

## 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 Victoria.

**Q. What does the law say about young people transitioning from care?**

- A. In Victoria there is legislation called the Children Youth and Families Act of 2005 and the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act of 2005, these say how laws on transitioning from care are put into practice (in particular Chapter 2, S16 - Responsibilities of the Secretary)  
[http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web\\_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/f932b66241ecf1b7ca256e92000e23be/15A4CD9FB84C7196CA2570D00022769A/\\$FILE/05-096a.pdf](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/f932b66241ecf1b7ca256e92000e23be/15A4CD9FB84C7196CA2570D00022769A/$FILE/05-096a.pdf)

**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 transition from care plan. If you don't have an assigned case worker you can still contact your local Department of Human Services office, or your placement provider to say you'd like to start planning. The phone number for your local centre is available at [www.dhs.vic.gov.au](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au) or by calling the head office on 1300 650 172

**Q. At what age does the transition planning start?**

- A. Government policy says that planning should begin in Victoria at least 12 months prior to leaving care.

**Q. What happens after I turn 18?**

- A. 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](http://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 either:

**The Office of the Child Safety Commissioner**

**T** 03 8601 5884  
**A** Level 20 , 570 Bourke Street Melbourne  
**W** [www.ocsc.vic.gov.au](http://www.ocsc.vic.gov.au)

**What other supports should I know about?**

- You might want to check out the Children, Youth and Families Section of the DHS website [www.cyf.vic.gov.au](http://www.cyf.vic.gov.au) there is some information for young people leaving care.

- **Melbourne City Mission Leaving Care hotline**

**T** 1300 LEAVING CARE or 1300 532 846 care.

You should call the hotline about getting support after you leave care. They can refer you to services in your areas and to specialist Leaving Care Support Programs.

- **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](http://www.tila.org.au) or ask your case worker for more information

- **Other services and support**

Local councils or community centres often have a list of youth services, brokerage (financial) services, health and counselling, scholarships etc so you can see what is available locally.

**There are also heaps of links and information about leaving care at  
[www.createyourfuture.org.au](http://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 speak to your case worker call the Department on 1300 650 172  
and ask to speak with your worker directly.

If you have a question for CREATE, or need some more information call us on  
1800 655 105, or 03 9918 0002

Email: [victoria@create.org.au](mailto:victoria@create.org.au) or visit [www.create.org.au](http://www.create.org.au) and  
[www.createyourfuture.org.au](http://www.createyourfuture.org.au)