



Carer Council

Member Spotlight Emily-Rose Fullerton | Carer Council Member

Background

Emily is a kinship carer based in regional South Australia who was appointed to the Council in December 2025.

What type of care do you provide?

Specialist kinship care.

What are some of your fondest memories of caring?

One of our little ones in our care has had a significant medical history since birth and is still receiving daily life sustaining treatment to this day. In many ways seeing him go through multiple surgeries and procedures was absolutely traumatic but also completely inspirational because even when he is at his sickest he would still be so cheerful and so resilient. I have learnt what it is to be strong through a child showing true strength and courage. My fondest memory was finally getting to bring him home after his longest stay in hospital of 11 months straight. Seeing all my kids so happy and excited to see the brother was so incredibly special and to finally be a complete family again.

Can you share something about yourself outside of caring?

I have a passion for art and enjoy being creative when I get the opportunity, as a family we love being outside exploring nature with our kids.

How did you become a carer?

Very unexpectedly, we were directly contacted by the department.

What are your hopes for the Carer Council?

My hope is that the Council can be a strong voice for foster and kinship carers, encouraging open communication, advocacy and meaningful improvements within the system. I want to help create better outcomes for all children in care while also supporting carers through connections, understanding and shared experiences. It's so important the voices of children and carers are heard. I feel immensely grateful to be a part of the Council and conversations that lead to real and meaningful change.

From your experience, what are some of the areas that need addressing in child protection?

For me, and from my own experiences I feel that trust has been lost between carers and the Department. I'm sure each and every one of us has a story where we feel we were let down by the Department and not heard. I hope in the future we can bridge the gap together and create a safe environment for carers and the Department to come together and work more collaboratively to better the lives of our children with transparency.

What experiences and skills do you have that will be useful to the Carer Council's work?

Throughout my time as a kinship carer, I have gained a unique set of skills through navigating the NDIS and the Department whilst caring for children with complex disabilities and medical complexities. My husband and I are now trained and qualified with skills that are equivalent to a registered nurse to administer life sustaining treatment in the home setting for the 24/7 care our son requires to live. My skills are gained directly through lived experience. Before taking on my full-time care role, I was a stay-at-home mum whilst my husband was a FIFO worker. Our lives have drastically changed since becoming carers, with my husband needing to resign from his career so we can meet the needs of our children. This resulted in me having to learn how to successfully advocate for my family and our needs. I hope my skills and experiences can resonate with other carers that have been through similar situations. My passion is advocating for the needs of children and their carers.