

Carers pick up diamonds every day



Caring: Murray Bridge foster carer Nola Grace says looking after children is one of her most rewarding experiences.

MANY Murraylands children are in need of foster carers.

Currently there are 50 carers in the region looking after 100 children, with more children left waiting.

Although new carers have steadily volunteered over the years, the number of children requiring care has increased at a greater rate.

Children need foster care when they are not able to live at home and when care provided by a relative or someone they know is not an option.

AC Care alternative care services manager Steve Mole said foster carers were a largely anonymous group of compassionate people from a cross section of the community, who care deeply for the wellbeing of children and young people.

"Carers often need respite themselves," he said.

"One of the greater areas of need is for new respite carers who can take a child for a weekend or a few days."

Murray Bridge foster carer Nola Grace said the experience looking after foster children was amazing.

"Everyday is a challenge, it is hard work," she said.

"But there is something about knowing that you are

giving children something they have never had.

"The world is not a safe place for children, so it is important for me to teach them to trust."

Mrs Grace looks after two foster children and said it was important to let children be children.

"Children should not have the world on their shoulders," she said.

"It is vital to create a safe environment.

"I do not want these children to slip between the cracks and be the ones who fall behind."

Mrs Grace said being a foster carer was the biggest job she had ever taken, but felt her love did not diminish by giving more, it just kept growing.

"We give these children a sense of belonging and treat them as part of our family," she said.

"Foster caring enables you to meet some amazing children.

"You pick up diamonds every day.

"Out of all of it, fostering a child is one of the most rewarding things you could possibly do."

- Details: For more information on becoming a foster carer phone 8532 1823 or visit www.accare.org.au