

THINGS I
WOULD LIKE
TO ASK OR
TELL MY
SOCIAL
WORKER ABOUT

How long will I be in care?

- * Some children are in care for a very short time. Some children are in care for a long time.
- * Every person is in care for a different amount of time.

Your Social Worker will talk to you about how long they think you might be in care for.

1

2

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How long will I be in care?

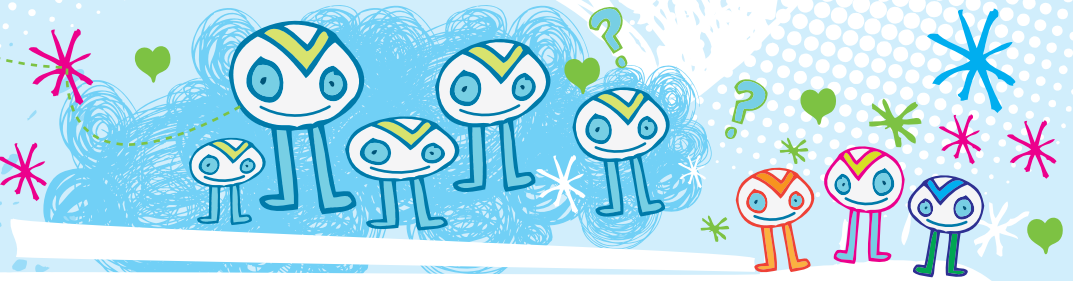


Can I see my family and friends?

- * If possible, your Social Worker will help you to see your parents, brothers and sisters. This is called 'access';
- * For different reasons, sometimes it is difficult to make sure that you get to see your family.

Your Social Worker will talk to you about this;

- * If there are other people that are important to you and you would like to see them, tell your Social Worker about them.



Draw or write about the people that are important to YOU...

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT WHEN YOU ARE IN CARE

The children in care who wrote this book wanted you to know about these important things:

7

Your care plan

- * Every child in care has a 'Care Plan';
- * This is a plan for your life in care and all the things to help you when you are in care e.g.
 - Where you will live and who you will live with;
 - Where you will go to school;
 - Where and when you will meet your family.
- * Your Social Worker will talk to you about plans for your care every time they visit;
- * You can talk to your Foster Parent and arrange to talk to your Social Worker about your life in care and the things in your Care Plan **anytime you like**;
- * Your 'Care Plan' is also talked about at meetings. These meetings are called Child in Care Review meetings.



Child in Care Review meetings

A meeting is when people who care for you come together to talk with you about how you are getting on. The people at the meeting might be your parents, Social Worker, foster parents and teacher.

What do you talk about at a Child in Care Review meeting?

At the meetings, you talk about:

- * Anything **you** want to talk about;
- * What has happened since the last meeting;
- * Your home...and if you are happy or sad about that;
- * Your school...and if you are happy or sad about that;
- * Your health...and how you are feeling;
- * Where and when you will meet your parents, brothers, sisters and other people you want to see (if possible)
- * How you feel about living in your new home;
- * Where you will live in the future.

THE
MEETING



WHERE
WHO
WHAT



THERE SHOULD
BE NICE FOOD
AT THE MEETING
AND IT SHOULD
BE IN A NICE
PLACE!

Who is at the Child in Care Review meeting?

- * Your Social Worker, foster parent, parents and other people who care for you can go to the meeting;
- * YOU are the **most important person** at the Child in Care Review meetings. **You** can say:
 - WHERE you would like the meetings to be e.g. your sitting room or somewhere you like;
 - WHO you would like to be at the meeting;

When are the Child in Care Review meetings?

- * There is a meeting about your Care Plan when you first go into care;
- * After that, there is a Child in Care Review meeting every six months for the first two years;
- * After that, there is one every year.

The Child in Care Review meetings last for about one hour.

REMEMBER!

You do NOT have to wait for a Child in Care Review meeting to talk about something that is important or to ask for something e.g. to go on a sleepover at a friend's house.

Help from children in care about Child in Care Review meetings

- * Your Foster Parent and Social Worker will help you get ready for your Child in Care Review meeting. They will talk to you about what will be talked about at the meeting;
- * It is ok to say how you really feel. You do not need to worry about upsetting anyone else;
- * If you do not want to say anything, your Foster Parent or Social Worker can help you say what you want to say;
- * The most important thing to remember is that this meeting is for YOU to make sure you are being well cared for.

My 'Care Plan' or 'Child in Care Review' meetings

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A few more important things about living in care:

Clothes: Your foster parent is given money to buy you clothes. Like in any family, you can only buy so many!



Food: You might be asked to eat food that is different to what you are used to;



Hobbies: You might be able to join different clubs and groups e.g. a hurling club or a dance group;



Sleepovers: It can be more difficult to go on sleepovers at a friend's house when you are in care. You might need to have permission from your foster parent, your Social Worker and sometimes from your parents. If you want to go on a sleepover, talk to your foster parent or your Social Worker about this.