependent on the identified need.

An enhanced carer allowance or reimbursement for a child with complex needs or with disability or high medical needs, will be provided directly to the carer. The amount of allowance is determined based on the specific circumstances and care needs of the child and is inclusive of the standard allowance currently received by carers.

This enhanced allowance supports meeting the increased costs of caring for a child with complex needs and ensuring kinship and foster carers have the resources to provide the intensive support and care required.

Step-Down Support Model

Care 2 Thrive will step-down support intensity as children stabilise and transition into their permanency arrangement, which may include continuing to live with their current carer family. Direct support to the carer and the child will vary between 5 and 15 hours per week, depending on the phase of the program and the needs of the individual child and carer. The enhanced allowance will be available for as long as the needs of the child meet the threshold for the Care 2 Thrive program.

With a step-down model of support, as the child or young person's needs stabilise over a 12 to 18-month period, the Care 2 Thrive program will actively engage with the child's family and community, while listening to the child's wishes, to work towards sustainable permanency options which may include family restoration; kinship care; longer term family-based care and transition to independence. In exceptional circumstances, the Care 2 Thrive model may continue beyond 18 months.



Care 2 Thrive is guided by four key principles that underpin the building of a therapeutic relationship and environment in which a child or young person can grow.

Care 2 Thrive Program Principles



Trauma-informed and evidence-based practice

CARE is our organisational model guiding all interactions with children, young people and families. CARE practically applies research and evidence to build knowledge and inform approaches that will create the conditions and experiences required for real and sustained change in a child's life. This provides a consistent, structured and cohesive approach, in which carers and/or kin are coached to enhance their interactions with children and young people to provide an enriched and therapeutic care environment.



Culturally safe and inclusive practice

Connection with culture, kin, community and country is a strength. Care 2 Thrive supports the strengthening of cultural identity and connection for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. The program will engage in cultural support planning and partner with families and community to support cultural connection, engagement and kin finding.



Family inclusion and connection

When children have good relationships with their families, they have better experiences in care and after care including improved safety, sustainability and felt security. By connecting parents with support and advocacy, we empower them to play active roles in their children's lives and improve the chance of reunification.



Child and young person involved

Care 2 Thrive meaningfully engages children and young people through participation in assessment, planning and decision-making processes.

Who can be a Care 2 Thrive Carer?

Care 2 Thrive Carers:



Can be single or partnered, from any cultural, ethnic or religious background, of any sexual orientation and of any gender identity



Can be kinship carers, other people known to a child or an approved carer unknown to the child



Must be consistently available to meet the high and complex needs of these children or young people.



Must be willing to engage with required training (CARE and TCI) and assessment processes to become an Authorised Carer.



Be willing to engage with additional training to meet the specific needs of identified children and young people



Must work collaboratively with Therapeutic Specialist and care teams.

Care 2 Thrive Carers must also be able to meet the requirements of general foster care applicants, meaning they:



Hold an unrestricted Drivers Licence and access to comprehensively insured vehicle



Preferably 25 years or older



Have a spare bedroom available



Be an Australian Citizen or Permanent Resident



If applying to care as a couple, have been in a committed relationship for at least 2 years



Hold a current Working With Children/ Vulnerable Persons Clearance/Blue Card



Be willing to undergo necessary background checks.

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We acknowledge the importance of preserving and enhancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's sense of identity by maintaining their connections with family, community, and culture.

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