

## **2019 National Foster and Kinship Care Conference**

Karen Weeks

Karen is caring for two adorable long term boys who arrived one week after she was approved as a Carer in April 2019 hence is very new to foster caring.

When she found out she was chosen to go to the National Conference, she thought she had won the lottery! On arrival at the amazing hotel in Scarborough, WA she found she had a deluxe room all to herself! The thought of having the kids for only 6 months and going to the conference on her own was so exciting!

Karen described making an instant connection at the airport with the others, she hadn't met any other Carers before. One night everyone (Fiona, Donna, Fleur and Kathy) met in Fleur's room and sat and chatted all night about foster care, which was just so valuable as a new carer to talk and hear about their experiences.

Karen's boys are Indigenous and she wanted to learn about connecting them to culture so went to all of the Indigenous sessions at the Conference. Karen's partner is Indigenous too. It was good to see what others are doing, creating nooks in their houses with books and flags etc. As a result, her 5yo is now learning to play the didgeridoo!

Karen says she learnt a lot about connecting them – they recently took a family trip to Darwin where they met Aboriginal Elders and are learning a new language which they are now using at home.

Karen was genuinely touched, appreciative and emotional in thanking CF&KC-SA for giving her this opportunity.