

# Students become foster carers

*“Incredibly important role in giving children loving and safe homes”*

The campaign to recruit more volunteers to help care for homeless or vulnerable children and teenagers is attracting interest from students and academics across Victoria's tertiary campuses.

According to foster care manager Janet Elefsiniotis, “Students studying for careers in teaching, health and social welfare make great foster carers. We need to dispel the myth that foster carers have to be part of a nuclear family. Anyone over twenty-one is eligible to apply to become a foster carer.”

On any given day, there are over 5000 Victorian children who cannot live safely at home, through no fault of their own.

John Mitchell recruits new carers for Good Shepherd's LINC Program (Living in Nurturing Communities).

“Foster carers need a sense of humour, patience, tolerance and a willingness to be flexible and open to new experiences. They play an incredibly important role in giving children loving and safe homes and helping to improve their quality of life,” he says.

As volunteers Good Shepherd



foster carers choose how much care they wish to provide, depending on their own commitments and lifestyles. Some prefer to provide weekend respite care whilst others are available for longer placements.

Elefsiniotis is keen to highlight the high level of support available.

“We don't expect our carers to deal with the demands of fostering on their own. There's a team of experienced social workers who offer professional support 24 hours a day. Carers also receive a fortnightly non-taxable allowance to help cover costs ranging from

\$262 - \$419, depending on the age of the child”.

Students wishing to learn more about becoming a foster carer with Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service can contact John Mitchell on 9270 9351 or email [j.mitchell@goodshepvc.org.au](mailto:j.mitchell@goodshepvc.org.au).

## 15 minutes to fitness

Community experts from La Trobe University reveal easy, sure-fire ways to improve your health in a new series.

Rick Hayes, a leading researcher on men's health from the School of Public Health has three tips that can improve your health in just 15 minutes a day.

“Anyone can easily incorporate them into their workday,” he says.

1. Spend 10 minutes outside your office each day. A short stroll will do wonders for your blood circulation and relieve stress at the same time.

“Fresh air and exercise is vital in maintaining a healthy lifestyle,” he says.

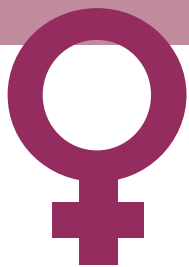
2. Feeling tired? Always suffering from headaches? Drink more water! Fatigue or headaches are often signs of dehydration. Keep a water bottle on your desk or make a specific time to drink a glass of water every hour.

“This will also help avoid potential harmful kidney problems later in life,” he says.

3. Stay productive by taking regular short breaks. Socialise with your colleagues – take part in a short activity or talk about something that is not work related for a few minutes.

“It is a great stress buster and it will add years to your life.”

## The Women's Clinic on Richmond Hill



We believe in providing the sort of healthcare we would want for ourselves, daughters, mothers, sisters and friends.

- Family Planning
- Sexual Health
- Abortion Information
- Counselling, Psychotherapy
- Abortion

Open Mon-Tues 8.30-4pm and Wed, Thurs, Fri 8.30-6pm. Ph 9427 0399  
AH Number for appointments is 0428 388 819

366 Church Street Richmond Victoria Australia 3121  
Phone 9427 0399 [www.womensclinic.com.au](http://www.womensclinic.com.au)

INFORMATION • SUPPORT • REFERRAL

# HIV & SEXUAL HEALTH

## Connect

### 1800 038 125

If you are having sex with different partners it is a good idea to regularly get tested for sexually transmissible infections (STIs).

If you have any questions about your sexual health or about human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) call the Connect line on 1800 038 125

CHLAMYDIA • GONORRHOEA • HERPES • SYPHILIS • THRUSH • HIV • HPV (WARTS) • CRABS

[www.connectline.com.au](http://www.connectline.com.au)