



Au Pair Assist

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Submission on the Draft Report Childcare and Early Childhood Learning

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About Au Pair Assist

Au Pair Assist is a consulting agency for Australian Families hosting au pairs from overseas to help with child care. Au Pair-Assist provides information, support, mediation and networks to both families and au pairs to ensure that both sides are clear about their expectations.¹ Au Pair Assist has a subsidiary in Germany and provides German speaking au pairs with all information they need to become a successful au pair in Australia.

¹ Please see attached Information at the end of submission

Executive Summary

The following will make some clear suggestions for a quick and non-bureaucratic solution with regard to au pairs and their domestic arrangement in a family home.

Interpretation of the visa condition for both students and visitors allowing them to work for lodging and board to the extent that this will be permissible in a domestic arrangement, namely within a host family.

Ruling that the engagement of an au pair in a host family does not reflect a true commercial value due to provision of lodging and board plus a small remuneration, the so called 'pocket money' and as well the inclusion of an au pair into the family for cultural exchange reasons.

Tax exemption for au pairs in a domestic arrangement including a clear FBT exemption and an exemption of superannuation payment obligation for more than 30 hours of service. It follows that families will not be unable to claim expenses arising with hosting au pairs.

Response to draft report citing Au Pair Assist

Au Pair Assist has made an initial submission which can be found under sub. 153.

The productivity commission did refer to it on 376 of the draft report. I like to give clarification to those points.

Working rights for Granny au pairs or others on a visitor visa

There is also an emerging trend to more mature au pairs, sometimes referred to as 'Granny au pairs' (Au Pair Assist sub. 153). However, it is unclear as to how these more mature workers would qualify for an Australian work visa.

It is simply not necessary for the Granny au pairs to have an Australian work visa. As stated on page 4 of my submission, the provision for work without remuneration (board and lodging acceptable) has already a place in the visa conditions for visitors. Although this exception seems to be applicable solely if the work undertaken is for a registered charity², the question here is very simple: What is the cost to Australia if visitors were allowed to help out families with their childcare needs in return for board and lodging?

The clear answer would be: NIL.

The benefits however are plenty. Visitors bring money into the country and it is already common practice that visitors who wish to stay for a period exceeding 3 months would need proof that they are able to financially support themselves. They are coming for a cultural experience.³

Submission 153 has the necessary 'small' change in the interpretation of the respective passus already covered and details the benefits for society if the access to au pairs will be made easier for families.

² <http://www.immi.gov.au/Visas/Pages/600.aspx>

³ Volunteer work tourism schemes (<http://www.immi.gov.au/Visas/Pages/651.aspx#sub-heading-8>)

In general, an eVisitor does not allow you to work in Australia. However, you might be able to work as a volunteer if:

- your main purpose in visiting Australia is tourism and the voluntary work is incidental to tourism
- the work is genuinely voluntary and you are not paid for it, other than for meals, accommodation or out of pocket living expenses
- the work would not otherwise be done in return for wages by an Australian resident

To draw on the draft report⁴, having access to mature age in-home care for children actually reflects common practice in Australia⁵. Those who have no grandparents for informal care⁶ available to help out with child care could invite a Granny au pair into the family home.

It is further stated that grandparents are relied on for outside school hours care.⁷ Looking at those hours they would be around 3 hours per day so a total of 15 hours per week. Demi-pair arrangements have, in-line with homestay arrangements, validated board and lodgings to be worth up to 20 hours in exchange⁸.

As a family is neither a business nor an organisation but hosts au pairs under a domestic arrangement I strongly recommend interpreting the respective passus in the visa condition in favour to domestic arrangements. This will furthermore correspond with the arrangements of visiting family members, who will help out in the same way (and more) like a Granny au pair would.

Qualification and Working with Children Check of au pairs

While au pairs are a more affordable care option for families, they typically do not have any formal training or qualification in childcare. It is generally accepted, therefore, that they are principally carers, rather than educators. Most au pairs also do not hold a current first aid qualification and few have undergone a working with children check from either overseas or Australia (Au Pair Assist sub. 153).

The majority of au pairs travel to Australia after finishing school in a gap year. Therefore professional experience simply cannot be expected from most. Families are well aware of it but it is purely in the family's discretion to choose an au pair according to existing or non-existing previous experience. Families demonstrate successfully that for those hours an au pair is needed, a young adult who is happy to take on the challenge might fit the gap very well.

Needless to say that families do not have a choice in selecting a fully regulated child care services and mostly the option is take it or leave it, if at all.

It would need a further investigation into the matter, but from my experience au pairs complement formal care for children similar to parent care. Host Families guide their au pairs and provide a schedule of activities. As the EPPE study from the UK⁹ found *that it was what parents did with their children* is important, a child (or a small group of children) with a sole carer attending different activities can only have a positive effect on the child as the *potential for negative effects are greater the closer to birth a child commences ECED and the longer the time the child spends in care*¹⁰.

In regards to current first aid qualifications of au pairs it needs to be pointed out that this is a criteria in the discretion of host families, where the parents in return might not hold such a qualification themselves and therefore don't make it a criteria. Families who wish for their au pair to have first aid skills will usually arrange for this.

⁴ here page 3 *particularly grandparents, also tend to be relied on*

⁵ Draft report, page 94 The majority of informal care is provided by grandparents

⁶ Draft report, page 63

⁷ Draft report, page 95 The Council on the Ageing (sub. 412) ... preference for grandparents to provide outside school hours care ...

⁸ www.priceless-exchange.com.au

⁹ Draft report page 175

¹⁰ Draft report page 176, it may as well be that a child actually can attend formal care due to the drop off/pick up by an au pair

The Working With Children (WWC) check is just as well in the discretion of host families who might ask for a police check from overseas¹¹. Families do not see any need for their au pairs to undergo a WWC check in Australia as those young adults simply would not be expected to have any records and especially not in Australia, arriving for the first time. The WWC in Australia is regarded as being costly, bureaucratic and unnecessary for au pairs, not only due to a missing national regulation.

The need for Au Pairs

It needs to be pointed out that the au pair industry is growing because of the lack of adequate access to childcare. The choice a family has is either arranging for acceptable childcare or one parent sacrificing on the career, which has a long term effect for career progress and mainly effects women.¹²

Informal Domestic Arrangement

Not all families are totally comfortable with hosting a 'stranger' in their family home, who has to be trusted to be a reasonable carer for their children. The lack of privacy, the sometimes strenuous settling in phase several times per year, the emotional stresses during conflicts, the lack of reliability or better security of continuous care etc. all contribute to call this a domestic arrangement rather than employment.

Obviously there are clear advantages and benefits to host au pairs and families are trying their very best to deal with any 'side-effects', being the most viable option for care for a large number of families for some years. I'm glad to confirm that the overwhelming response is all in all positive, being a mutual beneficial experience with a strong bond for years to come. Saying this, it points out again that the emotional aspect of such a relationship can only be a domestic arrangement rather than employment.

As long as the government cannot provide adequate care for children, where out of school hours care has been identified as a major concern to parents, host families need to be given some security as how to arrange for this new family member correctly. It should not be underestimated that the foremost criteria to invite an au pair is a 'gut feeling' (again this would not hold up as an employment criteria) by the host family rather than qualification that it will be a good match.

Formal Employment of a qualified Nanny

It is important to note that host families would also employ a qualified nanny if the government assistance is applicable for in-home care and therefore affordable for families. As it would be expected that a nanny would still come at a higher cost¹³, families might decide for an au pair instead, especially if the kind of care needed does not require formal qualification, e.g. outside school hours care which is often enough provided by parents themselves.

¹¹ Although this could be obtained easily in Germany and most EU countries it is hardly being requested.

¹² Draft Finding 6.5, page 253

¹³ It is notable that part of the cost for an au pair are balanced out by provision of lodgement, which in most circumstances would be non-realised income, as the family did not have the intention to rent the room out otherwise. Therefore the burden on the family budget will be significantly less than for a live-out carer.

Regulation requirement

Please let me again refer to my previous submission (sub. 153) where I already outlined some suggestions.

Some regulation and/or clarification are necessary just because confusing statements in host family forums and from agencies are preventing families to host an au pair, which could solve the lack of access to an appropriate childcare option.¹⁴

Before I summarise the changes families need, I appreciate that the government has indicated that a specific au pair visa is not intended as the working holiday, work and holiday and student visas so far are sufficient. Although a regulated au pair visa for those developing countries not included in any working rights visa (I mentioned Philippines), could be of great benefit.

The following are regulations which cannot be self-regulated by the industry bodies. The necessary Standards and Code of Conduct for Au Pair Families are already well in place through AAPFA – Australian Au Pair Families Association Inc.

Tax obligation

A question being asked on a regular basis by families concerns the “Fair Pay for AuPairs” (please find attached also our current version of recommended pay structure). The difficulty for families is being somewhat confused about any tax obligations and often refer to the so called pocket money as a payment which, due to its wording, is not taxable. Therefore most of the au pair agreements work on a ‘cash in hand’ basis as the amount does not reflect a true market value of hourly rates, however, there is the room and board component.

The understanding families have is furthermore that au pairs would be considered residents for taxation purposes as they take on a structured settled residential life for a period of time. Although this assumption could be checked with a test on the ATO website¹⁵, it is hardly done as it seems to be the case that the ATO simply does not check whether

- a) an income tax return will be lodged by an au pair or other temporary resident,
- b) the statement about residency for taxation purposes is actually correct¹⁶.

Families further assume that the actual amount paid in ‘pocket money’ will not exceed the tax free threshold¹⁷, which supports the assumption that cash in hand payments are legitimate.

Superannuation obligation

The ATO has already stipulated that au pairs working up to 30 hours will not be entitled to any superannuation payments.¹⁸

¹⁴ A focus needs to be on rural families or families with working arrangements outside the operation hours of formal care.

¹⁵ <https://www.ato.gov.au/Calculators-and-tools/Are-you-a-resident/>

¹⁶ Members of Backpacker Forums simply advice each other to tick the box resident for taxation purposes in their TFN declaration and to leave Australia without lodgement of an ITR, therefore avoiding the high tax for non-residents. <http://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Income-and-deductions/How-much-income-tax-you-pay/Individual-income-tax-rates/> Backpackers might be relaxed about it, families do worry and might decide not to pursue this option of childcare, which in return could result in the loss of an important part of the family income

¹⁷ This is common praxis in Germany, where au pairs are being regarded as low income earners.

¹⁸ Superannuation contributions (https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/International-tax-for-individuals/Coming-to-Australia/Working-in-Australia/When-you-start-a-job/?anchor=P182_13095#P182_13095)

Your employer is not required to make super contributions for you if you are doing work of a private or domestic nature for 30 hours or less each week - for example, if you are employed as an au pair.

Families are not employers

Families do not claim any expenses of hosting au pairs, which in an employment situation they would be entitled to, e.g. adequate furniture for the au pair room, general expenses like electricity, insurance etc. This is another indicator for a domestic arrangement.

It is my strong belief that families want to comply with any regulation but at the same time also desperately need to cover their child care needs where the government failed to provide this adequately.¹⁹

It is also understood that the government will not provide any incentives for families hosting au pairs but might consider government assistance when employing a qualified nanny, who holds her own ABN. This will definitely be appreciated by a lot of families who need more qualified care for their children.

Au Pairs are not requested to have professional qualification

As formal and informal care, here provided by au pairs, are often combined and especially for school aged children early learning activities or integration of a National Curriculum is simply not needed, au pairs will remain a strong option of choice.²⁰

Domestic Arrangement acceptable for visitor visa holders

The classification of informal care through au pairs should be reflected in agreeing to this being a clear domestic arrangement and will be open not only to those with working rights but also for visitors being 'temporary family members'.

Limitation on set weekly hours

A limiting comment however needs to be added. The ATO, as mentioned above, has stipulated that au pairs working up to 30 hours will not be entitled to any superannuation payments. 30 hours in most European countries define the maximum an au pair shall be engaged in a family home. If the decision in regards of superannuation has its defining criteria in those regulations, this may be applied to a definition of a domestic arrangement.

This again would then also call for a regulation if it is permissible for visa holders without working rights to accept a small cash contribution where on occasion longer hours are required. Although with a focus on outside school hours care, this might not even apply.²¹

In view of the suggested government assistance for employing a professional nanny²², a 30 hour limit²³ for au pairs might be combined with formal care.

Families might be encouraged to arrange to stay within this 30 hour limit due to the tax benefit, which in return benefits au pairs who would be able to explore their near surrounds, take up English classes or whatever other (leisure) activity to enhance their immersion into the Australian culture.

¹⁹ Families are at times strongly competing with each other on a monetary basis, stretching their budget to the limit. Those families who would tax the au pair's reimbursement would lose out.

²⁰ Families provide on the job training, which corresponds somewhat with the *New Zealand Nanny Intern Program* as described in the draft report, Box 11.10, page 499

²¹ It remains the need of care for school holidays where formal childcare is not available.

²² Draft recommendation 8.6, page 56

²³ As above *New Zealand Nanny Intern Program* defines a limit of 31 hours for live-in care.

Pocket money threshold

The government might like to specify a maximum amount of the so called 'pocket money, which would fulfil the tax-free criteria under this domestic arrangement.

A calculation basis could be the current rate of lodgings and board as defined by the Australian Homestay Network²⁴, which varies by location and furthermore the arrangement Priceless-Exchange²⁵ suggest for their homestay students, who work 20 hours²⁶ for their keep.²⁷

This would be in line with ATO findings²⁸ that homestay rates do not reflect true commercial value and are therefore not taxable. Again this would only confirm that a Domestic Arrangement cannot be considered work.

It would still be in the discretion of a family to provide non-monetary rewards for their au pair.

An au pair with professional qualification, who are also needed by a family, can easily negotiate regular employment conditions with the family, for example under a Children's Services Award²⁹.

Stay for more than 6 months permissible

Most au pairs are on a working holiday (sub 471) or work and holiday (sub 462) visa. The visa condition is to stay with one employer for up to 6 months. If au pairs would be engaged under a domestic arrangement, this condition would not apply and both families and au pairs can negotiate the length of stay.

The Draft Recommendation 8.7 is already confirming those respective visas conditions shall be simplified to allow 12 months stays.³⁰

Inclusion in the 2nd Working Holiday Visa

If the government simplifies the visa conditions it would be advisable to include au pairs in the list of eligible work³¹ in the specified regions³². This would correspond with Farmsafe Australia Inc. who identified in-home care (where the carer stays with the family) and mobile childcare services (available during peak times) as the preferred form of care for farming families nationally (Farmsafe Australia Inc. 2005).³³

²⁴ For current homestay rates see <http://www.homestaynetwork.org/public>

²⁵ <http://priceless-exchange.com/for-families/>

²⁶ In comparison the 'Work for meals and accommodation' wwoof scheme is between 4-6 hours (hard) work daily (!) and set up to learn new skills - <http://www.wwoof.com.au/>

²⁷ Calculation would look as follows: \$280 homestay cost in Brisbane, less 15% fees and this divided by 20 hours = \$11.90/h per hour after 20 hours, so that 30 hours would allow a non-taxable pocket money of \$119.

²⁸ <http://law.ato.gov.au/atolaw/print.htm?DocID=AID%2FAID2001381%2F00001&PiT=99991231235958&Life=20010914000001-99991231235959>

²⁹ For example Children's Services Award MA0000120, <https://extranet.deewr.gov.au/ccmsv8/ExternalDocument.aspx?BYREF/6361513989786155688889912894/216412/MA000120.htm>

³⁰ Draft report, page 48

³¹ <http://www.immi.gov.au/Visas/Pages/417.aspx#sub-heading-6>

³² <http://www.immi.gov.au/Visas/Pages/417.aspx?tab=1&heading=regional-areas>

³³ Draft report, page 338

Do Au Pairs receive Fair Pay?

"What do you hope to achieve by being an Au Pair?".

The usual answer is **"I want to experience another culture, travel and improve my language skills"** however, this particular Austrian Au Pair went on to say: *Use the skills of being creative and energetic around children, to travel with the security-net of having people there that care for me. And the clincher - I want to be able to look back at my year of being age 20 and know that I did something different, and make lifelong friends and make the most of the opportunity of sharing another family, learning new ways, and meeting new friends, and to make sure that I am adaptable in my life and **not stuck behind my own visions of my upbringing**".*

This is what the Au Pair opportunity has in its pockets for you
 – **absolutely priceless!** –

The family shares their private and personal life with you – a huge opportunity to discover differences of life.

- The family invites **you - a total stranger** – as their Au Pair into their house, their home, where everyone should feel safe. If for any reason you can't fit in, the whole family will feel uncomfortable and especially little children don't cope very well. Choose well (see below), also for your own sake!
- Regardless of your qualification there will be a family who will give you the opportunity to join them as Au Pair and basically train you how to run a home and care for children. If you have a formal overseas qualification, unfortunately this isn't recognised in Australia for formal employment; however, families will honour those as much as your willingness to fit in.
- Please remember that your experience or qualifications from overseas
 - Might not be needed by all families, so again: choose well if this is important to you.
 - Even with experience and qualifications a foreign country has a lot more challenges and a lot of things will be done totally different from what you are used to.
 - The language barrier might lead to miscommunication/-understandings on both sides.
- The family might ask the following:
 - Have you any work experience in child care like a Kindergarten, regular babysitting?
 - Do you hold a 1st Aid certificate – does this include children?
 - Do you bring any other formal qualifications from your home country?
 - Can you provide a police check and a working with children check?

The trend has moved away from engaging agencies to find Au Pairs or families which has its pros and cons. For both sides it means saving the fees but au pairs miss out on being somewhat prepared and families might be unsure what to expect; it is not uncommon that an Au Pair has been mistaken with a professional nanny.

After more or less extensive correspondence and Skype interviews most families choose their Au Pairs rather by gut feeling than based on (professional) qualification, experience or references, as the best Au Pairs are usually those who find it easy to fit into the host family's dynamics. This is what you should look out for!

The whole experience is based on the concept that the Au Pair is being integrated into the host family. This also means that you, the Au Pair should want to make a real effort to fit in with the family and you are here merely for the experience. Trust me, families put in a massive effort to make you feel comfortable.

Help (!) them and ask questions how things work in Australia, in the host family, how they like you to care for the children. Based on this elementary starting point it is contra productive if families have to get out of their way (sometimes every 3 months) to accommodate a young adult from overseas:

- a) It would deprive the Au Pair of the cultural experience.
- b) It weighs out the benefit families get from the help of another pair of helping hands.

Do it their way as much as you possibly can to make the most of the opportunity of sharing another family, learning new ways. Don't worry, this will not change you as a person at all but will ensure that you learn to be adaptable in your life and will earn you the love and admiration of your host family.

Choose wisely

It is up to you, the Au Pair, to do your research what family suits you best to fit in.

As offers vary greatly - Some points to consider:

- Location of the family (if you come from a big city, why not choose the real outback?)
 - Close to city (are you a nightlife person?)
 - Car available if remote or close to public transport
- Size of the family
 - How many children
 - Age of the children, e.g. babies to care for, nappies, school drives
 - One parent family
 - Children/parents with disabilities
- Hours required
 - Variations from 10 to 50 depending on family requirements
 - Weekends/Public holidays free or not? (e.g. shift work families)
 - When the hours are required, fixed or flexible, means can you plan for your free time?
 - How many hours are you in sole charge of how many of the children (age)?
- Length of stay: Up to 3 months, 6 months, 9 months or longer. The longer you stay, the easier it will be to spend a lot of quality time with your host family.
 Don't forget that **the shorter your stay the more work for the family** to find and settle someone new in. This is lost quality time parents could spend with their children (and you) – *No matter how fantastic you are.*
- Extras the family provides, which should be seen as a privilege and not be expected are
 - Travels with the family
 - Car use for personal travel/enjoyment (don't expect petrol to be paid for, please).
Ensure you know who pays for the excess in case of damage if the family lets you use a car.
 - Any other luxury you think is normal ... in this case you might consider whether Au Pair is really for you.
 - Your own granny flat/living area (although that might defeat the purpose of family integration and lessen your experience)
 - Does the family employ a cleaner? (less cleaning by Au Pair)
 - Any other extras a family provides also if it doesn't cost them anything, like a membership of [Au Pair Surfing Australia](#).

Fair Pay in an unregulated industry

The Au Pair industry in Australia is unregulated therefore the agreements between Au Pairs and host families vary greatly based on the needs of families, their location, the size of the family, the family budget. Au Pairs might also want to consider that – opposed to working holiday travellers – they have a safe place to stay and also know how much they are earning right from the start.

But what is Fair Pay for Au Pairs? As this seems to be one of the biggest questions for both families and Au Pairs, here are some **thoughts for consideration**:

Although Au Pairs receive pocket money, paid mostly on a cash-in-hand basis, let's start with looking at Australia's [National minimum wages](#), regulated by the [Fair Work Ombudsman](#) in an Award

At 18 years of age	At 19 years of age	At 20 years of age	> 20 years of age	
\$11.52 per/hour	\$13.92 per/hour	\$16.48 per/hour	\$16.87 per/hour	(1 st July 2014)

Those wages compare to the child care industry in the first two years of employment as taxable income. And those hourly rates most probably would be paid in hospitality (plus a casual loading) to backpackers.

The price tag on **room and board** (three daily meals, adequately furnished room and access to laundry facilities) in a family home is \$260.00 to \$300+ per week as defined by the Australian Homestay Network, a national recognised body in Australia. Australian universities follow those guidelines for [home stay students](#). This is basically the same what families provide for their Au Pairs.

Based on the hourly rate and cost of living a simple tax calculation can be done for a 19 year old, which is about the average age of Au Pairs who come to Australia in their gap year after finishing school.

\$13.92 /h x 38 h/week x 52 weeks/year = \$27,506.00 gross **income**, which is considered a low income and reduces the tax payable to \$1,736.00 and **leaves \$25,770.00** to pay for living expenses.

Brisbane for **example** has a **homestay rate of \$280.00 week x 52 weeks/year** = \$14,560.00.

We now deduct this from the net income just calculated and the end result is \$11,210.00 per year, or **\$215.00 per week for 38 hours of work**.

Most of you would receive pocket money something along this line if you help out the odd 40 hours (a couple of hours will surely cover tasks you would consider as a normal contribution to the household you live in). If you get more, keep quiet about it and just be happy.

If you get less, you might think of re-negotiating, but before you do, here is more to consider:

How generous is your family?

- Do they provide extras, like snacks or yummy treats?
- Internet use will usually be free (value approx. \$9.00/week)
- Is a mobile phone provided? (value approx. \$5.00-\$10.00/week)
- Car for personal use or contribution to public transport?
- Family dinners, vacation, excursions?
- Toiletries provided?
- Are they generous with their time to help you, eg. questions, drop-offs, or just a coffee chat?

You are also saving on both travel time and expense to and from work. Although your family might not care about it, it is worth mentioning that you probably are a non-resident for tax purposes in Australia (you can [test this](#) on ATO website) and would have tax obligations of 32.5% tax on every \$ earned in a regular job. Well, most au pair agreements work cash-in-hand as pocket money.

Although every Au Pair should understand that any personal activities during work hours are unacceptable (e.g. personal use of mobile phones, internet, skypeing, writing your diary etc.) you will find that families are actually phasing in **paid breaks** for you, for example if you prepare and have your own breakfast, lunch and/or dinner with the children. **No employer would pay you for either preparing or eating your meals.**

Then there are times when little children having a day time nap and you are only asked to keep an ear on them but can otherwise do whatever you like for most of the time. Some afternoon activities might give you a little time to relax or check your phone when the children are engaged otherwise.

Being an Au Pair is an experience, an opportunity and a challenge – more for an Au Pair than for the families. If you as an Au Pair are aware of it, **the families will love you to bits** and this is **something you can't put a price tag on.**

So what is a fair amount of pocket money?

Most Au Pairs come on a Working Holiday Visa and as per the conditions you are supposed to have your own funds of \$5000.00, which is a fair amount to spend on travels, personal needs and entertainment.

The following assumption is made that both you and your family have a good understanding what can and can't be expected from an Au Pair and that some expectations might need to be adjusted according to the family situation, your skills, experience and personality.

It is generally understood that the cost for room, board and general expenses cover around 15 to 20 hours help from an Au Pair. Students actually are often found working those hours in a Demi Pair arrangement.

An Au Pair should have at least a weekly amount of pocket money of around \$80 - \$100 regardless of hours to be able to go on outings and explore the area. This does not mean that the host family needs to pay this if only up to 20 hours are required as long as the family plans the au pair schedule in a way that it is possible for the Au Pair to source her income elsewhere, eg. in hospitality, babysitting for other families, cleaning jobs or whatever else is possible. (Students, as above, have other commitments and value the savings on room and board and love the extra comfort and benefit living with the security of a host family).

A family who needs a lot of flexibility from the Au Pair or simply does not agree with the Au Pair working elsewhere should communicate this right from the start and pay the minimum pocket money.

So here is a breakdown of what is reasonable in Au Pair arrangements

Up to 20 hours	\$80 - \$100 (but can be earned with additional jobs)
up to 30 hours	\$100 - \$150 pocket money
up to 35 hours	\$150 - \$180 pocket money
up to 40 hours	\$180 - \$240 pocket money

What needs to be taken into account is the length of time you spend with children in sole charge and how much contribution to the household is expected. Do you have to be flexible with your hours, do you work weekends, are some hours more stand-by, means you might be needed on occasions, does the family accommodate your plans, eg. time off, change of arrangements so you can earn extra money somewhere else, can you take children on 'all paid for' excursions, is a completion bonus promised etc. etc? If you are unsure, please check with us.

Qualities that families love and look for in an Au Pair:

- *Responsible*
 - *Common Sense*
 - *Ability to adapt*
 - *Honesty*
 - *Energy*
 - *Initiative*
 - *Creativity*
 - *Easy to live with*
 - *Cleanliness in the home*

Acceptance: Every family is different, every situation is different, every family will have its positive and negatives and that needs to be factored in when considering an Au Pair role. Consider carefully without judgement and remember that the responsibilities of a family differ greatly to that of a young person.

Accept what you have accepted. Don't be impressed by stories from your Au Pair friends because you will **never** get the whole story.

Be receptive to feedback and alternative ways of doing things.

With most families you can't do anything wrong – they just do it a different way.

And who knows

... maybe

... your Au Pair children might become Au Pairs

... for your own children

... one day.

.... And friendships are made that will be cherished throughout your life.



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Au Pair-Assist – What we do for you

Au Pair-Assist is passionate about the au pair idea. Not only does the CEO & Founder host au pairs herself but she promotes the au pair idea actively in Australia.

Regardless if you found each other online, through an agency or any other way, we are here to assist!

The passion in the spirit of **Au Pair-Assist** comes with lots of care; care for both au pairs and host families. With everything **Au Pair-Assist** does, the focus is on how to make the au pair experience successful. Successful means that both sides, au pairs and host families, can grow mutually while ensuring that best care is provided for the children.

This only works when both sides give generously, but this is not about money at all! It is about genuine care for the children, giving love and compassion, sharing life, experiences and also affection. It is about immersing yourself into someone's family life and again accepting the differences of a person who does.

Au Pair-Assist has first-hand experience how it feels to live in a different country and where the pebbles are which make you stumble. Both au pairs and host families will be made aware of when and where to actively look out for those 'pebbles'.

Being an au pair and hosting one can be great fun, that's for sure, but it can also be very strenuous at times. With all information, tips and advice from **Au Pair-Assist** both of you will be well prepared but you both will also know what to do if things become a little pear shaped: Contact us! Simple as that!

Au Pair-Assist will help right from the very start when the idea of becoming or hosting an au pair is born. Families will get help on how to set up a room, creating an au pair manual/hand book, how best schedule work hours, what kind of help can be expected and what is fair remuneration. Au pairs will get assistance with all their travel essentials incl. visa and health insurance and will know right from the start which questions to ask a potential host family to make an informed decision for a good match.

Experienced host families still love the back up from **Au Pair-Assist** for some feedback down the track if the family circumstances change for example; an au pair suffers from homesickness or just any other normal life hiccup.

Au Pair-Assist stays up to date with legal requirements to advice of changes and constantly researches any updates for the industry. We provide also parenting tips along the line with some book recommendations plus supply you with resources for children activities.

Online-Courses in English and specifically for au pairs are also on offer as well as templates for manuals and references for leaving au pairs. Our au pairs will get an extra reference from us if their family is not a member with us and/or does not provide one.



The little table below is again only a brief overview but to summarise it all:

Any question? Just contact us!

Au Pair Host Family	Au Pair
We explain, what you can expect from an Au pair	We explain what will be expected from you
We recommend where to best search on the web for au pairs	We suggest good places where to look for a family online
We will work on your online family profile with you	We will work on your au pair online profile with you incl. social media
We provide you with questions you should ask a prospective au pair	We provide you with questions you should ask a host family
We assist you with reference checks of your au pair including an overseas working with children check	We provide all forms for you for childcare and character references, medical, police & working with children check
We will help you with selecting au pairs only from countries which are eligible for a visa	We will help you with all travel related preparation eg visa, health insurance etc.
We will be your first point of contact for any questions along the way	We will be your first point of contact for any questions along the way
We provide you with templates and guidelines	You know what the family should provide you with
We will mediate between you and your au pair	We will mediate between you and your host family
We can offer special deals through our partners for your au pair's travel plans.	You will get special deals and discounts for your travels from our partner.
In our Facebook group you have access to a large library of information sheets, forms, handbook attachments, tips & advice.	You will find great Facebook groups to find a family, a travel partner, friends, short term accommodation and more.