

Grandcarers WA Position Paper April 2026

Ending Financial Discrimination Against Children Raised by Their Grandparents

Subject

Urgent need for equitable financial support for children being raised by their grandparents in Western Australia.

This is a Children's Rights Issue. In Western Australia today, children are being treated differently based solely on who is raising them.

- A child in foster care receives significant financial support.
- A child raised by their grandparent receives minimal support.

This is financial discrimination against children.

The Inequity

The WA Government has recently announced a **\$31.8 million funding package** to support foster and family carers, including a **10% increase in subsidies**, equating to approximately **\$1,500 additional support per child per year**.

At the same time:

- Children in foster care receive **around \$15,000 per year** in support.
- Children raised by grandparents receive **approximately \$1,000 per year in total**.

The increase alone for foster children now exceeds the total annual support provided to children raised by grandparents. This disparity is unjustifiable.

A Breach of Fundamental Rights

Australia is a signatory to the **Convention on the Rights of the Child¹**, which requires that all children are supported **without discrimination of any kind**. Yet, in Western Australia:

- The needs of the child do not change.
- The cost of raising the child does not change.
- The level of government support **does** change.

This is a clear failure to uphold the principle of non-discrimination.

The Reality

Children raised by grandparents are often among the most vulnerable. They benefit from stability, family connection and continuity of care. Grandparents:

- Step in during times of crisis
- Keep children out of the formal care system
- Deliver better long-term outcomes

Yet these children are **penalised financially** because they are not in foster care.

Our Position

Grandcarers WA calls for immediate action to end this inequity:

1. **Ensure parity with foster care support** so children are treated equally regardless of care arrangement.
2. **Recognise grandparent care as a core part of the child protection system.**

The WA Government has demonstrated it can act to support children in care. It must now act to ensure **all children are treated equally. No child should be disadvantaged because of who is raising them.**

Conclusion

Children do not choose their circumstances. But they are currently being treated differently because of them.

This is not fair.

This is not just.

And it must change.