

16 June 2020

## COVID-19 Resourcing for respite carers

**\$2.597 million for additional respite carers or provision of in-home support for foster and statutory kinship carers who require additional assistance to support placement stability as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19).**

**Kinship carers who need respite care should contact their case manager.**

**Respite funding** could be used for:

- purchasing additional respite placements,
- recruiting additional respite carers,
- purchasing items or services to support the establishment of an emergency kinship placement. For respite kinship arrangements you can also refer to the COVID-19: More support to keep families and children safe-Increased kinship finding guidance,
- supporting a current respite arrangement that is a direct result of coronavirus (COVID-19).

An example of where to access respite includes:

**Family Contact Services.** Foster and Kinship Carer Respite Service supports carers by allowing them time alone to rest and recharge after the intense demands of their role. Family Contact Service offers an in-home respite service for children in foster and kinship care situations, meaning that children have the security of a consistent respite carer in the familiarity of their own home, whilst allowing carers an important break.

Alternative respite options include weekends away or respite care in a contingency house. Carers might like to take advantage of respite service for a variety of reasons. It might just be for a few hours a week to allow them uninterrupted time to complete errands such as shopping or to spend some much-needed time with their partner. Carers may also need extra support during more intense periods, such as school holidays. Phone: 0459 363 172

**In home-support funding** could be used for:

- engaging qualified educators to support children while learning at home,

- engaging a babysitter – allowing a carer to take a break and to undertake activities such as going out to buy essential shopping supplies, attend medical appointments, exercise or have alone time,
- supporting a carer to maintain work commitments.

Access to in-home support should only be considered where there are no other childcare options available; for example, another parent or partner, close family friend or relative.

It would not be suitable for a carer's partner or close family relatives to be financially engaged as a babysitter to care for a child or young person.

Some examples of where to access in-home support include the following:

- **MiStaffing** connects families directly with qualified educators to support their children while at home. You can book care with MiStaffing via their dedicated Camp Australia page on their easy-to-use website.
- **Huddle** connects families with trusted childcare, where and when needed. Huddle primarily provides babysitting and nanny work and is utilising Camp Australia educators to meet the growing need of the community whilst families are staying at home.
- **Careseekers** are traditionally focused on providing independent aged care and disability support workers but now connect families with in-home care and support. If you need assistance with a family member, our educators have transferrable skills to be able to work across a variety of industries.
- **Sittr babysitting**