

Charter of Rights

for Children and Young People in Care

Information for Staff

Background Information

The Charter of Rights for Children and Young People in Care was initiated following the introduction of the *Children and Community Services Act 2004*. It is a requirement of the Act that all children in care know their rights.

The Care for Children and Young People Advisory Committee (CCYPAC), formerly the Children and Young People in Care Advisory Committee (CYPCAC) requested that the Office for Children and Youth, together with CREATE Foundation, develop the Charter by talking and listening to children and young people in care or who had been in care. Their ideas and voices are now represented in the Charter.

All departmental staff and carers play a vital role in ensuring that children and young people in care have access to the Charter and understand its meaning.

All children and young people entering care should be given their own copy of the Charter and have their rights explained in a developmentally appropriate way.

The Charter is part of the work we already do and is included in legislation. It reaffirms the efforts we already make with children and young people in care.

Ways to build a relationship with kids in care.

Children and young people come into care for various reasons. They need to have explained to them in an age appropriate way, why they are in care and how long they are likely to remain in care.

- Understand the child's case history to see the bigger picture.
- See things from the child's perspective.
- Respect the child or young person that you're working with.
- Follow up on things and if there is a delay, let the child know.
- Get to know the child (for example likes, dislikes, favourite book or TV show etc).
- Be contactable whenever possible (give the child your work number if appropriate).
- Let the child know that you have other cases to work on but that the child is just as important as the others.
- Let the child know that it is okay to talk to you about things that the child does not want the carer or anyone else to know.

The Charter

1. You have the right to receive proper health care including medical and dental when you need it.
2. You have the right to receive guidance and encouragement in your education and activities such as hobbies, sport, music, dance and art.
3. You have the right to be kept informed about your care plan and your views about the plan considered.
4. You have the right to be respected (and to treat others with respect too).
5. You have the right to raise an issue with your case worker, foster carer and/or Advocate for Children in Care.
6. You have the right to privacy and to have your personal belongings.
7. You have the right to be heard (and show the same to other people's views and opinions).
8. You have the right to get help and support to go to court regarding your care.
9. You have the right to have contact with family members and friends whenever possible.
10. You have the right to be encouraged and supported in your religion and culture.
11. You have the right to proper planning before leaving care.
12. You have the right to be safe.

If you would like more information about the Charter of Rights for Children and Young People in Care please contact:

Advocate for Children in Care
Department for Community Development
189 Royal Street, East Perth WA 6004
Email: judith.garsed@dcd.wa.gov.au
Tel: (08) 9222 2518

CREATE Foundation
PO Box 4033, Victoria Park WA 6979
Tel: (08) 9470 6155

Office for Children and Youth
Level 7, Dumas House, 2 Havelock Street
West Perth WA 6005
Tel: (08) 6217 8400



Department for Community Development
Office for Children and Youth



Care for Children and Young
People Advisory Committee