

IMPORTANT LEAVING CARE STUFF YOU NEED TO KNOW

Did you know that there are supports in place for young people who exit out-of-home care (either when they become independent, their court orders expire or they turn 18)?

This information sheet explains what transition from care plans are (leaving care plans), and what should go into a plan. It gives you extra information about the supports, rules and processes in the Northern Territory (NT).

Q. What does the law say about young people leaving care?

A. In the NT there is legislation called the *Care and Protection of Children Act, 2007*, this says how laws on transitioning from care are put into practice. The law is made effective by government policy. The policy relating to Transitioning from Care is included in the NT Families and Children Policy and Procedures Manual.

Q. Who is responsible for transition from care planning; who do I talk to if I don't have a plan?

A. Case workers are responsible for developing your leaving care plan. If you don't have an assigned case worker you can contact your local Department of Health and Families office to say you'd like to have a case worker to start planning for your transition. The phone number to call to find your local office is (08) 8999 2400 there is also information available at <http://health.nt.gov.au>

Q. At what age does the transition planning start?

A. Government policy says that planning should begin from at least age 15.

Q. What happens after I turn 18?

Once you have left care your plan should describe the supports in place for you, and who is responsible. If you have left care, and you need extra support that's not in your plan, you can go back and ask for help until you reach the age of 25.

Q. What if nothing happens when I ask for a plan? (making a complaint)

A. Sometimes these things take time. However, your plan is VERY important! If you have not had a response within a week, you could try writing the worker a letter, sending an email or ringing. It's good to keep records of how you tried to contact your worker and the date.

If your worker has not contacted you to set a meeting time within a month you should ask to speak with a Team Leader or Manager, telling them the steps you've taken, and saying you would like their help to set a date for planning.

1800 655 105

www.create.org.au

If after *all* of this you still have not been involved in developing your transition plan then you can give feedback or make a complaint to:

Department of Health and Families - Complaints and Compliments

T 08 8999 5511

A 87 Mitchell Street, Darwin NT 0800

W www.health.nt.gov.au/agency/complaints_and_compliments

The Children's Commissioner

T 1800 259 265

A 4th Floor, 9-11 Cavenagh Street, Darwin

W childrenscommissioner.nt.gov.au

What other supports should I know about?

You might want to check out the Community Services website at www.health.nt.gov.au/Children_Youth_and_Families where there is some information for young people in care.

TILA: The Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA) is a national, one-off payment of up to \$1500 that helps people 15 to 25 pay for things like utility connections, moving expenses, appliances, education etc. Visit www.tila.org.au or ask your case worker for more information

**There are also heaps of links and information about leaving care at
www.createyourfuture.org.au**

We hope this information and the 'What's the Plan?' calendar have given you some handy hints about leaving care. As you move towards 18 you might have some more questions....

To contact your case worker call the Department on (08) 8999 2400 or 1800 700 250 and ask to speak with them directly.

If you have a question for CREATE, or need some more information you can call us on 1800 655 105, or 08 8981 7513

Email: nt@create.org.au or visit www.create.org.au and www.createyourfuture.org.au