

# Taking the first step

Enquiring about fostering

**LIFE  
WITHOUT  
BARRIERS**

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**“You don’t know if it’s going to be right for you or not unless you take the first step”**

Katie - Carer Ambassador

When enquiring about fostering with Life Without Barriers, we understand you might be coming in ready to get started or might be dipping your toes in the water to find out more information for the future. Wherever you’re at in your journey of considering fostering, we encourage you to make an enquiry and see where it leads. We have pathways to suit all phases of consideration and will help you understand more about how to make the right decision for you and your household.

## How to make an enquiry

Our Central Carer Enquiry Team are a wonderful group of fostering experts (some of whom have been foster carers too) who are ready and excited to talk to you. We know that people prefer options that suit their readiness and availability when gathering information, allowing you to reach out through a range of channels.

- **Phone:** 1300 592 227 (available Monday to Saturday, 8 AM – 8 PM AEST)
- **Email:** [carers@lwb.org.au](mailto:carers@lwb.org.au)
- **Website:** Visit <https://www.lwb.org.au/foster-care/> and make an enquiry online. You can complete our readiness questionnaire to help you decide if now is the right time.
- **Online Booking:** <https://calendly.com/lwbccet>
- **Webchat:** You can access our webchat function from any of our foster care website pages.
- **Social media:** Connect via Facebook or Instagram – why not follow our page to keep up to date with all things Life Without Barriers.

## What to expect from your enquiry

Depending on whether you're keen for a chat or would prefer to receive some information about fostering via email, your enquiry process could look a little different. What will remain the same is that you can expect to hear from us within one business day, regardless of the method of contact you use. Providing you with information to support your fostering journey is our top priority.

If you've provided your phone number, a member of the Central Carer Enquiry Team will contact you to discuss any questions you might have and find out a little about why you're thinking about fostering. We'll discuss:

- **Answering questions:** First and foremost, our first call will focus on addressing any queries you may have about fostering. We know that people come to fostering with a wide range of knowledge, from those just starting to those who have worked in the industry or have been involved in fostering for years. No question is too big or too small, so don't be afraid to ask.
- **Information about fostering:** We'll share with you some basic information about fostering, why children come into care, the types of fostering we support in your area, and a quick overview of the Life Without Barriers approach to caring that concentrates on providing environments in which children can grow, heal, and thrive. We'll send you some more information by email that you can read later and

share with your support, including a link to our handy Carer Guide, which provides information for both prospective and existing carers.

- **The fostering process:** Understanding the process of becoming a carer is important in the path to deciding whether now is the right time for you and your family. We will provide an overview of the steps involved, including an initial readiness conversation, home visits, background checks, training, and assessments, along with an expected timeframe.
- **Your motivation:** Understanding why you wish to become a foster carer. You can learn more about good reasons to become a foster carer by visiting [Reasons to Foster](#). There is a wide range of life experiences and personal reasons why people consider fostering and discussing these can help you understand if you're ready for the ups and downs that fostering can bring.
- **Your circumstances and basic eligibility:** To help you understand what to consider in making sure you're ready to apply to foster, we'll have a chat about your living situation, time and availability, support networks, and any relevant experience you might have. We'll review a few basic eligibility criteria in your area to ensure you head down the right path. If it's not something you're ready for right now, we offer an excellent nurturing program that will prepare you for the realities of fostering when the time comes.

Our initial fostering information conversation typically lasts around 20 minutes, and we are always happy to conduct it at a time that suits you best. This conversation helps determine if fostering aligns with your circumstances and if you're ready to take the following steps. At the end of the conversation, you may be invited to participate in an initial interview, commonly referred to as a foster care readiness conversation.

If we haven't heard from you after making an enquiry and trying to get in touch, we'll follow up with you weekly for a month to try and ensure you can ask any questions you might have. If you'd rather join our mailing list for now, just let us know by return email or text.

## What to expect from an information pack

If you're just dipping your toe into connecting with us about fostering, and have just provided an email address, don't be worried – you're not alone. Many people consider fostering for some time before deciding. Ensuring you have the necessary information to make informed decisions for yourself, and your family is vital. Our team are more than happy to provide you with information about fostering with Life Without Barriers that can help you answer your questions. Initially, we'll provide you with our foster care information book, which includes:

- **About Life Without Barriers:** Learn about our origins, our values and our approach to fostering.

- **Overview of fostering:** Detailed information about the fostering process and what to expect.
- **Types of care:** Descriptions of different fostering options, such as emergency, short-term, and long-term care.
- **Training and support:** Information on the training programs and 24/7 support available to carers.
- **Common questions:** We answer some of the most asked questions that prospective foster carers might have.
- **Contact information:** Details on how to reach out for further questions or support.

This pack serves as a comprehensive guide to help you understand the commitment and responsibilities involved in fostering, the support Life Without Barriers offers and how to get started. We'll email this to you the day you enquire, along with some further handy information about fostering and any questions you've shared with us, over the following month, before you join our nurturing program if we haven't heard from you.

## The fostering journey: what happens next

After having a chat about fostering initially, you can opt to take the next step of participating in an hour-long foster care readiness conversation where we'll chat in more detail about how your life might fit for fostering and gather some information to help you get started. If you're not ready for that just yet, we can offer you the opportunity to learn more about fostering over time by joining our nurturing program and receiving our informative newsletter, **Fostering Futures**.

### Got more questions?

If you have some questions or are ready to begin your fostering journey:

**Phone: 1300 592 227**

**Email: [carers@lwb.org.au](mailto:carers@lwb.org.au)**

Life Without Barriers provides a safe and supportive environment for children in care and values the diverse community of foster carers. We'd love to hear from you no matter where you are in your fostering journey.

# LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS



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