

University of New South Wales

Study into Appropriate Foster Care Payments for Stable and Adequate Substitute Care in Australia

Research Consultancy for The Child & Family Welfare Association of Australia (CAFWAA) and The Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA)

**Foster Care Agencies Survey
To be completed by the Program Manager**

*All questions referring to 'care' are for foster care. All questions referring to 'carers' are for foster carers. All questions referring to 'program' refer to the program (or service) provided by an agency. Please see attached Glossary (pages 1 & 2) for other definitions of terms used in the survey
(If space insufficient for comments to any questions please add extra sheets as necessary)*

1. Type of agency (tick one box) Government Non-governemnt Postcode _____

Some foster care agencies provide one foster care program and others several programs.

2. How many foster care programs does your agency provide? (tick one box only)

One (go to Q 3) Several (see Note below then go to Q 3)

*Note: For agencies with more than one programs please complete a **SEPARATE** survey form for each program**

* Please photocopy original form (both sides) and complete a separate survey for **each** program, or contact Marilyn for downloading the form, either by email M.McHugh@unsw.edu.au or **free call** on 1800 065 576.

3. Please describe fully the type of care provided by the program *(please use the terms where possible from page 2 of the 'Glossary of definitions' to describe the program, ie, 'length of time in care', 'category of child or young person', and/or 'level of need'.*

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4. What are the ages of children for whom care is provided by the program? *(please tick all that apply)*

12mths or under	1-4	5-9	10-11	12-14	15-16	Other (specify)	All Age groups
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. What are the agency's funding sources for the standard subsidy for carers in the program? *(please tick all boxes that apply)*

State/Territory government funding

Agency's funding

Commonwealth funding (ie grants for special purposes)

Other *(please specify)*

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6. Does the agency reimburse carers in the program only at the rate of standard subsidy set out by the department responsible for foster care in your State/Territory? *(please tick one box)*

Yes *(go to Note before Q 9)* No *(go to Q 7)*

7. Does the agency 'top up' the standard subsidy provided to carers ? *(please tick one box)*

Yes *(go to Q 8)* No *(go to Note before Q 9)*

8. There are reasons why agencies 'top up' the standard subsidy provided to carers. Briefly explain under what circumstances and why your agency 'tops up' the standard subsidy. The 'top up' is defined here as an increased amount of money in addition to that provided by government by way of 'add-on loadings', or 'add-on allowances' or 'one off grants' or 'contingency payments' *(see p1 of Glossary for explanation of these terms)*

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Note: The standard subsidy in all states and territories is meant to cover a number of items and commodities that are needed by children in care. Please answer Question 9 below for those items and commodities included in the standard subsidy in your state or territory.

9. For the items and commodities listed below please indicate how often carers express difficulty in meeting the specific costs for children in care? (please tick one box per line only)

	Very often	Often	Not very often	Never	N/A
Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing and footwear (includes school uniforms and shoes)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport (access/contact related)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport (day-to-day)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal care (nappies, toiletries, menstrual products, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Household goods and services (includes school books, stationery)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy (electricity/gas, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leisure goods (includes holidays, Xmas and birthdays, sports and out-of-school activities)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health/Medical (includes pharmaceutical and dental)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other school expenses (fees, levies, excursions and trips)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child care fees (for child in care)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pocket money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. For carers who have difficulty in meeting costs meant to be covered by the standard subsidy in this program who (if anybody) provides additional financial assistance when difficulties arise?

(please tick all boxes that apply)

Department Agency Carer Needs not met

Other *(please specify)*

Please comment on any specific issues/concerns the agency has in relation to meeting the costs meant to be covered by the standard subsidy.

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(If space insufficient for comments add extra sheets as necessary)

11. Was any adjustment made to the level of standard subsidy paid to carers in July 2000 (or thereabouts) to reflect the impact of the GST? *(please tick one box only)*

Yes *(go to Q12)* No *(go to Q13)*

12. Who was responsible for adjusting the level of standard subsidy to reflect the impact of the GST? *(please tick one box only)*

Government Agency D/K

13. Have carers commented on the impact of the GST on their costs? *(please tick one box only)*

Yes *(go to Q 14)* No *(go to Q15)*

14. Please describe impact of the GST on costs to carers.

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(If space insufficient for comments add extra sheets as necessary)

15. How often is the standard subsidy adjusted to take account of changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI)? *(please tick one box only)*

Automatic adjustment Other regular basis Ad hoc Never Don't know

Other *(please specify)*

Children in care often have special needs that require additional services besides those items covered by the standard subsidy.

16. From the list of services below please note how often a child in care requires particular services

(please tick one box per line only)

	Very often	Often	Not very often	Never	N/A
Specialist <i>(medical, eg psychiatrist, etc)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist <i>(dental, eg orthodontist, periodontist, etc)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counselling <i>(eg psychologist, etc)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education <i>(eg private school fees, remedial)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Therapy <i>(eg speech)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other additional service <i>(please specify)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please comment on any specific issues related to the availability of additional services for a child in care.

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Carers can at times experience difficulties in trying to arrange additional services for children in their care.

17. From the list of services below note how often (if ever) difficulties occur in arranging additional services for a child in care. *(please tick one box only)*

	Very often	Often	Not very often	Never	N/A
Specialist <i>(medical, eg psychiatrist, etc)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist <i>(dental, eg orthodontist, periodontist, etc)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counselling <i>(eg psychologist, etc)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education <i>(eg private school fees, remedial)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Therapy <i>(eg speech, etc)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other additional service <i>(please specify)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please comment on any specific issues in accessing additional services/support for children.

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(If space insufficient for comments add extra sheets as necessary)

- (a) Personal reasons
- (b) Retirement of spouse (*or partner*)
- (c) Paid labour market work
- (d) Carer stress due to fostering
- (e) Carer's ill-health
- (f) Caring for grandchildren or others
- (g) Reimbursements not covering costs of child in care
- (h) Allegation of abuse
- (i) Bad experience/s with child (*please describe*)

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- (j) Bad experience/s with agency (*please describe*)

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- (k) Other factors (*please specify*)
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25. Of the factors listed from 'a to j' in Question 20 that lead to carers leaving the program what do you think are the three most important?

Most important	Second most important	Third most important
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26. Are there any other issues for the agency in meeting the needs of children in the program in relation to any costs associated with care. (*please tick one box*)

Yes(*go to Q 27*) No(*go to Q 28*)

27. Please comment on any specific issues in relation to costs associated with care.

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*For questions 28 to 30 please comment on the importance of the reimbursement provided to carers in the program.
(please tick one box per line only)*

From your perspective how important is:	Important		Neither	Unimportant	
	Very	Fairly		Fairly	Very
28. Amount of reimbursement offered to carers in maintaining them in fostering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. Amount of reimbursement given to carers in preventing placement breakdown	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. Amount of reimbursement provided for additional services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The following section Q 31 to Q34 contains a number of general questions relating to reimbursements.

For questions 31 to 34 please comment on whether you agree or disagree to the following statements.
(please tick one box per line only)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
31. The standard subsidy should be age-related.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. A standard subsidy should cover a set of budget items to meet the extra costs to a family of a child in care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. Carers of children in long term care should have access to:					
Medicare Card in child's name;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health Care Card in child's name	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. Carers of children in long term care should have access to Family Assistance Payments (FAP) if child eligible for FAP in birth family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

35. Are any carers in the program kinship carers (see glossary)?
 Yes (go to Note before Q36) No (go to end of page)

Note: In some States/Territories kinship care is included in definitions of foster care and the practice of many agencies and government substitute care teams is to treat kinship care as part of the continuum of foster care. The exclusion of kinship care from definitions of foster care in some other States/Territories has resulted in lesser amounts than the standard subsidy being paid to carers for kinship care..

36. Please describe how the agency reimburses kinship carers for the costs of a child in their care (eg paid at same rate as other carers, offered support only, etc).

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37. Please comment on any concerns or issues for the agency in relation to payments to carers who provided kinship care.

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The survey is now complete thank you for your help.