



MEDIA RELEASE: Monday 15th September 2025

Cafes join the call for more foster carers during Foster Care Week

Mallee Family Care is using Foster Care Week (September 14-20) to acknowledge the incredible contribution of foster carers in our region, and to encourage more people to consider opening their homes to a child in need.

Right now, there is an urgent need for more foster carers across Australia – including in north-west Victoria and south-west New South Wales. Foster carers provide safe, stable and nurturing homes for children and young people who are unable to live with their birth families.

To help spread the message and encourage more people to consider foster caring, Mallee Family Care has teamed up with five cafés across its catchment area.

During Foster Care Week Beans2Machines and blk.mlk specialty coffee in Mildura, Golly Café Bakery, Wentworth Café & Lotto and Swan Hill's Café 202 will serve hot drinks in specially designed foster care takeaway cups.

Featuring the message 'Start your foster caring journey with Mallee Family Care', each cup also includes a QR code which can be scanned to access more information about foster caring.

"We're so grateful to these local businesses who are getting behind Foster Care Week," said Mallee Family Care CEO Teresa Jayet.

"Our goal is that these takeaway cups will help generate awareness, spark conversations, and inspire more people to consider becoming a foster carer.

"Foster carers change lives every day. By offering stability, kindness and care, they give children and young people a chance to feel safe and to thrive. We know many people in our community have the compassion and ability to provide that care – and right now, we need more of them," Ms Jayet said.

On an average night, 1,300 children are in foster care across Victoria. In the 2024-25 Financial Year, Mallee Family Care coordinated foster care placement for 78 children aged between 0 and 18 years.

Mildura's Barb Clifford has been a foster carer for almost a decade, and says the experience is one of the 'best things I've ever done'.

"There is nothing better than hearing someone say, 'I feel like I'm part of a family'," she said.



Media enquiries

Mieka Symes | Communications Manager

T: 03 5023 5966 M: 0439 850 638

E: misymes@malleefamilycare.com.au



“Some of the most rewarding parts are in the everyday things – seeing a young person start to do things for themselves without reminders or to be proud of their own achievements.

“It’s not always easy, but it’s incredibly rewarding. You have the chance to make a real, lasting impact in a child’s or young person’s life and they often make as big an impact on yours,” Barb said.

Anyone aged 21 years and over can apply to become a foster carer, including single people, those with or without children, people in heterosexual and same-sex relationships, full-time, part-time or casual workers, retirees, homeowners and renters.

Mallee Family Care provides training, ongoing support and advice for all foster carers. Carers can choose from respite, emergency, short-term or long-term placements depending on their availability and circumstances.

“A lot of people have a negative or outdated idea of what foster care is like, but the reality is very different. Its great!” said Barb.

“You’re not doing it alone. There’s a whole support system behind you. As a carer, you have a dedicated support worker who checks in regularly to see how you and your family are going. That support really makes a difference.”

Barb encouraged everyone – even those who might only be slightly curious about foster caring – to explore it further.

“There’s a real need in our community and I’ve always struggled with the idea of not helping when I know I have the ability and the room to.

“For me, the joys far outweigh the challenges. Yes, there are tough days, but seeing the difference you can make in a child’s or young person’s life makes it all worth it.

For more information about becoming a foster carer, visit malleefamilycare.com.au or call 5023 5966.

ENDS



Media enquiries

Mieka Symes | Communications Manager

T: 03 5023 5966 M: 0439 850 638

E: misymes@malleefamilycare.com.au