

Who are family carers?

NT Families and Children (NTFC) recognises that families come in all shapes and sizes with their own intricacies and values. NTFC understands that for many, family extends beyond their immediate family and includes their extended family and /or persons with who they have a kinship relationship and/or emotional attachment.

You can become a family carer if you are either blood related or have an emotional attachment to a child that is unable to stay at home because of care and protective concerns. Family carers are:

- blood relatives other than the child's natural parents
- relatives by marriage or de-facto relationships
- members of the child or young person's language group
- godparents
- persons considered family or close friends
- persons who have an emotional attachment to the child or young person.

Why is it important that I become a family carer?

NTFC believes that when a child is unable to remain in their family home, the best alternate care option for a child is within their extended family. Family placements are better for a child because they:

- minimise the trauma experienced by the child or young person during this time
- enable the child to live with persons that they know and trust
- reinforce the child's or young person's sense of identity and self esteem by maintaining a connection with their family, culture and community
- minimise the degree of disruption to the child's life and help to normalise the experience
- reduce the stigma associated with being placed in foster care or other out of home care placements.

What does it mean to be a family carer for NT Families and Children?

NTFC has a legal responsibility to assess all potential carers, regardless of their relationship to the child. This means that all persons who are blood related or who have an emotional attachment with the child, will need to be assessed and registered with NTFC. A family carer assessment package has been developed specifically for families that take into account the different needs and experiences of the family and their existing connections to the child.



It is a good idea to speak to the child's caseworker about the family care assessment process before agreeing to become a carer, so that you know what to expect. NTFC will offer support through the process, because we value family and prioritise the importance of family carers for all children in need of care.