



Family Carers

Family Care

Families caring for children in out-of-home care play an essential role in supporting these children to thrive in their childhood and live positive and productive lives. Some of the many benefits of family care include providing a home for a child with people they already know and trust and supporting a child to maintain and develop their identity through being immersed in their family's culture.

As a part of the Out-of-Home Care reforms, significant consultation was undertaken with family members caring for children in out-of-home care. Clear and strong feedback was received from these family members that they do not view themselves as 'relatives' and 'relative carers', but rather as 'family'. Feedback has been strongly supportive of referring to these carers as 'family carers'.

Further, the term 'family care' is more meaningful and captures the diversity of relationships within the Western Australian community that is rich in culture, religions, ethnicities and traditions.

What is happening?

To recognise and honour this feedback, the terms 'relative care' and 'relative carer', will be replaced by 'family care' and 'family carer'.

The definition of a Family Carer is a person who provides care to children who are unable to live with their own parents and who are in the care of the CEO, and, is a 'relative' to the child requiring a care arrangement as defined in the *Children and Community Services Act 2004*. A family carer provides family care in a setting that is considered their primary residence.

From 31 August 2016, the language will change to Family Carers. These changes will be reflected in the Assist database and Casework Practice Manual.

Significant others, who are not family members of a child in the CEO's care, but have a demonstrated enduring relationship with a child and/or a child's birth family and are providing a care arrangement for a child will continue to be referred to as 'significant other carers'.

What do I need to do?

Be aware of the changes, and start using the language.

You can find more about Family Carers in the Casework Practice Manual in Chapter 9.

For information about the reforms, please refer to the Reform page on the Department's website (<http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/ChildreninCare/Pages/OOHCreform.aspx>).