

## What Is E-Safety And What Does It Mean To Me?

E-safety can cover a lot of different issues, like being bullied over mobile phones, being sent scam emails and people trying to trick you over the internet, E-safety covers everything to do with staying safe when using computers, phones, games machines and other devices that can hook up to the internet.

## What Do I Need To Know?



The 5 smart rules for staying e-safe are included in this pack and can be found with the leaflets, the leaflets cover questions such as.

**“What should I do if I see something that makes me feel uncomfortable or something I could get in trouble for viewing?”**

Often when you're looking online for information even if you know and trust the sites you're visiting, something can go wrong.

## Sexting

‘Sexting’ (sending a sexual photo of yourself or someone else via text) is against the law as whoever has that picture on their phone, is technically in possession of an indecent image of a child. If the people involved in sexting are under 18, this is illegal (even if the person is your boyfriend or girlfriend).

This means the person can be prosecuted. Also think about what would happen if you fell out with or broke up with the person you sent it to, what if they sent it around everyone you know.

## What About Using Facebook, Youtube And Sites Like MSN?

These sites are a great way to keep in touch with friends and family, but sometimes people can use them to bully or trick you. Remember to always put your privacy settings as high as possible, to avoid people contacting you that you don't want. If you worry about putting in personal information when signing up to sites, use a fake name and then let your friend know it is you.

### **Sharing your information!**

Posting video blogs and photo's of yourself, your friends or your family can be fun and exciting. However, even with fairly strict privacy settings you never know who will find it. It may get spread or end up all over the internet. Remember sometimes even your private information can be found! To make sure it is completely safe think about sending it in an email or sending it in private messages rather than making it public on places like your wall.

## What About Using Facebook, Youtube And Sites Like Msn , Cont...

### **Password and usernames**

Remember, no employees of big social networking sites and shopping sites will ever ask you for your password, email address or other account information. Don't be fooled if someone contacts you pretending to be from a site you trust! Always keep your username and password safe so no one can steal your information. Also before you login to a site make sure you are on the real site. Sometimes, you can click on links that take you to sites that look like the sign in pages for sites like Facebook but are actually fake. Always check the website address at the top of the page.

### **Carers/workers:**

Sometimes your carers or Social Workers might be worried about the types of websites that you are visiting, or just generally worried about your e-safety. Remember, that sometimes sites that you know are safe might look dangerous to other people. It is always best to talk sensibly about these issues.

## Road Safety

Whether you're walking, riding, roller blading, scooting or skate boarding you need to dress the part and be aware.

- Always wear a seat belt in a car and make sure that it fits you properly.
- Find somewhere away from traffic if you want to scoot, blade or skate board.
- Don't take chances with traffic, find a safe place to cross the road.
- Check your bike tyres, brakes, reflectors and lights before you start.
- Use reflective stripes, badges and clothes or carry a torch to make drivers aware of you.
- Wear a helmet, use lights in the dark and use cycle lanes when you're on your bike and make sure the bike is the right size for you.



## Out And About

Staying Safe is something you are responsible for but it shouldn't stop you getting out and enjoying yourself. You can however, take a few simple steps to make things safer for you and your friends.

- Let people know where you are going and what time you'll be back.
- Go out with a mate.
- If you do get a taxi home share it with a friend and make sure that the taxi driver has some identification before you get in.
- If possible carry a phone or a phone card with you at all times.
- Don't carry a weapon of any sort. Apart from putting yourself in real danger you could end up in serious trouble with the Police
- Leave a telephone number where people can contact you in an emergency.
- Be aware-if you think someone is following you, knock on a door and ask for help (but don't go in).
- Stick to routes that you know and don't be tempted to take what you may think is a short cut.
- Before you go think about how you are going to get where you want to go and possible problems you might have getting there and back.
- If you use public transport check out the times of the buses and trains first and at night sit near the driver or where there are a number of people.

Being healthy is important for all young people. Being healthy covers things like what you eat, what exercise you do and being confident and happy. It is also important that you know when and how to seek help or advice from professionals if you are feeling unwell or worried about your health.

Everyone has a unique body and all young people will have questions at some time or another about their aches and pains, whether things are working properly or not or if their bits and pieces are 'normal'! It is also natural that as you become a teenager you will have questions around your development and sexual health.



## What Is A Health Assessment?

You will meet with a doctor/nurse or sometimes a school nurse for your health assessment to discuss your health. The assessment should be about how you are feeling, the things you can do to be healthy and any problems you have or things you are worried about.

It should include whether you have been to a dentist and whether you need your height and weight, eyes or hearing checked. It might include things about smoking, alcohol and other drugs, sexual health, caring for your skin, hair and help or treatment with any health problems.

## Why Do I Need a Health Assessment?

You have the right to good health care to help you to stay healthy and feel good. Therefore while you are being looked after, we aim to ensure that your health needs are met. To help us do this when you first become looked after you should have a health assessment with a doctor.

Then once a year you should have a further health check with your school nurse/health visitor or a doctor (twice a year for children under five years old).

Your Health Assessment is there to help you stay fit and well, so there is no need to worry about it.

## Where Will The Health Assessment Take Place?

Your health assessments may take place at the child development centre, your local clinic, at home or at school. You can be seen with your carer or other trusted adult or you can speak to the doctor/nurse on your own. You may also be asked to sign to give your consent to the health assessment.

## How Long Will The Health Assessment Take ?

The health assessment should take about one hour depending on your individual health needs.

## What Will Happen After The Health Assessment?

A Health Plan will be written with you to ensure all your health needs are identified, how they will be met and by whom. The health plan will be discussed at your review and shared with your Social Worker, carers, GP and maybe your birth parents. This will be discussed with you first.

## Your Health Plan

Your health plan will be reviewed at your review health assessment by a school nurse, health visitor or doctor, after 12 months (6 months for children under 5 years old) or at any time, if your health needs change in any way whilst you are looked after.

## What Are Immunisations

Immunisations are commonly known as injections. Throughout your life and in particular during your schools years you will have a number of immunisations to keep your body safe.

## When Do I Have Immunisations And Why?

<b>when</b>	<b>what does it protect me from</b>
Two Months Old	Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio and Haemophilus.
Three Months Old	Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio and Haemophilus.
Four Months Old	Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio and Haemophilus.
Around 12 Months	Haemophilus Influenza
Around 13 Months	Measles, mumps and rubella.
Three years and four months or soon after	Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis and polio measles, mumps and rubella
Girls aged 12 to 13 years	Cervical cancer caused by humanpapillomavirus
13—18 years old	Tetanus, diphtheria and polio

## Puberty

Puberty is when your brain begins to release hormones through your bloodstream, which give your body instructions to develop into adulthood.

As well as physical changes, these hormones might also have an effect on your moods or your emotions. If things ever get out of hand, try talking to your carers or Social Worker. Everyone goes through puberty, so someone should know what you're going through.

## What Happens?

Boys usually begin puberty between 10 and 15. During this time, boys voices will deepen as their adams apple develops, they'll become more muscular and eventually start growing facial hair. The reproductive organs will also begin to develop in size.

For girls, puberty can start anytime between the ages of 8 and 16. Once it begins, girls bodies gain slight weight around the hips and the breasts start to develop. Hormones also begin targeting your reproductive organs and soon after your periods start (otherwise known as your menstrual cycle).

## Periods

There's no right or wrong age for them to begin. Most start at 12 to 13 but lots start earlier or later. Some begin at 8, while others start at 16 or 17, so don't worry if everyone's had theirs before you. During the menstrual cycle (which takes around 28 days) an egg is released from one of the female's two ovaries and gradually makes it's way down to the womb, via the fallopian tubes.

Puberty causes all kinds of changes in your body and you may need to change the way you keep yourself clean and take care of your body. Your skin and scalp may suddenly get greasy. Sometimes, you seem to sweat for no reason and you may notice new smells from your body.

## Things To Remember

- The best way to keep unpleasant smells away is to bathe or shower every day using a mild soap and warm water. This will help wash away any bacteria.
- Wear clean clothes, socks, and underwear each day to help you feel clean.
- Always wash your hands after you have been to the toilet and before you eat.
- Brush your teeth and gums at least twice a day.
- Skin can become dry and flaky because ordinary soap can dry out the skin. Use an oil based moisturiser daily to cream or oil your skin all over your body especially on your face, legs, neck, knees and elbows.



## Healthy Relationships

Relationships can be full of fun, romance, excitement and intense feelings, but they can also be confusing, painful and infuriating too. It's pretty rare for people to meet someone for the first time, go out with them, marry them and live happily ever after. Everyone is different and relationships often develop over a long time, as two people get to know each other.

It is really normal for relationships to go a bit wrong or not work out particularly when you're young and still learning about who you are, what you like and how to be in a relationship. That doesn't make you a failure and there's always a lot to learn from every relationship. Don't forget if you need help or support you can always talk to your carer, key worker or Social Worker.

## Top Tips For A Healthy Relationship

- Respect
- Trust
- Honesty
- Support
- Separate identities
- Fairness/equality
- Good communication



## Unhealthy Relationships

Not all relationships are healthy. Qualities like kindness and respect are must haves for a healthy relationship and if someone you're in a relationship or friendship with is making you feel bad, you need to change things. A relationship is unhealthy when it involves someone being mean to you, or trying to control you, or disrespecting you or abusing you.

If your partner or friend starts using verbal insults, mean language, nasty putdowns, gets physical by hitting or slapping, or forces you into sexual activity, or if it is verbal, emotional, sexual or physical abuse. You must talk to your carer, key worker or Social Worker, so that they can help you.

- Gets angry when you don't drop everything for him or her.
- Criticises the way you look or dress, and say you'll never be able to find anyone else who would be friends or date you.
- Keeps you from seeing other friends or from talking to any other boys or girls.
- Wants you to quit an activity, even though you love it.
- Ever raises a hand when angry, like he or she is about to hit you.
- Tries to force you to go further sexually than you want to.

## Sexual Health

Your sexual health is important because it can have an affect on many other parts of your life.

You don't have to have sex, its your choice. Even if your friends are saying you should, you don't have too. If you don't feel 100% ready yet, you don't have to have sex. Don't let anyone put you under pressure to have sex and always say no if you don't feel ready.

If you want to talk to someone about having sex for the first time, call Ask Brook on 0808 802 1234 - your call will be confidential. That means they won't tell anyone about your call.

Using contraception, like condoms, can help protect you against unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (also known as STIs).

The thing about sex and relationships is that everyone is different and the important thing is that you're happy with the choices you're making. Nobody has the right to force you to do anything and you need to develop the skills and confidence to make sure that you are only having the sex that you want, when you want it and sex that doesn't harm you or your partner.

## Sex And The Law

As a young person, you have rights and responsibilities when it comes to sex.

The age at which it is legal to have sex is called the age of consent. In the UK the age of consent is 16 years old for everyone, whether they want to have sex with someone of the same or opposite sex.

The age of consent law was designed to protect young people from harm rather than to prosecute them.

## Using Contraception

You don't have to have sex and you should never feel forced into doing anything you don't want. If you feel like you are in a relationship and ready to have sex it is important to use contraceptive.

Using a condom during sex can help stop you getting an infection, but it can also help reduce the chances of you getting pregnant. The contraceptive pill is also a popular method of contraception among women, but it gives you absolutely no protection against infection, so always use a condom.

## Need Contraception?

All contraception is free on the NHS in the UK. If you're not sure which type of contraception you want to use, it's a good idea to talk it through with someone you trust. You can pick up free contraception and get confidential advice on which method might be right for you from:

- Contraception and Sexual Health Services (CASH Clinic)
- A family planning clinic
- Your GP
- Another GP (if you don't want to go to your GP)
- Your Carer
- Looked After Nurse
- School Nurse
- Another young people's service for example places like youth clubs offer information and advice about contraception and sexual health, they may also supply you with free contraception.

Don't forget if you need help or support you can always talk to your carer, key worker or Social Worker.

## Drink Aware

The legal age to drink is 18 years old. If you're over 18 then this means you can walk into any bar, pub or club and order whatever drink you want.

If however, you're under the legal age then you can't buy alcoholic drinks in a pub, corner shop, supermarket or any other store. It's also illegal for someone over 18 to buy alcohol on your behalf.

If you need help or support you can always talk to your carer, key worker or Social Worker.

## Smoking

If you're not a smoker but have thought about it, you shouldn't start. Smoking can be hard to quit and you might think it looks cool or good but it doesn't. It stains your teeth with a yellowish-brown colour. It gives you bad breath and could lead to death.

When tobacco is smoked or chewed, nicotine goes into the bloodstream. It goes from the bloodstream straight to the brain in seconds. The nicotine is what our bodies become addicted to.

Nicotine is a stimulant so speeds up the nervous system and can make you feel like you have more energy. It also makes the heart beat faster and raises blood pressure. However when the effects wear off it can make you feel moody and you reach for more tobacco. So the addiction starts! According to experts, the younger you are when you start smoking, the more likely you are to become strongly addicted. If you need help or support you can always talk to your carer, key worker or Social Worker.

## Drugs

Drugs are illegal and can be incredibly unpredictable. The effects that drugs can have on you vary wildly from one person to another.

Some drugs come in pill or tablet form, which are usually swallowed; some come in a powder form which can be snorted, smoked or injected, and some are in a herb or resin form which is usually smoked.

Depending on the drug, the effects vary greatly but most give the user a 'high', and it is this high that can become addictive. However, after every high there is a come-down and they can be very unpleasant. Drugs can also lead to life threatening illnesses and death.

There are many reasons that you might begin taking drugs. The most common reason is peer pressure. You might find that if your friends take drugs they will put you under pressure to do the same. If this is the case then they are not good friends to have because they are trying to make you do something that is bad for you and that you don't want to do.

## Need Some Help?

### FRANK

Worried about drugs or want some information? You can call FRANK confidentially and for free from a landline, 24 hours a day on 0800 77 6600, or visit [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com). If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you can also use FRANK's textphone number which is - 0800 917 8765.

FRANK offers a confidential, non-judgmental drugs advice, information and support about legal and illegal substances. The helpline is open to people of all ages,

You can now text FRANK anytime with a drugs-related question. It's completely confidential and you'll receive a reply from a trained expert. Text your question to 82111.

There are some common questions that the FRANK helpline deals with all the time. Cannabis and cocaine are the most asked about drugs to the FRANK help lines.

If you need help or support you can always talk to your carer, key worker or Social Worker.

## Being Aware of Mental Health

Just like physical health (catching a cold or the flu) needing help with your emotional well being is something everyone is going to need at sometime in their lives. This is nothing to be embarrassed about. Emotional well being problems can cover lots of different feelings and problems from feeling depressed to other problems where you might need more support and help. The next couple of pages cover the basics you need to know.

Remember, there are always people you can talk to if you need help. You could tell your Social Worker, bring it up in your review, talk to the Children's Voice Project, as well as specialist charities, doctors, friends and also your carers.

Asking for help and support is often the hardest step but remember there is nothing to be ashamed or embarrassed about. People offering support will not judge you feeling depressed, they are there to support you. If however you do feel you're not being listened to don't give up - seek alternative support from your doctor (GP), counsellor, helplines, friend, teacher or family member. It's your right to be listened to and supported.

## Felling Depressed?

Everyone gets depressed at sometime and this is not something to feel ashamed or embarrassed about, people sometimes feel depressed about something long after it has happened. There is not a time when an event suddenly stops having an effect on someone, so there is no reason to feel like you should have 'gotten over it'.

You may feel depressed for reasons not linked to an event for example if you are under a lot of stress, or depression can run in families sometimes. There are different types of depression, however if you are feeling depressed for long periods of time you may want to talk to someone like your Social Worker, key worker or your carer.



## Self Harm And Self Injury

Self harm covers a wide range of things that people do to themselves in a deliberate and usually hidden way that could cause harm.

This includes things like; drinking, smoking, addiction and taking excessive risks and self injury.

Self-harm is often a way of coping with painful and difficult feelings and distress. Someone may harm themselves because they feel overwhelmed and don't know how else to deal with things. It's usually a very private issue and can have different motivation and reasons from person to person.

Sometimes it can help to find things that can help distract you or to cope with how your feeling. This could include drawing, writing, listening to music, or maybe just creating a box with things inside that make you feel better.

Self Injury is a deliberate, intentional injury to your own body that can cause death, damage or leaves marks. This is done to cope with an overwhelming or distressing situation (and in some cases can lead to death).

If you are worried about yourself or a friend please speak to a worker or someone you trust.

If you need help or support you can always talk to your carer, key worker or Social Worker.

## Key Facts:

- NHS Direct is a totally confidential telephone helpline that can help anyone out with virtually any health question 24 hours a day on 0845 46 47.
- You can go to a NHS Walk-in Centre, even if you have your own normal GP. Many universities run their own health service too, which makes it easier if you're far from home.
- Some GPs even run special clinics for young people. Even if you are under 16 years old, everything you talk to your GP about is kept totally confidential.
- Depending on your circumstances, you might be able to get free or reduced fee treatment from opticians and dentists.
- In an emergency, always call 999.



## School:

You are expected to go to school until you have finished year 11. It's the law and Staffordshire County Council wants you to get the best education possible.

## Will I Go To The Same School?

If it is possible and if it's the right thing for you then you'll stay at the same school while you're living in foster care / residential care. If it's best for you to change school then your Social Worker and your carer will sort that out with you and make sure you have what you need to settle in at your new school. Only very rarely will you have to change schools in your last two years of High School.

## Who Can I Talk To?

If you have any problems in school, your Social Worker or carers, will help sort these out with you and your teachers. Every school has someone who has special responsibility for helping children to settle in at their new school and making sure they are doing well; these are called 'Pastoral Support' staff.. You will also have a Personal Education Plan which includes what support you need to help you with your education and makes sure you feel happy in school.

## Why Should I Learn?

Whatever you want to do in the future, it pays to keep on learning. Qualifications give you a greater chance of doing what you want to do in life and are proof that you have the type of knowledge and skills that employers are looking for. By taking your learning to the highest level possible, you can build on your strengths, make the most of your skills and achieve your full potential. So give learning your best shot! Your Personal Education Plan is the golden thread that ties your education together.



## Designated Teacher

Your school will have a designated teacher who is responsible for making sure children in care are given all the information, advice and support they need to do well in school. Your designated teacher will monitor how well you are doing in school and will arrange extra help and support if you need it.

## Your Designated Teacher May Do Some Of The Following...

- They will make sure that you have a Personal Education Plan.
- They will have regular contact with your Social Worker and your carer and to make sure they are offering as much support for your education as possible.
- They will keep up to date information about how well you are doing in school and in your education and get you help if you need it.
- They will arrange and offer support if you have any issues which are affecting your education.



## Your Personal Education Plan

All young people in care who are of the age to attend school have something called a Personal Education Plan. This plan tries to make sure you are doing well in your education and you are happy with how you are getting on at school, college or in other types of education.

## So How Does It Work?

Within 20 days of you entering care you will have a Personal Education Plan. Your Social Worker will work with the designated teacher at your school or college to arrange a meeting to discuss your plan.

### **before the meeting**

- The designated teacher at your school or college will meet with you to discuss why you are having the meeting and make sure you feel able to have your say.
- Before the meeting your designated teacher will collect information about you such as your attendance record, exam results and may ask other teachers about how you are doing.

### **your personal education plan meeting**

- Everyone who attends your meeting will discuss your plan and make sure it meets all your needs.
- Together you will make sure your plan is complete and everyone understands what the plan says.
- You will also set the time and date for your next plan review.



## The Virtual School for Looked After Children

The responsibility for your education and your educational success, lies with the school you attend and your teachers and Headteacher. But it has been found that where another 'virtual' Headteacher and school is able to keep an overview of all our Looked After Children's education, as if they were in one 'virtual' school, it has an added, beneficial outcome. The Virtual School makes sure that your education is high up on the priority list for schools and the Council. Virtual school staff can help to build the links between Social Workers and Designated Teachers, make sure we get the most out of PEPs and keep everyone up to date. Here in Staffordshire, the Virtual School for Looked After Children is working on your behalf, for your benefit.

## Careers Guidance

Careers information, advice and guidance can help you unlock your potential and open the door to a great future.

Our Personal Advisers can help you with a wide range of topics including:

- Careers planning
- Options in Years 9 and 11
- Apprenticeships
- Higher Education
- Job hunting
- Money matters

Personal Advisers work in schools across Staffordshire and run Careers Drop-ins in your area. Visit **[www.youfind.me.uk](http://www.youfind.me.uk)** to find your nearest centre.

## Part Time Jobs

### **Are you old enough to have a job?**

Once you reach the age of 13, you can only do light work. This means that you cannot do any job that can affect your health and safety or may get in the way of your education.

Things you can do include babysitting and taking on a paper round.

These restrictions last until you become 16 and have left school, when you become classed as a young worker. This means that you'll have more choice in the jobs you can do. If you are 18 or over, you get the same work rights as adults.

There are rules that regulate what times of the day you can work and for how long. These are different depending on your age.

### **Are you old enough to have a job?**

There are a lot of rules that control working hours of children under 16, but the basic ones are:

- during term time, you can only work for two hours on week days and Sundays
- during term time, you can only work for five hours on Saturdays
- during a school holiday, you can work for up to five hours on a week day or a Saturday
- during a school holiday, you can't work for more than two hours on a Sunday
- you cannot work before 7.00 am or after 7.00 pm on any day

### **15 and 16 year olds**

If you're 15 or 16 and are working while you're still at school, your rights are almost identical to those of 14 year olds. However, you are allowed to work for up to eight hours on Saturdays or during the school holidays.



# CVP

## Children's Voice Project

### Have Your Say Today!

A chance to change!

Bored of not being listened to?

Got something to say?

Want to make a difference?

Are you a young person in the care  
of Staffordshire County Council?

The Children & Young People's Voice Project could be for you.  
We help you to have a say about your care, the services  
that you receive and plans that are being made for  
Staffordshire's looked after young people.



Staffordshire  
County Council

## Key Facts:

- We listen to what young people have to say about being in the care of Staffordshire County Council.
- We tell decision makers at Staffordshire County Council about what young people tell us works or doesn't work in their lives.
- We involve young people in events, groups and meetings so that they can tell us how we can make services better for the future.
- We provide young people with the chance to have their voices heard by service providers.
- We involve young people in lots of exciting projects.
- We give young people the chance of learning new skills.
- We provide young people with the opportunity of influencing and changing how services are run for the better.
- We support the Children in Care Council to shadow the agenda of Corporate Parenting Panel.
- Young people have fun too!

## Get Involved!

If you would like more information please contact  
The Children & Young People's Voice Project  
on 01785 253878 or email:  
[cvp@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cvp@staffordshire.gov.uk).

You can also check us out online at:  
[www.staffordshire.gov.uk/cvp](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/cvp)

## What Is The Children In Care Council?

The Children In Care Council aims to improve the lives and futures of children and young people in care.

The young people involved in the Care Council come from different backgrounds including foster care, residential care, independent and local authority, respite care and disability services. They meet in a few locations across Staffordshire, but mainly at The Kabin in Stafford. They meet on two Mondays of each month. There can be up to 12 members on the council. There's more information inside on how to become a member.

## What Else Do The Children In Care Council Do?

Visitors also come to the meetings and ask the council to give their opinions on things like leaflets, forms, new policies and services that are available to young people in care. The Care Council tell them how to make what they are doing the best for young people and how to make it more interesting for young people.

## How To Get Involved?

Think you can make a difference? Want to get involved?

New members are always welcome to apply. Council members need to be aged 12—18 years old and be in Staffordshire's Care. All you need to do is get in touch, tell us a bit about yourself and why you want to join the council.

If you are interested please contact the Children and & Young People's Voice Project on 01785 253878.

## Something Gone Wrong?

Sometimes you may feel unhappy about how you are being treated or upset about something which has happened. Every young person in care has the right to complain but sometimes it's better to talk to one of the following people about it first and they maybe able to sort it out for you.

- Your carer
- Your Social Worker
- Your key worker

If you are still unhappy after speaking to one of the above this is the time you may want to think about making a complaint.



## Something Gone Wrong or Something Gone Right?

### **Complaints & Compliments:**

There may be times when you may not be happy with the services you are getting, or you feel things could be done in a better way, or you may want to tell us about something we have done well.

At Staffordshire County Council in the Children, Young People & Families Directorate we have a special team, who coordinate young people's feedback and complaints about services for children, young people and families.

## Thinking About Making a Complaint?

Making a complaint can sometimes be a difficult decision to make. It may help to talk to someone you trust first. Sometimes just telling someone who can help you with something your not happy with, is often the simplest and quickest way to sort things out, and it may mean you don't have to make a complaint.

Here are some ideas about who you could talk to for some advise:

**Your Carers**

**Your Social Worker**

**A Member of Staff**

**Your "Independent Visitor"**

**Someone who doesn't work for us**

**Teacher**

**Children Advise and Representation Service (CARS) (0800 233 311)**

**Children & Young People's Voice Project (01785 253878)**



## Something Gone Wrong or Right?

### **Have you decided to make a complaint or compliment?**

If you have decided to make a complaint or a compliment. You can find a specially designed leaflet in the back of this folder which will guide you through making a complaint or compliment.

Don't forget you can always speak to someone if you need help to make a complaint or compliment

## Key Contacts From The Complaints Team:

Complaints and Compliments Team Helpdesk:

Tel: 01785 278601

Freephone: **0800 0837014**



# CARS

**puts you in the driving seat**

What can CARS offer?



You have a right to have your say.  
**Children's Advocacy and Representation Service (CARS)**

## What can CARS offer?

### **The respect you deserve**

We can help children and young people who are:

- looked after in a placement, like a children's home or a foster home
- living at home with family but receive support from a social worker.

## How?

### **We can...**

- tell you what your rights are
- help to get adults to listen to you
- make sure that you have your say about the things in your life
- offer advice and information
- come to your review to make sure you are listened to
- help you make a complaint.





## Do you know you have the right to complain if you don't have these things?

- Respect
- Good, healthy care
- A reasonable standard of living
- Safe living
- Education
- Protection from all kinds of abuse

## CARS is run by the NSPCC

The people who work for CARS, children's rights advocates, believe children and young people come first . . . and that their wishes and feelings matter.

You can use the service if you are looked after or having help from Staffordshire or Shropshire local authorities.

If you have a worry, a problem or a complaint, please get in contact because talking helps - and together we can sort it out.

**If you talk to someone from CARS it is private. Nobody will be told without your permission, unless you or someone else is being harmed or at risk of being harmed.**



If you need any advice,  
you can call freephone

**0800 233 311**

24-hour answerphone

**or contact CARS during office hours  
(Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)**

**Staffordshire CARS**

4 Chapel Street  
Stafford ST16 2BX

**01785 228888**

**Shropshire CARS**

Sycamore House, East Wing  
The Professional Quarter  
Shrewsbury Business Park  
Shrewsbury SY2 6LG

**01743 281981**

## How to complain

You have the right to make a complaint if you are not happy with the work offered by CARS. You should contact the children's services manager at the CARS office in Stafford, at the address and phone number above.

The NSPCC keeps records about the people it works with. You can ask to see your file at any time so if any information is shared with other people you will know about it.

## Do I Have Rights?

Everyone has rights! Children and young people have rights and it's a good idea if you know what your rights are.

## What Are My Rights?

You have the right to:

- **Be treated with respect**, as a real person, whatever your age.
- **Be treated fairly** whatever your age, race, your disability, your religion or the clothes you wear.
- **Be listened to** and your feelings and wishes to be heard and considered when people are making plans about your future.
- **Be able to go to school.**
- **Be in good health.**
- **Be able to complain** if you are unhappy or worried about something like being bullied, abused, not listened to.....
- **Be able to have an advocate** who can help you sort things out when you are unhappy.

## Information And Advise Services

### **Childline - 0800 1111 - [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)**

This is a free helpline for children and young people in the UK. Children and young people can call Childline to talk about any problem – their counsellors are always there to help you sort it out.

### **Think you know - [www.thinkyouknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkyouknow.co.uk)**

This is a website created to provide young people the space to share what you think is good and what is not, share your experiences of things that have gone wrong and show ways in which you can get yourselves out of bad situations online.

### **Bullying Online - [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)**

Bullying Online was founded in 1999 by journalist Liz Carnell. The website contains lots of resources and reliable information on a variety of bullying issues.

### **Youthbox - [www.youthbox.info](http://www.youthbox.info)**

Youth Box is Staffordshire County Council's website specifically for teenagers. It is somewhere for young people to go to get advice, find an activity or project in their local area, and somewhere to share and promote the work that they are involved in.

## Useful Words And Phrases To Know...

### **Foster Care**

This means to live in a house or apartment with one or two carers who will look after you as part of their family.

### **Foster Carer**

The person or people who look after you in a foster home.

### **Residential Care**

This means to live in a house with other looked after young people with the support of staff.

### **Social Worker**

The person whose job it is to help look after you by arranging meetings, visiting you and carrying out your care plans.

### **Complaint**

This means to raise concerns about how you are or have been treated.

### **Essential Information Form**

This form tells your carer things they need to know about you like your school, health and family.

### **Care Plan**

This is used to tell you and the people caring for you what should be done for your future care.

### **Children and Young People's Voice Project**

The Children & Young People Voice Project aims to help young people have their say about their care, the service they receive and plans that are being made for the future.

## Useful Words And Phrases To Know...

### **Personal Education Plan (PEP):**

All young people in care who are of the age to attend school have something called a Personal Education Plan. This plan tries to make sure you are doing well in your education.

### **Review:**

A review is a meeting with you to discuss how you are getting on and how you feel about where you live.

### **Health Assessment:**

You will meet with a doctor/ nurse or sometimes a school nurse for your health assessment, to discuss your health. The assessment should be about how you are feeling, the things you can do to be healthy and any problems you have or things you are worried about.

### **Children Advise and Representation Service (CARS):**

CARS can help children and young people who are looked after in a placement like a residential care home or foster homes, to make sure your wishes and feelings are heard.

### **Pledge**

A pledge is a promise or set of promises made to you. Staffordshire County Council has a pledge for children and young people in care.

### **Children In Care Council**

The Children In Care Council aims to improve the lives and futures of children and young people in care.



# STAFFORDSHIRE'S PLEDGE

## To Children & Young People in Care.

The Pledge is a set of promises made to children in the care of Staffordshire County Council. All adults who work for and with the Council have a duty to make sure you are safe and happy. This pledge shows how we promise to do this. This Pledge has been written by Staffordshire's Children in Care Council.

### Your Education:

- There will be a designated teacher in your school who will offer you advice and guidance if you need it.
- We will support you to learn English if it is not your first language.

### Your Health & Wellbeing:

- We will promote services that are available to you to help maintain your health and wellbeing.
- We will give you the chance to have regular health checks.
- We will offer help and support in accessing leisure services.

### Diversity:

- Everyone who is looked after will be given the same opportunities. We will treat all young people the same but respect each others differences.



Staffordshire  
County Council



## **Family & Lifestyle**

- We will try to ensure that you have an annual holiday where possible. This might be with carers, friends, family or school. It may be abroad or within the UK for a few days or a week.
- We will help you keep in regular contact with family members, if this is in your best interests.
- We will meet your religious and cultural needs where possible.
- Where possible we will try to provide you with IT equipment and access to the internet. This may be at Home or School.
- We will try to encourage you to read, we will do this by asking your carers to read to you and provide you with books.

## **Where you live:**

- We will try to place you near to your family, friends and education where possible if it is safe to do so.
- Where possible you will be given a choice on where you live.

## **Having a Voice:**

- To encourage children and young people to have a voice to enable positive change.
- To provide forums and support where children and young people can have their voices heard.
- To provide events where children and young people are encouraged to meet and share ideas.
- To provide a wide range of communication aids to promote having a say.

## **Leaving Care:**

- We will plan with you about when to leave care and identify what support you will need and who will provide it .
- We will help to prepare you for independence by helping you to budget, cook, clean and experience what it might be like to live independently.
- We will help you to find somewhere safe and suitable to live and to support you when you leave care.

**If you would like further information please contact the Children & Young People's Voice Project on 01785 253878 or email [cvp@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cvp@staffordshire.gov.uk). You can also find more information on our website at [www.staffordshire.gov.uk/cvp](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/cvp)**