

**LIFE
WITHOUT
BARRIERS**

Victorian


Carer Transfer Information

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Share your world. Become a foster carer.



Are you a current carer considering transferring agencies? Learn more about what Life Without Barriers can offer carers to help you decide if it's the right place for you to continue your carer journey.

Who we are

We are a leading social purpose organisation working in more than 440 communities across Australia. Through our services we support over 20,000 people living in their own homes or in residential settings that we manage. This includes children, young people and families, people with disability, older people, people with mental illness, people who are homeless, refugees and asylum seekers.

Today, we are one of the largest providers of social services in Australia working in partnership with the community, elders, government and the private sector to improve the lives of the people we support.

Our Values

- We are responsive – We respond to the needs of people and we are determined to get things done the right way, quickly, every time.
- We are imaginative – We are open to new ideas and to finding new and better ways to work with people – ways that make lives better.
- We are courageous – We stand by our convictions and encourage open and transparent reviews of everything we do.
- We are respectful – We value the diversity, opinion and privacy of all people, and seek to reflect this in everything we do and say.
- We build relationships – This means working with individuals to build open, confident and trusting relationships.

Reconciliation

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original custodians of the land and strongly believe in recognising, respecting and advancing the inherent rights, cultures and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. We acknowledge the importance of family, and cultural and community ties for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our commitment to raising awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by hearing their voices and recognising their achievements and shared histories in our communities is ongoing, as we work towards making sure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have access to the same opportunities as all Australians.

We believe that reconciliation must live in the hearts and minds of all Australians.



‘Empowered Voices’ cultural artwork created by Keisha Leon, Lisa Sorbie Martin and Gilimbaa.

How we support children in care

When caring for children, young people and their families we work in ways that evidence tells us makes a difference for them.

We Put Children First

Every day, Life Without Barriers offers support and care to children. We want every one of those children to feel as safe and respected as they should. We all have a responsibility to make sure their safety comes first – and that they are well cared for, protected from abuse and given the respect they deserve.

Children and Residential Experiences (CARE)

To create conditions for positive change, we use this evidence-informed, principle-based approach in our work with children, families and each other. We support our carers to apply this model in how they look after, teach, guide and support children.

Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for families

This crisis prevention and intervention model teaches carers how to help children learn constructive ways to handle crises. How we respond to these crises is critical in helping children and young people learn constructive ways to deal with frustration, failure, anger, rejection and depression.

MOCKINGBIRD FAMILY™

MOCKINGBIRD FAMILY™ improves the sense of connection and wellbeing of children, young people and their carers. It connects foster and kinship care homes in a local community with an experienced carer, who becomes the Hub Home provider. The Hub Home provides short-break care for children, as well as supporting carers with practical and emotional support through regular activities, training and meetings.

Trauma informed

Being removed from their families is traumatic for children and causes profound grief and loss. Our support of children, young people and their families will reflect this understanding and focus on nurturing care where children feel safe.

Children's Rights

Children have a right to care that is consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children should have meaningful opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their lives – in ways that respect their developmental age and needs. We give children information about their rights and access to organisations and individuals who will advocate on their behalf.

Support for carers

Our carers are never alone in their caring journey. It can be challenging to comprehend the experiences children bring with them, so it is essential that carers feel supported and confident in their role.

Training

We provide carers with a range of learning opportunities suited to their level of experience and the needs of children in their care. This includes access to an extensive range of eLearning options on topics such as child development, understanding trauma and stress and healthy living.

24/7 on-call support

Our carers can access on-call support at any time of the day or night for advice, support and direction in stressful situations.

Financial support

Carers receive a tax-free allowance, at 10% above the statutory rate, to support the individual needs of children placed in their care.

Specialist support

Our specialist staff work with children and alongside carers where additional support is needed. Where permanency options are being considered, we will help you understand what this means for you as carers and the children in your care, including the support available throughout the process.

Respite

For a night or a weekend, children in care may spend time with a respite carer, an opportunity to strengthen social and family networks while their carer takes a short break. This type of care is only offered when it is in children's best interests.

Carer networking

Talking with other carers is sometimes the best form of support. Through regular carer events, we create opportunities for carers to share their concerns, celebrate successes and provide feedback to the Life Without Barriers team.

Caring with CARE

Our carers receive training and support in using the CARE Model principles to help shape the way we care for children and young people, using relationships to help build new skills and create conditions for positive change. The core principles of CARE are:

Trauma informed

All expectations and interactions are to take into account the impact of trauma, such as neglect, abuse and violence, on a child's development.

Family involved

A child's identity is tied to their family and involving parents or other significant adults is a vital component in achieving safety, well-being and permanency.

Competence centred

Competence is the combination of skills, knowledge and attitude that each child needs to negotiate effectively in everyday life.

Ecologically orientated

Caring and supportive environments provide children with a model of how to care for themselves and others.

Relationship based

Nurturing care experiences and basic attachments are necessary for children to grow into healthy adults.

Types of care at Life Without Barriers

You might be curious about the types of care we provide for children and young people at Life Without Barriers. We know that each child and young person's time in care will be different, and we provide all types of care to ensure we can meet their needs. This ranges from care for short periods and support to return home, through to more permanent care types. Life Without Barriers works within the principles of the Permanency Support Program, to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people.

Respite or short break care (duration of care – anything up to seven nights in a row)

Respite care allows children to extend their network of support while their primary carer takes a short break. It's regular or occasional time spent with carers who are not the child's primary carers. It is usually planned in advance and only takes place where in the child's best interests.

Emergency or crisis care (duration of care – days or weeks)

Children may need somewhere to stay immediately, for a night or even a few weeks for their own safety. The call for emergency care can happen at any hour of the day or night.

Short to medium term foster care (duration of care up to 6 months)

While difficult situations at home are resolved or until plans for longer-term care are made, children need a safe, stable, caring environment where they can strengthen their family relationships so that they can return home safely.

Long-term foster care (duration of care – more than 6 months, potentially until the child reaches adulthood and beyond)

Some children in long-term care are not expected to return to live with their family full-time. Foster carers who provide long-term care commit to parenting children toward adulthood and providing them with stability and permanency. They experience all the challenges and rewards of guiding a child as they grow and develop.

Carer transfer process

If you are thinking about transferring agencies, chances are you have plenty of questions, and it's essential you take the time to find all the answers. We partner with you to ensure we are the right agency for you, making the transition as successful as possible.

1. Chat with your current Agency/ Department of Families, Fairness & Housing

If you're considering transferring agencies, it's essential to chat with your current agency or foster care provider about moving. This is particularly important if you have a child or young person in your care who would be transferring with you. It also helps to make the process as smooth as possible.

2. Chat with our team

If you've decided that you'd like to consider moving agencies, we'd love to chat with you about any questions you might have about how Life Without Barriers could best support you as a carer and any children or young people in your care. We'd love to find out why you're considering transferring and the types of care you currently provide or hope to provide in the future. We'll let you know the following steps, which may differ depending on whether you have children in your care or not.

3. Information exchange consent

If you're looking to move to our agency, we'll ask you to complete a consent to have information about your current experience as a foster carer shared with Life Without Barriers. We'll ask you to provide this permission for any caring experience with your current or past agencies. Sharing details of your one-time carer assessment and caring experience is important in informing the transfer review or assessment.

4. Home visit

The next step involves lining up a time to visit you in your home where you can ask questions and meet the local Life Without Barriers Care Team. At this visit, we'll talk more about your decision to transfer agencies and do a quick home safety check. We'll also ask all carers and household members to complete a new set of background checks to kick off the process.

5. Transfer assessment or review

Once your previous caring experience information has been reviewed, background checks and any other steps or consultations are complete we will complete a transfer assessment or review, depending on how long since your original carer assessment and your reasons for transfer. This process will be much like your original carer assessment, with interviews with yourself as carers and household members, but often much shorter as you have valuable caring experience to draw evidence from. There is some further information below that explains why this step is important, and what you might need to prepare.

6. Approval

Once complete, the transfer report will be submitted to an Approval Panel. If the panel supports your capacity to continue caring, you will become an approved Life Without Barriers carer and receive ongoing support and training from the Life Without Barriers Carer Team.

A little more about the carer transfer requirements

For currently authorised carers who are looking to transfer to Life without Barriers, an important step is taking part in a transfer review or assessment. This is necessary and forms part of the ongoing process of information exchange and is key to making sure it is suitable for you to become a carer with Life Without Barriers. Life Without Barriers will help you right throughout this process.

During the process, there are some documents we will ask you to share, and some background checks you'll need to complete. Some of these documents might already be available with your current Agency, and we'll ask for your permission for them to share this information with us to help make the process that little bit easier. This would involve completing and signing a consent to release information, allowing your previous agency/ies to share information about your caring experience.

You may be familiar with some of the personal and safety checks, which may include a Home and Environment Check, including compliance documentation if your home has a swimming pool, health and medical checklists and background checks like Working With Children Checks, National Police Check and Disqualified Carer Check.

We will help you understand how we support the caring relationship at Life Without Barriers, including discussing the Life Without Barriers policies relevant to carers, including those that outline your rights and responsibilities as a carer, and explaining our Life Without Barriers - We Put Children First policy.

Make sure that you have the following personal documents handy for when we visit:

- 100 points of identity documentation
- Your current Driver's Licence
- A copy of your current Motor Vehicle Registration
- A copy of your current Motor Vehicle Insurance.



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Where to from here?

Whether you're looking to start the transfer process or want more information, our team of specialists can help. You can contact us via social channels, email and telephone. Our team will come back to you as soon as possible.

1300 592 227
carers@lwb.org.au



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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