

# RESOURCE BOOKLETS for Kinship Carers

**Support for  
informal kinship  
carers**

**2025**



GPV/KCV acknowledges the peoples of the Kulin nation as the traditional owners of our great land and offers respect to Elders, past and present.

GPV/KCV acknowledges that the Aboriginal culture existed in Australia before European settlement and consisted of many community groups. Further, we acknowledge the Indigenous peoples of this land as the oldest continuing cultures in human history.

GPV/KCV acknowledges that laws and policies of the past have inflicted grief and suffering on our fellow Australians and regrets the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families.

GPV/KCV believes that a society that is inclusive of all is crucial to individual and community wellbeing and will behave with respect towards all irrespective of their race, religion, sexuality, gender or socio-economic background.

GPV/KCV acknowledges 13th of February as National Apology Day, the anniversary of then Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, delivering the National Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples in 2008. GPV/KCV will take steps that promote a happier and healthier future for Indigenous Australians, particularly the children and young people.

Ph: 0499 969 234

Email: [admin@kinshipcarersvictoria.org](mailto:admin@kinshipcarersvictoria.org)

[www.grandparentsvictoria.org.au](http://www.grandparentsvictoria.org.au)

[www.kinshipcarersvictoria.org](http://www.kinshipcarersvictoria.org)

Key words which influence GPV/KCV approaches are: Truthfulness, Confidentiality, Inclusiveness, Integrity, Constancy, Gratitude, Commitment, Compassion

Kinship Carers Victoria  
acknowledges the support of the  
Victorian Government.



# Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>PART 1 – COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE</b>                              | <b>5</b>  |
| Australian Government Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Advisers | 6         |
| Australian Government FAMILY TAX BENEFIT                             | 7         |
| Australian Government CHILD CARE SUBSIDY                             | 7         |
| Australian Government ADDITIONAL CHILD CARE SUBSIDY (GRANDPARENT)    | 8         |
| Australian Government DOUBLE ORPHAN PENSION                          | 8         |
| Australian Government PARENTAL LEAVE PAY                             | 8         |
| Australian Government DAD AND PARTNER PAY                            | 9         |
| Australian Government CONCESSION AND HEALTH CARE CARDS               | 9         |
| Australian Government MEDICARE BENEFITS                              | 10        |
| Australian CHILD DENTAL BENEFITS SCHEDULE                            | 10        |
| Australian Government CHILD SUPPORT                                  | 10        |
| Australian Government ADDITIONAL CHILD CARE SUBSIDY                  | 11        |
| Australian Government CARER PAYMENT                                  | 12        |
| Australian Government CARER ALLOWANCE                                | 12        |
| Australian Government RENT ASSISTANCE                                | 13        |
| Australian Government PARENTING PAYMENT                              | 14        |
| Australian Government JOBSEEKER PAYMENT                              | 14        |
| Australian Government CENTREPAY                                      | 15        |
| BEREAVEMENT ASSISTANCE   | 15        |
| Australian Government Social Workers                                 | 16        |
| Australian Government Interpreter Service                            | 16        |
| <b>PART 2 – VICTORIAN ASSISTANCE</b>                                 | <b>17</b> |
| Victorian Government EARLY START KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM                | 18        |
| Victorian Government BEREAVEMENT ASSISTANCE                          | 18        |
| Victorian Government CAMPS, SPORTS & EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)          | 19        |
| Victorian Government TRANSPORT CONCESSIONS                           | 19        |
| Victorian Government STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS                            | 20        |
| Victorian Government NO-INTEREST LOAN SCHEME                         | 20        |
| Victorian Government CARER CARD                                      | 21        |
| Victorian Government COMPANION CARD                                  | 22        |
| Victorian Government KIDS' VOUCHER PROGRAM                           | 23        |
| Victorian STATE SCHOOLS' RELIEF FUND                                 | 24        |
| Victorian Government ONLINE SAFETY FOR CARERS & CHILDREN             | 25        |
| <b>PART 3 – NON-GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE</b>                            | <b>27</b> |
| Parentline   | 28        |
| Womens Legal Service Victoria  | 28        |
| Partners in Wellbeing  | 29        |
| Abracadabra Childcare Services                                       | 29        |
| Family Contact Service   | 30        |
| Family Relationships Online  | 31        |
| Dardi Munwurro Brother to Brother 24-Hour Crisis Line                | 31        |
| Embrace Multicultural Mental Health                                  | 32        |
| Team Sports 4 All  | 33        |
| Early Parenting Centres (EPCs)                                       | 34        |
| Griefline  | 35        |
| Steps to speaking up   | 36        |



Kinship Carers Victoria  
0499 969 234  
admin@kinshipcarersvictoria.org  
kinshipcarersvictoria.org



<https://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/podcasts-videos/>

# Part 1

# Commonwealth

# Assistance



## Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Advisers

Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Advisers provide extra support for formal and informal carers who provide ongoing care for children.

They can help you with all of the following:

- getting tailored information about payments and support services based on your family circumstances
- arranging appointments with specialist staff, including social workers
- getting referrals to federal, state and community service providers
- accessing Medicare, Child Support and Centrelink information and payments.

For more information about assistance available for grandparent, foster and kinship carers, go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)

To speak to a Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser, call Freecall™ **1800 245 965**.

## Australian Government FAMILY TAX BENEFIT

Family Tax Benefit (FTB) helps with the cost of raising children. It's made up of two parts:

- FTB Part A for each child. The amount carers receive depends on the family's circumstances.
- FTB Part B provides extra assistance to single parents, non-parent carers (including grandparents) and some coupled families with one main income earner.

If a child under one comes into care or carers adopt a child of any age, FTB Part A may increase. This increase is **Newborn Supplement** and will last for up to 13 weeks. If carers receive Newborn Supplement carers will also receive **Newborn Upfront Payment** as a one-off payment.

### For more information

- Go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- Call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

## Australian Government CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

Child Care Subsidy gives carers assistance with the cost of child care. Centrelink pay it directly to the care provider to reduce the fees carers pay. children needs to be attending approved child care to be eligible.

Approved child care may include outside school hours care, family day care, vacation care, long day care, in-home care and some occasional-care services.

If carers are eligible for Child Care Subsidy, they receive extra help with the cost of approved child care. To receive this payment, carers need to be one of the following:

- an eligible grandparent getting an income support payment
- transitioning from certain income support payments to work
- experiencing temporary financial hardship
- caring for a child who is vulnerable or at risk of harm, abuse or neglect.

### For more information

- Go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- Call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

## Australian Government CHILD CARE SUBSIDY (GRANDPARENT)

Carers may be able to receive additional assistance called **Additional Child Care Subsidy (Grandparent)** for grandparents and great grandparents who:

- have 65% or more care of a grandchild or great grandchild
- receive an income support payment, and
- make the day-to-day decisions about the child's care, welfare and development.

It provides extra help with the cost of approved child care. If carers aren't on an income support payment they won't be eligible for Additional Child Care Subsidy (Grandparent). However, carers may still be eligible for Child Care Subsidy.

### For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

## Australian Government DOUBLE ORPHAN PENSION

Double Orphan Pension helps with the costs of caring for children who are orphans, or who can't be cared for by their parents. There's no income or assets test for this payment.

### For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

## Australian Government PARENTAL LEAVE PAY

Parental Leave Pay may support carers taking time off work to care for a newborn or recently adopted child. If carers aren't the birth mother or adoptive parent, they may only receive Parental Leave Pay in exceptional circumstances.

If eligible, carers could receive up to 18 Centrelink weeks Parental Leave Pay at the rate of the national minimum wage.

### For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

## Australian Government DAD AND PARTNER PAY

Carers or their partner may be eligible for **Dad and Partner Pay** if they take time off work to care for a newborn or recently adopted child. If eligible, carers may receive up to two weeks' Dad and Partner Pay at the rate of the national minimum wage.

### For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

## Australian Government CONCESSION AND HEALTH CARE CARDS

These cards give carers access to some cheaper medicines under the:

- Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)
- medical services funded by the Australian Government.

Carers may also have access to other concessions provided by state, territory and local governments. Carers may already have a **Health Care Card** or a **Pensioner Concession Card** if carers receive a payment.

If carers aren't receiving a payment from Centrelink, they may still be eligible for a **Low Income Health Care Card**.

If carers are caring for someone else's child, such as a grandchild, carers may be eligible for a **Foster Child Health Care Card**. There isn't an income or assets test for the Foster Child Health Care Card. Centrelink issue it in the name of the child carers care for. Carers must apply for a new card for any child coming into your care.

### For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

## Australian Government MEDICARE BENEFITS

Carers may claim Medicare benefits for a child they are caring for if they are the person who paid for the service. They don't need to be registered on your Medicare card. To claim Medicare benefits for them, carers need to provide Centrelink with:

- the child's Medicare number
- an account or receipt with the child listed as the patient, and
- your Medicare number

Where carers have high out-of-hospital medical expenses, the **Medicare Safety Net** may help carers cover some of these costs. To be eligible to receive Medicare Safety Net benefits for a child, who is in your full-time care, carers must have legal authority for the child and the child must be registered in your Safety Net family.

The **PBS Safety Net** may also help your family with the cost of some medicines.

### For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

## Australian CHILD DENTAL BENEFITS SCHEDULE

The **Child Dental Benefits Schedule** provides eligible children with benefits for basic dental services, capped at \$1000 per child over two consecutive calendar years. Carers may confirm the eligibility and balance amount for a child in their care by accessing their Medicare online account through myGov or by calling 132 011.

### For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

## Australian Government CHILD SUPPORT

Grandparents or non-parents caring for children may be able to receive child support from one or both parents of the children. Centrelink include child support as income when calculating the rate of FTB Centrelink pay

### For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

# Australian Government

## ADDITIONAL CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

The Additional Child Care Subsidy is a payment for families who need practical help with the cost of child care to support their child's wellbeing.

If a parent feels they need help to support their child's wellbeing, it is a good idea to tell their child care provider. The provider may tell parents if their child could benefit from Additional Child Care Subsidy.

If the provider determines eligibility for Additional Child Care Subsidy, parents may receive a higher subsidy for up to six Centrelink weeks. If the provider thinks this subsidy is needed for more than six Centrelink weeks, they may apply to Centrelink to approve Additional Child Care Subsidy for longer periods.

Families are exempt from the Child Care Subsidy activity test for any child that is eligible for the Additional Child Care Subsidy. This means they will be entitled to access up to 100 hours of subsidised child care per fortnight, regardless of their activity.

The Additional Child Care Subsidy is paid directly to approved child care services to reduce the cost of child care for eligible families. Eligible families will receive a subsidy equal to the actual fee charged by the child care service, up to 120 per cent of the

If the provider has determined that a child is no longer eligible, they will notify Centrelink and the Additional Child Care Subsidy will cease. The family may still be eligible to receive the Child Care Subsidy.

### For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.



## Australian Government CARER PAYMENT

This is a payment if carers give constant care to someone who has a severe disability, illness, or an adult who is frail aged.

To get this, carers must:

- be an Australian resident
- care for someone who is an Australian resident
- care for one or more people who have care need scores high enough on the assessment tools used for an adult or child
- care for someone who'll have these needs for at least 6 months
- be under the pension income and assets test limits.

Both the carer and the person they are providing care for need to be eligible.

A child younger than 16 must meet all the following:

- have a score high enough on the **Disability Care Load Assessment (Child) Determination 2020 (DCLAD)**
- have an illness or disability likely to last at least 6 months, or have a terminal illness
- need care in their home or in hospital.

The DCLAD has questions both the carer and treating health professional must answer.

Even if the person getting care has lower care needs Centrelink may pay Carer Payment for either:

- 2 to 4 children younger than 16 whose needs equal 1 child with severe needs
- 1 or 2 children younger than 16 and 1 adult whose needs equal 1 child with severe needs.

### For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

## Australian Government CARER ALLOWANCE

This is a payment for people who give additional daily care to someone with a disability or medical condition, or an adult who is frail aged. People who receive a Carer Payment for a child younger than 16, do not need to claim Carer Allowance.

You must complete a claim for Carer Allowance if you're providing care for either:

- a person 16 or older
- a child younger than 16 and you don't get Carer Payment for them.

To get this you must:

- care for someone whose care needs score is high enough on the adult or child assessment tools
- care for someone who'll have these needs for at least 12 months
- meet an income test.

### For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

# Australian Government RENT ASSISTANCE

The amount of Rent Assistance paid depends on how much rent is paid. There's a minimum amount of rent applicants need to pay to get Rent Assistance.

Applicants may receive Rent Assistance if they rent and are receiving:

- Age Pension, Carer Payment or Disability Support Pension
- ABSTUDY Living Allowance, Austudy or Youth Allowance
- Special Benefit
- Family Tax Benefit - Part A at more than the base rate
- Parenting Payment partnered and single
- JobSeeker Payment or Farm Household Allowance.

Applicants must also be paying one of the following:

- rent
- fees in a retirement village
- lodging
- board and lodging
- site or mooring fees if your main home is a caravan, relocatable home or a boat.

## For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.



## Australian Government PARENTING PAYMENT

This is the main income support payment while you're a young child's main carer.

To get this payment, carers must meet all of the following:

- be under the income and asset test limits
- meet principal carer rules for a child under 8 if you're single, or under 6 if you have a partner
- meet residence rules
- your partner is not currently getting Parenting Payment.

Parenting Payment is a separate payment from **Family Tax Benefit** and **Parental Leave Pay**.

### For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

## Australian Government JOBSEEKER PAYMENT

This payment is financial help for people between 22 and **Age Pension** age and looking for work. It's also for when you're sick or injured and can't do your usual work or study for a short time.

To get JobSeeker Payment, carers need to meet some conditions. These include:

- being between 22 and Age Pension age
- meeting some the income and assets tests
- meeting residence rules.

JobSeeker Payment may affect the child support payments you make or receive. You need to tell Centrelink if your income changes.

### For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

## Australian Government CENTREPAY

CentrePAY is a free bill paying service enabling regular deductions from your Centrelink payment regular bills and other ongoing expenses, such as rent, electricity and phone.

### For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

## BEREAVEMENT ASSISTANCE

Centrelink provides payments and services that may help when someone close to the carer dies. The type and amount of bereavement assistance available depends on all of the following:

- individual circumstances
- relationship to the person who died
- timing of reporting the person's death

There are different types of bereavement assistance depending on your situation and the situation of the person who died, including whether it was an adult or a child/young person in your care

### For more information

- go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/grandparentcarers) or [servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/nonparentcarers)
- call the Grandparent, Foster and Kinship Carer Adviser free on **1800 245 965**.

## Australian Government SOCIAL WORKERS

Social workers may provide short term counselling and information to help carers through a difficult time. Social workers may also connect carers with other support and services.

To speak to a social worker call **132 850** or visit a service centre.

## Australian Government INTERPRETER SERVICE

Centrelink provides free interpreters and translated information including videos, audio and written products.

If carers are claiming a payments or service, Centrelink may also translate documents free of charge

Call Centrelink on **131 202** to speak to someone in your language about Centrelink payments and services.

For help with Medicare or Child Support services call the **Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)** on **131 450**.

# Part 2

# Victorian Assistance



## Victorian Government EARLY START KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

**Early Start Kindergarten** provides free kindergarten to eligible three-year-old children where programs are offered by a qualified teacher. Children can also access free or low cost Four-Year-Old Kindergarten through the Early Start Kindergarten Extension Grant.

Eligible children must be aged three by 30 April in the year they will be attending kindergarten, and:

- from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or
- your family has had contact with Child Protection (or been referred to Child FIRST), or
- your child is Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

Applications for Early Start Kindergarten funding are made by the service on your behalf and the grant is paid directly to the service. Carers may enrol your child by contacting a kindergarten service near carers and asking to access Early Start Kindergarten. Alternatively, your Child FIRST or Child Protection worker may do this on your behalf, or a Koorie Engagement Support Officer (KESO) in your nearest Department of Education & Training office may help carers apply.

### Further information

Visit <https://www.vic.gov.au/early-start-kindergarten>

Contact your regional Department of Education & Training office (see below for contact details of regional offices)

North-Eastern Victoria – Benalla **8392 9502** / Glen Waverley **8392 9300**

North-Western Victoria – Bendigo **5440 3111** / Coburg **9488 9488** /

Greensborough **8468 9200**

South-Eastern Victoria – Dandenong **8765 5600** / Moe **5127 0400**

South-Western Victoria – Ballarat **5337 8444** / Geelong **5225 1000** / Footscray **8397 0300**

## Victorian Government BEREAVEMENT ASSISTANCE

Victorians experiencing financial hardship can still give loved ones an inexpensive and dignified funeral.

Bereavement Assistance is a not-for-profit funeral director, registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

They provide low-cost, dignified funeral services for those in the Victorian community who have limited or no funds and where the alternative is a 'pauper burial' or an expensive funeral that relatives or friends cannot afford.

For more information visit <https://bereavementassistance.org.au/> or call **(03) 9564 7778** (24 hours). After business hours calls will be transferred to a funeral director's mobile phone.

## Victorian Government CAMPS, SPORTS & EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)

The CSEF provides payments to assist eligible families to cover the costs of camps, sporting activities and excursions.

Payments are made directly to an eligible student's school. Schools must use a CSEF payment only for the eligible student and not for that student's siblings or any other student (except where the eligible student leaves the Victorian education system and there are remaining and unspent funds).

Some common examples of school-organised programs for which a CSEF payment may be used include:

- school camps/trips
- swimming and other school-organised sporting programs
- outdoor education programs
- excursions/incursions.

Schools will need an agreement with parents before allocating CSEF and a credit note will stay on the family account until the family advises the school how they want the funds allocated.

For more information and to apply, visit the CSEF web page: <https://www.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund>

## Victorian Government TRANSPORT CONCESSIONS

In Victoria, all students aged 18 and under can travel on public transport at a concession rate using a Child myki, with only those aged 17 and 18 required to carry government-issued proof of age ID or proof of concession entitlement. All students are eligible to apply for a PTV School Student ID or PTV Approved School Student ID, one of which is necessary for purchasing a Victorian Student Pass.

For more information see: <http://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/myki/concessions-and-free-travel/children-and-students/school-students>

In country areas and some outer metropolitan areas, students who reside 4.8 km or more from their nearest Catholic school may be eligible for transport assistance. In locations where there is not enough demand to run a free school bus service, the Victorian Government provides a conveyance allowance to help with travel costs.

For more information, first contact your child's school. If further information is required, see [www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/conveyance-allowance/policy](http://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/conveyance-allowance/policy) or [www.ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/regional-tickets/victorian-school-buses/school-bus-program](http://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/regional-tickets/victorian-school-buses/school-bus-program).

## Victorian Government STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

The Department of Education manages a range of scholarships on behalf of various trusts.

### Eligibility

Scholarships support students and families to assist with the cost of education and engagement in further study at primary, secondary and tertiary level.

Scholarships are available for students:

- studying in Victoria and who are citizens or permanent residents of Australia
- enrolled in Years 4 to 11
- enrolled in Year 12 who plan on undertaking tertiary studies.

Scholarships are awarded to students who can demonstrate:

- excellent academic achievement
- participation in school and local community activities
- financial need as determined by the parent or carer receiving a Centrelink income support payment, or the student themselves receiving the Youth Allowance.

For more information, see <https://www.vic.gov.au/student-scholarships> or <https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/scholarships/>. For further advice, email [studentscholarships@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:studentscholarships@education.vic.gov.au)

## Victorian Government NO-INTEREST LOAN SCHEME (NILS)

Victorians suffering financial hardship may be eligible for a no interest loan for the purchase of essential goods and services. Loans are available up to \$2,000 for essential goods and services including:

- Household essentials
- Car repairs and registration
- Medical & dental
- Technology
- Housing
- Education

Note that the loans are not for cash. If your loan application is successful, Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand will make a payment for the items (or services) for you.

To be eligible for a loan, you must:

- Have a Health Care Card / Pension Card, or
- Earn less than \$70,000 gross annual income as a single or \$100,000 gross annual income as a couple or people with dependants, and
- You can show that you have the capacity to repay the loan.

More information and to apply with NILS: phone **13 NILS (13 64 57)** or visit the NILS website: <https://goodshep.org.au/services/nils/>

# The Victorian Carer Card

The Victorian Carer Card recognises the significant contribution carers make to the lives of people they care for and the communities in which they live. Carers can use the card independently of the person in their care.

There are more than 4,000 participating businesses whose discounts are now available to Carer Card holders. These include discounts on a range of goods and services like eating out, shopping, getting help with your finances, or even leisure and recreation activities. There are also new carer transport concessions now available for Carer Card holders.



## How do I apply for a Carer Card?

It's easy and free to apply for the card, [applications can be made online](#) or sent in by downloading the [Carer Card application form](#) (pdf, 160kb) or you can call the Carer Card team on 1800 901 958 and they will send you one. Applications may take four to six weeks to process.

Carer cards are valid for either one or five years, depending on the situation.

## Manage your Carer Card details online

Update or renew your carer card details at Manage your account. This is also where to go if you have lost your card. <https://www.carercard.vic.gov.au/manage-your-account>

## Who is eligible to receive a Carer Card?

To be eligible for a Carer Card you must be a resident of Victoria and either:

- the primary carer of a person with a disability, severe medical condition or mental illness, or someone who is frail aged or in need of palliative care
- a foster, **kinship** or respite carer.

You can confirm your eligibility by:

- providing your Centrelink Customer Reference Number (CRN) or your Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Vendor Number if you receive a carer payment or allowance
- having a medical professional verify your eligibility.
- Professional carers that receive a wage for providing care are not eligible.
- Eligible carers are welcome to [apply online](#) or you can download the [Carer Card Application Form](#) (PDF 159.4 KB).

To find out if you are eligible or to be sent an application form, contact the Carer Card team by email on [carercard@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:carercard@dffh.vic.gov.au) or call **1800 901 958**.

## Discounts for Carer Card holders

Carer Card holders can now enjoy most of the discounts available to Seniors Card holders in more than 4,000 participating businesses across Victoria.

The government has merged the Carer Card and Seniors Card discount directories so that Carer Card holders can access an even wider range of discounts, including:

- public transport
- eating out
- shopping
- getting help with your finances
- leisure and recreation activities like seeing a movie at a Village cinema.

## Discount directory

<https://www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/discount-directory>



This card is provided by the state government to people who have a significant and permanent disability and have a lifelong need for a high level of support in order to participate in community events and activities.

The card allows the person's carer free entry into participating venues and events and use all Victorian public transport services.

## Where is my companion card accepted?

Only a business who is an affiliate of the Companion Card is required to provide a ticket at no charge for your companion.

Participating organisations will usually display the distinctive Companion Card logo at the entrance of business premises or on their promotional and advertising material.

The Companion Card can be used on all Victorian public transport services.

<https://www.companioncard.vic.gov.au/where-can-i-use-my-card>

[https://www.companioncard.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/202104/Companion%20Card%20Affiliates%20list%20\\_alphabetised.pdf](https://www.companioncard.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/202104/Companion%20Card%20Affiliates%20list%20_alphabetised.pdf)

## How to apply

You can apply for a Companion Card using a hard copy form or you can apply online

<https://www.companioncard.vic.gov.au/how-apply>

## Who is eligible?

Find out about eligibility for a Companion Card here:

<https://www.companioncard.vic.gov.au/check-eligibility>

**1800 650 611**

**[companioncard@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:companioncard@dffh.vic.gov.au)**

**[www.companioncard.vic.gov.au](http://www.companioncard.vic.gov.au)**



**GET ACTIVE  
VICTORIA**

## KIDS VOUCHER PROGRAM

**Eligible children may receive a voucher to cover the costs for membership and registration fees of sporting clubs.**

### Is my child eligible for a voucher?

To be eligible for a voucher your child must be:

- aged 0 to 18 years, and
- a resident in Victoria, and
- named on a valid Australian Government Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card, and
- named on a valid Australian Government Medicare Card.

Special consideration may apply if your child doesn't meet the eligibility criteria but is aged 0 to 18 years, a resident in Victoria and meets one of the following criteria:

- child is currently residing in Victorian Care Services; or
- the child/family is a temporary or provisional visa holder, undocumented migrant or international student.

To be considered for special consideration email [getactivekids@sport.vic.gov.au](mailto:getactivekids@sport.vic.gov.au)

### What costs are covered?

Vouchers can be used to pay for membership, registration, or participation fees at a registered **Get Active Kids** sport or active recreation club, association or program.

If uniform and equipment are part of the membership or registration fee, a voucher can be used to pay for that uniform or equipment (for example, safety equipment, mouthguards).

### How to apply

Apply at <https://service.vic.gov.au/find-services/outdoor-and-recreation/get-active-kids> to receive your voucher to use with an approved activity provider.

Present the voucher code to your activity provider and get costs off the registration and membership fee (as well as any included uniforms and/or equipment).

You can apply for more than one voucher if you have more than one eligible child. You can apply for multiple children on the one application.

<https://www.getactive.vic.gov.au/vouchers/>

If you have questions or require further support,  
Phone: 1800 325 206 or Email: [getactivekids@sport.vic.gov.au](mailto:getactivekids@sport.vic.gov.au)





**STATE  
SCHOOLS'  
RELIEF**

Ensuring that every young person is able to participate with the same pride and dignity as their peers.



State Schools' Relief is a not-for-profit organisation that improves the lives of tens of thousands of disadvantaged Victorian students, and their families, each year.

SSR's simple and practical service ensures that all students can attend school in warmth and comfort with a greater sense of belonging and improved self-esteem, which in turn enhances their educational engagement.

### State Schools' Relief's principles

**UNITY**

**EQUALITY**

**DIGNITY**

**BELONGING**

**One in ten Victorian state school students are supported by State Schools' Relief.**

Issues such as poverty, neglect, family illness, abuse and homelessness continue to affect many Victorian families.

SSR provides government school students with new uniforms, footwear and educational resources, including learning devices.

SSR works side by side with all Victorian primary, secondary, specialist and language schools to ensure that any students facing hardship have the necessary items they require for school.

## How to apply

If you are a parent, carer or guardian and need of assistance with your child's government education, please speak with the school principal, assistant principal or welfare/wellbeing coordinator to discuss your child's requirements. The school can then place an application for assistance directly with SSR on the student's behalf.

Should you have questions regarding applications for SSR assistance, please contact your child's school directly.

Email: [contact@ssr.net.au](mailto:contact@ssr.net.au) | Phone: 03 8769 8400, 8.30am–4.30pm Mon-Fri

Website: <https://stateschoolsrelief.org.au/>



**eSafety**  
Commissioner

## Online safety for carers and children

### Information & resources

### Talking about online risks with your kids

Discussing online safety and sexual abuse online with your child can be daunting and difficult. eSafety has published a suite of new resources to help guide conversations with your children about online safety.

Talking regularly and openly with children about what they're doing online, how it makes them feel and who they're connecting with is one of the most effective ways to help protect them.

Tips for talking to 0 to 12-year-olds and 13 to 18-year-olds about child sexual abuse online

<https://esafety.cmail19.com/t/i-l-fykba-trltyhajt-h/>

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/issues-and-advice/protecting-children-from-sexual-abuse-online/talking-with-13-to-18>

### Free webinars for parents and carers

eSafety's live webinars give parents and carers the knowledge, skills and tools to support their children to have safe online experiences. Term 4 webinar dates are online.

#### Supporting healthy tech use as your child transitions into high school

· Thursday, 28 Nov, 12.30 pm AEDT

<https://esafety.cmail19.com/t/i-l-fykba-trltyhajt-n/>

#### eSafety 101: How eSafety can help

· Wednesday, 4 Dec, 12.30pm AEDT

### Free online learning for grandparents

If you know a grandparent wanting to increase their online knowledge, including how to spot scams and download useful apps, eSafety has a number of programs to support older Australians.

Digital skills can help bridge generational divides so help the grandparents in your family stay safe online with eSafety's Be Connected program.

<https://esafety.cmail19.com/t/i-l-fykba-trltyhajt-a/>



# **Part 3**

# **Non-Government**

# **Assistance**



## Parentline

Parentline is a phone service for parents and carers of children from birth to 18 years old. We offer confidential and anonymous counselling and support on parenting issues.

**Call 13 22 89 for support 8am to midnight 7 days/week**

### What services are available?

Parentline's qualified counsellors are available to:

- talk about any issues to do with parenting and your relationships with your child
- help you with ways to cope and be a positive parent
- help with your family's wellbeing and resilience
- connect you with services in your area.



## Women's Legal Service Victoria

<https://www.womenslegal.org.au>

Women's Legal Service Victoria is a not-for-profit organisation that has been providing free legal services to women since 1982.

**Call (03) 8622 0600 or toll free: 1800 133 302**

### What services are available?

They provide women experiencing relationship breakdown and family violence free legal support, advice, and representation. WLS prioritise support for people who are experiencing family violence and face other barriers to justice. This may include:

- having no or low income or access to money
- having limited access to other legal support
- not having secure housing
- being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- not speaking English or having English as a second language
- being on a temporary visa or not having a visa
- living with disability
- caring for children with disability



## Partners in Wellbeing

Support to manage your wellbeing in difficult times.

If you are not coping or have been feeling distressed, anxious or down over several weeks, help is available through Partners in Wellbeing. This free service offers one-on-one support for people in Victoria to help improve wellbeing, develop strategies to cope and receive emotional support when and as you need it.

### Call 1300 375 330 for support

The Partners in Wellbeing team is available 9am – 10pm weekdays and 9am – 5pm weekends.

### What services are available?

- Wellbeing coaching
- Small business support
- Veterans support
- Mental health and wellbeing hubs



## Abracadabra Childcare Services

Abracadabra Respite Care offers a wide variety of respite services, which will cover short regular episodes of care, 24-hour live-in care, or even casual care.

### Call 1300 011 167 for support Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm

### What services are available?

- Respite for foster/kinship carers
- Respite for parents who have fallen victim to domestic violence
- Disability/injury care & insurance claims
- Community services workshops & forums – Group childcare assistance
- Children with special needs including supporting families' NDIS funding
- 24/7 childcare for unwell parents requiring hospitalisation

[abra.childcare@gmail.com](mailto:abra.childcare@gmail.com)

**After Hours Service Number & Emergency Care: 6am to 9am & 5pm to 9pm Weekdays, 6am to 9pm Saturday & Sunday**

**Please text 0403 222 117 and an ACS consultant will respond ASAP.**



## Family Contact Service

Family Contact Service's Kinship Carer Respite Service supports carers by allowing them time alone to rest and recharge after the intense demands of their role.

Family Contact Service offers an in-home respite service for children in kinship care situations, meaning that children have the security of a consistent respite carer in the familiarity of their own home, whilst allowing carers an important break.

### What services are available?

- Available 365 days per year, except Christmas day depending on staff availability.
- FCS cover all areas of Melbourne, Geelong and rural areas in Victoria.
- Handover and pick-up service offered.
- Time spent/access supervision court reports provided on request.
- Supervisors can give evidence in court if subpoenaed with an hourly rate charged.
- Organisation providing supervisors for time spent/access supervision for the Family and Children's Courts.
- Respectful, private and confidential service to families.
- Minimum time for supervision is two hours.
- Their focus is protection for children from harm during contact in line with the Child Safety Standards under the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005.
- FCS is a private organisation that offers innovation and creativity.

**0459 363 172** | [julie@familycontactservice.com.au](mailto:julie@familycontactservice.com.au)

**0452515080** | [geoff@familycontactservice.com.au](mailto:geoff@familycontactservice.com.au)



## Family Relationships Online

### Helping families build better relationships

Information for all families – whether together or separated – about family relationship issues. Find out about a range of services to assist families manage relationship issues, including helping families agree on arrangements for children after parents separate.

## Call 1800 050 312 for family relationship advice

### What services are available?

- Counselling
- Family dispute resolution providers
- Legal advice
- Publications
- Family mediation and dispute resolution
- Financial advice
- Information in other languages



## Dardi Munwurro Brother to Brother 24-Hour Crisis Line

The Brother to Brother 24-hour crisis line provides phone support for Aboriginal men who need someone to talk to about relationship issues, family violence, parenting, drug and alcohol issues or who are struggling to cope for other reasons. The line is staffed by Aboriginal men, including Elders, who have a lived experience in the issues that the line offers support for.

## Call 1800 435 799 (24 hours, every day)



## **Embrace Multicultural Mental Health**

Embrace Multicultural Mental Health (the Embrace Project) is run by Mental Health Australia and provides a national focus on mental health and suicide prevention for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

**Call (02) 6285 3100 for support**

### **What services are available?**

- Support in many languages
- mental health support
- information and training



# TEAMSPO RTS4ALL

In 2015 TS4A became a registered charity and received DGR status.

This program assists families experiencing severe financial hardship to get their kids playing sport. The program connects families with a club, pays their fees & uniform costs, and most importantly gives them ongoing support.



TS4A believes no child should miss out on playing sports

The program currently assists over 400 children, with this number growing each month.

## Can you assist with ...



### Financial donations?

All donations can be claimed as a tax deduction and are very much appreciated.



### Boot & apparel donations?

If you have boots or sporting apparel you would like to donate, please complete the form on the website.



### Running an event and looking for a local charity to support?

Please complete the form on the website, as TS4A would be very grateful and happy to supply further information.

## What roles are available?

TeamSports4All relies on volunteers who are passionate about helping youth within their own communities. Some volunteers give a small number of hours per month and other give more. Roles are:

- **Sports mentor** - works directly with supporting the families
- **Sporting club liaison** - works with local sporting clubs to build ongoing relationships
- **School liaison** - works with local schools to build ongoing relationships and identify families who would benefit from TS4A
- **Community services liaison** - connects with local community service organisations who will refer children to TS4A
- **Fundraising** - assists with fundraising opportunities
- **Events** - event planning and execution

Contact – <https://teamsports4all.com.au>

# Early Parenting Centres (EPCs)



## What does the service provide?

EPCs provide specialist, targeted and flexible supports to parents/carers of children aged 0 and up to 4 years, in the areas of sleep and settling, feeding, behaviours, parent-child attachment and strengthening parenting capacity.

EPCs provide a free service that can be accessed by people with or without a Medicare card, including those on visas.

View this short video about the service

<https://www.vhba.vic.gov.au/health/specialist-centres/early-parenting-centres-expansion-and-upgrade>

## How to access the service

Referrals to the service are usually from:

- maternal and child health services
- maternity services
- general practitioners
- Child FIRST (Family Information Referral and Support Team) and Child Protection – delivered by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH).

## EPC locations, and self-referral form links

### **Noble Park – The Queen Elizabeth Centre**

Tel: (03) 9549 2777

<https://qec.jotform.com/231968068845976>

### **Footscray – Tweddle Child and Family Health Service**

Tel: (03) 9689 1577

<https://www.tweddle.org.au/online-self-referral/>

### **Wyndham (Werribee) – Tweddle Child & Family Health**

Tel: (03) 9689 1577

<https://www.tweddle.org.au/online-self-referral/>

### **Ballarat – Grampians Health**

Tel: (03) 5320 3003

<https://www.bhs.org.au/services-and-clinics/community-services/grampians-early-parenting-centre/>

### **Canterbury – Mercy Health**

Tel: (03) 8416 7600

<https://health-services.mercyhealth.com.au/our-health-services/oconnell-family-centre/>

### **Whittlesea (South Morang) – Mercy Health**

Tel: (03) 9407 6820

<https://health-services.mercyhealth.com.au/our-health-services/oconnell-family-centre/>

### **Casey (Clyde North) – Monash Health**

Tel: (03) 7511 2800

<https://monashhealth.org/services/child-youth-and-family/murrumbek-casey-early-parenting-centre/>

### **Geelong – Barwon Health**

Tel: (03) 4215 5920

<https://www.barwonhealth.org.au/services-departments/barwon-early-parenting-centre/self-referral-form>

## Anticipated to open in 2024

Bendigo – Bendigo Health

Aboriginal EPC in Frankston – First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing

## In planning stage

Hastings – The Queen Elizabeth Centre

Northcote – Operating health service TBC

Shepparton – Operating health service TBC

# Griefline

For anyone experiencing grief  
or facing any kind of loss

Griefline provides free,  
compassionate and confidential  
support every day of the year

Griefline are dedicated to helping individuals navigate the complexities of grief and loss. They provide free, accessible support and resources to people across the country, anytime they need it.

## Phone support

The Griefline helpline is a free service and provides telephone support nationwide, 7 days a week. Phone support sessions are secure and confidential and available to adults aged 18 years and over.

## Online forums

Online peer-to-peer moderated forums give people the opportunity to read about others' stories in managing and working through their experiences of grief and loss, while also providing the chance to actively interact and share their own journey

## Support groups

Griefline provide bereavement support groups facilitated by a qualified counsellor. If you are facing grief as a result of losing a loved one, you don't have to go it alone. Connect and interact with others dealing with similar circumstances.

[www.griefline.org.au](http://www.griefline.org.au)

## Vision and values

Griefline envision a national mental health ecosystem where grief is met with empathy and effective support.

Guided by their values of courage, compassion, and connection, Griefline work to prevent mental health challenges linked to unresolved grief.

## Ensuring excellence

- **Evidence-based practices:** All programs are grounded in the latest grief and bereavement, mental health research and industry standards.
- **Comprehensive training:** Griefline's counselling team and volunteers receive best-practice training, monthly professional development sessions, and access to recorded resources for ongoing learning.
- **Supportive supervision:** They prioritise regular supervision and peer debriefing to ensure their team is supported in their vital work.
- **Strong governance:** Forward-thinking governance structures guide adaptability and responsiveness to community needs.
- **Advocacy and engagement:** Griefline work with policy and decision-makers to shape services that effectively support emotional and mental well-being on a national scale.

**Call 1800 845 745**  
**for support 8am-8pm,**  
**7 days a week**

# Steps to Speaking Up



Important things to know about the  
Child Protection system for parents  
with disabilities in Victoria



## KCV's resources for kinship carers booklets

1. Cyber safety for children and young people
2. Non-physical types of discipline for children and young people
3. Case planning, case management, roles and responsibilities
4. Emergency and useful contacts for kinship carers
5. Relaxation techniques for carers
6. Working with Children Clearances for kinship carers and household members
7. Charter for children in OOHC/Charter supporting people in care relationships Planning for more effective access visits
8. Diet, nutrition and wellbeing
9. The importance of quality sleep
10. How to run a successful support group and be an effective carer advocate/representative
11. The Orange Door services
12. Support for informal kinship carers
13. Grief and loss
14. How to make a complaint – and get heard
15. Court orders – the role of Child Protection and the courts
16. Education
17. Financial support for kinship carers
18. Rights
19. For children & young people with an emotional or physical disability
20. Assistance for those coping with suicide
21. LGBTQIA+ families & communities
22. Mental health and family relationships
23. Camps & respite
24. Carers' wellbeing
25. Legal community
26. Local governments
27. Support for grandparents and non-parents caring for children



Kinship Carers Victoria  
0499 969 234  
[admin@kinshipcarersvictoria.org](mailto:admin@kinshipcarersvictoria.org)



Kinship Carers Victoria  
is supported by the Victorian Government.

