



Carer Council

Member Spotlight

Peter Kennedy | Carer Council Chair

Background

Peter is a regional based foster carer from the Riverland. Peter is serving as the Chair of the Carer Council from July 2026.

What type of care do you provide?

Emergency, Respite and Short Term foster care.

How did you become a carer?

My wife heard a segment of the local radio station regarding an information session near our home. She attended and spoke with someone then came home and spoke with me. Our attitude was it sounded like a good idea (something we could do) and we would work our way through the application process. We were comfortable that we could withdraw from the process if we heard anything that didn't suit us. After many months of interviews, home visits and paperwork we were approved as carers. Its been a part of our life since then (2018).

Can you share something about yourself outside of caring?

I am a particularly busy retired Police Inspector. I am a passionate Crows Supporter and Deb and I love our Rock N Roll dancing. I work endless hours in my garden, and I play pool (cue sports) all around Australia and the world. Deb and I are off to South Africa in October for some World Championships and a Safari.

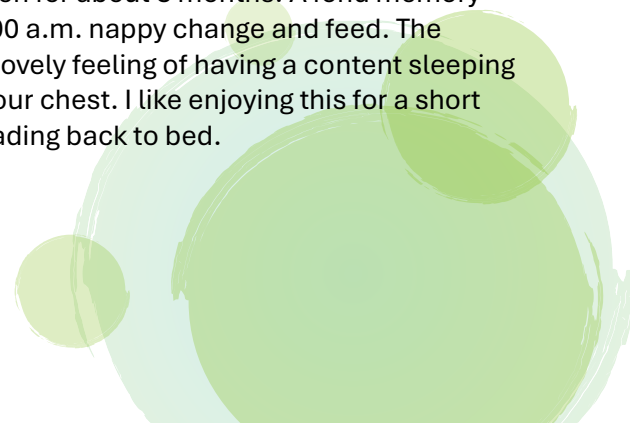
I find simple things can amuse me and give me satisfaction. Baking sourdough bread is one of my most recent hobbies.

What are some of your fondest memories of caring?

There have been many highs and a few concerning moments also. It's not all 'peaches and cream'. I do recall when I was driving two young boys from the Riverland to Murray Bridge. They were an emergency placement and had been with us a few nights. While I was driving along a boring section of the country road one of the boys stated, "You and your wife are good people." This came out of the blue with no other conversation. He made it clear he appreciated our efforts.

On another occasion my wife and I were sitting in the lounge room when two young girls came in with a present for us. (This was another emergency placement). The present was a handmade Thank You card they had made and written in. It was a lovely gesture.

Deb and I have cared for several infants. Babies have arrived at our door just days after being born. We care for these children for about 3 months. A fond memory involves the 4.00 a.m. nappy change and feed. The memory is the lovely feeling of having a content sleeping baby lying on your chest. I like enjoying this for a short time before heading back to bed.



What are your hopes for the Carer Council?

I hope the Carer Council is an active part of any conversations that may lead to improvements in Child Protection. It is my belief the issues involved in Child Protection are extremely complex and challenging. There is no silver bullet to make things better. Making improvements will come from all interested parties sharing ideas and having meaningful conversations. I hope the Carer Council can play an active part in any relevant discussions.

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

This is a challenging question to answer, and my answer comes from my personal experiences. Whilst many areas provide opportunities for improvement, I feel the issues of communication and consistency are two significant opportunities.

Carers need to feel valued and listened to. For this to occur there needs to always be open and honest conversations with carers. Good communication leads to carers feeling respected and valued.

Unfortunately, not all areas across the State are consistent in how they approach Child Protection issues. This is particularly evident regarding payment decisions. It is my understanding this is an area currently being examined.

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

During my working life I have always acknowledged the importance of diversity and listening to other people's views. When involved in Carer Council work it is important to remember the need to represent all carers as well as you can. What will achieve the best outcomes for carers and in turn the young people they care for. I am not a kinship carer and have had limited contact with kinship carers. Since my work with the Carer Council, I am now a strong advocate for issues regarding kinship carers.

Throughout my life I have been involved in many committees and similar groups. Many of the committees I have been involved in have a community focus, Kindy, Primary School, High School and Rotary. I am presently an active member of my community, and this is something I have always been.

