

MEDIA RELEASE

Celebrating & Supporting Young Carers During National Carers Week

10 Oct 2023

National Carers Week is set to take place from October 15th to 21st, 2023, providing a platform to raise awareness about the 2.65 million Australians who selflessly provide care and support to their family members or friends. This year Your Side is putting a spotlight on young carers, people up to 25 years old, who dedicate their time and energy to assist family members or friends with disabilities, mental health challenges, chronic conditions, substance dependence, or frailty. With over 235,000 young carers across Australia, it's crucial to acknowledge their essential role in caregiving. While many young carers find fulfillment in their responsibilities, it's important to recognise that inadequate support can adversely affect their health and wellbeing, schooling and pathways to employment and the time they have to socialise with friends.

Meet Cheryl, a 9-year-old Young Carer

Cheryl, a remarkable 9-year-old, is one such young carer. She helps care for her Mum, who struggles with anxiety, and her grandparents, both of whom have dementia. Cheryl assists with household chores, food preparation, and supports her grandparents with mobility. Despite the challenges, Cheryl finds comfort in helping those she loves. She shared, "When I was little, my grandparents cared for me, and now I am caring for them. It's just really nice to help people you love. My favourite young carer activity has been camping. The Carer Gateway is a gate to happiness, friendship, and support, and I have made a lot of new friends. My family is really happy for me."

Meet Ben, a 15-year-old Young Carer

Ben, aged 15, plays a crucial caring role for his older brother, who has an intellectual disability, a responsibility he's embraced for the past four years. Balancing his caregiving duties with school was challenging for Ben, impacting his academic performance and social life. However, he found support through the young carers program offered by the Carer Gateway. Ben now receives tutoring, leading to improved school performance, and participates in numerous young carer social events.

"My grades have got heaps better at school and I go to a lot of young carer events which is cool. I loved the pizza-making event we did the most. If you are a young carer, you should check it out," said an enthusiastic Ben.

Your Side, as a Carer Gateway service provider, help young carers achieve their goals, offers tutoring to establish good study habits and balance school with caring responsibilities, can arrange respite so young carers can, organise counselling and peer support sessions, look into upskilling and employment pathways courses and even assist with driving lessons!



James O'Keefe, Young Carer Consultant at Carer Gateway, said, "The young carers program supports carers under the age of 25. It can help relieve pressures at school, stress at home, and help young carers find work. And it is fun!"

National Carers Week 2023 aims to shine a light on the invaluable contributions of young carers like Cheryl and Ben and the support available to them through the Carer Gateway.

To learn more or access these services, visit www.carergateway.gov.au or call 1800 422 737, Monday to Friday between 8am and 6pm local time.

Let's come together to recognise, celebrate, and support young carers across Australia during National Carers Week 2023.

Your Side's Community Engagement Team will also be attending various events throughout Carers Week to chat to people and carers more about the Carer Gateway so they can sign-up for support.

[See the full EVENT CALENDER here](#)

Videos:

[Cheryl's Young Carer story](#)

[Ben's Young Carer story](#)

[About the Young Carer Program, Carer Gateway](#)

For Photos of Ben & Cheryl [CLICK HERE](#)

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James O'Keefe - Young Carer Consultant, Carer Gateway

Cheryl, Young Carer

Ben, Young Carer