

# Support for grandparents and non-parents caring for children



**centrelink**



**Australian Government**  
Department of Human Services

**humanservices.gov.au**

Sometimes families find themselves in situations where parents are unable to care for a child. Instead, a grandparent or non-parent carer takes responsibility for the child's care.

Information in this brochure is for grandparent and non-parent carers who are looking after a child under:

- **formal arrangements**, when the care of the child is being managed by a state or territory welfare authority, or a family law parenting order is in place, and
- **informal arrangements**, when the non-parent carer has come to a private agreement about who provides care for the child.

If you're a grandparent or non-parent carer of a child and live in the same house as a parent, you may not be eligible for payments from us. If you're in this situation, you can contact us to discuss your circumstances.

We have specialist staff who can provide support to grandparents or non-parents caring for a child.



## Grandparent Advisers

Grandparent Advisers support grandparents who have caring responsibilities for their grandchildren, as well as ongoing support for non-parent carers, including foster and kinship carers of children.

They can help you by:

- providing information about our payments and services
- arranging appointments for you with our specialist staff, including social workers, Financial Information Service Officers, Indigenous Service Officers, and Multicultural Service Officers
- referring you to federal, state and community service providers, and
- helping you manage your business with us.

For information about Grandparent Advisers, go to **[humanservices.gov.au/grandparentadvisers](https://humanservices.gov.au/grandparentadvisers)**

## Social workers

Social workers can provide short-term counselling, support and information to help you through a difficult time, and refer you to other support services. They can help if you're experiencing a crisis, in need of support, or unsure of how to access the right assistance.

For more information about social workers, go to **[humanservices.gov.au/socialwork](https://humanservices.gov.au/socialwork)**

# Payments you may be eligible for

## Family Tax Benefit

Family Tax Benefit (FTB) helps with the cost of raising children. It's made up of two parts:

- FTB Part A, and
- FTB Part B.

FTB Part A is paid for each child. The amount you get depends on your family's circumstances.

If a child enters your care before they turn one, or you adopt a child of any age, you may receive an increase to your FTB Part A. This is called Newborn Upfront Payment and Newborn Supplement.

FTB Part B gives extra assistance to single parents, non-parent carers, such as grandparents, and couples with one main income—for example, when a grandparent or non-parent stays at home to care for a child full time, or they balance some paid work with caring for a child. Your claim will be income tested and the amount you'll get depends on the age of the youngest child.

In some situations, you may share the care of a child. If so you may still be eligible to receive some FTB for the child if you care for them at least 35 per cent of the time.

For more information on FTB, go to **[humanservices.gov.au/ftb](https://humanservices.gov.au/ftb)**

## Child Care Subsidy

Child Care Subsidy gives you assistance with the cost of child care. We pay it directly to your child care provider to reduce the fees you pay. Your child needs to be attending approved child care to be eligible.

Approved child care can include outside school hours care, family day care, vacation care, long day care, in-home care and some occasional-care services.

## Additional Child Care Subsidy (Grandparent)

You may be able to receive additional assistance called Additional Child Care Subsidy (Grandparent). It's for grandparents and great grandparents who:

- have 65% or more care of a grandchild or great grandchild
- receive an income support payment, and
- make the day to day decisions about the child's care, welfare and development.

It provides extra help with the cost of approved child care.

If you aren't on an income support payment you won't be eligible for Additional Child Care Subsidy (Grandparent). However, you may still be eligible for Child Care Subsidy.

For more information on Child Care Subsidy, go to **[humanservices.gov.au/childcaresubsidy](https://humanservices.gov.au/childcaresubsidy)**

## Double Orphan Pension

Double Orphan Pension helps with the costs of caring for children who are orphans, or who can't be cared for by their parents. There's no income or assets test for this payment.

For more information on Double Orphan Pension, go to **[humanservices.gov.au/orphanpension](https://humanservices.gov.au/orphanpension)**

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## Parental Leave Pay

Parental Leave Pay can support you if you're a primary carer taking time off work to care for a newborn or recently adopted child.

If eligible, you could get up to 18 weeks Parental Leave Pay at the rate of the national minimum wage.

For more information on Parental Leave Pay, go to [humanservices.gov.au/parentalleavepay](https://humanservices.gov.au/parentalleavepay)

## Dad and Partner Pay

You or your partner may be eligible for Dad and Partner Pay if you take time off work to care for a newborn or recently adopted child. If eligible, you can get up to two weeks Dad and Partner Pay at the rate of the national minimum wage.

For more information on Dad and Partner Pay, go to [humanservices.gov.au/dadandpartnerpay](https://humanservices.gov.au/dadandpartnerpay)



## Extra assistance

### **Concession and Health Care Cards**

Concession and Health Care Cards give you access to some cheaper medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and medical services funded by the Australian Government. You may also have access to other concessions provided by state, territory and local governments. You may already have a Health Care Card or a Pensioner Concession Card if you receive a payment from us.

If you aren't receiving a payment from us, you may still be eligible for a Low Income Health Care Card.



If you're caring for someone else's child, you may be eligible for a Foster Child Health Care Card. The Foster Child Health Care Card is not income tested or asset tested, and is issued in the name of the child you care for.

For more information on Concession and Health Care Cards, go to [humanservices.gov.au/concessioncards](https://humanservices.gov.au/concessioncards)

## Medicare benefits

You can claim Medicare benefits for a child you're caring for. They don't need to be registered on your Medicare card.

To claim Medicare benefits for them, you need to provide us with an invoice or receipt in your name with the child listed as the patient. You'll also need to provide the child's Medicare card number. Where the Medicare card number is unknown and the claim is processed at the practice, the health professional can get the child's Medicare card number by contacting us.

Where you have high out-of-hospital medical expenses, the Medicare Safety Net may help you cover some of these costs. To be eligible to receive Medicare Safety Net benefits for a child, who is in your full time care, you must have legal authority for the child and the child must be registered in your Safety Net family.

The PBS Safety Net can also help your family with the cost of some medicines.

For more information about Medicare, go to [humanservices.gov.au/medicare](https://humanservices.gov.au/medicare)

## Child Dental Benefits Schedule

The Child Dental Benefits Schedule provides eligible children with benefits for basic dental services, capped at \$1000 per child over two consecutive calendar years. You can confirm the eligibility and balance amount for a child in your care by accessing your Medicare online account through myGov or by calling **132 011**.

For more information about the Child Dental Benefits Schedule, go to **[humanservices.gov.au/childdental](https://humanservices.gov.au/childdental)**

## Child Support

Grandparents or non-parents caring for children may be able to receive child support from one or both parents of the children. It's important to know that we include child support as income when we calculate the rate of FTB we can pay you.

For more information about child support, go to **[humanservices.gov.au/childsupport](https://humanservices.gov.au/childsupport)** or call **131 272**.

## Other assistance

You may be able to access:

- Rent Assistance
- Carer Payment
- Carer Allowance
- Centrepay, or
- the Financial Information Service.

## Next steps

For more information:

- go to **humanservices.gov.au/grandparentcarers** and **humanservices.gov.au/nonparentcarers**
- call a Grandparent Adviser on **Freecall™ 1800 245 965**, or
- go to a service centre.

Some information is available in audio CD/DVD, large print, Braille and e-text. Call us on **132 717** with your request.

If you're deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment, you can contact us through a TTY phone on **Freecall™ 1800 810 586**.

To speak to us in your own language about Centrelink services and payments, call us on **131 202**. For help with Medicare and Child Support services, call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on **131 450**.

**Note:** calls from your home phone to '13' numbers from anywhere in Australia are charged at a fixed rate. That rate may vary from the price of a local call and may also vary between telephone service providers. Calls to '1800' numbers from your home phone are free. Calls from public and mobile phones may be timed and charged at a higher rate.

## Disclaimer

This information is accurate as at June 2018.  
If you use this publication after that date, please  
check with us that the details are current.

FPR019.1806