

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 Tasmania.

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

A. In Tasmania there is legislation called the *Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997*, this says how laws on leaving care are put into practice. The law is made effective by government policy. The policy relating to leaving care is *Planning for Leaving Care and After Care Support*. You can view the policy at www.fostercare.tas.gov.au/information-for-foster-carers2

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

A. Child Protection Workers are responsible for developing your leaving care plan. If you don't have an assigned Child Protection Worker you can still contact the Department of Health and Human Services or your placement provider to say you'd like to start planning. The phone number for your local centre is available at www.dhhs.tas.gov.au or by calling the departments head office on 1300 135 513.

Q. At what age does the leaving care 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 21.

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:

The Ombudsman's Office

T 1800 001 170
A 99 Bathurst St, Hobart
E ombudsman@justice.tas.gov.au
W www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au

What other supports should I know about?

You might want to check out the Department of Health and Human Services website at www.dhhs.tas.gov.au where there is some information for young people leaving care.

After Care Support Program

This program provides financial assistance for those under 25 years of age to undertake further study, improve employment opportunities, develop and maintain relationships with family members, improve links to the wider community, access counselling services, participate in creative activities. Their contact details are:

A PO Box 538 Hobart TAS 7001
T 03 6233 2273
F 03 6223 1343

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

Do you have a disability?

If you are a young person with a disability you may be eligible for support from the After Care Support Program, call 03 6233 2273.

**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 03 6233 2273
and ask to speak with them directly

If you have a question for CREATE, or need some more information call us on
1800 655 105, or 03 6224 9822

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