

Foster Care Association of Victoria

Annual Report 2025-2026

Annual Report July 2025 - June 2026

The Foster Care Association of Victoria presents a year in review. As the peak body for foster carers, the Foster Care Association of Victoria's mission is to build Victoria's recognition, respect and resources for foster carers, the volunteers who every day and night, make a difference in the lives of Victoria's children and young people. Together we stand to make a difference.



ABN 30 747 010 099

VISION

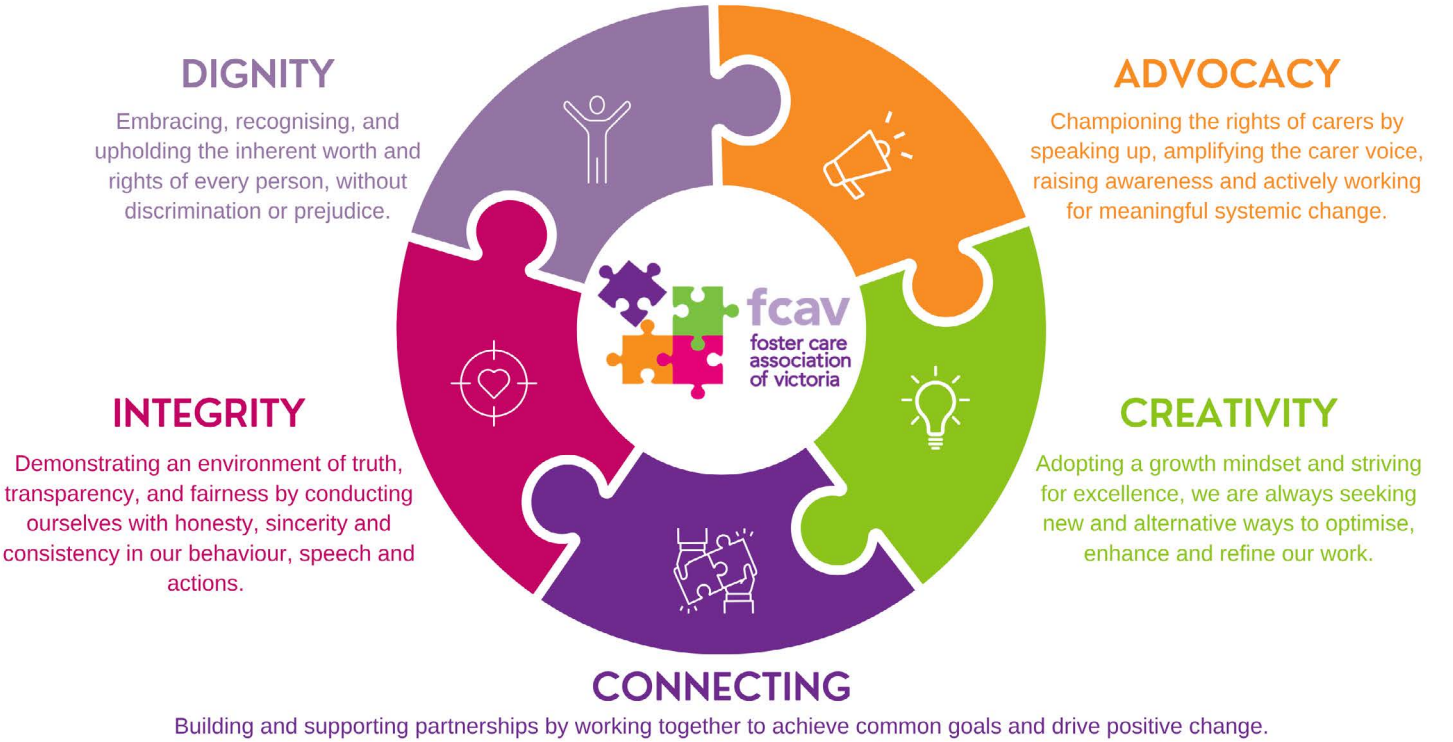
A future where all foster carers are supported, respected and empowered to continue caring, to provide the best possible experiences for children and young people in care, assisting them to reach their full potential.

MISSION

As the peak body in Victoria, we are the united voice of foster carers, advocating for systemic improvements, building productive partnerships and nurturing respectful relationships. We champion foster carers to be recognised and valued for their role in the lives of children and young people in care, and deliver a full range of information and support services to meet carers' needs at all points in their care journey.

Foster Care Association of Victoria

VALUES



Cover image and right: Carers and supporters participate in a **Queen Acknowledgement** by **Natarsha Bamblett, proud First Nations leader** at the FCAV Carer Celebration during Foster Care Week 2025, sharing a moment of connection to First Nations culture, Country and each other.



Acknowledgement of Country
The FCAV acknowledges the unceded sovereignty of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. We acknowledge their continued connection to Country – including lands, cultural knowledges and their peoples – and pay our respect to Elders past and present. We advocate for systemic change that honours the place of culture, family, community and connection to country in the lives of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people as they grow.

President Report

Natalie Pryor

President of the Board of Directors



Welcome to the Annual Report of the Foster Care Association of Victoria (FCAV) for 2025/26.

Every day, a foster carer opens a door.

They open their homes, their families and their lives - creating connection, stability, opportunity and hope.

Open Doors. Open Hearts. Open Opportunities. Across Victoria, carers make space for children and young people, helping create the safety and stability from which they can thrive.

As a foster carer myself, I know what it means to open that door. Carers give their time, energy, resources and hearts. They rearrange work and family life, attend appointments, advocate tirelessly and absorb costs because the needs of the child come first. Foster carers cannot simply step away when the system is difficult. They keep showing up.

And so too does the FCAV. This year, we have continued to push for change through the Care Allowance Campaign for fairer financial support. Whilst we welcomed the recognition of the financial pressures facing foster carers in this year's Victorian Budget, there is more work to do to ensure support reflects the true and changing costs of caring.

Independent scrutiny has also reinforced many of the concerns carers and the FCAV have raised for years. The Victorian Auditor-General's review highlighted the decline in foster carer numbers and its impact on the system's capacity to provide suitable homes for children and young people, recommending stronger recruitment and retention and a review of care allowance levels.

There are many doors still to open.

Carers continue to face significant challenges and the FCAV Care Support Team provides individual advocacy and support to carers. The team works alongside carers navigating the realities of foster care. They provide information and support, bring carers together through events and forums and provide access to independent counselling and wellbeing support through the Carer Assistance Program.

"Open Doors. Open Hearts. Open Opportunities. Across Victoria, carers make space for children and young people, helping create the safety and stability from which they can thrive."

These services are at the heart of the FCAV. They mean that while we work to change the system for carers, we are also there to support carers within the system as it exists today.

But advocacy and support is not only about pushing against closed doors. Sometimes it is about opening new ones.

As we advocate for change across the sector, we have also been prepared to ask ourselves some difficult questions. This year, a significant focus for the Board has been FCAV's Theory of Change and organisational evaluation. It has required us to step back from the immediate demands of the work and ask fundamental questions: What change is the FCAV here to create and how do our services, advocacy, engagement and partnerships work together to achieve that change?

We have not tried to answer those questions alone. We have listened to carers, staff and our sector partners and are prepared to let what we hear shape where we go next. This is substantial work helping us understand what is working well and where we need to evolve to ensure our resources remain focused on what matters most to carers.

Throughout the year, the Board has continued to provide stewardship and oversight of the FCAV while making space to think deeply about our future. I am grateful to my fellow Directors for the experience and perspectives they bring. Our discussions are shaped by different viewpoints but grounded in a shared commitment to ensuring the FCAV remains strong, relevant and accountable to the carers it exists to serve.

I am incredibly proud of our Board, staff and members, and deeply grateful for the dedicated leadership of our CEO, Samantha Hauge. They have asked difficult questions, supported one another and met the challenges with courage and commitment.

There are days when the doors in front of us feel firmly closed. Progress can be frustratingly slow. But I remain hopeful.

Because I see the extraordinary carers who continue to open their homes and hearts. I see the children and young people whose lives are changed because someone said yes. And I see the FCAV community continuing to show up, even when the work is hard.

To every foster carer across Victoria: thank you for opening your door, your heart and your life to create opportunities for children and young people.

It is an honour to stand alongside you.

CEO Report

Samantha Hauge

Chief Executive Officer



The past year has been one of building leverage for the Foster Care Association of Victoria.

As both a foster carer and CEO, I bring a personal understanding of the issues at the heart of our work. This year, we have continued to deliver a high quality and responsive service to carers, strengthened partnerships across the sector and continued to build the data and evidence needed to make a stronger case for change.

We have advocated consistently with government, the sector and decision-makers, while recognising that advocacy does not always translate quickly into action. Systemic reform takes time, and progress can be constrained by competing priorities, funding pressures and complex decision-making processes.

Our role is to keep pushing, using evidence and the collective voice of carers to influence policy, challenge barriers and keep foster care firmly on the reform agenda.

Central to this work is listening to carers. Over 660 carers participated in the 2026 FCAV Carer Census, providing an important evidence base on the experiences, needs and challenges of Victoria's foster carers. I thank every carer who contributed. Their experiences inform the services and support we provide and our advocacy.

Financial support for carers has remained a major priority. Through our Care Allowance Campaign carers have continued to tell us about the financial pressures and the FCAV has worked to ensure these experiences are heard at both state and federal levels and supported by strong evidence. We contributed to the Australian Institute of Family Studies national review into carer payments, as well as the Victorian Auditor-General's Office report on Out-of-Home Care Services.

Throughout the year, we have created opportunities to put the priorities of carers directly before those with the capacity to influence change.

"Our focus remains on reducing administrative burden, improving access to supports and achieving better outcomes and recognition for carers and the children in their care."

We were so pleased to welcome the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP and former FCAV Board member Sarah Witty MP to the FCAV office to discuss barriers carers face in accessing Federal family payments and supports. Key issues included means testing, the practical challenges of navigating application systems, and opportunities to improve information sharing and administrative arrangements between Federal and State systems.

These discussions form part of our broader engagement to ensure carers' experiences are heard, understood and reflected in policy and service improvements. Our focus remains on reducing administrative burden, improving access to supports and achieving better outcomes and recognition for carers and the children in their care.

It has been a privilege to continue working with our colleagues in the National Foster and Kinship Care Collective as an important opportunity to pursue issues affecting carers across Australia and ensure carers are represented in national policy discussions. We have advocated for improved financial support and recognition, including the removal of means testing for carers accessing Commonwealth family support. We have highlighted the impact of caring on workforce participation, retirement security and carers' long-term financial wellbeing.

In Victoria, I am proud of FCAV's role in the recently launched Foster Care Alliance. Bringing together foster carers, Community Service Organisations and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, the Alliance provides a new opportunity for the sector to work collectively on practical solutions to some of the longstanding challenges affecting foster care. I look forward to seeing this important collaboration develop.

The Carer Support Team continues to provide independent information, support and advocacy, therapeutic support through the Carer Assistance Program (CAP), learning and development and resources, and opportunities for carers to connect. This year, the team provided 2,425 hours of direct service delivery and introduced a new CAP triaging and streamlined booking process to strengthen our support for carers.

It has been a pleasure to gather with carers at 'Grill and Chill BBQs', and the 'Chats with CEO' and other opportunities for direct conversation.

I extend my sincere thanks to the talented FCAV team for their expertise and dedication throughout another busy year. I also thank President Natalie Pryor and the FCAV Board for their leadership, governance and support.

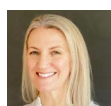
Most importantly, thank you to Victoria's foster carers. The time and care you give to children every day remains at the heart of everything we do. Your experiences and commitment to the children in your care continue to shape our work and strengthen our collective efforts to improve foster care in Victoria.

2025-2026 Team



From left: Biba Dickson, Tessa Hughes, Anna Viola, Rowan Pulford, Sarah Wauters, Bronwyn Hume, Samantha Hauge, Tonya Bavaro, Leigh Hillman and Deb Collard (Not pictured: Jake Iaria, Niraj Shah, Rebecca Butterworth).

FCAV Board of Directors



Natalie Pryor, President



Rob Whyte, Director



Cassandra (Sandi) Grace, Director



Kym Philips, Vice President



Melinda Carlyle, Director



Nicole Williams, Director (co-opted)



Samantha Keats, Treasurer (co-opted) (appointed June 2026)



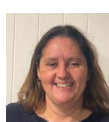
Renee Zou, Director



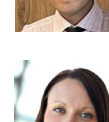
Ali Haidari, Director (co-opted)



Stephen Bowers, Treasurer (resigned 19 May 2026)



Kristie Simpson, Director



Alexis King, HR Consultant (co-opted)



David Gutteridge, Secretary



Cathy Hutton, Director

FCAV Carer Ambassadors

Fiona and Michael te Wierik



FCAV Staff

Chief Executive Officer – Samantha Hauge

Communications Manager – Anna Viola

Office Manager – Bronwyn Hume

Policy Adviser – Rowan Pulford

Member Relations Coordinator - Sarah Wauters

Finance Manager – Niraj Shah

Finance Officer - Rebecca Butterworth

Carer Support Team Manager – Tessa Hughes

Carer Advocate – Biba Dickson

Carer Advocate - Leigh Hillman

Carer Advocate/ L&D Coordinator – Deb Collard

Carer Assistance Program Counsellor – Tonya Bavaro

Carer Assistance Program Counsellor – Jake Iaria

With Gratitude

By investing in the Foster Care Association of Victoria, donors and subscribers assist the organisation to provide the support that carers need beyond our core funding. Your support helps us give carers the tools, advice, and advocacy they need to provide safe and nurturing homes for children in foster care. By investing in FCAV, you directly strengthen foster households and improve the lives of thousands of children across Victoria.



The Foster Care Association of Victoria is funded through the state government of Victoria, agency subscribers, foundation grants, fundraising campaign donors and the generous volunteer support of individuals and organisations. Thank you to all subscribers and donors who provided the FCAV with generous donations throughout the year.

Your Donations In Action:

Donations from supporters

The FCAV is so grateful to the individuals and organisations who support our work through donations, including those who make regular contributions throughout the year.

Many of these donations are made anonymously, so we do not always have the opportunity to thank our donors personally.

We want to acknowledge the generosity behind every contribution and the difference this support makes.

FCAV Carer Events

Donor's generosity helps us provide opportunities for carers to connect, learn, access information and participate in activities that strengthen carer wellbeing and the foster care community.

Donations help fund workshops and other carer events supporting the costs of venues, catering and services, all adding to FCAV's work, from resources and materials to practical support for carer events, workshops and activities.

Piloting and extending our work

Donations give the FCAV flexibility to trial new initiatives, extend existing programs and respond to emerging needs where dedicated funding may not otherwise be available.

Your donations help with flexible funding that allows the FCAV to explore new ideas, pilot initiatives and extend valuable activities beyond the scope of existing government funding.

This can help us respond to emerging carer needs, test new approaches and build the evidence for initiatives that may attract longer-term funding or become part of our ongoing work.

Pro bono and Volunteer Support

Kate Gray
Proofreading



Our Agency Subscribers

Thank you to the Community Service Organisations and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations that formed our subscription base for 2025/2026.





Caring for Carers



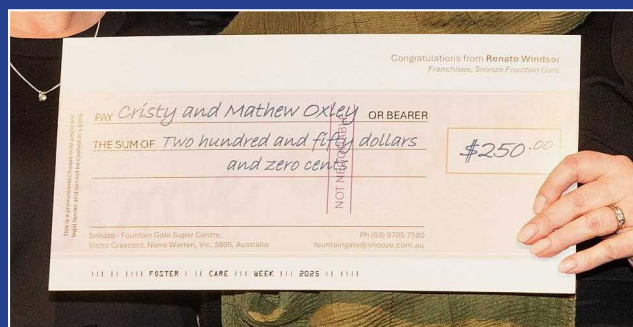
THE FOSTER CARE ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA IS A REGISTERED CHARITY WITH DEDUCTIBLE GIFT RECIPIENT STATUS – THAT MEANS ALL DONATIONS OVER \$2 ARE FULLY TAX DEDUCTIBLE FOR INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES.

Thank you to the generous donors who made a tax deductible donation to the Foster Care Association of Victoria during our social media and EOFY drives.

As a registered charity, individuals and companies can make a valuable contribution towards the support the FCAV provides to foster carers of children and young people across the state and receive a full tax deduction for every amount over \$2.

Thank you to every donor who made the FCAV their charity of choice in 2025/26.

Special thanks to **Renato Windsor and the team at Snooze Fountain Gate** for working with our FCAV **Ambassadors Fiona and Michael te Wierik** to support the FCAV 2025 Foster Care Awards with **\$500 worth of vouchers** to upgrade bedroom furniture in our winning carers' homes.



Our Donors

Thank you to these supporters who made significant funding or in-kind donations to the FCAV and our carer members throughout the financial year. **For more details on making a donation, you can visit the Foster Care Association of Victoria (FCAV) website at: www.fcav.org.au/get-involved**

- Australian Quilters Association
- Brenta Meats, Fairfield
- Coles Supermarket, Collingwood
- Collingwood Children's Farm
- Commonwealth Bank Community Donations Program, Abbotsford Branch
- Diana Ceramic Studio
- Eddie's Backpacks (Parade College)
- Edwards Lake Hotel
- Gelato Messina
- Gravity Zone Seaford
- Grill'd Windsor
- Hunky Dory Richmond
- Jirrahlinga Dingo Conservation & Wildlife Education Sanctuary
- Meet & Make, Watsonia Neighbourhood House
- Melbourne Comedy Festival
- Moonlit Sanctuary
- Myuna Farm
- Pinchapoo
- Puffing Billy
- Snooze - Fountain Gate Super Centre
- The Big Goose Animal Farm
- Toscans, Kew
- VIC & TAS Circus Quirkus Shows
- Watsonia Neighbourhood House
- Woolworths Supermarket, Richmond



Above: FCAV's Bronwyn Hume accepting a \$500 Commonwealth Bank Community Donations Program grant which supported the December 'Grill and Chill' Carer BBQ

Membership Report

The Foster Care Association of Victoria (FCAV) welcomed **255 new full members** and **36 new associate members**, bringing our membership total to **4,500 members** across Victoria.

FCAV remains committed to ensuring our services, communications and engagement opportunities are accessible, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of carers from a wide range of cultural and community backgrounds.

Building meaningful connections with members remains a key priority. New members receive a welcome pack by email and post, introducing them to FCAV's free support services, resources, advocacy work and opportunities to connect with other carers. Throughout the year, members are kept informed through regular newsletters, social media updates, webinars, and events, while our Carer Support Team provides individual assistance via phone and email.

Members play a vital role in shaping FCAV's advocacy and service delivery. Through surveys, census, Carer Voices profiles, events and direct conversations with staff and the CEO, carers share valuable insights and lived experiences that inform our policy positions, submissions, and sector advocacy. Their contributions help drive positive change for foster carers and improve outcomes for children and young people in care.



[Read more on our website - Our Carers](#)

As we look ahead, FCAV remains committed to strengthening engagement with members through expanded outreach, increased opportunities for connection and consultation, and personalised support. By continuing to invest in meaningful relationships with carers across Victoria, we aim to ensure every member feels heard, valued, and supported in the essential role they play.



Carer Snapshot Report 2026

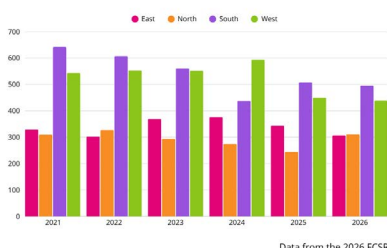
The 2026 FCAV Foster Carer Snapshot Report, collected for March of 2026, reflects a stabilisation of active foster carer households, with steady non-active carer households and an increase in carers going through the accreditation process. Despite the increase in carers going through accreditation, this has not translated into substantial growth in active carer households.

Compared with pre-pandemic levels in 2020, Victoria has **18% fewer active** carer households available to provide home-based care in 2026. Without sustained intervention, the system is likely to continue operating with a diminished and further stretched pool of carer households, with direct implications for placement availability and continuity of care for children and young people. [Read the full Foster Carer Snapshot Report on the FCAV Website.](#)

2026 FOSTER CARER SNAPSHOT REPORT



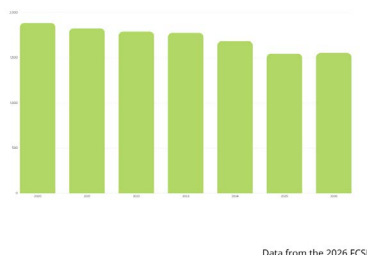
Active households from 2021 to 2026 by DFFH divisions.



2026 FOSTER CARER SNAPSHOT REPORT



Active households from 2020 to 2026.



18%

fewer active foster carer households compared to pre-pandemic levels in 2020.

Engagement

The FCAV continued to strengthen its engagement with carers, sector partners and the broader community. Alongside our regular newsletters, website, social media and communications, we used community events, partnerships and other opportunities to bring people together in support of foster care, raise awareness and extend the FCAV's reach.

Giveaways and Community Support

The FCAV worked with businesses and community supporters to provide a wide range of giveaways and experiences for foster carers and their families. These included more than **80 items of Patagonia and Nike clothing**, toys and baby hampers, family passes and activities, restaurant meals and food vouchers, books and cultural experiences.

Support from local businesses and community partners helped create opportunities for carers and children to enjoy experiences together, while providing practical items directly to foster families.

“I just wanted to say thank you very much for all the things in the hamper, they have really come in handy. Little (baby boy) and I are very lucky to have got them!”

Media

Journalists and news outlets depend on the Foster Care Association of Victoria for foster care insights, grounded in lived experience and unique data, which have been featured across major outlets including **ABC News radio, television and online, The Age** and **The Guardian newspapers** in the year. This visibility is key to making public the challenges faced by carers and children and amplifying our calls for change.



[Read more on our website - Media](#)

Sector Relationships

The FCAV continued strong connections with organisations and community partners, including **Raising Expectations, CREATE Foundation, NOFASD Australia, VCOSS**, the **Commission for Children and Young People**, the **Association for Children with a Disability** and **Backpacks 4 VIC Kids**. These relationships help connect carers with additional information, resources, opportunities, advocacy and support.

Social Media

Social media reach and engagement increased over the 12 months with Instagram and Facebook reaching over **8,000** followers. The FCAV's LinkedIn page had a large increase in engagement and is an increasingly important platform. Social media continues to be a valuable way of reaching carers and supporters in Victoria and worldwide.



www.linkedin.com/company/foster-care-association-of-victoria



www.instagram.com/fostercarevic



www.facebook.com/fostercarevictoria

Midsumma Carnival 2026

It was a pleasure to collaborate with **Fostering Connections** to host a joint stall at Midsumma Carnival this year, connecting with Victoria's LGBTQIA+ communities to discuss all things foster care. We shared information, answered questions and encouraged conversations about fostering and the diverse people and families who provide care.



Above: (L-R) Fostering Connections team members Luke Meney, Jade DeBoer and Madeleine Dowling, with the FCAV team Samantha Hauge and Anna Viola

National Conference Sponsorships

The FCAV sponsored **10 foster carers** to attend the 2025 **National Foster & Kinship Care Conference** in Sydney, alongside two FCAV Board members and two staff. The opportunity enabled carers to hear from speakers from across Australia, build their knowledge and connect with other carers and members of the broader foster care community.

Feedback from sponsored carers highlighted the value of having access to sector learning and opportunities to share experiences with other carers.

“As a carer with 10 years of experience, this was my first time attending a conference, and it was incredibly beneficial.”

Newsletters

The FCAV distributed **9 carer newsletters** and **2 sector newsletters**, comprising foster care news, updates, carer information, legislation changes, events, training and carer giveaways in the 12 months. Back issues are available here: fcav.org.au/newsletters

Carer Support Team Report

The Carer Support Team comprises **Carer Advocates** providing information, advice and advocacy to foster carers (enquiries) and the **Carer Assistance Program**, providing short-term therapeutic counselling to foster and permanent carers (sessions). Overall, for the **2025-2026 year** the Carer Support team delivered a total of **1,020 sessions** and provided **2,425 hours of service** delivery.

Carer Advocates

The Carer Advocates responded to and closed **590 enquiries**, delivering **1460 hours** of service in the year. While the number of enquiries remains consistent, hours of support increased significantly. Support for carers through complex **Client Incident Management System (CIMS)** investigations continues to remain a priority for carers accessing the service.

“FCAV provides such a key service to foster carers in times of hardship. Thank you FCAV and please keep up the wonderful work you all do.”

Carer Advocates provide information and support throughout CIMS investigations, helping carers understand the process and supporting them through interviews and other stages.

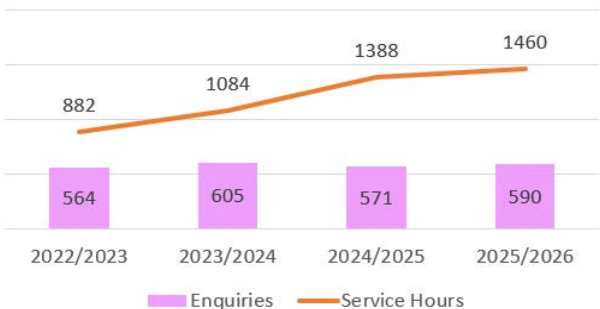
Investigations can be lengthy and complex, and some carers experience concurrent CIMS matters where further allegations arise during an existing investigation. Carer Advocates help carers understand the processes affecting them and access appropriate support.

Given the significant consequences where allegations are substantiated, including implications for a carer’s Working with Children Check, employment and community participation, procedural fairness and timely, transparent decision-making are particularly important.

Carer Advocates assist with complaints where there are significant concerns about procedures and processes followed or decisions made by the **Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)**.

“Leigh was our FCAV support person. I deeply appreciated her empathetic approach, positive support and tremendous guidance through an emotional process. Leigh assisted us to reduce our feelings of despair.”

Table 1: Enquiries by year



Enquiries by Outcome

The Carer Advocates **provided Information to 209, Advice to 234 and Advocacy to 147 foster care enquiries** in the year. The service focusses on **empowering carers to navigate the system** with confidence and independence. If relationships are fractured or matters are complex, then Carer Advocates may liaise and advocate on behalf of a carer with the DFFH, the carers agency or other key stakeholders.

There were **147 Advocacy issues** with carers that took a significant **913 hours** of advocates time, demonstrating the complexity of issues within the system and how time consuming it can be to work alongside other professionals in the system to address and resolve matters.

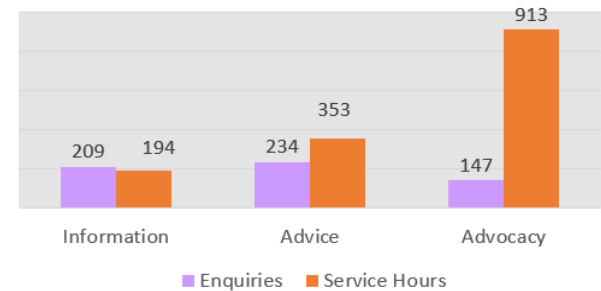
“Biba provided invaluable advice and support. I’m not sure we would’ve had anywhere near the same outcome if I had not called FCAV.”

Matters can include the assessment and reaccreditation of carers at their allocated Agency or ACCO.

An issue often raised by carers is asking to change their agency or ACCO and Carer Advocates spend considerable time navigating those discussions and processes. The focus is often attempting to support a carer to work through their issues with the agency and attempting to resolve the matter.

“Deb provided friendly non-judgmental conversation with advice, and I felt heard”

Table 2: Enquiries by Outcome 2025/2026



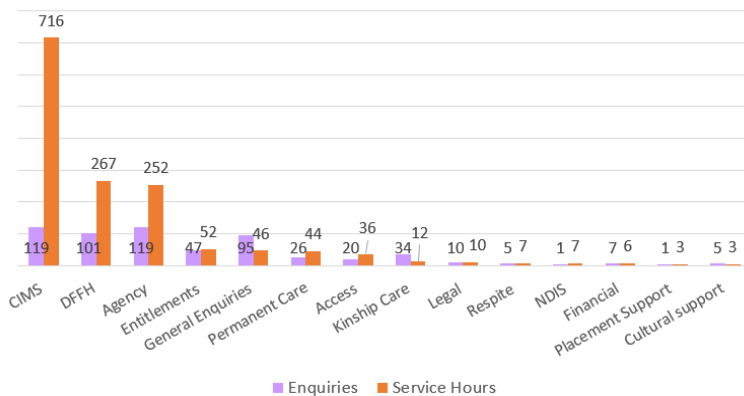


[Full CST Report 2025/26 available on the website](#)

Enquiries by Category

Carer Advocates spent the most time responding to enquiries relating to CIMS investigations, issues with DFFH and Agency matters. As already mentioned, CIMS investigations are time consuming with many delays, so it takes many hours to provide support and information to resolve issues and receive outcomes from the investigations.

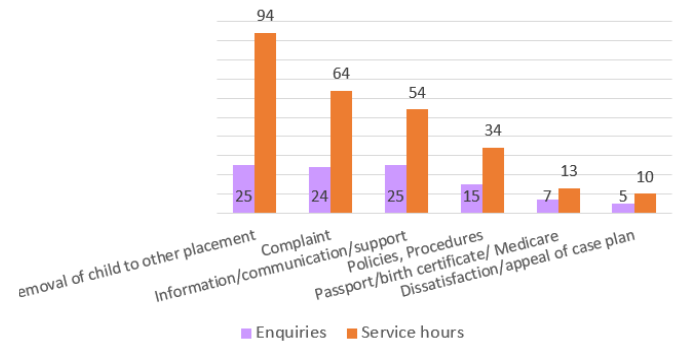
Table 3: Enquiries by Category 2025/2026



DFFH categories

Most service hours were spent assisting carers with information about the investigation process and issues stemming from the removal of children from their care. Many carers sought support when a child was removed from their care and placed with another carer, often in a rushed and unplanned manner. DFFH complaints and lack of information and support were also key issues this year, similar to previous years.

Table 5: DFFH categories 2025/2026

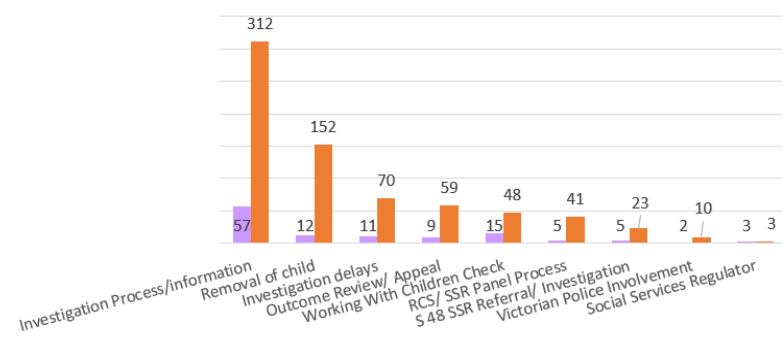


CIMS categories

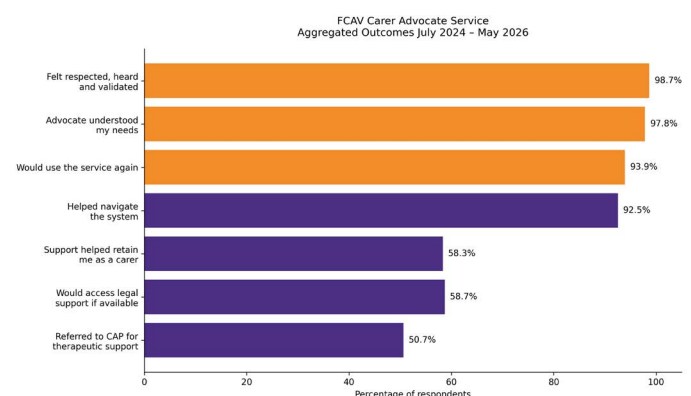
The Carer Advocate provides independent, confidential support to carers involved in, or affected by, CIMS processes. This includes helping carers understand investigation procedures, clarifying their rights and responsibilities, supporting them to prepare documentation, attend investigation interviews and ensuring carers are afforded procedural fairness.

Importantly, the Carer Advocates aim to reduce carers' feelings of isolation during what can be a highly stressful experience, while also identifying systemic issues and escalating concerns where required to promote fair and timely processes. Many carers take up the opportunity to have a debriefing session after their interview.

Table 4: CIMS categories 2025/2026



“Friendly non judging, offers good advice, listens.”

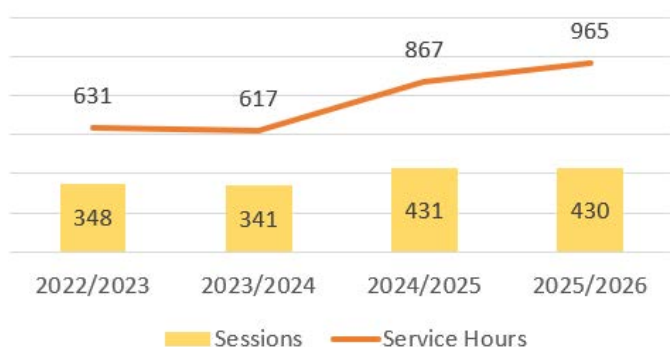


Carer Assistance Program



The Carer Assistance Program (CAP) delivered **430 sessions** of therapeutic short-term counselling, delivering **965 hours** of service in the year.

Table 6: CAP Sessions by year



CAP Categories for foster carers

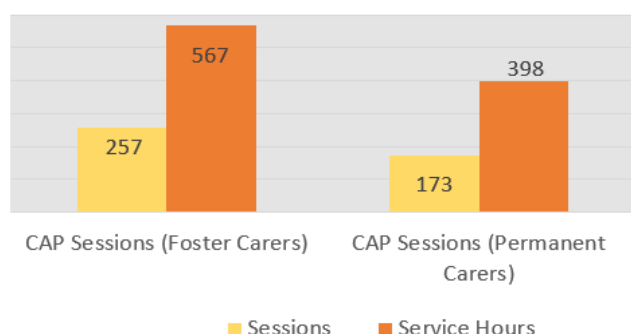
CAP counsellors delivered **257 sessions for foster carers**, delivering **567 hours of service**.

“Jake has been excellent in all aspects. Extremely helpful, understanding, unbiased, and someone who has time to listen and help formulate positive ways forward.”

Many foster carers access CAP for the emotional support while involved in a CIMS investigation and for complex loss and grief issues. They often express frustration with the system and a lack of support, particularly when they identify significant issues for the children in their care.

It continues to be challenging to navigate the NDIS system and many children in care have challenging behaviours, often associated with childhood trauma and attachment issues.

Table 7: CAP Sessions by Type of Care 2025/2026



Above: Jake Iaria (Left) and Tonya Bavaro, Therapeutic Practitioners, Carer Assistance Program

The issues raised by carers in relation to the children in their care are complex and multifaceted. When placements break down this can be challenging for the child and the carer. Carers can question their capacity to continue to care and feel undermined by the experience.

CAP categories for permanent carers

CAP counsellors delivered **173 sessions for permanent carers**, delivering 398 hours of service.

For permanent carers seeking therapeutic support, the challenging behaviours of children in their care, mental health and birth family issues were the most common issues in the year.

Permanent Carers often discuss the impact caring has had on their mental health and wellbeing. Strategies to manage this are identified in sessions and carers are provided with appropriate resources as required.

For all carers, the validation and normalisation of the issues they experience is hugely beneficial to each of them. The program is focused on supporting carers to continue to provide care to the children and young people in the Out-of-Home Care system.

“We found this service so valuable. Tonya helped us to organise our thoughts and plan for the future with our young child. She put our minds at ease by setting us up with the skills and resources needed to support our child. Such a worthwhile service.”

Learning and Development

The FCAV delivered a varied program of learning and development, wellbeing, information and connection opportunities for foster carers across Victoria.

The FCAV delivered a varied program of learning, information and connection opportunities for foster carers across Victoria.

The program combined practical webinars and resources with new member inductions, informal carer gatherings, creative activities and opportunities for carers to speak directly with the FCAV team. Sessions were shaped by the issues and questions carers were bringing to us, with a focus on providing useful information, building confidence and creating opportunities for connection.

Webinars and learning

The FCAV delivered webinars addressing practical issues across different stages of the fostering journey.

What We Wish We Knew on Day One brought together FCAV Ambassador and long-term foster carer Fiona te Wierik and Learning and Development Coordinator Deb Collard to share practical insights for new and experienced carers.

Better Futures | Home Stretch provided carers with information about supports available to young people transitioning from care, including housing, education and training, employment, health and wellbeing, and community and cultural connections.

Responding to growing enquiries from carers, **Understanding FASD: Supporting Children in Care** was delivered by NOFASD Australia. The session provided practical information about recognising and understanding Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, accessing assessment and support, communication, regulation and creating supportive environments for children.

The FCAV also made **Delving into Disenfranchised Grief** available to carers following the CAP presentation at the 2025 National Foster and Kinship Care Conference.

Connection and community

Learning and development also created opportunities for carers to connect with each other and with the FCAV outside formal training.

New Member Inductions welcomed carers to the FCAV and introduced the support, advocacy, information and learning available through their membership.

Chats with the CEO provided informal opportunities for carers to speak directly with CEO Samantha Hauge and FCAV staff, raise issues affecting their caring role and contribute insights that inform the FCAV's broader advocacy and support work.

The FCAV also visited Life Without Barriers, taking learning and engagement directly to carers and strengthening connections with carers and agency staff.



Our **Grill and Chill BBQs** provided relaxed opportunities for carers and families to meet other carers, connect with FCAV staff and spend time together outside the formal service environment.

Huge thanks to **Diana Ceramic Studio** that donated a wheel throwing workshop for **10 foster carers**, offering time to create, connect and enjoy time with others who understand the fostering experience.

These activities reflect the FCAV's commitment to learning and wellbeing offerings that are practical, responsive and accessible for carers of children in care, while recognising the value of peer connection and shared experience in supporting carers throughout their fostering journey.



Above: carers at the Wheel Throwing Workshop sponsored by Diana Ceramic Studio in October 2025





Being Heard FCAV's Advocacy Program

The FCAV maintained its strong focus on advocating for greater investment, stronger support for carers and reform of the systems that underpin home-based care.

Our advocacy was informed by the experiences of carers and strengthened by collaboration, research and data, direct engagement with government and parliamentarians, policy analysis, public campaigning and media advocacy. The FCAV also drew on national advocacy and collaboration to strengthen the case for reform in Victoria, pursuing opportunities for change across both Commonwealth and State systems.

Care Allowance Advocacy

Financial support remained a major priority. Through the **Care Allowance Campaign**, delivered in partnership with **Permanent Care and Adoptive Families**, the FCAV continued to call for a substantial increase to Victoria's base care allowance and fairer CPI indexation.

More than **4,300 submissions** to the campaign demonstrated the extent of concern about the financial pressures facing carer households.

The FCAV continued advocacy through the Victorian Budget process. The 2026–27 State Budget committed **\$14.9 million over four years**, delivering **3.5% indexation** of the care allowance for 2026–27.

The FCAV welcomed this additional investment while continuing to advocate for more substantial reform to Victoria's base allowance.

The case for reform was further strengthened in June by the **Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) audit** of Out-of-Home Care Services.

VAGO recommended that DFFH review care allowance levels to determine whether they adequately contribute to the **day-to-day costs of caring for children** and whether they are sufficient to support the recruitment and retention of carers.

The audit also **highlighted declining foster carer numbers, inadequate allowances and broader pressures on Victoria's Out-of-Home Care system**.

Policy and legislative reform

The FCAV responded to significant reforms affecting children, families and carers during the year.

We welcomed commitments announced by Minister for Children the **Hon Lizzie Blandthorn MP** at our Foster Care Week Carer Celebration, including a new therapeutic support program for children in care and carer support hubs intended to provide more accessible and coordinated support for foster carers.

In response to the **Children, Youth and Families Amendment (Stability) Bill 2025**, the FCAV supported the objective of greater stability for children while advocating for increased services and supports needed by families to enable reunification and by carers to sustain longer placements where required.

The FCAV also responded to the **Supporting Stable and Strong Families Bill 2025**, supporting its whole-of-government intent while advocating for meaningful carer consultation, adequate resourcing, consistent planning and stronger accountability across the systems supporting children and families.

”

Because I want to provide the best for the kids in my care while juggling personal commitments. This means ensuring the 2 kids in my care are getting nutritious food and have all the mental health aid that is needed to help them find themselves after being in a trauma state for most of their lives prior to placement. The monthly allowance does not cover the much needed therapy, clothes and shoes (that they quickly grow out of), afterschool activities and tutoring. This means personal funds are channeled and with an allowance that is not sufficient. This puts a strain.

Victorian Care Allowance Campaign



Commission for Children and Young People

The FCAV was pleased to meet with **Tracy Beaton** following her appointment as Victoria's new **Principal Commissioner for Children and Young People**, and welcomed the appointment of **Dallas Widdicombe** as **Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People** during the year.

These appointments provide an opportunity to continue the FCAV's strong relationship with the Commission and our shared focus on improving outcomes for children and young people in care.

Advocacy in Action

Throughout the year, the FCAV continued taking the experiences of carers directly to government, parliamentarians, the media and organisations across Victoria's child and family services sector.

Carer voices in public debate

Carer voices remained central to our public advocacy. The FCAV worked with carers and journalists to bring the realities of foster care into public debate, combining lived experience with evidence to demonstrate the impact of inadequate funding and system failures.

This included significant media advocacy following reductions to care allowances for some children with high and complex needs. In October, *The Age* reported cases where support had been reduced by more than \$100 a day, with subsequent coverage and interviews across *ABC News* and *ABC Radio* bringing further attention to the impact on children and carer households.

Carers speaking publicly about their experiences strengthened the FCAV's calls for adequate funding, greater transparency and accountability. Media advocacy also supported our broader work on the Care Allowance Campaign, carer attrition and the need for greater investment in home-based care.

Taking carer priorities to decision-makers

The FCAV continued to brief Victorian parliamentarians and decision-makers on the reforms needed to strengthen and sustain foster care.



This included a meeting with **Ben Carroll MP**, then Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, and **Paul Edbrooke MP**, then Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer and Co-Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of the FCAV.

FCAV CEO Samantha Hauge and FCAV Ambassador and foster carer Fiona te Wierik shared insights from the carer community, including the importance of collaboration between carers, schools and government to support children in foster care in their education and beyond.

Working together for change

The FCAV continued to work with organisations including **Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS)**, the **Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP)**, **CREATE Foundation** and organisations across the home-based care sector to share evidence, identify common priorities and strengthen collective advocacy.

Foster Care Alliance



During the year, the FCAV undertook ground work to bring carers and foster care organisations together around shared solutions to the challenges facing the sector.

This work led to the development of the Foster Care Alliance, with the FCAV supporting its establishment and providing secretariat support. The Alliance commenced its work in May 2026, with its public launch following in June. The FCAV continues in its secretariat role, while the Alliance is co-chaired and led by carers and leaders from **Community Service Organisations** and **Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs)**.

The FCAV looks forward to continuing to work alongside Alliance members on our shared commitment to strengthening foster care in Victoria.

State Election Campaign

As Victoria moves towards the 2026 state election, our ongoing advocacy informed the development and launch of the FCAV's 2026 state election campaign.

The election priorities are grounded in the experiences and concerns carers have shared with the FCAV, translating calls for change into clear priorities for all parties and candidates ahead of the election.

every child,
every carer,
counts.



FCAV CEO Samantha Hauge represents Victoria on the **National Foster and Kinship Care Collective (NFKCC)**, joining foster and kinship care peaks from across Australia to champion carers and drive national change.

During 2025–26, the FCAV and NFKCC strengthened national advocacy through direct engagement with federal ministers and government departments, federal pre-Budget submissions and contributions to national policy and reform processes.



Above: (L-R) Natalie Pryor, President; Minister for Social Services the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP; CEO Samantha Hauge; Member for Melbourne Sarah Witty MP.

In June, the FCAV welcomed **Federal Minister for Social Services the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP** and **Member for Melbourne Sarah Witty MP** to discuss the experiences of foster carers and the impact of Commonwealth policy on foster care.

The discussion focused on access to Federal family assistance payments and supports, barriers created by means testing and eligibility requirements, childcare and workforce participation, Medicare-funded dental care, and better coordination between Federal and state systems.

National reform

A major focus was the Australian Institute of Family Studies independent review of payments and financial supports for foster, kinship and permanent carers. The FCAV made submissions drawing on carers' experiences and advocating for fairer, more adequate and accessible financial support and supported the NFKCC national submission.

The NFKCC also advocated to improve access to Australian Government payments and other supports including; Family Tax Benefit Part A and Part B, Parenting Payment, the Child Dental Benefits Schedule and Child Care Subsidy.

Work on carers' long-term financial security also continued, including a National Carer Superannuation Survey to strengthen the evidence for reform.

Connecting carers nationally

National collaboration continued through the National Foster & Kinship Care Conference, held in Sydney in November 2025.

FCAV CEO Samantha Hauge joined fellow NFKCC representatives for a plenary session, while FCAV Carer Assistance Program Therapeutic Practitioner Jake Iaria presented on disenfranchised grief and its impact on carers.

The conference brought foster and kinship carers, sector representatives and experts from across Australia together for three days of learning, connection and discussion.

Through the NFKCC, the experiences of Victorian foster carers contribute to national reform, while national evidence and opportunities for change strengthen the FCAV's advocacy in Victoria.



Above: (L-R) Kym Philips, Director; Natalie Pryor, President and Jake Iaria, CAP Counsellor, at the NFKCC in Sydney, NSW

Foster Care Week 2025: Time to Care

Foster Care Week events and celebrations aim to recognise and celebrate Victoria's foster carers and the difference they make in the lives of children and young people and in the broader community.

The 2025 theme, **Time to Care**, recognised the time, commitment and care foster carers give every day to children who need them. Foster Care Week was also a time to care about carers, recognising their contribution and the importance of ensuring they are valued and supported.

Thank you to the agencies and ACCOs that hosted a fantastic range of carer events and activities throughout the week, helping make Foster Care Week 2025 a statewide celebration of recognition, appreciation and care for carers.

Throughout Foster Care Week, the FCAV, Agencies, ACCOs and the DFFH used social media to celebrate carers, share the **Time to Care** message and amplify activities taking place across Victoria. Posts highlighted the contribution of foster carers, shared messages of recognition and helped extend Foster Care Week beyond individual events to the broader community.



The FCAV was delighted to attend **carer events across Victoria** during Foster Care Week, providing opportunities to celebrate with carers in their own communities and hear directly about their experiences.

Sam Hauge joined **Mallee Family Care's Swan Hill Carers Dinner**, meeting with local foster carers and hearing about their experiences first hand.



In Ballarat, **Tessa Hughes** joined **Cafs' Foster Care Week Morning Tea**, sharing information about FCAV services, learning and upcoming initiatives.

Deb Collard joined **Life Without Barriers' Paint & Sip celebration**. Carers and staff came together

for an afternoon of creativity, connection and carer wellbeing.

These visits provide a valuable opportunity to strengthen connections with carers, ACCOs and agencies and share in the recognition of the contribution foster carers make every day.



FCAV Carer Celebration in Foster Care Week



It was a pleasure to welcome 140 carers, children, staff, students, parliamentarians and sector leaders to the FCAV Carer Celebration during Foster Care Week 2025.

Hosted by **FCAV President and foster carer Natalie Pryor**, the event celebrated Victoria's foster carers and provided an opportunity for carers to connect directly with government and sector leaders.



Natarsha Bamblett, proud First Nations leader, opened the celebration with a powerful Queen Acknowledgement, creating a shared experience of First Nations culture, Country and connection. **Sarah Witty MP, Member for Melbourne, FCAV Board alumna and long-time foster carer**, shared a deeply personal account of her own foster care journey and her gratitude and admiration to all carers for their contribution to children's lives and the whole community.

The **Hon. Lizzie Blandthorn MP, Minister for Children and Minister for Disability**, recognised the role of foster carers and outlined initiatives to strengthen support for carers and children in care, including a new therapeutic support program and carer support hubs. The celebration also welcomed sector and parliamentary leaders, including Meena Singh, then Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People, Paul Edbrooke MP and Roma Britnell MP, providing an important opportunity for decision-makers to hear directly from foster carers about their experiences.

Celebrating Outstanding Foster Carers

The 2025 Carer Celebration marked the launch of the inaugural FCAV Foster Carer Awards, created to recognise the extraordinary commitment and contribution of foster carers across Victoria.

The FCAV received an overwhelming response to the call for nominations, with stories highlighting carers' advocacy, commitment and dedication to children's emotional, medical, educational and cultural needs, often while providing stability in highly complex circumstances.

Inaugural FCAV Foster Carer Award Winners

Cristy and Mat Oxley – VACCA

(Cristy pictured upper right) | Recognised for their exceptional commitment to providing stability, keeping siblings together and advocating for children with significant and complex needs.

Anne Dight – Berry Street

(Pictured lower right) | Recognised for her extraordinary commitment as a carer and advocate, providing therapeutic, nurturing care to five children with complex needs.



Commitment to Supporting Carers Awards

The celebration also recognised the people working alongside foster carers. The **Commitment to Supporting Carers Awards** acknowledge agency workers who go above and beyond in supporting carers and make a significant contribution to the stability and wellbeing of carer households.

Stacey Brown – MacKillop Family Services

Miriam Wolthuizen – Anglicare Victoria

Both received multiple nominations from carers, reflecting the value carers place on consistent, responsive and respectful support.



Treasurer's Report

Samantha Keats

Treasurer



The Foster Care Association of Victoria full Financial Statement for the year ending **30 June 2026** is available on the FCAV website: [FCAV Financial Statements 2026](#)

Financial Year Ended 30 June 2026

It is my pleasure to present the Treasurer's Report for the Foster Care Association of Victoria (FCAV) for the financial year ended 30 June 2026.

Through strong financial stewardship and prudent governance, the Association has maintained a sound financial position to sustain and strengthen its support for foster carers across the state.

The FCAV continued to invest in organisational capability, technology, systems and workforce capacity to ensure the Association remains responsive, sustainable and well-positioned to meet the evolving needs of foster carers.

The FCAV generated total revenue of **\$1,373,938**. Revenue remained stable despite a changing funding environment and reduced event-related income. The Association recorded an operating surplus of **\$49,690**, bringing accumulated retained earnings to **\$968,569** at year end.

While the surplus was lower than the FY25 result of **\$162,399**, the FY26 result reflects strategic investment in people, systems and infrastructure that support the sustainability and effectiveness of the organisation. Increased staff costs, consultancy expenditure, and depreciation associated with new lease arrangements contributed to the lower surplus.

Subscription income reduced slightly, demonstrating declining carer numbers. Interest income increased while donations and fundraising income were significantly lower at **\$1,540**. The decline in donation income is consistent with broader national trends in charitable giving.

While donations remain a relatively small component of FCAV's funding base, the Association will continue exploring opportunities to diversify revenue sources and strengthen community support.

Total expenditure increased to approximately **\$1.324** million, reflecting expanded operational activity and investment in organisational capacity.

Employee benefits remained the largest expenditure category at **\$1,057,644**, representing nearly 80% of total expenditure.

Consultancy expenditure increased to **\$82,578**, while depreciation expense increased substantially following recognition of right-of-use assets associated with building and equipment leases under AASB 16.

The FCAV's balance sheet remained strong throughout FY26. Total assets increased by **16.5%** to **\$1,282,627**, while net assets increased by **\$49,690** to **\$968,569**. The growth in assets was primarily driven by increased cash holdings and recognition of leased office premises and equipment as right-of-use assets.

Total liabilities increased to **\$314,058**, largely due to lease liabilities associated with the Association's office accommodation and operating assets.

Net assets increased from **\$918,879** to **\$968,569**, providing a strong equity base and reinforcing the Association's long-term financial sustainability.

Cash and cash equivalents at 30 June 2026 remained strong, providing a stable liquidity position and ensuring the Association maintains sufficient reserves to fund operations, manage risk and invest in future initiatives.

This strong cash position provides FCAV with the flexibility to manage unforeseen costs, meet short-term obligations, manage risk and invest in future initiatives.

The FCAV enters FY27 in a strong financial position, supported by healthy cash reserves, a robust balance sheet and continued government funding.

The Board will remain focused on maintaining strong financial stewardship and sound governance, ensuring FCAV's resources are managed responsibly and sustainably to best support Victorian foster carers.

The Board extends its sincere thanks to our outgoing Treasurer, **Stephen Bowers**, for his dedicated service and valuable contribution, and to the finance team for their ongoing commitment, professionalism and support.

Financial Report

Profit and Loss

For the Year Ended 30 June 2026

		2026	2025
	Note	\$	\$
Revenue	2	1,373,938	1,378,679
Employee benefits expense	3	(1,057,644)	(1,022,927)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	3	(51,960)	(17,732)
Consultancy fees		(82,578)	(13,799)
Administrative expenses		(11,353)	(8,464)
Carer and event expenses		(12,736)	(15,861)
Office expenses		(20,120)	(30,520)
Occupancy expenses		(14,328)	(49,572)
Other expenses		(63,954)	(55,050)
Finance costs		(9,575)	(2,355)
Surplus before income tax		49,690	162,399
Income tax expense	13	-	-
Surplus for the year after income tax		49,690	162,399
Other comprehensive income, net of income tax			
Revaluation changes for property, plant and equipment		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		49,690	162,399

Balance Sheet

		2026	2025
	Note	\$	\$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	1,146,013	1,055,072
Trade and other receivables	5	26,059	32,198
Prepayments		-	4,195
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		1,172,072	1,091,465
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Right-of-use assets	8	110,555	9,200
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		110,555	9,200
TOTAL ASSETS		1,282,627	1,100,665
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	6	98,171	69,316
Lease liabilities	8	50,862	9,540
Employee benefits	7	100,849	100,990
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		249,882	179,846
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Lease liabilities	8	64,176	-
Employee benefits	7	-	1,940
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		64,176	1,940
TOTAL LIABILITIES		314,058	181,786
NET ASSETS		968,569	918,879
EQUITY			
Retained earnings		968,569	918,879
TOTAL EQUITY		968,569	918,879

Statement by the Board of Directors

Responsible Persons Declaration

Responsible Persons have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

Principal activities and significant changes in nature of activities

The principal activities of Foster Care Association of Victoria Inc during the financial year were:

- Carer Advocates - free, independent advice and support to foster carers and strong relationships with agencies, ACCOs and key stakeholders to work collaboratively to assist foster carers.
- Carer Assistance Program - free, confidential short-term counselling to foster parents, permanent carers and adoptive parents.
- Learning & Development - free forums and career events, for information exchange, connection and wellbeing support for carers.
- Advocacy - Advocating on behalf of foster carers to government, their agencies, in the sector and the community.
- Community Building - as the only centralised body for all foster carers in the state.
- Promotion of the Carer Voice - through member forums, research and engagement.
- Carer News and Information - through our comprehensive website, social media pages and regular newsletters.

There were no significant changes in the nature of the principal activities during the financial year.

Operating result

The surplus of the Association for the financial year after providing for income tax amounted to \$49,690 (2025: \$ 162,399).

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Responsible Persons:

Responsible Person:

Natalie Pryor

Responsible Person:

Samantha Keats

Dated this 19th day of August 2026

Auditor's Report



Toowoomba
160 Hume Street
PO Box 3178, Toowoomba QLD 4350

Clayfield
Suite 5 764 Sandgate Road
PO Box 191, Clayfield QLD 4011

1300 363 866
audit@mcs.au
www.mcs.au

Auditor's Independence Declaration to the Responsible Persons of Foster Care Association of Victoria Inc

In accordance with the requirements of section 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, as lead auditor for the audit of Foster Care Association of Victoria Inc for the year ended 30 June 2026, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- a) No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in section 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and,
- b) No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alistair Taylor-Spry'.

Mr Alistair Taylor-Spry
Chartered Accountant; Registered Company Auditor
Associate
McConachie Stedman Audit and Assurance Pty Ltd
Registered Company Auditor No. 465552
160 Hume Street
Toowoomba Qld 4350

19 August 2026

FCAV 2026 Carer Census



Full Carer Census Report - fcav.org.au/carers-census

In May/June 2026, the FCAV undertook a Foster Carer Census inviting participation from all registered FCAV members including current, recently exited and on-hold carers. The excellent response rate builds an important evidence base on the experiences, circumstances and needs of foster carers across Victoria.

Conducted independently by ORIMA Research, the Census received **665 submitted responses from foster carers**. Building on the 2024 Census, the findings allow the FCAV to track carer experiences over time and better understand the factors affecting carer wellbeing, recruitment and retention.

The Census explored who Victoria's foster carers are, their motivations for fostering, the children they care for, their experiences of the care system, financial and other challenges, access to support and their intentions for the future.

FCAV CARER CENSUS 2026

A BIENNIAL CENSUS OF FOSTER CARERS, THE CHILDREN IN THEIR CARE, AND THEIR EXPERIENCES ACROSS VICTORIA.

CONDUCTED BY ORIMA RESEARCH ON BEHALF OF THE FOSTER CARE ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

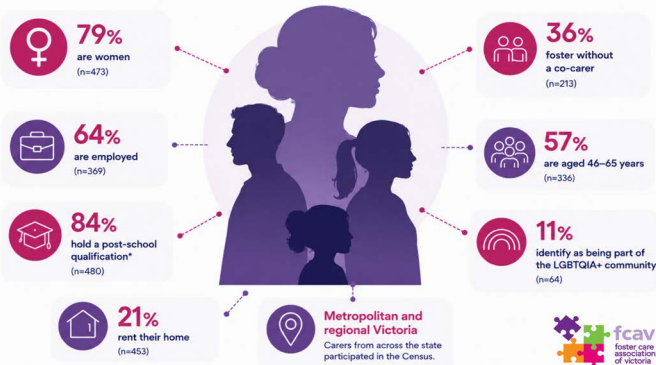


ABN: 30 747 010 099

SPOTLIGHT

Who are Victoria's foster carers?

A snapshot of the diverse people providing care across Victoria.



SPOTLIGHT

Why people foster

A strong commitment to provide care and make a difference in children's lives.



Read the 2026 FCAV Carer Census Report

Evidence for action

The findings are informing the FCAV's advocacy priorities, service delivery and engagement with government and the broader sector. They provide critical evidence about the pressures affecting carers and the changes needed to support a sustainable foster care system in Victoria.

Understanding the carer experience

The Census asked carers about their living and household circumstances, the children in their care and their experience of fostering, including how long they had been carers and the types of care they provide.

It also explored carers' motivation to provide care and the rewards and challenges of fostering; their experiences of support and the care system, their wellbeing, and the factors influencing whether they continue fostering into the future.

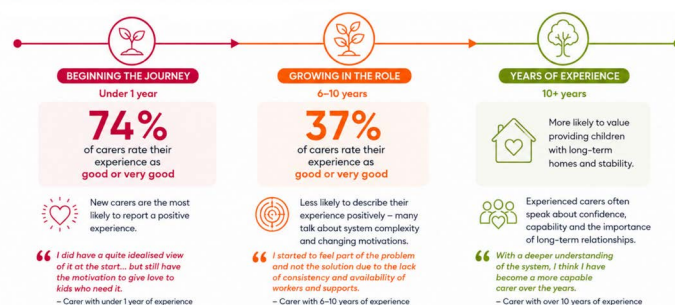
The Census captured what carers value about fostering. Carers spoke about the rewards of making a positive difference in children's lives, providing care and stability, building meaningful relationships and seeing children grow, develop and achieve positive outcomes.

At the same time, carers identified system challenges. Beyond the direct demands of caring for children and young people, **39%** identified support, inclusion and/or respect in Child Protection planning as challenging, while **25%** identified accessing information or support when needed. Financial pressures also emerged strongly, with **43%** identifying inadequate carer allowance and **31%** inadequate funding for children's expenses as challenges.

SPOTLIGHT

The foster care journey

Carers' experiences and motivations evolve over time.



Fostering is a journey.

New carers are the most positive about their experience, while carers with 6–10 years' experience are less likely to report a good experience. Over time, carers increasingly value the opportunity to provide children with long-term stability and belonging.



47% of all current carers rate their experience as good or very good.

Thank you to the 665 carers who took the time to share their experiences.

A year at a glance

FACTS & FIGURES

FCAV 2025-2026

during this
year the fca
has delivered...

Over 1,000
carer enquiries
delivering
2,425 hours
support to
carers

22

in-person and online
forums with carers

100%

agency response
rate for the carer
snapshot

140

carers/attendees at
our carer celebration
in foster care week

4,500

total
membership as
at 30 June 2026

255

new full members
(carers) 25-26

46

new associate
members 25-26

10 carers fully
sponsored to
attend the national
conference

665 responses to
the carer census

4,300+

submissions to the
care allowance
campaign

50

carers nominated in
the inaugural fca
foster carer awards

32

nominations to the
fca commitment to
carers awards

430

counselling and
support sessions
provided through the
Carer Assistance
Program

3.5%

care allowance
indexation secured for
2026-27

3

new member
induction sessions
held

We champion foster carers to be recognised and valued for their role in the lives of children and young people in care.

BECOME A MEMBER!

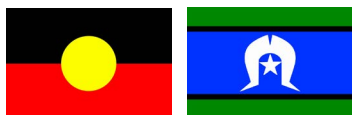
As an FCAV member you have access to free advocacy, support & information. Your membership is instrumental to our strength, striving for a better Victorian foster care system for our children, young people & carers.

As the peak body in Victoria, we are the united voice of foster carers, advocating for systemic improvements, building productive partnerships and nurturing respectful relationships. We deliver a full range of information and support services to meet carers' needs at all points in their care journey.

FCAV.ORG.AU | (03) 9416 4292



The FCAV celebrates the diversity of its carer membership, board and staff. We are committed to a workplace, policies and services that are safe and inclusive for LGBTIQA+ communities, young people and families.



Acknowledgment of Country

The FCAV acknowledges the unceded sovereignty of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. We acknowledge their continued connection to Country – including lands, cultural knowledges and their peoples – and pay our respect to Elders past and present. We advocate for systemic change that honours the place of culture, family, community and connection to country in the lives of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people as they grow.

Contact:

Foster Care Association of Victoria
Ground Floor, 2 Greenwood Street,
Abbotsford VIC 3067
Telephone: (03) 9416 4292
Email: admin@fcav.org.au
Website: www.fcav.org.au

