

Young Person's Handbook

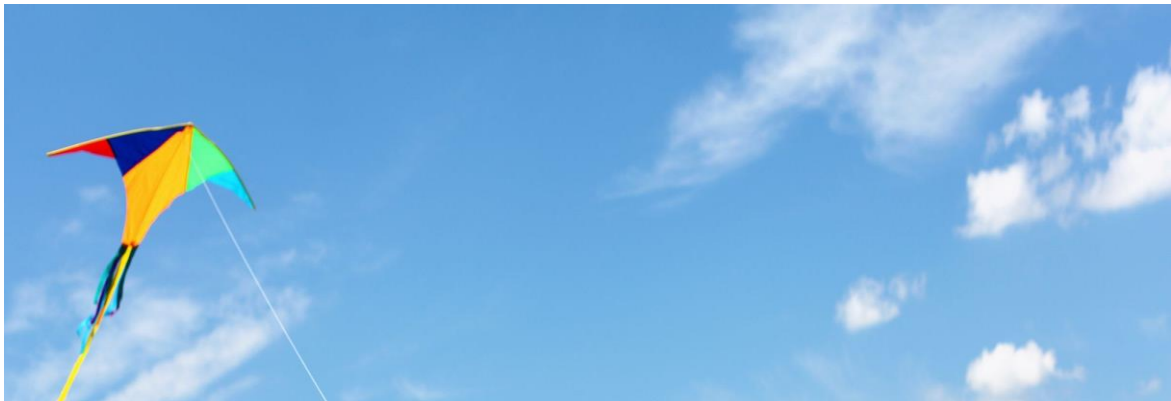
Age 12 - 18



UK Fostering
change a child's life

My Details

My Name	
My Date of Birth	
My Address	
Foster Carer's Name(s)	
My Social Workers Name and Number	
My Carer's social worker (SSW)	



Other Important Names and Addresses:

Name			
Address			
Telephone		Mobile	
E-mail			

Name			
Address			
Telephone		Mobile	
E-mail			

Name			
Address			
Telephone		Mobile	
E-mail			

Name			
Address			
Telephone		Mobile	
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Telephone		Mobile	
E-mail			

Introduction

UK Fostering have designed this handbook to help you settle into your new foster home with your foster family.

Coming into care, or moving from one foster family to another, can be scary and confusing. At the very least it will cause some level of anxiety. This handbook will answer some of the questions you might have now and in the future. It is one of many sources of information available to you. Later on in this handbook there is guidance as to where you can find help and information.

In this handbook we will tell you about UK Fostering and our foster carers we will:

- share with you, who's who, and
- share with you what should happen while you are in care with UK Fostering.

We will explain:

- what meetings you might have while you are in care
- why they are important and how to get the most out of them.
- What some of the words mean that you will hear people using.

We'll also let you know what your rights are, what you can expect and what you can do if you are not happy with anything to do with being in foster care.

What's in this book?

- Introduction
- Statement of Purpose
- About UK Fostering
- Your rights in care
- Social Workers
- Have your say (Complaint Procedure)
- Review meetings
- Health
- Education
- Bullying
- Leaving Care
- Internet Safety
- Jargon
- Helpful Contacts

How can I use this book?

- 1) Read this book by yourself to find out more
- 2) Read this book with a trusted friend and then talk about it
- 3) Go through this book with your social worker or foster carer
- 4) If you see a word in bold, **like this**, then you can find out what the word means at the back of the book.

If adults use words you don't understand, ask them what they mean.

About UK Fostering

UK Fostering is an independent fostering agency for children and young people.

We provide foster carers who can support and care for children and young people who are not able to live with their own family. Carers will look after children and young people for varying lengths of time, short or long term, depending on the circumstances.

UK Fostering will do their best to find foster carers who share your culture, religion and language. The main thing however is that you are made to feel safe and cared for and able to make the most of what could be a difficult time for you.

Statement Of Purpose

The statement of purpose is quite a sizable booklet which tells anyone who is interested about UK Fostering. But some of the things in there you may find a bit boring, so we have pulled out the most important bits and put them down in the paragraph here (but if you would like to have a full copy, we will give you one: just ask the social worker from UK Fostering and they can arrange this for you).

UK Fostering Ltd is an independent fostering agency which is governed by regulations and the most important are the Children's Act 1989 and the Fostering Services Regulations 2011. These regulations inform us about what we have to do and when as an organisation.

We have many foster carers, who we have recruited, thoroughly assessed and approved. They have to do some training, and go before an independent panel before they can look after any foster children.

We take great care to make sure that any child or young person who is coming to live with our carers goes to the right place, the one which we, the social worker, and you, feel is best for them.

We have different people working for us, but for you the one you will see regularly is the Supervising Social Worker. They visit the foster home regularly, and have a number of things they need to check and make sure of.

We are totally committed to work together (in partnership) with everyone who has an interest in your well being. We believe that it is important to talk and speak with each other and we will always do this with respect and good intentions.

We provide a number of different foster placements, this can be for a very short while on an emergency basis, or for a long time until a young person is ready to live independently. We work out with the social worker and you what might be best for you.

The mission of UK Fostering reads as follows:

Within a safe and loving family environment we create opportunities and positive experiences for children and young people which help to improve their lives.

This means that: we want you to be safe and feel loved, we want you to have opportunities, things to do which help you to develop, have fun and to look forward to having a good life.

What is foster care?

Foster care is when you go to live with another family in their home.

There are many reasons why children and young people need to be in foster care. Your own family may not be able to provide a safe and healthy environment for you at this time. Your parents may have been unwell, unable to cope, or they may have argued a lot. Perhaps you have been treated badly. It is the responsibility of Social Services to provide you with somewhere safe and comfortable to live.

You have the right to be told why you have been taken into care.

You will have a **social worker** who has been trained to help families through difficult times and they will explain things to you and make sure you understand what's going on. You will go to live with a foster carer in their home until you are able to return to your family or are old enough to live on your own. This may mean a stay of a few days, weeks, months or even years. Your social worker will visit you in your foster home.

You have the right to ask how long you will be in foster care.

Going into care for the first time or moving into a new place can be very scary. There will be lots of new people to meet and you may be moving away from friends and family. It is not uncommon for young people to arrive at their foster home feeling upset, angry, confused or worried. You may not understand why you cannot stay at home with your parents and the rest of your family. Or, you may even be relieved to be away from home.

Whatever the case, your foster carers are there to reassure you and to help you settle in. You are not alone – your foster carer and social worker are there to talk to you and to keep you safe.

Foster Carers

Foster Carers are carefully chosen, assessed and trained before they can provide care for children and young people. They might have other foster children or birth children living there too.



Your foster carer will welcome you into their home, make you feel comfortable and at ease. They will give you all the support and help you need. Your foster carer will be there for your daily needs, and to help you with your education, health, and social needs. They will support you at meetings when plans for your future are being discussed.

Foster Carers are assigned their own **supervising social worker** to give them additional support and guidance to look after you. You will see the supervising social worker regularly, and they are someone else you can turn to if you have any worries.

Your rights in care

You have lots of 'rights' in care. These rights say how you should be treated and how you should be looked after. This handbook will tell you about the different parts of being in care and it also tells you about your rights.

UK Fostering and their foster carers believe that you should always be treated with respect and care. You should never feel that you are worse off or treated badly because you are in foster care. You have the right to be protected and to grow up happy and healthy.

When you are being cared for by one of our foster carers we hope you will be comfortable and settled – we want you to be happy in our care.

If at anytime you aren't happy with the way you are being treated or the plans that are being made for you - **SPEAK UP!! TELL SOMEONE** – if you can talk to your foster carer or social worker then tell them. You have the right to make a complaint if you are unhappy about anything to do with being in care or you feel you are being treated unfairly, and you have the right to have an **advocate** to help you make a **complaint**. (We will tell you more about children's rights, complaints and advocates later on).

Your rights include:

- To be listened to about your wishes and feelings.
- To have hobbies and enjoy other out-of-school activities.
- To stay in touch with friends and family, so long as it is safe for you to.

- To use the phone to speak with friends, family and social workers etc.
- To have pocket money.
- To have privacy.
- To be safe and protected.
- To have food, clothing, outings, toiletries- all things you need.
- To have your own things with you, like photos, books, toys, things that matter to you.
- To tell someone if you are unhappy with anything about where you are living or how you are being cared for and have the right to make a complaint if you want.

Remember - If you have any questions at all, anything you don't understand, ask someone.

For example you might want to know:

- Why am I in care?
- How long will I be here?
- What are the rules?
- What does the foster family do at weekends?
- How will I see my family and friends?
- Who can I talk to if things get difficult or feel like they are going wrong?
- Who makes decisions in my life, what sorts of decisions and how are decisions made?

Have confidence. It is good to speak up. You have the right to say if you are unhappy or confused about anything.

Social Workers

What is a social worker?

Your social worker is there to make sure you get looked after properly, it is their job to:

- Talk to you and find out how you are and what you think and what you need.
- Make plans about how you are going to be cared for and where you live.
- Help you get the most out of your education.
- Help you stay in touch with your family, if it is safe for you to.
- Make sure you are happy and healthy.
- Explain things to you and make sure you understand what's happening.

You and your social worker

You have the right to:

- Have your social worker visit you within the first week of a new **placement**.
- See your social worker on your own if you want (not always with your foster carers so that you can talk to them in private), ask them to take you out sometimes, and to choose where you want to meet them and at a time that is good for you too.
- Have explanations for all the decisions they make about you and your life.
- Be asked what you think about all the decisions they have to make for you, to be listened to and taken seriously.
- Your social worker should visit you at least every six weeks in the first year of being in care and at least every three months after the first year. If this does not happen ask why?

What is a Duty Social worker?

If your social worker is off sick or on holiday you can talk to a Duty Social Worker. She or he will not be your social worker but can help answer questions and get things done for you while your social worker is away. There is a different duty social worker each day of the week. It's a good idea to get their name so you can remember who you have talked to.

Remember - Foster carers are assigned their own **supervising social worker** to give them additional support and guidance to look after you. You will see the supervising social worker regularly and they are someone else you can turn to if you have any worries.

Have your say! (Complaint Procedure)

Everyone has the right to be treated fairly, and with respect. Your rights as a young person are written in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This means that you have a right to:

- Have your voice heard and be treated with respect.
- Be treated fairly at all times.
- Be able to go to school and receive a good education.
- Receive good health care.
- To practice your religion culture and use your own language.
- Be able to complain and have an advocate or legal representation.
- Be involved in all decision making.
- To be safe and protected from **abuse**.
- To have full integration and participation in society.

What if I am not happy and find it hard to speak up?

If you are not happy about something and find it hard to speak to your social worker you should try speaking to another adult that can help you. This could be another adult you trust like your foster carer, key worker, personal advisor, teacher or **social care** team manager. If this does not help you can ask for an **advocate**.

What is an advocate?

An **advocate** is someone who can work with you and help you to make sure that your views, feelings, thoughts and wishes are heard. Making sure that people know what you think is so important because it means that your views are taken into account when decisions are made about you.

An **advocate** can attend your **review meetings** to support you and help you speak up if you need them to. They can also give you information and advice and also help you with making a complaint.

What is an independent visitor?

If you have had little or no contact with your parents for more than a year, then the law says that you should be provided with an **Independent Visitor**.

An independent visitor is like your friend, they visit you regularly and, like an advocate, help to make sure that your voice is heard. An independent visitor can also help to support you to take part in making decisions about your care.

How do I complain?

There will be times in your life when things can go very well and there may be other times when things can go wrong. If you are not happy about something to do with your care then it is your right to make a complaint.

It is your right to be treated fairly and unless you tell someone that you are unhappy, things may not change. A complaint can help to make things better for you and maybe even other young people like you. A complaint is not about getting you or other people into trouble, it's about making sure that you are being listened to.

If you want to make a complaint, there are three steps (also known as stages):

Stage 1:

This is the first stage where you speak to your foster carer or social worker about what is bothering you. If you don't feel comfortable speaking to them, you can also speak to the UK Fostering Complaints Manager by phone, letter, email or an initial text, at the following address:

UK Fostering, Lansdown Building, 2 Lansdown Road, Croydon, CR9 2ER

Complaints Officer: Urs Biemann

Tel: 0208 263 6073

Include mobile number?

Email: enquiries@ukfostering.org
Include facebook page

You can have support from your foster carer, friend, advocate or someone that you trust to do this. They should try to sort out the problem within ten working days.

Stage 2:

If you still think that there is a problem, the complaints manager will ask for an independent person (someone who doesn't work for UK Fostering or the local authority) to look into it for you. This is a formal investigation and you should be told within 20 working days about what will happen. A report will also be written up and senior manager will go through this with you.

Stage 3:

If you are still not happy then a review panel will look into this for you. The panel is made up of three people, and at least one of them is not working for UK Fostering. They will try to sort the problem within 20 working days and will let you know the result.

Below are the contact details of some additional services and organisations concerned with the welfare of children.

Voice (Providing advocacy services)

320 City Road,
London, EC1V 2NZ
Email: info@voiceyp.org
Freephone: 0808 8005792

Childline

www.childline.org.uk
0800 1111
24 hour helpline for young people in trouble or danger.

You can contact Ofsted

Ofsted Chief Inspector
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Tel: 0300 123 1231 email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Review Meetings

You will find that while you are in foster care there will be lots of meetings and lots of paperwork being filled in – you should see this as something good and positive – because this ensures that everyone who is working with you is talking to each other, and checking that they are providing the best care for you.

What is a review?

A **review** is a meeting to make sure that you are being cared for properly and that all the different bits of your life are going well.

Who comes to the review meeting?

Most importantly - **YOU**. This meeting makes important decisions about your life and it makes sense for you to be there! Your social worker must talk to you about who else you would like to have at your review meeting. Usually your social worker, your carer and the supervising social worker will be there, and one or both of your parents, depending on who you are in touch with. There will also be someone called an **independent reviewing officer**.

How often does a review meeting happen?

Your review meetings happen one month after you come into care, then four months after you came into care and then every six months for as long as you are in care. Your independent reviewing officer might arrange your review meeting sooner if they think it's needed and you can ask for a review any time you like.

What's an independent reviewing officer? (IRO)

This is the person who chairs your review meetings. This means that it is their job to make sure that your meetings run smoothly, that everyone gets a chance to speak. Because the IRO is separate to your social workers team they can check that good plans are made for your care and that people do what they say they will do to care for you properly.

Who else might come to the review meeting?

Sometimes there may be teachers, your doctor, or other people involved in your care. You can say if you don't want these people there and they can send a written report or only come to a bit of the meeting.

Where do reviews happen?

Mostly review meetings happen where you are living, but they can happen at school or in social services office. If there is somewhere else that you would like to have your review you can say so, but wherever it is you should feel comfortable there.

Your rights during reviews

You have the right to –

- Go to all of your review meetings.
- Talk with your social worker about where you want the review to happen and what time (not school time).
- Share with your social worker who you want and you do not want at your review meeting.

- Ask people who you might want to know something from. This may perhaps be teachers – ask them to write a report, or send them questions to answer you before the meeting. They do not have to come to the meeting.
- Be told who is going to say what at the meeting.
- To meet with your **Independent Review Officer** (IRO) before the meeting to talk about what's going to happen and what you do and do not want talked about at the meeting. Sometimes difficult things have to be talked about, but you can talk with your IRO about whether they have to be talked about in the review meeting or with everyone there, or even if you have to be there.
- To feel comfortable and safe in your review meeting, and a part of all that is talked about and everything that is decided.
- To take someone you trust with you to support you like an advocate (someone who's job it is to help you speak up or to speak up for you), a friend, or a family member- someone who you trust to help you to get point of view across
- To talk to your independent review officer about chairing your own meetings with their help.
- Send someone along to talk up for you, or to write or record something about what you think to take to the meeting if you do not want to go.
- To have a written copy of all the decisions that are made at your review meeting so that you know what was decided and who should be doing what for you.

Health

We want you to be healthy and feel good about yourself. There are different aspects to being healthy, for example your physical health (your body) and your emotional health (how you feel). We want to make sure that we cover all the areas of your health and the following paragraphs should explain how this is done.

What is a medical?

To make sure that you are healthy, Social Services will get a doctor to give you a medical every year to check your general health. The first medical you have when you come into care has to be done by a doctor.

When you go to live with a foster carer they will arrange for you to be registered with a local doctor if your old one is too far away. **A health plan** will be written for you and sent to you. In your health plan it will say if anything needs to be done to make sure you stay healthy- like a trip to the dentist or vaccination. Your foster carer can arrange appointments for you, and go with you if you'd like them to.

Your **looked after Young Person nurse** is also there for you to talk to if you have any worries or questions about your health. If you want to get hold of them ask your carer or social worker to get in touch with them.

Your rights with medicals

You have a right to:

- See a man or woman doctor if you prefer one or the other.
- Be told what they are going to do as part of the medical.
- Be told what they find out about your health.
- If you choose to have your medical done by a nurse you can talk to them about where you want it to happen.

You also have the right to decide not to have a medical if it is clear that you are old enough to understand the decision you are making.

What about my teeth?

You will need to go to the dentist at least once a year to have your teeth checked – we want to make sure you have a healthy smile. Your foster carer will arrange for you to see a local dentist if you do not have one.

What about my eyes?

You will need to go to the optician (people specially trained to look after eyes) at least once a year. Your foster carer will arrange for you to see a local optician.

Eating healthy!

Eating the right foods will give you the energy you need if you want to exercise, go out with your friends or if you just need a boost to get up off the sofa!

Four top tips to keep up your energy levels:

- Always eat breakfast – if you are in a hurry grab a piece of fruit!
- Eat regularly.
- Eat foods rich in iron – things like wholegrain cereals, leafy green vegetables, dried fruits and baked beans.
- Drink lots of water every day.

Sexual Health

Although this is a very personal issue, it is important that you can have open and frank discussions with people you trust about sexuality and sexual health.

There are also a number of organisations which have advice and can offer support if you have any questions or worries. They can also help with issues around sexually transmitted diseases (STI) or pregnancy.

Advice and Info by the NHS:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Sexandyoungpeople>

It pays to get the facts from somewhere you can trust. You can't always believe what your mates tell you.

Healthy Habit Tips

Just like brushing your teeth, healthy habits should be cultivated on a daily basis. The following is a guide to daily tasks:

- Activity should be a daily occurrence. Walk, run or jump for a minimum total of 20 minutes a day.
- Protect your skin. Sun block should be applied on face, neck, arms and hands even in the winter. Moisturize skin daily.
- Eat fruits, vegetables, grains, low-fat dairy products and small amounts of protein. Avoid sweets and other processed foods.
- Meditate or spend a minimum of five minutes daily in quiet time.
- Find your spiritual self. Discover what inspires you, raises your level of consciousness, motivates you, and satisfies your soul.
- Exercise your brain. Read, study, solve problems, and learn new skills. As does the body, the brain wastes away with lack of use.
- Hug a friend.

Education

When you come into care, social services will try to make sure you stay at the same school. But sometimes, for various reasons, children and young people have to move to a new school. Your social worker should talk to you about this and find out what you think and where you want to go to school. Your foster carer will make enquiries for a place for you at local schools and arrange a visit if you want.

What is a personal education plan?

A personal education plan (PEP) is a plan which is unique to you and it is all about your education. It says what you need to make sure you do the very best with your education that you can. This plan is put together by your social worker, someone who looks after the education of young people in care, sometimes your parents and most importantly YOU.



Who is a designated teacher?

There is one teacher in every school who's job it is to make sure that children and young people in care are getting a good education - they are called a designated teacher and they will be told that you are in care. But they should not know all the reasons why you are in care or even what all the plans are for you, and they should not tell all other teachers.

Your rights with your education

You have the right:

- To have a place in school.
- To keep it private at school that you are in care, if you want.
- To be able to go on school trips, outings, etc like any other child or young person.
- To have someone come to your parents evenings and watch you in school plays, concerts or assemblies, if you want (it is usually your social worker or your carer).
- To tell someone if you are unhappy at school, getting into problems or being bullied.
- To ask for extra help outside school with your studies.
- To get involved in after school activities and clubs.

Bullying

Bullying is always wrong and causes a lot of bad feelings and stress. When you are at the receiving end of bullying you need to tell somebody so that they can help you make it stop.

Bullying includes name calling, making threats, intimidating, stealing your money, making you do things you do not want to because you know they are wrong, hitting, slapping or making up stories so that you get in trouble. Bullying can happen face to face, through other people, via Social Media, including facebook, MSN, or via text message.

If you think somebody is bullying you tell your foster carer, your social worker, the supervising social worker, a teacher or a friend. Don't keep it to yourself.

You can also call Child Line on 0800 1111 or check out the website at www.bullying.co.uk

Leaving Care

When will I leave Foster care?

When you are **looked after** by Social Services, your time in foster care will end at some point. This can happen in a few different ways. If you are still in foster care when you are 18, and you have a **Care Order**, this will end automatically. This means that you are independent.

When you are over 16 you have more influence on your **care plan** than before, you can talk to your social worker and independent review officer about leaving care and the process that is involved. You can contact an advocate for extra support if you think that will help you.

If you are over 16, and you have been **accommodated** without a Care Order, this can end at any time if you, your parents and your Social Worker agree. If you would prefer to stay looked after you can do this, even if your parents don't agree.

It can be an exciting yet scary time when you are leaving care. There is a lot to think about – paying bills, studying or working, looking after yourself, cooking and cleaning, having fun and making time for your self of course!

What will happen when I turn 16?

To make sure that you are ready to live on your own, you will get a new Social Worker when you turn 16 (or when you are 15 and nearly 16). They work in a team called The Leaving Care Team. It is their job to support you, together with the foster carer and to help you think about what you can do to get ready to live on your own once you are 18. It is the Leaving Care service's job to make sure you have a social worker, financial assistance and somewhere to live.

Just because you have a new social worker does not mean that you will move from where you are living. Usually you can stay where you are living if you are still happy there. If you are ready, you might move from where you are living to a place that gives you more independence. This is called Semi-Independent living. Your social worker and independent reviewing officer will talk to you about this when you are 15 and/or 16.

Pathway Plan

When you turn 16, your new social worker will talk to you and other people who are important to you to find out more about you and what your needs are. They will help you to think about your future – what you are studying, what you want to do in the future and your independence skills. You should be involved in these meetings to be able to say what your wishes and feelings are. This is called a needs assessment. Your needs assessment is written into what is called a **Pathway Plan**. Although it may seem like more paperwork, your Pathway Plan is there to help you to take control of your life. It is there to help you to plan future goals and tasks, and to deal with any worries you have or challenges you may face.



A pathway plan will help you to:

- Prepare for living independently
- Get work or start a course
- Become self sufficient
- Make a successful transition from foster care into your own home
- Look after your emotional health
- Build and sustain a permanent home for yourself
- Plan for the unexpected
- Achieve your goals and ambitions

You will complete your Pathway Plan and review it at least every six months. Your pathway plan will be written down and you will get a copy of this. You will have this plan until you are 21 or 24 if you are in further education or training. Your Social Worker will keep working with you until you are 18, and will help

you plan for the future and continue to make sure that you are safe and that all of your needs are met.

What help will I get from my social worker?

- Information, advice and support throughout the time that you will be leaving care.
- Help in completing and reviewing your Pathway Plan.
- Links to other services that you may need.
- Assistance in undertaking tasks yourself, rather than doing tasks for you.

Remember: It is up to you to work with the social worker and the foster carer to learn life skills such as cooking, shopping, washing, ironing, budgeting, cleaning, planning etc. They can't do that for you.

Internet Safety

The internet is a helpful resource, it helps you to do research for your homework, talk with your friends, look for goods and services, send emails listen to music and download video's and games. There are however risks with using the internet. It is important that you keep yourself safe whilst surfing.

Your foster carer has a duty to monitor your usage of the internet. This is why you will not be allowed to have internet access in your bedroom. Any computer or laptop with internet access has to be in a public place within the foster home.

Things you should do on the internet :

- Keep all of your personal details to yourself to keep yourself safe!
- Ask your carer if you can use a discussion forum or other chat rooms.
- If you think someone is chatting on a site that really shouldn't be and you are suspicious, please let your carer know.

Things you should NEVER do on the internet:

- Do not organise to meet people you have had discussions with over the internet. If you choose to please make sure you have your carer there with you!!.
- Do not give anyone you speak to over the internet your home address, your telephone number (including your mobile) or any bank details!
- Do not send anyone any pictures of yourself.
- Never give your full name to someone that you don't know.
- Never give your address to strangers.
- Never give out your telephone number.
- If using chat rooms use a nick name when talking with people you do not know.
- Be respectful while you are on the net. This means do not sent hateful messages to other people.
- If you receive horrible messages tell your carer or your social worker.
- Do not open an email from someone that is not known to you.
- If you have your own computer have a virus protector program installed.

Check out these sites for good ideas to keep safe when using the internet!

www.kidsmart.org.uk
www.thinkuknow.co.uk
www.chatdanger.com

Jargon

Abuse – This is when someone hurts someone else – this can be neglect (not looking after you properly), sexual abuse, emotional abuse (this can be when it hurts your feelings) and physical abuse (if someone hurts your body). All abuse is harmful to children and young people. This is why some children and young people come into care – because someone has been hurting them, or there has been a high risk of them being hurt.

Accommodated – This is when a child is being looked after by foster parents or in a residential home with the agreement of parents.

Advocate – This is someone who speaks on your behalf, and helps you to have your say!

Boarding School - This is when you live somewhere and go to school there too. The house where you live is usually separate from the school site.

Care Order – This is when the Court says that a child or young person cannot live with their parents. This decision is made always to protect a child or young person from being hurt.

Care plan – This is something your social worker will write down about how your needs will be met. This includes things like where you will go to school, contact, health, legal status, money, where you will live and activities you would like to do.

Children Looked After Mental Health Service (CAMHS) – This is a health service especially for children and young people who are looked after to support you with your emotional and social needs.

Children Act 1989 - This is the law that all Councils must follow to keep children safe and free from harm.

Code of conduct – This is something written down that tells people what rules they must follow.

Consultation form - This is a form that you can write your views and wishes on before a review meeting. It is a chance for you to write down what you think!

Depression - This is a common condition which affects both males and females, young and old. You might be feeling very sad or low and generally cannot be bothered. If you have been feeling like this for a while you could be depressed. You can talk to a trusted adult about this.

Foster carer – This is a person or a family that looks after children and young people that can't live with their own family for whatever reason.

Key worker – This is an adult who usually works in a residential unit or a school/boarding school. It is their job to support you and help you to do the things you need to do.

Independent reviewing officer – This is an adult who works for the Council, but is separate to your Social Worker and Foster Carer. They run a meeting with you and the people helping

to care for you once every six months. It is their job to make sure that you are being looked after properly.

Independent visitor - If you do not have much contact with your family your social worker will talk to you about having an independent visitor. This is a trusted adult that can visit you, take you out, give you advice and be a friend to you.

Looked after – This is a term used for children and young people who are not living with their family and are **accommodated** or in care. This means the Council is looking after you and must make sure all your needs are met!

Pathway plan – This is a plan that is written with you when you turn 16 which will help you to think about what support you might need to live independently.

Placement - This term is used by Social Workers and Foster carers sometimes. It means the place where a child or young person in care will live. This could be a foster **placement**, residential care, boarding school or secure accommodation.

Psychologist – This is a person who studies human behaviour and how the mind works. They can help children and young people to deal with difficult things happening in their lives.

Psychiatrist – This is a person who has a medical background and also studies human behaviour and how the mind works. Psychiatrists can prescribe medication to help children and young people who need extra help with their mental health.

Psychotherapy – this is a type of counselling.

Secure accommodation – this is a place which is locked where children and young people stay if they are a danger to themselves and/or others. A court order is needed if someone goes into secure accommodation for more than three days. This does not happen very often.

Social Care – This is the name of the teams that provide services to support children and families and make sure children are always safe!

Review meeting – This is a meeting where you and adults who care for you meet every 6 months to check that your **care plan** is working for you and that you are being looked after properly. It is important for you to have your say at review meetings!

Residential care – This is a place where children and young people might live when they are looked after. They will have their own room and live in a building where there are always workers to help and a staff team. This is usually called a children's home.

Visual impairment – This is when you don't have full use of your eye sight.

Helpful Contacts

Want more Advice about being in care?

Check out these websites!

Carelaw

www.carelaw.org.uk

Gives useful information like rights, your education, health care for children and young people in care.

Children Act 1989

www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1989/Ukpga_19890041_en_1.htm

This is what the law says and is the ultimate guide to what your rights are.

National Youth Advocacy Service

www.nyas.net/

Provides information, advice, advocacy and legal representation to children and young people up to the age of 25

Office for the Children's Rights Director

www.rights4me.org

This is a funky website with lots of info about your rights!

Voice

www.voiceyp.org

Voice is a national charity that works with young people to speak up for them and support them in getting improvements to their lives

The Who Cares Trust

www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk

The Who Cares Trust is a national charity working to improve the lives for children and young people in care. They produce a magazine and give lots of useful info.

The Children's Society

www.childrensociety.org.uk

The Children's Society website has a section 'For Children' to allow you to have your say.

Want Advice, Information, Support?

Childline

www.childline.org.uk

0800 1111

24 hour helpline for young people in trouble or danger.

Samaritans

www.samaritans.org

08457 90 90 90

Samaritans provides confidential support, 24 hours a day for people having feelings of distress or despair.

Brook

www.brook.org.uk

Confidential information and advice for young people with links to your nearest Brook centre.

Refugee Council

www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Unaccompanied minors will find this website very useful. The Refugee Council has a range of projects for asylum seekers and produces information in different languages.

RU-OK

www.ru-ok.org.uk

The website that helps you to help yourself – how to cope with common problems as well as using your strengths.

Youth Access

www.youthaccess.org.uk

Youth Access is the national membership association for young people's information advice, counselling and support.

Youth Net

www.youthnet.org

First charity available only online! Provides guidance, advice and support to young people.

Disability Information

Contact a family

<http://www.cafamily.org.uk/inyourarea/>

For families and carers with disabled children.

Mencap

www.mencap.org.uk

Information and advice on learning disability, housing, education, employment and leisure.

National Children's Bureau

www.ncb.org.uk

The National Children's Bureau has a project for disabled children's rights to be heard 'Making Ourselves Heard'.

People First

www.peoplefirstltd.com

Advice, information and advocacy service for people with learning disabilities.

RNID

www.rnid.org.uk

0808 808 0123

Useful information for deaf and hard of hearing people.

The Children's Society

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/disabilityadvocacyproject

The Children's Society has a project for promoting advocacy with and for young people with a disability.

The National Autistic Society

www.autism.org.uk

0845 070 4004

For information, advice and support on autism.

Health**Food Standards Agency**

www.eatwell.gov.uk

Information and tips on healthy eating, whatever your age.

Mental health

www.youngminds.org.uk

Information on children's mental health.

NHS direct

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

0845 46 47

Free confidential information and advice on health and well being.

No Panic

www.nopanic.org.uk

No panic information and confidential help for phobia's and anxiety disorders.

Royal College of Psychiatrists

www.rcpsych.ac.uk

Lots of useful information for young people about mental health.

Surgery Door

www.surgerydoor.co.uk

Information on lots of different medical conditions and advice on healthy living.

IMOKTA

www.imokta.co.uk

IMOKTA is an online lifestyle website for 14 to 19 year olds. There's lots of cool stuff on it, like games, wallpaper, film and music reviews! The issues section has cartoon animations in real life situations, and shows you how to stay safe. Have fun!

Need2Know

www.need2know.co.uk

Need2Know is the new portal for 13- to 19-years-olds. It provides a 'first-stop-shop' for everything in life, covering areas of life such as health, relationships, law, money, and travel.

Alcohol Concern

www.alcoholconcern.org.uk

Information about alcohol use and links to local services.

Drugscope

www.drugscope.org.uk

Information on drugs, the law, drug policy and latest research and policies.

Talk to Frank

www.talktofrank.com

0800 917 8765

Information and advice about drugs

Help and Advice

Here are some of the organisations that can help people children and young people with their problems.

Voice (Providing advocacy services)

320 City Road,

London, EC1V 2NZ

Email: info@voiceyp.org

Freephone: 0808 8005792

You can contact Ofsted

Ofsted Chief Inspector

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231 email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Children's Legal Centre

01206 873 820

University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex CO4 3SQ

Gives expert advice to young people and has lots of useful (and free!) leaflets.

Childline

0800 1111 Free, 24 hours a day

0800 844 444 children in care line

Freepost 1111, N1 0BR

Offers a confidential "helpline" if you are worried or frightened or just need someone to talk to.

NSPCC Child Protection Line

0808 800 5000 Free, 24 hours a day

Kidscape

020 7773 3300

2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH

Kidscape works to prevent bullying. They also produce leaflets for children

“Who Cares”? linkline

Freephone 0500 564 570

For young people currently looked after or who have left care.

Open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

The Children’s Society

0207 639 1466

91 Queen’s Road, Peckham, London SE15 2EZ



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