

# Wage Assistance

Andy Buckman is 19 years old, and is from Mollymook on the NSW south coast. While he was at high school, he did some work experience with Graham Parsons, a plumber in Ulladulla, a few kilometres away.

Andy loved working as a plumber, and knew that this was what he wanted to do when he finished school.

But plumbing apprenticeships are hard to come by in Mollymook. So when he finished school, Andy registered with the Ulladulla Job Network member, Wesley Uniting Employment.

Wesley Uniting told Andy about a service called Wage Assistance.

Wage Assistance means that when you get a full-time job, your boss may be able to get up to \$4400 to help pay your wages. If you get a part-time job, your boss may be able to get up to \$2200. Both of these are for up to 26 weeks.

Andy got a Wage Assistance card, and went to see Graham Parsons. He explained how Wage Assistance would help to pay his wages.

'At first he wasn't sure, but I kept on hassling him,' says Andy. Graham says he wouldn't have been able to give Andy the job without Wage Assistance.

'We interviewed Andy first because it's a big responsibility. I'm really glad for the Wage Assistance in slow times in a small town. But I would do the same again,' says Graham.

'We're lucky, he's a good worker.'

You can get Wage Assistance too. You must let Centrelink know you're unemployed, and, if you're over 21, you have to be getting income support payments. You may also be able to get Wage Assistance if you've just left CDEP. Talk to your local Centrelink office or call 1802 102. ■