

Media Release

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Giving Children Hope, Stability and Belonging: Celebrating Foster Carers

MacKillop Family Services is marking Victorian Foster Care Week 2026 (13-19 September) with a simple but heartfelt message for foster carers across the country: thank you for continuing to show up and for the difference you make every day.

Foster care is one of the most important roles a person can play in their community. It can ask a great deal of the people who step up to do it but brings its own rewards as carer, Mardi, can attest to.

A maths and science secondary teacher with 20 years' experience, Mardi Easton has worked in state schools, international boarding schools overseas and university student ministry. "I love working with teenagers," Mardi says.

After watching the film *Instant Family* and listening to a podcast about fostering, the idea that it could be for her would not leave Mardi's mind. Initially, she dismissed it. She was single and worked full time, and assumed foster care was not realistic. But the thought persisted.

"I realised I had the capacity to provide for and love a child," she says. "I wasn't so focused on climbing a career ladder and I had something to give.

Mardi became a foster carer with MacKillop Family Services, starting with short-term care, offering short stays for children and young people who needed somewhere safe for a weekend or a break.

Since then, she has cared for 10 children and young people, some for only a weekend, others for several months. And for anyone wondering if they could make a difference, Mardi offers this challenge: "If you have room in your house and capacity to love someone else, please do it."

This Foster Care Week, MacKillop is turning the spotlight on carers' quiet, consistent dedication.

MacKillop invites the community to be part of this appreciation via a ['Thank You Wall'](#), to let foster carers know that their extraordinary contribution is seen, valued and appreciated.

"This Foster Care Week, we want to say a heartfelt thank you," said Jasmine Perry, MacKillop's National Manager of Foster Care Recruitment and Development. "Thank you for opening your hearts, sharing your lives, and creating opportunities for children and young people to feel safe,

cared for and connected. Your dedication makes a lasting difference, and we are grateful for all that you do."

Foster carers provide safety, stability and a sense of belonging for children and young people who are unable to live with their birth families, often stepping in at short notice, and staying the course through some of the most challenging moments in a child's life. It is in the small, everyday moments like a shared meal, a bedtime routine, and making sure there are clean clothes in the morning, that foster carers make the biggest difference.

Jasmine added: "We see the care foster carers give, the challenges they navigate, and the commitment they bring. MacKillop is here to walk alongside them with ongoing support because we are part of the same team, working for the best outcome for children."

Throughout Foster Care Week, MacKillop will be recognising and thanking foster carers through a series of local activities and appreciation moments, and encouraging the broader community to join in acknowledging the people who make a difference in children's lives every day.

An online 'Thank You Wall' – accessible via the [MacKillop Family Services homepage](#) – has been created to give the community the opportunity to share written messages, photos, short videos, artwork or creative expressions of thanks. By coming together to recognise and acknowledge foster carers, we can help ensure they know their extraordinary contribution is seen, valued and appreciated.

MacKillop is also encouraging anyone considering foster care to reach out and learn more about becoming a carer, with information sessions and support available for people at every stage of the journey.

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For further information, contact the MacKillop media team:

Angela Mallon, Media & Communications Team Lead
M: 0438 076 313 E: angela.mallon@mackillop.org.au

Suzanne Schokman, Media & Communications Advisor (NSW)
M: 0488 777 497 E: suzanne.schokman@mackillop.org.au

About

[MacKillop Family Services](#) is a national child and family welfare organisation with extensive experience delivering therapeutic and trauma-informed services. We operate residential care, foster care, family support, disability support, youth homelessness and education programs across NSW, VIC, WA, the ACT and the NT, and provide foster care recruitment services in Central QLD and the Sunshine Coast.