



In partnership with:



stepping stones into care

children's booklet

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Introduction

Hello 

This pack has been designed by other young people to help you if you are being cared for away from home.

When you are going to be cared for away from home it can be very different. You may want to know what will happen and what it will be like. We hope that this pack will answer some of your questions.

What does being looked after mean?

When you are 'looked after' this means the same as 'being in care'. There are different ways you might come into care, for example this could be where it has been decided through the courts or where your parents have asked for help taking care of you. You might be in care for a short time (short term) or for a long time (long term). Other children may go on to be adopted. What happens for each child is different. If you have any questions please talk to your social worker, carer or key worker.

How you may be feeling

We know you may be feeling a lot of different emotions. Don't worry this is quite normal.

Sometimes we have felt:

- Lost
- Sad
- Depressed
- Judged
- Afraid
- Confused
- Alone
- Grief
- Loss
- Awful
- Guilty
- Relieved



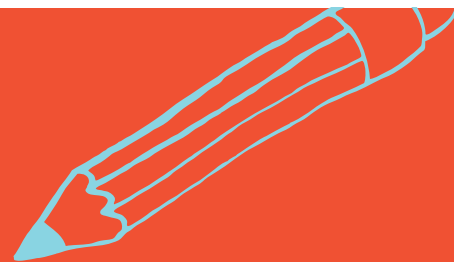
if you are feeling sad you may want to...

- Write
- Read
- Watch TV/movies
- Talk to friends, carers, family or your social worker
- Draw
- Get a hobby or join after school clubs
- You may want to take part in singing, drama, dance or play sport
- Find positive ways to fill your time

And remember it is important to tell people how you are feeling.



about me



Name

Age

My school

My pets

I like

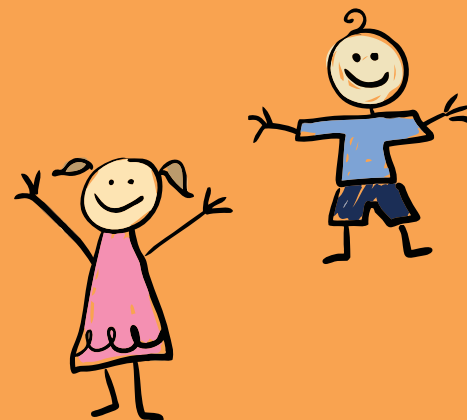
I dislike

My picture

People who are important to me

My hopes and dreams are

What is a social worker?



Your social worker makes sure you get the support you need. He/she will listen to your problems and try to help your family work things out if it's in your best interest. Although it might seem strange having a social worker they are there to help you.

My social worker is called:

A large, empty rectangular box with a slightly rough, hand-drawn border, intended for a child to write the name of their social worker.

Telephone number:

A large, empty rectangular box with a slightly rough, hand-drawn border, intended for a child to write their social worker's telephone number.



WHERE WILL I LIVE?

The place where you live when you are in care is called your placement. There are different types of placements you may live in because everyone's needs are different. Anyone looking after you should treat you as well as they would treat their own child and do their best to make you feel happy.

Foster Placement: This is where you live with another family in their home. The people who look after you will be called your foster carers.

Kinship Placement: Some children live with other members of their family or with close family friends.

Residential Care: This is where lots of children live in the same house and have a key worker that takes care of them.

Short Break Care: Some children need a lot of special care and may have a disability. They will have short breaks away from their home at different times.

Contact with family

If I want to see my family will I be able to?

Contact with your family will happen if it's safe, if you want it and if your family wants it. If you are not allowed to see your family, then your social worker should explain why.

It's up to you if you want to see your family.

Ways of staying in touch:



Phone



Letters



Email



Visits



Skype (under your carer's supervision)

When I see my family
and friends:



SOME Questions you may want to ask



Will I get pocket money? How much will I get? When will I get it?

Am I allowed to use the phone?

Who will buy my clothes?

Can friends stay over and can I stay with friends?

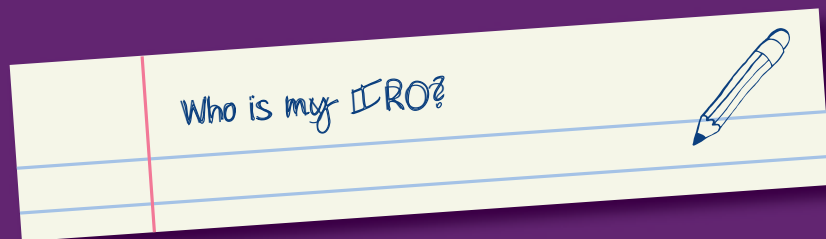
What time do I have to be home?

What time do I have to go to bed?

People you may meet in care

Independent reviewing officer (IRO):

Your IRO is the person that runs your Looked After Children (LAC) meetings. They make sure that your voice is being heard and that you are getting the service you should.



Advocate:

An Advocate is a person you can speak to if you are finding things hard and they can speak for you at meetings if you are not able to. Please find their details on the useful contacts list.

Independent visitor:

- An independent visitor (IV) is an adult who has volunteered to spend time with young people who are in care.
- They will do fun activities with you and give you support.
- You can have one if you are lonely, far from home or if you don't see your family much.
- If you would like to get an independent visitor please ask your carer or social worker to contact the IV coordinator whose details can be found on the useful contacts page.

Targeted Youth Support Worker (TYSW):

Your TYSW is a friendly face to talk to if you need a helping hand with things at school or are concerned or worried about something. If you need help when it is time to move on from school then we can support you. If you are bored we can also let you know what activities are available in your local area.



Plans and reviews

Care Plan

When you are in care you will have a care plan. The plan will say what needs to be done to care for you and who should do it.

LAC review meetings

- This is where all the people involved in looking after you check your care plan.
- Your IRO should talk to you by yourself before every review meeting to make sure you are happy and to check how things are going.
- If any changes need to be made these will be discussed at your LAC review.



School

Personal Education Plan (PEP)

A PEP is a way of making sure you get the best from school and is part of your care plan. People who help you with school will meet to see how you are doing and set goals for you.

Designated Teachers

They are teachers who support children in care. Every school has one. They know all about being in care and are there to make sure you're ok and get the most out of school.

My designated teacher at school is:

A large, empty rectangular box with a light orange background and a thin black border, intended for the user to write the name of their designated teacher.



HEALTH

When you are in care you will have a health plan. This means that people can make sure your health needs are being met. Your carer and social worker must make sure you get all the health and dental treatment you need.

Your Rights

I have the following rights:

- To be happy
- To feel listened to
- To have a say in my life
- To see a social worker
- To go to school
- To have health check ups
- To feel safe
- To be the best that I can be
- To complain if I am not happy
- To not have to keep moving to lots of different homes

**CARER
FAMILY
SAFETY
SUPPORT
CARE
FOSTERING
HOME
PEP**

Wordsearch answer:

A word search puzzle grid with the words 'VOWEL' and 'CONSONANT' hidden. The grid is 15 rows by 15 columns. The words are highlighted in blue. 'VOWEL' is located in the top-left corner, and 'CONSONANT' is located in the bottom-right corner.

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The Pledge

These are a set of promises made by Bromley to all their children in care and care leavers. We want to make sure that you are safe and healthy. The pledge spells out how we are going to do this. A film about the pledge can be viewed at <http://vimeo.com/33960216>



IF there is something you are not happy about

If you want to complain and there is something you are unhappy about please:

- 1** Speak with your family, social worker, foster carer, your teacher or independent visitor
- 2** If you are still upset about something tell your Independent Reviewing Officer
- 3** If they can't help they can support you in getting an advocate
- 4** If you are still not happy please contact the complaints officer whose details you can find in the useful contacts on page 20

But remember to make sure you have followed all the **right steps first**.

Come and join us at the Living in Care Council



At the moment we are a group of young people aged between 12-18 in care in Bromley. We would like to start including younger children in making decisions. Our Living in Care Council is run by someone called the Active Involvement Officer.

We know what you are going through and that sometimes it can feel like everyone else is making decisions for you. We meet to make care a better place and get our voices heard.

- You get to make friends and share advice
- You can increase your confidence
- We get to do lots of fun activities like making films, going on trips and eating out
- We help organise events like the celebration of achievement awards

If you would like to know more about the group please contact us:

For The Living in Care Council contact The Active Involvement Officer

Tel: 020 8461 7869

Text: 07932 707262

Email: LinCC@bromley.gov.uk



Quotes from other children in care

“When I first came into care, I didn’t know what was happening and felt lost in my own world. However, once I settled into care after a month or so, I built a relationship with my carers. They made me feel like I was part of their family, and supported me through everything. I’m still learning stuff from being in care now, but the thing is you learn something new everyday, and that’s made me a better person.”

“When I first came into care I was scared but they made me feel safe at home and I felt part of their family. You might find it difficult to fit in but you will and people will understand if you don’t like it.”

“Care is what you make it.”

“When I first came into care I was nervous, but my carer looked after me and made me feel safe.”

“When I first came into care I felt blank but I felt safe with my carers.”

“Every little thing is gonna be alright.”

“Coming into care for me was so difficult. If there was one thing I could tell you it would be that things are going to be okay, they will get better.”

Our tips and advice

“Tell people how you are feeling.”

“Try and see the positives even though it may difficult.”

“Don’t let the past get you down.”

“Don’t be forced in to anything you don’t want to do.”

“If you don’t ask you don’t get.”

Did you know...

- In March 2012 there were 67,050 children in care in England!
- At any one time there are around 300 young people in care in Bromley
- The place where you live must be clean and warm!
- You are allowed to bring your own toys and things to your new home



Famous people who have been FOSTERED



Marilyn Monroe is the biggest female Hollywood icon of the last century. She grew up in an orphanage and a series of foster homes.



John Lennon was part of the Beatles, one of the biggest bands of the 20th century. He grew up in what we would now call kinship care. He lived with his aunt and uncle throughout most of his childhood and teenage years.



Eddie Murphy is a very famous American comedian and actor. Although he was only in foster care a little while, the experience had a big influence on the rest of his life.



Fatima Whitbread is a former javelin world champion. She is also known for appearing on 'I'm a celebrity get me out of here'. Fatima spent the first 14 years of her life in childrens' homes.



Kerry Katona is a former singer from Atomic Kitten and she is also well known for a number of reality TV shows. As a young girl she was placed in care and brought up by four sets of foster parents. During that time, she attended eight different schools.

Useful contacts

For The Living in Care Council contact The Active Involvement Officer

Tel: 020 8461 7869

Text: 07932 707262

Email: LinCC@bromley.gov.uk

Bromley Youth Support Programme

If you would like to find out what fun activities are taking place in your local area or you are in year 6 and above at school and you would like to contact a targeted youth support worker you can by:

Tel: 020 8466 3080

Email: YouthActivities@bromley.gov.uk

www.bromley.gov.uk/youthsupport

Childline

Childline has a special line for children living away from home.

Freephone: 0800 884444

Open Mon to Fri 3.30pm to 9.30pm and

Sat and Sun 2.00pm to 8.00pm

Ofsted:

General helpline: 0300 123 1231

Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street,
Manchester, M1 2WD

Independent Visitor Coordinator

Tel: 020 8690 3636

Email: lewishambb@family-action.org.uk

Family Action, Independent Visitor Service,
219 Stanstead Road, London, SE23 1HU

Looked after Children Team

Tel: 020 8313 4016

CYP Advocacy Service

Tel: 020 8899 6555

Complaints officer

Tel: 020 8461 7644

Education & Care Services Complaints
Department (children's services) Complaints
Officer, LB Bromley, 3rd Floor Stockwell
Building, Stockwell Close, Bromley, BR1 3UH

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