

# CARE

[lwb.org.au](http://lwb.org.au)

## **What is it to be “Relationship Based”?**

A core principle of the CARE Model, our guide to how we care for children and young people, is to be Relationship Based. We know that relationships are the foundation for creating safe and nurturing bonds with children and young people, and helps them navigate the world around them, both now and into their future as adults.

For children and young people in care relationships can be tricky, and building trust takes time.

An important role for Carers is promoting a safe relationship that allows children and young people to learn to relate to their worlds in a positive way, which needs an approach of patience, unconditional positive regard and empathy. Building a trusting relationship is the first step and it is from this relationship that Carers are best able to influence children's positive growth and the confidence to learn and explore the world around them.

### **CARE helps us to think about 'developmental relationships' which are characterised by:**



**Attachment** – being available, sensitive and accepting develops an emotional connection and provides a secure base for children to develop and grow.



**Reciprocity** – adult/child relationships where there is 'give and take' such as throwing a ball together, negotiating expectations, sharing jokes and doing fun activities together.



**Progressive complexity** – through shared activities with the child, Carers can assess the child's competence and can adjust expectations and tasks and the level of support so the child successfully learns more complex skills.



**Balance of power** – Carers focus on supporting the child's needs and adjusting expectations, and with this the child can apply more emotional and behavioural control, experience success and rely more on their self-regulation and independent skills.

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**Children need trusting,  
meaningful relationships.**

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In considering your readiness to start the journey of becoming a Carer at Life Without Barriers, it's helpful to think about the quality of relationships within your life, how you might be able to create a safe and nurturing space that helps children and young people develop relationships of trust and healing.

**Some questions to consider are:**

- 1.** Think about a person in your upbringing who had a positive influence on your life.
- 2.** What memories, thoughts or feelings are still with you today when you think about this relationship?
- 3.** What meaningful relationships might a child in care have? What could be done to encourage these relationships to be positive and enduring?
- 4.** How could a history of broken relationships or disrupted attachments explain any difficulties a child is having making new relationships?
- 5.** In what ways could you help a child in your care build trust in you?

**Change is never easy. CARE offers us new and different ways to create the conditions for change in children and young people. We focus first on building healthy relationships that encourage the child to take risks in a supportive environment. Are you ready to be that safe space for a child to explore their world?**



# LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS

## Contact us

For more information on any of the services provided by Life Without Barriers, please contact us on:

**1300 592 227**



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