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Your submission for this review:

The carer allowance has not kept up with the cost of living. Carers who previously may have been able to work part time, allowing more time to be available to foster, are working additional hours just to be able to keep a roof over their head. I suggest that care allowances also vary for the type of care provided. Emergency and short term care need to at least double per night. The average daily allowance is around \$45. Pathetic compared to the hundreds paid for ICAs etc. This amount equates to roughly one hour of work for me. Inevitably I will lose hours at work collecting a child early from school/day care for emotional reasons, going to family visits, appointments, illness etc etc Already Im behind the eight ball financially, making it difficult to be able to say yes to a placement in this current financial climate. Emergency placements often come without appropriate clothing, shoes etc. We make purchases for the kids and then, if we get reimbursed, it takes weeks to go through. A better system needs to be in place, pre paid Visa cards or similar with the onus on carers to provide the receipts. Making emergency and short term placements financially more attractive for carers will significantly reduce your costs of alternative care arrangements. One significant way to reduce the cost of kids being in alternative care arrangements is to value the carers you currently have so they dont give it up. Treat us as professional, dedicated, understanding individuals, who bring a phenomenal skill set to the table. Include us in decision making and talk to us as equals. Share knowledge of the childs needs with us, dont hide it from us. Another alternative is to look more into professionalising the foster system again. And my final big request is to pay us superannuation. I respect its an allowance, but figure out a way to do it. Women suffer enough with the gender income divide. Close the gap a little this way.