



North

Yorkshire County Council



Children and Young People's Service

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Welcome!



Hello and welcome to your 'It's your home' guide to becoming and being a looked after young person in North Yorkshire.



This guide was designed by young people living in foster care and those who have left care to live independently. These young people wanted to make something bright and colourful and full of useful stuff.



This guide belongs to:

.....



I live with:

.....



My interests are:

.....

.....

.....



If you would like to have a voice to improve the service, you and other looked after young people receive, ring the Participation, Quality and Standards Team on 08458 727374.



STAYING SAFE



RECORDS



STAYING SAFE

North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board

"We seek to make sure that children and young people in North Yorkshire are protected from all forms of abuse and neglect by ensuring that everybody working with children work effectively together." www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk



What happens if young people need protecting harm?

Lots of adults in Schools/Police/Youth Service/Health look out to see if a young person is unhappy and may be harmed.

If they are concerned about a young person, they will contact the Local Authority (LA), which is North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC). They will talk about their concerns to someone in the Children and Young People's Service (CYPS). This person will direct them to the right service.

The Access and Impact (A&I) Team might be given information about the family. If they think that there are concerns, a Social Worker will visit the young person and their family to find out if the young person is not cared for properly.

The A&I Social Worker will support the family for a short period of time and things will hopefully improve for the young person.

However, if support needs to be provided for longer, another Social Worker from the Child In Need (CIN) and Child Protection (CP) Team will take over supporting the family.



CONSENT

The first thing Social Workers do when they start working with a young person and their parents/carers, is ask for their consent. Consent is about young people and adults agreeing to CYPS professionals sharing their personal information with other professionals, letting them know what the worries are and asking what support they have been giving.

Sharing information helps other professionals understand what the family's difficulties are and what support is needed to make things better. Young people who have a good understanding about sharing information can give their consent.

People do not have to give their consent but if they don't, this may make it difficult for CYPS to help properly.

People can tell CYPS if there is anyone they don't want their information to be shared with. People can withdraw their consent at any time.

***If a child is at risk of being harmed,
consent is not required.***

Access to Records

Many professionals who work with young people and their families record all the information they are given on a computer programme.

Records have to be kept by law (the Government says so).

This information can only be seen by relevant professionals in CYPS and those authorised in special circumstances like the Courts.

All professionals need to make sure what they record is right and fair.

**THE COMPUTER
PROGRAMME WILL
HAVE...**



- Your name and people in your family.
- Your Date of Birth.
- Where you have lived and where you live now.
- Schools you have had and where you go now.
- When visits were made to you and your family.
- What you and your family have said.
- What other professionals have said.
- What your health is like and who your doctor is.
- Your likes and dislikes.
- All reports that have been taken to meetings and court reports.
- All your Looked After Children review notes.

Seeing your Social Care Records

If you are under 16 years, an adult has to decide if you would be able to understand all the things that are written in your records. If you want to see your records, speak to your Social Worker or Foster Carer/Carers.

What is a Social Worker?



This is someone who has been trained on how to help young people and their families who are having difficulties.

They work with lots of children and their families to:

- Help them sort out their difficulties.
- Get other professionals to support them.
They may get a Family Support Worker (FSW) to also work with the young person and their family.
- Write assessments and make plans.



What are Assessments?

Assessments are written by the Social Worker. They will ask the young person, their family, teachers, health professionals and the police (if they have been involved) lots of questions. The young person can tell people how they feel by going onto the Viewpoint website.

When the Social Worker has all the information, they write reports for meetings and make an assessment on:

- ➔ **What the concerns are.**
- ➔ **What needs to change to help the young person be safe.**
- ➔ **What support has to be given to the family to make sure the young person stays safe.**
- ➔ **Make a plan on what has to happen to make life better.**



If things get better for the young person, the Social Worker may close the family's case. If things don't get better a Child Protection Conference may be arranged.

what is a Child Protection Conference?

This is a meeting that is held when there are worries about a young person's safety. The meeting is arranged by a Social Worker and an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO).

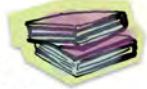
Independant Reviewing Officer (IRO)

This person is an experienced professional who must have a social work qualification, have worked for at least 5 years with children and young people and have managed people.

They are 'Independent' which means they are separate from the Social Workers and their Managers.

The IRO chairs the meeting, which means they make sure everyone at the meeting has a say and helps everyone make a plan of what support should be offered.

The people usually invited to a CPC are parent/s or carers, family doctor, school nurse, teacher, someone from the Police (if they have been involved), the young person and the Social Worker.



The Social Worker will explain to the young person what will happen in the meeting and ask if they want to attend.

Some young people want to be at the meeting. In this case, the Social Worker will ask if they want someone to go with them to act as a 'supporter'.

This person would support the young person to have their voice heard in the meeting. An advocate from NYAS could be the 'supporter.'

National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)

Help children and young people to have a voice by providing independent and confidential advice and information.

If you feel that you need an advocate ring..

FREELPHONE
0800 61 61 01

- ★ The **Social Worker** and the **Independent Reviewing Officer** decide who should be at the meeting. The young person and their family will be told who will be there. If someone is going to be at the meeting that worries the young person, the **IRO** will make sure that this person is not there when the young person is.
- ★ If the young person does not want to be at the meeting, they will be supported to write down what they want and this will be shared in the meeting.
- ★ The meeting will be chaired by the **IRO**, who will meet the young person before the meeting to explain what will happen and answer any questions.





★ All the **Professionals** at the meeting will have written a report on what support they have offered to the young person and their family; what has gone well and what the worries are. The young person and their family will have seen these reports.



★ The **IRO** makes sure that everybody has a say in the meeting. Everyone hears what the concerns are and decides whether all these people need to support the young person and their family in the future.

★ If it is decided that the family need support, a **Child Protection Plan** will be written for everyone to stick to.

★ This means that everyone at the meeting knows what the concerns are and that everyone has to support the young person and their family as much as possible.

★ The plan lists what needs to happen to make things different and how long it should take.

★ A copy of the plan will be given to the young person and their family.

★ The plan is looked at every six months or earlier if the **IRO** requests. This is to see how things are working and to make sure that the young person is safe.



Becoming looked after

If a young person continues to remain unsafe, the Social Worker and their Manager will look at whether the young person should be found a safe place to live and be 'looked after' in care.

Young people come into care for lots of different reasons and all young people will have had very different experiences.

The Social Worker will ask the parents/carers if there are any other family members who could safely look after the young person. If nobody can, the Social Worker would ask the parents/ carers to voluntarily place their child in care.

Voluntary

This means that the young person's parents/carers have asked for their young person to be looked after by the Local Authority or agreed for the Local Authority to 'look after' their child and it has not gone to Court.



If the parents refuse for their child to be looked after, the Social Worker has to go to a Court and give a Judge/Magistrate all the assessments they have written.



Going to Court

The Judge/Magistrate hears from a lot of Professionals about the concerns for the young person; hears from the parents/carers about how they can make things better for the child and hears from the young person about what they want.

To make sure that the young person has a voice, an adult called a Children's Guardian will visit them, to find out what they want to happen and make sure the Court knows.

A lot of young people want to stay living with their parents even if they are not being looked after properly. Even when they have told adults this, a decision may still be made for them to be looked after by other grown ups.

The Judge/Magistrate, after hearing from everyone, decides if a legal 'order' should be made and which one would best meet the young person's needs.

The Judge/Magistrate may decide that:

- ➔ **A Care Order should be made but the young person could stay living with their parents/carers.**
- ➔ **The young person stays with/or returns to their parents/carers and a Supervision Order is made. This is where the Social Worker has to carefully supervise how well the young person is being cared for and that they are safe.**
- ➔ **Another family member should look after the young person with Social Worker support.**
- ➔ **The young person should either stay in care or come into care and a Care Order will be made.**



What is a Care Order?



A Care Order means that the Local Authority will act as the young person's 'legal parent' and decide where the young person attends school, where they shall live and make sure they stay safe and healthy.



The Local Authority usually decides when the young person will see their parents/carers but the young person or the parents/carers can ask the Judge/Magistrate to change the arrangements.



The Social Worker must work with the young person's parents/carers, to make sure they know what the plans are and that everyone is working together to meet the young person's needs.



A Care Order lasts until the young person's 18th birthday, unless a Judge/Magistrate decides that the young person is safe without a Care Order and it can be 'Discharged'.

If the plan is for the young person to be looked after long term, the last team who have been supporting them



Access and Impact Team and/or



Children In Need/Child Protection Team

will hand over the young person's information to a Social Worker from the Looked After Children's (LAC) Team.



BECOMING LOOKED AFTER





BECOMING LOOKED AFTER



What does "looked after" mean?

A young person will become looked after if they can not live with their birth parents or family members.



Foster Care

Most young people who become looked after are found a foster home. This is where the young person goes to live with adults who have been carefully checked by the Local Authority that they will be very good at looking after children. Foster Carers offer emergency, short term and long term placements.

The Fostering Service aims to provide the very best foster placements for children and young people being 'looked after' by carers in North Yorkshire. How they do their best to achieve this is set out in a document called the 'Statement of Purpose'. If you would like to see this please ask your Social Worker or your foster carer to give you a copy.

Young people will be found a foster home that should match their interests, needs and is close to their school, family and friends. If a foster home can not be found near all these things, the Social Worker will make sure that the young person still sees people that are important to them and, if a new school has to be found, they will make sure that it is a good school.

Young people will have read some information about the foster family before they move and will have visited the foster home (unless they have had to move in an emergency). These are called 'introductions'. All sorts of people become foster carers and each one will look after young people differently.



BECOMING LOOKED AFTER

All foster carers have to:

- Look after young people in their own homes.
- Give the young person their own bedroom.
- Provide a healthy well balanced diet (takeaways etc can be given as treats).
- Help with school, college and university.
- Make sure the young person sees their friends and people who are important to them.
- Keep the young person safe.
- Encourage interests/hobbies.
- Support the young person to do a **MEMORY BOOK.**

There are four memory books for different ages. These books help looked after young people record the time in their lives when they were not able to live with their birth family.

The books help capture memories about:

- What the young person looked like?
- Where they lived and who with?
- What makes them happy or sad?
- Holidays/birthdays/school and friends.

The foster carer and Social Worker will write things about the young person's family:

- Why the young person was not able to live with their birth family?
- What plans were made and why?



Looked after young people want to be treated no different from any other young person!

Foster carers and Social Workers will support their young people to keep in contact with their friends, by arranging to have their friends visit and for them to visit their friends.

They may agree to their foster child having a 'sleepover' at their friends.

The foster carer will want to check that the young person will be okay at the friend's house and speak to the other young person's parents/carers. If everything is okay then it can happen. If the sleepovers are not regular, **NO** Police checks need to be made with the other parents.

The foster carer and the Social Worker will know the rules about this!

Foster carers get an allowance to look after young people. This money goes to support the young person to have clothes, food, pocket money, school trips, hobbies/interests.

There is a guide for foster carers on what money they should spend. Young people can ask their foster carer/Social Worker if they are not sure about what money they will be given.



It is good for all young people to have a bank account, whatever their age. The foster carer will encourage the young person to save and may put part of their pocket money into an account.

All homes have rules:

- ➔ Going to school.
- ➔ Bedtimes.
- ➔ Jobs to do in the house, for example - tidying your bedroom, washing up.
- ➔ Times to be home after seeing friends.



All foster carers get support from Fostering Social Workers, who will visit them and talk about what is going well and any difficulties.

The foster carer will go on training and have reviews to see how they are getting on.

Young people will be asked their views.

Ask your Social Worker how you can get your views heard!

The Social Worker will see the young person every 6 weeks (or more if the young person wants) to make sure that they are happy in the foster home.

There are other kinds of fostering:

➔ Specialist Fostering

These carers have a lot of skills supporting young people who have a lot of needs.

➔ Treatment Fostering - Adolescent

These carers need to have all the required skills for Specialist Fostering, but one carer has to be at home full time, and they have to have regular training.

➔ Treatment Fostering - Prevention

These carers need to have all the required skills for Specialist Fostering, but one carer has to be at home full time, and they have to have regular training. They work with 3-6 year olds.



Kinship Carers (foster carers for specific children)

Before any child becomes looked after, the Social Worker will look to see if any other relative or family friend can care for them. These people would have to be checked by the Local Authority whether they would be good parents. If agreed, they would become a foster carer for that child only. Kinship Carers can do the same training as general foster carers.

Adoption

When children are very young and become looked after, the plan should always be for them to be adopted. The Local Authority has to go to court if adoption is the plan for the child. The birth parents will be asked if they agree or not. A Judge/Magistrate will make the final decision.

If adoption is agreed the young person will be found a family to live with until they are 18 years old.

Before adopting, the family will have been assessed very carefully by the Local Authority. Children will be matched with adoptive parents. This means the Social Worker will look at lots of adoptive parents and find the best one to meet the young person's needs.

Residential Care (sometimes called a Children's Home)

When young people start living in Residential Care, they should get a booklet that describes all the support they will get.

Residential Care are homes where several young people live. The young people are cared for by adults who work for the Local Authority. These adults will have been assessed as being good carers and they get a lot of training. The young people will have their own bedroom, bathroom and share the rest of the house.

They will have a key worker - a member of staff that will make sure that they are doing well in the home/at school/seeing their family and friends and help them plan for their future.

Sometimes young people start off living in residential care and move into foster care.


Sometimes young people start off living in foster care then move into residential care.

What support do young people get when looked after?



By law all young people who are looked after must have a Social Worker.

The Social Worker must:

- ➔ See their young people alone every 6 weeks . However, with everyone's agreement it could be less or more often.
- ➔ Listen to young people. 
- ➔ Keep talking to the young person's birth parents/carers.
- ➔ Write a very clear 'Care Plan' (this is a report that details where the young person will live, where they will go to school, how to meet their health needs, the young person's interests and hobbies).
- ➔ Arrange for the young person to have 'contact' with their birth parents/carers; brothers; sisters etc.

note

The Social Worker will have decided how often contact should take place. A decision may have been made that the young person should not see a family member at all; this would only happen if the concerns were too great.

This should be explained to you by the Social Worker.

If the Social Worker has assessed that the young person would be unsafe seeing their parent/s on their own, the Social Worker would arrange the contact to be supervised. This means that a professional would stay with the young person during contact.

If you are unhappy about the amount of contact you have, speak to your Social Worker / IRO

Social Workers



- 1 Work with families to ensure that young people are cared for properly and not being harmed.
- 2 Work with children and young people who are being looked after and ensure they have a good relationship with their families.
- 3 Work with lots of other professionals and make sure that families, children and young people get the right support at the right time.
- 4 Sit in teams with other:

➔ **Social Workers**

➔ **Family Support Workers (These are Professionals who do direct work with young people and families).**

➔ **Personal Advisors (These are Professionals who support and prepare young people to leave care and help them live on their own).**

5 Record everything that they are doing to support the young person.

6 Arrange Looked After Reviews with the IRO (explained later).

7 Have to report every 6 weeks to a person called an Assistant Team Manager on how they are supporting their young people.

Assistant Team Managers are qualified Social Workers who manage other Social Workers to make sure they are doing their best to support young people and their families.



Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

Their role is described in the 'Staying Safe' section.

By law all looked after young people must have an IRO.

They make sure young people are:

- ➔ Living in the right place.
- ➔ Getting all the support they need.
- ➔ Having a say in the plans/decisions that are being made for them.
- ➔ Able to have a voice in their Looked After Reviews and Child Protection Conference meetings.



It is okay to contact your IRO, you do not have to ask your social worker first.

MESSAGE FROM AN IRO

“It is important that children and young people get on with their social worker, are happy where they live, know what the plan is for their future, are going to a good school, are given choices in their daily lives about the support they get and the activities they do.

It is important that outside of school, children and young people get opportunities to take part in sport, art and cultural activities. Children who are looked after should have easier and quicker access to health care; know someone who knows how to talk to them about difficult issues like alcohol and drugs.

When young people move on from care they should get support, a plan, a personal advisor, and money. They should get a choice about when they move on, a choice about where they live as well as help to move on from care and get a start in work.”

Looked After Reviews?

When a young person becomes 'Looked after' the Social Worker has to arrange a 'Looked After Child (LAC) review.

LAC reviews have to happen by law to make sure the young person is getting the right support and the long term plan for the young person is right.

How often do reviews happen?

- ➔ When a young person first becomes looked after, a LAC review will take place in the first 20 days.
- ➔ A review will then happen three months later.
- ➔ Then every six months.



A review can be called at any time if big changes are happening for the young person.

What happens before the review?

The Social Worker must visit the young person before their review to hear about what is going well, anything they would like to change and what they would like for the future.

The Social Worker should ask young people:

- 1 Who they would like at their review?
- 2 Where the review should take place? (In your foster home/youth club/school/where your Social Worker sits.)
- 3 What time the review should take place.
 - ➔ Most reviews happen when school has finished (IRO's don't really like to have reviews during lesson times).
 - ➔ Before people have their evening meal.
 - ➔ The review should not last too long but needs to be long enough so people know how things are going.
- 4 What the young person would like to talk about and anything they don't want to talk about.

Viewpoint



The young person can tell people how they feel by going onto Viewpoint, an online website. When on Viewpoint they are asked questions about how they feel. The answers are sent straight to the Social Worker and the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), who makes sure their views are heard in the meeting.



Who comes to the review?

Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) -

This person will 'chair' the review (this means they make sure the right people are at the review; everyone has a say and make sure the plan is right.)



In the review the:

FOSTER CARER/CARER - Will tell everybody how well they think the young person is doing at home.

SOCIAL WORKER - Will tell everybody how well they think the young person is doing.

YOUNG PERSON - Should tell everybody how well they think things are going.

EDUCATION - Someone that knows the young person well at the school or where they are studying will tell people how they think the young person is doing.

HEALTH - If somebody is supporting the young person with their health, this person will let people know how they think the young person is doing.

FAMILY MEMBER - Somebody from the young person's family may be at the review or if this is not possible, they will have told the Social Worker about how they think their child is doing.

Young people tell us that they do not like too many people at their review, so the Social Worker and the IRO will make sure that only the people that the young person wants there will be invited. However, there may be people who want to have a say. They would be asked by the Social Worker/IRO to write a letter so their views can be shared.

Everybody wants young people to be at their reviews, as hearing directly from young people is really important. If young people don't want to be there, that's okay but young people must make sure that their voices are being put forward and listened to.

If a young person is at their review, the IRO will make sure that their voice is heard and will make sure that the information at the review is easy to understand.

The LAC review looks at:

- ➔ Where the young person lives and what should happen in the future.
- ➔ Education and studies.
- ➔ Health.
- ➔ Seeing family and friends.
- ➔ Interests and hobbies

The 'Care Plan'

The review has to plan:

- ➔ What needs to happen for the young person to stay happy in their home.
- ➔ How to keep the young person healthy and safe.
- ➔ How to make sure the young person always does well in their studies.
- ➔ That the young person has good times with their family and friends.



What happens after the review?



The IRO will go through what everyone wants the plan to be and will explain the plan to the young person.

- The IRO will write down what needs to be done before the next review.
- The IRO will send the young person a letter with all the things that were agreed.
- The IRO will also let the other people know what was agreed.

If there is anything that you didn't understand, the IRO or Social Worker should explain.



Every looked after young person should have a copy of the "Care Plan" This is a form that says what the long term plan is for the young person.

If you don't have one, ask your Social Worker or IRO.

Who else makes sure young people get the right support?

The Director of Children and Young People's Service - this person has to make sure that all young people in North Yorkshire are being protected from harm and that all the Professionals working with young people know what they should be doing.

OFSTED - (People who work for the Government) visit all Local Authorities every few years to check very carefully that Professionals are protecting young people from harm/have good plans for young people who are unsafe and that young people in care are being well looked after.

They visit Social Work teams and read some of the assessments that have been written. They speak to some Social Workers, foster carers, parents, managers, county councillors, the Director of Children and Young People's Service and Assistant Director, children's social care and young people.

OFSTED then write a long report telling everybody how well or not, the Local Authority are doing and what things need to improve.

To see what OFSTED wrote about North Yorkshire County Council go to - www.ofsted.gov.uk. They can be contacted on **03001231231** or **60085** for text messages.

Corporate Parents - When young people become looked after, all those who support them and every County Councillor (see note) become their Corporate Parents. This means that although they are not the young people's birth parents, they have to do everything a good parent would do.

Examples - keep young people safe/ provide a good education/ make plans for their future/ help young people see the people that are important to them/ write clear Care Plans/ celebrate their successes; make sure young people know what the plans are/ that they are involved in writing the plan/ plan for when their leave care to live independently.

note 

County Councillors are adults that have been voted by the public to speak on their behalf and make decisions on what should happen in North Yorkshire.

There are many County Councillors in North Yorkshire - There will be one where you live. Anybody can go and see their Councillor.

County Councillors want to know:

- ➔ How many young people are being Looked after in North Yorkshire
- ➔ How well they are doing at school
- ➔ That they are being well looked after
- ➔ That young people in residential care are having their needs met
- ➔ That they are healthy
- ➔ The plans for them to live independently are good and they will be safe and secure living on their own.

Knowledge

SCHOOL

EDUCATION

Learn



Along time and





EDUCATION

We want all young people to succeed in life. That means it is very important that you go to school, do well in your homework and exams and hopefully go to college and perhaps university in the future.

Who helps you?

Foster carer

Your foster carer will make sure that you have all the right things you need for school. Things like - the right uniform, a good bag to keep all you school stuff in (eg: ruler/calculator), lunch box or school dinner money.

- ★ They will help you with your homework and speak to your teachers if they or you are worried about anything.
- ★ Parents' Evening - Your carer will see your teacher/s at parents' evening and read all the school reports that are sent. You may want other grown ups to go to your parents' evening, eg: Birth parents, Grandparents, Social Worker. You will need to talk to your foster carer and Social Worker about this.
- ★ You should be able to use a computer where you live, to do your homework.
- ★ You should be told when you can go on the computer and what websites you can look at - **Keeping safe online.**

Social Worker

Your Social Worker will really want you to do well at school and will help you and your foster carer plan for your future.

The Social Worker will not see you as often as your foster carer, so they will ring your carer every so often to find out how things are going.



Do not give out your mobile number or address

Keep all personal information safe and private

Always ask permission from others if you are putting their picture online



How can you protect yourself while using the internet?

Learn how to block, delete or ignore people - especially strangers

Respect your friends and family - do not give out their details



Do not trust people you meet online. Online friends are really strangers

Never reply to a message from people you do not know

Always tell someone if someone makes you feel uncomfortable or worried



Personal Education Plan

Your Social Worker will write a Personal Education Plan (PEP). These are written for all looked after young people aged 3-16 years. The plan tells people:

- ➔ What you are doing at school.
- ➔ How well you are doing.
- ➔ What support you need to help you achieve.
- ➔ What you do as a hobby/interest.
- ➔ What school trips you will be going on.
- ➔ What you would like to do when you are older.
e.g. College/University



Your Social Worker will arrange your Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting.

The PEP meeting is where your carers/social worker and parents meet with you to look at the plan.

An Education Adviser (LAC) from the Education for Looked After Children Virtual School (ELAC-VS) will be invited if you need extra support.

What does the Education for Looked After Children (ELAC) - Virtual School do?

Sometimes young people need extra support to help them do well in school. Your Foster Carer, parents and Social Worker will work with you on what support you may need and will seek the help from this team.

Perhaps an ELAC-VS Youth Mentor or a Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) could help.

No-one ever makes it to the top completely by chance. Life's winners set themselves goals and put together action plans for how to reach them. All this should be in your PEP. The ELAC-Virtual School Team are there to keep an eye on all looked after young people's education and track their progress.

Whenever you move schools your PEP goes with you, so you don't have to repeat yourself to your new school.



The ELAC-VS may ask the school to help the young person more. This could be through Pupil Premium Plus.



What is Pupil Premium Plus?

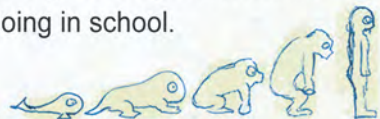
This is an amount of money given to school to help you whenever needed as identified through your PEP.

School Designated Teacher



This is someone who is the central point of contact for looked after young people in their school. If any of these young people are having any difficulties it is their role to offer help.

This means that all your teachers do not necessarily need to know that you are "looked after" and just one person knows how you are doing in school.



Planning for your future



People will:

- **Talk to you** about all the different careers that suit your interests and abilities – you will find that there are so many that you never even knew about.
- **Help you** look at the routes that you can take to get to where you want to go. For example, you may decide that you would like to do an apprenticeship and learn while you work and then you may go on to college and university. Or you may decide that the best route is to take A Levels and then go into work or university.
- **Support you** to find out more so that you are making informed decisions and can look forward positively to your future.

The

**North Yorkshire
Youth Support Service** will:



- Give you the chance to do something different or to be involved with an organised project.
- Help you understand about things that affect you.
- Provide places to go to meet friends and relax.
- Provide opportunities to learn something new or to improve your skills in things that are of interest to you.



www.nyyss.org



If you have internet access you can explore www.nyyss.org.

QUALIFICATIONS AND PATHWAYS...

→ You can explore the different routes you might take.

LOCAL COURSES...

→ Find out where you can go to do courses.



ABOUT WORK...

→ Lots of questions answered about, for example, the hours you can work and what you can be paid.

CAREERS...

→ Information about hundreds of different careers.

MAKE PREPARATIONS...

→ Including help to revise for exams, write your CV, work experience and volunteering and much more.



Personal Adviser



When you are nearly 16 years old, a worker called a Personal Adviser (PA) will start supporting you. Their role is to make sure you are doing all the right things that will help you move out of foster care/residential care in a planned and successful way (when you are older). Whilst you are still in care, your Social Worker will write a Pathway Plan. The plan looks at your:



- ➔ health
- ➔ education
- ➔ training and employment
- ➔ managing finances
- ➔ family and friends
- ➔ identity
- ➔ mental and emotional health
- ➔ independent skills
- ➔ suitable accommodation

When you leave care to live independently, the Personal Adviser will take over from your Social Worker.

The PA will update your Pathway Plan and make sure it is reviewed every 6 months or earlier if you really struggle or move accommodation.







Supporting you to be healthy

Your foster carer/carers will get a lot of information about your health when you become looked after. The Social Worker would have found out from your parents/carers what inoculations you have had; any childhood illnesses and what your current health is like.

Every young person when they become looked after will have a health check with a **Paediatrician**.

This is a Doctor who specialises in seeing children and young people, checking that their health is good and how they can stay healthy.

The Paediatrician will write a report telling the Young Person/Social Worker/carers/parents what the young person's health is like and whether anything needs to be done to improve their health.

The report is called a **'Health Assessment'** and every year the young person's health will be checked.

When the young person is in primary school the **Health Visitor** will see the young person.

When they move to Senior school the **School Nurse** will assess the young person.



→ It is really important to have these health checks as it helps you and those who care for you, know that you are fit and well.

→ The health checks might pick up something, which means you need extra health support eg Asthma, Diabetes, Diet.

→ People who care for you will want you to always have these checks until you are older and can see the Doctor on your own.

The information you give to them is Confidential. This means they will not share what is talked about with anybody else, unless what you tell them is putting you at harm or could harm somebody else.

Your Social Worker and foster carer/carers will make sure that you have a..



Doctor (who will see you if you are poorly)

Dentist (checking your teeth are okay)

Optician (having your eyes checked)



To help people know what support you may need with your health, your Social Worker/foster carer and you will fill in a **Strengths and Difficulties** questionnaire with you.

Ask your Social Worker/foster carer if you don't know what this is.

Every looked after young person should have a **Health Plan** which is part of the **Care Plan**.

The IRO should ensure that the **Health Plan** is reviewed at least every 6 months.

Social Workers should make sure foster carers are given a written health record for each child in their care.



General Health



Keeping Fit



It is recommended that all young people aged 5 years and over do 60 minutes or more exercise each day. This can be achieved through **active play, sports and hobbies.**

If you want a hobby, look at: www.nyys.org. This website will tell you what is going on where you live.

Eating Well

Eating healthy is really important and helps current, future health and well being. Having a healthy weight can reduce chances of getting diseases like heart disease, diabetes and cancer.



The top 7 tips for eating well are:

- 1** Try to eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day.
- 2** Eat more fish.
- 3** Cut down on saturated fat and sugar.
- 4** Try to eat less salt - no more than 6g a day.
- 5** Get active and try to be a healthy weight.
- 6** Drink plenty of water.
- 7** Don't skip breakfast.



You should be able to ask your carer for some of your favourite foods and be able to tell people what you like and don't like.

Your carers will make sure that you have a healthy diet and will give you things that you may not have tried before. Best to try it first and then decide if you like it or not, rather than saying no because you have never had it before.



As you grow older your foster carer should give you a chance to help prepare meals. You should also be given a chance to take part in shopping for food.



Oral Health



- ★ Brushing teeth twice a day (supervised up to the age of 8 years).
- ★ Reduce sugary foods and drinks.
- ★ Regular dental checks.



Puberty

Growing up can be exciting but scary and confusing at the same time, but don't worry it is completely normal.

Puberty is when your body changes from being a child to a young adult. These changes include things like your body changing shape, hair growing in new places and sweating more.

For girls it also means starting your periods and boys start to make sperm, all in preparation for having babies in the future, should you want to. Puberty usually starts earlier in girls, between 8 and 14, than for boys who start after the age of 10 or 11.

Everyone is different and changes at their own rate, so some people may start puberty earlier and some later. Sometimes it's hard not to compare yourself to other people but there's no need. Everybody gets there in the end.

Not all of these changes relate to your body, your feelings and moods change too.



Your foster carer and Social Worker can answer any questions that you may have.

For more information visit:
www.nhs.uk/worhtalkingabout



There are also some leaflets that may help answer some of your questions. Ask your foster carer/Social Worker for a leaflet.

4You: Growing up what's it all about?	Age 9 and above
Periods: What you need to know	Age 9 and above
4Boys: A below the belt guide	Age 12 and above
4Girls: A below the bra guide:	Age 12 and above
Your guide to contraception	Age 12 and above
Love sex relationships	Age 12 and above
Is everybody doing it?	Age 12 and above
Love STings	Age 12 and above
Pregnancy	Age 12 and above
Abortion	Age 12 and above
Is this love	Age 14 and above
Love, Sex, Life	Age 16 and above

Smoking

Smoking cigarettes are not good for people's health. A doctor can help people who want to stop. For more information visit:

<http://smokefree.nhs.uk/>



Drugs and Alcohol

If you are worried about drugs and alcohol there will be services in or near where you live. The services are free, confidential and the staff will be able to offer advice and support.

Drugs

If you have any questions or want to talk to someone about drugs, call

FRANK on **0300 123 66 00** for friendly, confidential information.

Or visit talktofrank.com for more details.

Alcohol

Many people enjoy drinking. If they drink sensibly they are unlikely to come to any harm.

Compass REACH

Compass REACH works with young people in North Yorkshire who are aged 11 to 19 and identified as being at risk of:

- ➔ substance misuse, including alcohol and legal highs;
- ➔ poor sexual health, including preventing early pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections; and
- ➔ behaviour associated with the two above areas that may lead to harm.

Contact them at: Compass REACH, Insite Youth Support Service Centre,

159-160 High Street, Northallerton, DL7 8JZ

Tel: 01609 777662

E-mail: NYRBS@compass-uk.org



The Law

Under 5 - it's illegal to give an alcoholic drink to a child under 5

Under 14 - A person under 14 can't go into a bar or pub unless the pub has a Children's Certificate.

14 or 15 - they can go anywhere in a pub but can't drink alcohol.

16-17 - they can be bought beer or cider, so long as it is bought with a meal, but not in a bar.

Under 18 - with the exception of having a meal in a pub, it's against the law for anyone under 18 to buy alcohol in a pub, off-licence or supermarket. It's also illegal to buy alcohol in a pub for someone who's not 18.

Anyone **over 18** can buy and drink alcohol legally in licensed premises in Britain.

Emotional Health

Happy Feelings

- Feeling safe.
- Being able to talk to an adult of their choice in confidence.
- Achieving things.
- Being praised.
- Generally feeling positive about oneself.

Sad Feelings

- Feeling angry a lot.
- Not eating properly.
- Frightened to be alone.
- Worried about other people.
- Being bullied or bullying others.

What is bullying?

- being teased
- being called names
- being pushed or pulled about
- being kicked or physically hurt in any way
- having money and other possessions taken or messed about with
- having rumours spread about you
- being threatened or intimidated
- being ignored or left out



Bullying can also be part of other forms of *abuse* involving *neglect*, *emotional*, *physical* and *sexual abuse*.

If you are being hurt in anyway, tell someone you can trust.

If in doubt ring Childline on 0800 1111.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)



CAMHS Workers support many young people and will help looked after young people who have worries and health problems.

They also give advice to Social Workers and foster carers.

If you are having problems you can ask to see a CAMHS Worker through your Social Worker.

The CAMHS Worker will be able to help you get the right kind of help and access to any other services you may need.

Out and About

Stay Safe
on the
internet!



Who supports young people to have interests?

The foster carer/carer and Social Worker will support them.

Activities can happen:

- ➔ In the home, foster care, residential care.
- ➔ In the community (parks, adventure playgrounds, playing fields, swimming pool).
- ➔ As part of organised activities (such as after school groups, dance classes, play schemes, football and rugby teams, Brownies and self defence classes).
- ➔ Special visits, for example to an art gallery, theatre, nature reserve, wildlife park or museum.
- ➔ At school, before and after the school day and during breaks.

Getting there?



Foster carers/carers will help their young people to get to places. However, when young people get older, they may need to start using public transport either on the bus or train.

To find all bus services in North Yorkshire go to:

www.northyorkstravel.info

To find train information about trains go to:

www.nationalrail.co.uk



Foster carers will be able to use some of the allowance they get, to pay for some activities. The young person may be asked to put part of their pocket money towards an activity.



If it gets to be really expensive, the foster carer may ask the Social Worker to find some other funds to help pay.

Young people's interests/hobbies will be written in the Care Plan, so everybody can support the young person to do the things they like and this will be talked about in the LAC review.

Also, a young person's interests will be written in their Personal Education Plan (PEP).

Finding an interest?

North Yorkshire
Youth Support Service

www.nyyss.org

Our website www.nyyss.org is full to the brim with information and advice on issues that affect young people, such as health, housing, money, relationships, staying safe, education and careers, with links to organisations that can offer specialist support. You can access info about the YSS and its many activities, plus up-to-date news relevant to young people, such as apprenticeship opportunities and local and national events and projects.

www.vinspired.com

Getting young people volunteering.

Keyfund

Groups of young people can apply if they wish to do an activity. For more info contact the Participation, Quality and Standards Team on **08458 727374**.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award for young people 14-24.

Libraries

These are great places to find out about interests and hobbies. They have books that might give ideas and computers with free internet access.

Computers



Most foster carers/carers have a computer and internet access in their home. It is good if the computer is used where it can be seen by everybody. This helps adults check that young people are on the right internet sites.

Young people are allowed to use the home computer and may even have their own.



The computer should mainly be used for:

- School work
- Writing a word document
- Surfing the internet for information



Many young people set up an email address; this is where people/ companies can email them information.

Many parents/carers want to know what information is being sent to their young people so they can check that it is safe. Parents/carers will put security settings on the computer to block some internet sites.

When young people get older, around 13 years plus, they (if their parents/carers agree) can start using social networking sites.

These sites help people keep in touch with friends, find friends, make new friends.

These sites ask people to set up a 'Profile'. This means:

facebook

twitter

→ Putting a picture of themselves ,

YouTube

flickr

→ Their name

digg Technorati

vimeo

→ When they were born

LinkedIn

stumbleUpon

→ Likes / dislikes on the site.

del.icio.us

myspace.com

*This could be seen by hundreds, thousands
or even millions of people!*

Therefore, young people need **ADULTS** to help them create a profile and make sure that they have set up the right **Privacy Setting** for their page.

W - Always ask **WHY** a website or someone you make 'friends' with would need your personal information.

I - Be **INSPIRED!** The internet offers great tools for learning, discovering and creating.

S - Be **SECURE**. There are always new scares, hoaxes, viruses and spyware on the internet. Install security software to keep your computer safe.

E - **EVALUATE** the info you read or receive through the internet. Just because it is on the internet does not make it true, reliable or genuine.

Staying safe on the internet



10 top tips for children and young people:

- 1 Treat your password like your toothbrush - keep it to yourself.
- 2 Check your profile and make sure it doesn't include any personal information.
- 3 Always respect others - be careful what you say online and what images you send.
- 4 Think before you send - whatever you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever.
- 5 Look out for your friends - and do something if they are at risk.
- 6 Only give your mobile number or personal website address to trusted friends.
- 7 Block the bully - learn to block or report someone who is behaving badly.
- 8 Save the evidence - learn how to keep records of offending text messages, pictures or online conversations.
- 9 Don't retaliate or reply.
- 10 Tell your parent, carer or a teacher if something or someone makes you feel uncomfortable.

Good websites to help:

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.ceop.gov.uk



YOUR RIGHTS



YOUR RIGHTS



Everybody has rights. These are things that all people should have like a home, food, water, to be safe from harm.

Children and young people should have all the rights listed by the UNCRC.

General Rights

- ★ **UNCRC** - United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. (See all the rights in the convention at the back.) This is an international human rights treaty giving all children and young people up to the age of 18 years a set of rights. This is not a legal thing but can be used in the courts.
- ★ **Children Act 1989 and 2004** - these are laws that professionals who work with young people in need and who are in care have to follow.
- ★ **Human Rights Act** - This is a law. The IRO can use the Human Rights Act if something is not going well for a looked after child or young person.

Who Promotes Young People's Rights?

All adults should promote children and young people's rights. This includes: teachers/police/health/parents/carers and professionals. If you feel someone is not providing you with something, you have the 'right' to talk to an adult you can trust to help you.

- ★ North Yorkshire County Council, Children and Young People's Service ensures all young people have a voice by supporting the following:

- ➔ The Young People's Council (YPC)
- ➔ Celebration Day
- ➔ Consultation Events
- ➔ Young People Interview Panels (YPIP's)

1 The Young People's Council (YPC)



- ➔ Is a group of North Yorkshire care experienced young people.
- ➔ They meet monthly.
- ➔ They regularly meet with those who make the decisions that affect them and other young people. These people are:

*The Director of Children and Young People's Service,
the Assistant Director Children's Social Care,
Lead member for Children's Service and the Children's Champion.*

- ➔ The YPC talks about all the things that are important to care experienced young people and this helps the people who make the decisions to improve services.

The Young People's Council (YPC) has:

- ➔ Written a pledge for looked after children and care leavers - this is a set of promises of all the things that care experienced young people should have.
- ➔ Consulted with young people on care experience issues.
- ➔ Written a work plan - this is a list of things the YPC will be working on.



If you would like to get involved contact YPC on
01609 536621 or
e-mail ypc@northyorks.gov.uk or
visit www.nyys.org.uk/ypc.



2 Celebration Day

This is a day for care experienced young people to come together, have a fun day and learn new skills. A group of care experienced young people help to plan and run the day.



3 Consultation Events

When care experienced young people come together and tell grown ups what is going well for them and what changes to the service they would like.



4 Young People Interview Panels (YPIP's)

When Children's Social Care teams have jobs they want to fill, the people applying have to be interviewed by a panel of care experienced young adults and a panel of managers. The young adults are supported to write the questions they will ask and helped to run the panel.

Youth Councils

There are many Youth Councils across North Yorkshire. These councils are for any young people to discuss and act on issues that matter to them. The Youth Councils aim to influence the way things work for the better.

There is also a North Yorkshire Youth Council made up of young people from the area of youth councils. If you would like to get involved speak with your Social Worker or carer.



NYCC Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/northyorkshirecountycouncil

NYCC Twitter:

www.twitter.com/nycc.co.uk

The NYCC has links to the British Youth Council - www.byc.org.uk

UK Youth Parliament is for young people and run by young people aged between 11-18. It gives young people a voice to change services for the better. www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk

The Participation, Quality and Standards Team at North Yorkshire County Council children's social care works closely with the NYAS coordinator to ensure that young people know about NYAS.

NYAS - National Youth Advocacy Service

If you are a care experienced young person and feel that people are not listening to what you want/need, then maybe having an advocate will help?

NYAS help children and young people to have a voice by providing independent and confidential advice, information.

If you feel that you need an advocate call:



FREEPHONE 0800 61 61 01 or

send a text message to:

0777 333 4555 or

send an email to help@nyas.net.

www.nyas.net



Hi,

I just wanted to give you a bit of information about **NYAS (National Youth Advocacy Service)**.

NYAS can provide you with an Advocate if you feel you have problems that you need help with. An advocate is someone totally independent from your Social Worker/ Support Worker. The advocate will come and talk to you and pass on your views to anyone who is supporting you, this maybe your Social Worker or IRO or even your family or foster carer.

Your advocate will work entirely for you and can help by going to meetings with you or supporting you if you want to find out more information about your care plan or make a complaint.

You can contact us for help or advice by ringing our friendly staff at our helpline on **FREEPHONE 0800616101**. Calls are free from landlines but you could text and someone will always get back to you. You could email us help@nyas.net or just send off the card in the leaflet. You don't need a stamp and we will contact you as soon as we can (we don't work 9 - 5) or you could get someone who works with you to ring on your behalf.

Check out our website www.nyas.net that gives you lots of information on how we can help and support you.

Remember **NYAS** is free, independent, confidential and there just for you.

Thanks,
Judi Morris
Advocate **NYAS**

Complaints, Commendations and Information Team

The Participation, Quality and Standards Team works closely with this team.

They help young people sort out any difficulties they may be having.

They may be able to help solve the problem by ringing the manager of the team that supports the young person.

This is called a 'Representation'.

If the problem is not sorted out by Representation, a young person can ask that it goes to a Stage 1 complaint.



Stage 1 Complaint

The Complaints, Commendations and Information Team (CCIT) will write to you to let you know who will 'investigate' (look at) your complaint. This is usually a manager of the team that supports you. This person will look at what you are not happy with and will try and sort things out. They should write to you within 20 working days to tell you what has been done.

When the complaint has been looked at, the CCI Team will ask you if you are happy with what has happened. Most complaints are sorted out in **Stage 1**.

If you are still not happy, the CCI Team will ask you if you want to take your complaint to **Stage 2**.

Stage 2 Complaint

This is when the Complaints, Commendations and Information Team ask two independent people (this means they don't work for Children's Social Care) to meet with you, to talk more about your complaint. If you have an advocate you could ask him or her to be there.

These Independent people listen to you, look at the work the manager and his/her team did to try and sort out the problem and work out what still needs to happen.

They write a report about how things went and if anything more needs to be done.

This report is given to a Senior Children's Social Care Manager (this person has to make sure that children and young people who are being supported get the right care and support).



If things could have gone better, the Senior Manager has to look at making things right for you and make sure that similar things do not happen again for you or other young people. The Senior Manager tries to make the service better for everyone.

After this, the CCI Team will ask you if you are now happy with things.

Stage 3 Complaint Review Panel

If you are not happy with the way your complaint has been investigated, you can ask for a Complaint Review Panel meeting.



The Complaints Team would explain this in more detail.

The Local Government Ombudsman can also look at your complaint independently. Telephone 0300 061 0614

Where else to go if your rights are not being met

★ Children's Commissioner

Is the official website for the Office of the Children's Commissioner. They spend lots of time listening to what children and young people who live away from home have to say about how they are looked after. If you live away from home then this is the place to find out about your RIGHTS and a way for you to **BE HEARD!**
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk



★ ChildLine

Free and confidential helpline for children & young adults in the UK.



★ OFSTED

Ofsted inspects Local Authorities, to find out how well they are protecting and looking after young people. www.ofsted.gov.uk.

They inspect:

- ➔ Children's homes a minimum of twice a year.
- ➔ Residential special schools a minimum of once a year.
- ➔ Local authority adoption services.
- ➔ Local authority fostering services.
- ➔ Local authority private fostering arrangements.
- ➔ Voluntary adoption agencies.
- ➔ Independent fostering agencies.
- ➔ Adoption support agencies.



Useful Contacts

North Yorkshire County Council

County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 8AD
www.northyorks.gov.uk

General Enquiries

08458 727374
Customer.service@northyorks.gov.uk

Social Care Services

08450 349410
social.care@northyorks.gov.uk

Residential Children's Homes

08450 349410
Woodleigh, Forest Lane, Stepney Road

Access and Impact/Child In Need and Child Protection Long Term Teams

08450 349410 ask for the team who is supporting you.

Leaving care

08450 349410 ask for the team who is supporting you.
Scarborough, Selby, Northallerton and Knaresborough

Children's Disability Teams

08450 349410 ask for the team in your area.

Fostering Service

08450 349410 ask for the team in your area.

Adoption Teams

08450 349410 ask for the team in your area.

Independent Reviewing Officers

08450 349410
ask for the team in your area.

Useful Contacts

NYAS

Freephone helpline - 0800616101

Complaints

01609 534193 or free answerphone 08081 682785

Participation, Quality and Standards Team

08458 727374

OFSTED

Text 60085 or 03001234666.

Children's Commissioner for England

020 77838330

info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

Childline

0800 1111

Emergency Duty Team

0845 034 9417

Police General

0845 6060 247

Useful Contacts

North Yorkshire Youth Support Services' Facebook pages

www.facebook.com/CravenAreaYSS

www.facebook.com/HarrogateTownYSS

www.facebook.com/BoroughbridgeKnaresboroughYSS

www.facebook.com/RiponNidderdaleYSS

www.facebook.com/ThirskYSS

www.facebook.com/BedaleYSS

www.facebook.com/EasingwoldYSS

www.facebook.com/NorthallertonYSS

www.facebook.com/StokesleyYSS

www.facebook.com/RichmonshireYSS

www.facebook.com/RyedaleYSS

www.facebook.com/SelbyYSS

www.facebook.com/WhitbyYSS

www.facebook.com/ScarboroughYSS

www.facebook.com/FileyEastfieldYSS

Useful Contacts

North Yorkshire Support Services

Harrogate

Trax Youth Support Service Centre

Tel 01609 532380

Email trax@northyorks.gov.uk

Northallerton

Insite Youth Support Service Centre

Tel 01609 532323

Email insite@northyorks.gov.uk

Pickering

Atmosphere Youth Support Service Centre

Tel 01609 532574

Email atmosphere@northyorks.gov.uk

Richmond

Richmond Youth Centre

Tel 01609 533682

Email RichmondYouthCentre@northyorks.gov.uk

Scarborough

Ourspace Youth Support Service Centre

Tel 01609 533170

Email ourspace@northyorks.gov.uk

Selby

Sphere Youth Support Service Centre

Tel 01609 532809

Email sphere@northyorks.gov.uk

Skipton

Youth Support Service Centre

Tel 01609 532412

Email hg-hub@northyorks.gov.uk

Seeing my Social Care Records

My Full Name.....

Date of Birth.....

Where I live.....

.....

.....

Contact me on.....

My Social Worker or Personal Advisor is/was

.....

These are the things from my records that I would like to know

.....

.....

.....

.....

Please send this form to:

Confidential
Room SB09
County Hall
Northallerton
North Yorkshire
DL7 8AE

