



## Respite Foster Care For Adoption Applicants

### What is Respite Care?

Respite Carers look after children for short periods of time to give their full-time Carers a break.

Respite Care can be regular and planned for the same child or children, or in response to emergency situations within the foster family.

Respite Carers look after children in their own home, for a few hours, a weekend or a few weeks. The length of care is decided before placement.



### What is the Respite Program?

The Respite Program supports full time Foster Carers and children in their care.

As a Respite Carer you work as part of a team. This includes the child's full-time Foster Carer and Department staff. A close working relationship helps ensure the needs of the child and carer are met.

### How do I benefit?

A number of prospective adoptive parents are foster carers, and find it a really worthwhile and rewarding experience.

Many fostered and adopted children have emotional and physical difficulties; you'll find the fostering training very useful in understanding children's experiences and meeting their individual needs.

Respite care also gives you an invaluable opportunity to gain experience and build confidence in caring for children, before adopting a child. It also provides a wealth of experiences for foster children.



**“Participating in the Respite Care Program was a really fantastic way of contributing something positive to those children. We gained invaluable experience without some of the issues we might have had with a longer foster care placement. We were able to specify the age of the kids we wanted, when and how long for. We got great support and training from Fostering Services.**

**We enjoyed every placement and it really helped develop our parenting and caring—we highly recommend the program.”**

Testimonial from Adoptive Applicants Richard and Kirrily Kilbane

## Will it affect my Adoption application?

Family Information and Adoption Services (Adoptions) and Fostering Services will work with you together.

Fostering Services will let Adoptions know about each respite placement, and give them copies of all relevant documents, as well as feedback such as any issues you had to deal with when providing respite.

If you have applied to adopt a local child, you can only provide respite care for up to one week at a time, usually a weekend. This doesn't apply for inter-country adoptions as you normally have a better idea of when you will be allocated your adopted child.

## And when I'm allocated a child for adoption?

Adoptions will tell Fostering Services, and respite care will stop before you bring the adopted child home.

## How do I become a Respite Carer?

Contact your Case Worker at Adoptions to discuss the difference between fostering and adopting a child, and whether fostering is suitable for you.

Adoptions will contact Fostering Services, who will then contact you and send out an information pack, and ask you to complete an expression of interest form.

Once they have received your form, Fostering Services will arrange a meeting to discuss respite foster care.

As an approved Adoptive Applicant, you don't have to go through the same assessment process as other Foster Carers, but will still need to attend training and assessment relating to foster care.



**For more information, contact  
Fostering Services on  
6380 5900 or  
1800 024 453  
or visit  
[www.childprotection.wa.gov.au](http://www.childprotection.wa.gov.au)**

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