



Social Work Children & Families Throughcare & Aftercare

Leaving Care **Guide**

Throughcare -
“Building pathways for the future
with care leavers”

Ref: **SWLCGI**
March 2008



The Leaving Care Act 2000

If you are still in care or left care after April 1 2004, then the Leaving Care Act 2000 affects you. This Act aims to improve your future when you leave care by:

- **delaying your discharge from care until you feel you are prepared and ready**
- **providing better personal support**
- **providing better financial support**

Who qualifies for help?

There are four categories of young people named by the Leaving Care Act who qualify for help:

- **currently looked after young people**
- **compulsorily supported young people**
- **prospective supported young people**
- **discretionary young people**

These categories are explained below:

Currently looked after young people

You are a 'currently looked after young person' if you have been looked after by Social Services for 13 weeks or longer after your 14th birthday. If you are 16 or 17 and still being looked after, you are also eligible for the following:

- **all the provisions of the looked-after system**
- **personal adviser (member of the Throughcare Team)**
- **needs assessment**
- **pathway plan**

Compulsorily supported young people

You are a 'compulsorily supported young person' if you are under the age of 18, and were formally a 'looked after' young person' but have now left care.

A compulsorily supported young person is entitled to:

- **a Throughcare Worker (member of the throughcare team)**
- **a needs assessment**
- **a 'pathway plan' to help you achieve independent living**
- **accommodation and a personal allowance**
- **support and advice to help you achieve the goals in your pathway plan**

If you are in this category of young people Social Services must keep in touch with you.

Prospective supported young people

When you reach 18 you become a 'Prospective young person' and are entitled to the following:

- **regular contact with your Throughcare Worker**
- **regular updating of your pathway plan**
- **support and advice**
- **some help with the costs of employment**
- **accommodation during university/college holidays**
- **some help with the costs of education or training**

Discretionary supported young people

This means we have agreed to help you with your request as a prospective supported young person and you are entitled to the following:

- **Social Services keeping in touch with you**
- **help with education and training**
- **accommodation during higher education holidays if you are living away from home**

Please ask your Throughcare Worker or Social Worker for more information on what you are entitled to.

How we will help you

You will be allocated a Throughcare Worker who will provide you with information about the range of assessments that are undertaken, how long these will take and why we review your pathway plan when you are 18 and over.

It is their duty and responsibility to give you information, educate you towards your independence and keep in contact with you and give you details of who to contact when they are not in the office.

What we need from you

Tell us what you think about our service by giving us ideas on how to improve it by speaking to a member of our team.

This is your service and your voice matters to us. Take the time to complete surveys which will let us know what areas we need to improve and this will help us to bring about change.

There will also be the opportunity to join our user group and take part in activities and annual meetings. These meetings will be held in the Throughcare offices and you will be notified of times.

Leaving care

When you reach 15, people will start to ask you what you want to happen when you are 16. If you want to leave care your Social Worker, carers or key worker should help prepare for this. They will help you plan what will happen when you do leave and they will put you in touch with your Throughcare Worker and the Throughcare Team. The Throughcare Team can be contacted on 0141 578 8855.

Needs assessment

Between your 15th and 16th birthday someone from the Throughcare Team or your Social Worker will explain to you what a needs assessment is and why it is important. They will then consult with you to give you more information to help you fill it in and work towards building your pathway plan. This can happen before your 16th birthday. Your Social Worker will be able to give you more information.

Pathway Plan

This maps out your future on paper to ensure you get the support you need and it should be started before your 16th birthday. Your plan will be updated at least every six months, or more often if you want. You will be consulted about everything it contains and it is your decision as to who gets a copy.

The plan covers the following areas:

- **personal support**
- **accommodation**
- **education and training**
- **employment**
- **family and social relationships**
- **practical and other skills**
- **financial support**
- **a contingency plan in case things go wrong or if you change your mind**

The people who will help you

Several people will play an important part in helping you prepare to leave care: your Throughcare Worker, your Key Worker, your Social Worker, your independent visitor and your (careers) advisor. The following information describes what they can do.

Throughcare Worker

Every young person will have a Throughcare Worker who is a member of the Throughcare Team. The Children's Leaving Care Guidance 2004 says that the appointment of a Throughcare worker is a 'statutory requirement' which means that the law requires all young people leaving care to have someone to help them.

The job of your Throughcare Worker is to:

Provide practical advice and support

Your pathway plan will contain an agreement between yourself and your Throughcare Worker about what support you need and who will provide it. Many different people may help you, but your Throughcare Worker will make sure you get all the help you need. It is important that you discuss what advice and support you think you will need with your worker.

Take part in your assessment and the preparation of your pathway plan

Your Throughcare Worker will negotiate on your behalf and make sure your needs assessment and pathway plan are written and reviewed. Your pathway plan should be realistic and able to meet your assessed needs. Your Throughcare Worker, your Social Worker and you will decide who does what and when, and make sure your plan is prepared.

Review your pathway plan

Your Throughcare Worker must make sure your pathway plan is reviewed at least every six months and that any changes are recorded. When you leave care, your Throughcare Worker will take responsibility for passing your new pathway plan (or the part they can help with) on to the agencies supporting you.

Work with your local authority to make your plan work for you

Your Throughcare Worker will make sure that you get the support that you need from the people and agencies that help you. They will also help you take the steps needed to get where you want to be. They will arrange a review of your pathway plan if your circumstances change.

Co-ordinate services and help you use them

Your Throughcare Worker will try to make sure services are available for you at the right time. This may also involve helping you to access those services by organising travel arrangements and transport fares.

Keep informed about your progress and wellbeing

Your Throughcare Worker must help safeguard and promote your welfare by having regular contact with you and those agencies and people who said they would help you. Your Throughcare Worker must keep a written record of the contact they have with you, this will contain information that you may find useful, and you will have access to this.

Your Key Worker

If you are living in a children's unit then you will have a Key Worker. This person will work with you and anyone who is involved with you to make sure the time you spend in care is as worthwhile as possible. When you leave care you can still have contact with your Key Worker if you wish - please ask your Social Worker to arrange for this to be in your pathway plan.

Young Persons Supporter

When you are in care, you may have an independent visitor. This person is a volunteer who is not employed by Social Services. Their role is to visit, befriend, advise you and to make sure you are being looked after properly. The independent visitor will still visit you when you leave care if you want them to.

You will also have the option of having a 'supporter' chosen by you. This should be someone you trust and have confidence in. This person can be at all of your meetings and can appeal any decisions on your behalf. Your personal advisor will help you with this and give you any advice if you wish.

Your Careers Advisor

Your Careers Advisor will help you with the employment, education and training section of your pathway plan. The Throughcare Team has a close link with Careers Scotland. They will help you make an informed choice about your career, give you guidance in making your choices and provide independent advice to help you meet your short and long-term goals.

At some stage before you leave care we will talk to Careers Scotland and they will appoint an advisor to you. This person will help you make decisions about your future education or employment.

Help to prepare you for independent living

Before you leave care, Social Services must make sure you are prepared and ready to live by yourself. Your Carer, Throughcare Worker or your Key Worker should help you identify what skills you need and then help you learn and practise them so you are ready for independence.

There is plenty of time so you don't need to learn everything at once. The Throughcare Team will run a course called Independent Living Skills Training that can help you. You could move into some independent and semi-independent living schemes. Your Throughcare Worker will have more information on these.

Help you are entitled to when you leave care

This section gives information on the help you are entitled to when you leave care. It includes where you live and help with higher education, money and employment.

Accommodation

If you are under 18 and have left care, Social Services must provide you with suitable accommodation, which takes into account your needs and wishes. You should have a choice of about where you live and it should be safe and affordable. Social Services must do a check on the landlord/landlady before you move into the accommodation to make sure they are suitable. Social Services must also pay your rent.

Details on the rates of rent for accommodation will be explained to you in another booklet. Alternatively, you can ask your Throughcare Worker if you are unsure of the figures.

You can choose from the following:

- **staying in care - either foster care, children's home or some other sort of care if this is thought to be in your best interest**
- **stay with your foster carers by changing your placement into a supported lodgings placement**
- **supported lodgings, with supported carer (someone's house)**
- **accommodation with support so you can learn the skills needed to live independently when you are ready (hostel type of thing)**
- **specialist accommodation for young people with particular support needs, such as pregnant young women or single parents**
- **your own flat or house with support from the Throughcare Team**
- **your own tenancy**

Not all these types of accommodation are yet available in East Dunbartonshire, but most are and your Throughcare Worker will discuss with you the options available.

Remember - it is important you know all the options so you can base your decisions on what you think will meet your needs. Talk to your Throughcare Worker and plan ahead.

What if it all goes wrong?

You need a contingency plan if your accommodation does not meet your needs or staying there is not an option. This alternative plan will have been worked out beforehand with your Throughcare Worker and is part of your pathway plan. Ask for help if you need it - plans change and that is OK.

Will I get my permanent place when I am 16?

No. Permanent housing can only be offered to people 18 and over. This does not mean that you will automatically get your own accommodation at 18. However, you will be housed before you are 21.

Your housing needs will be planned as part of your regular assessments.

How can I develop my skills to live independently?

Social Work has a duty to prepare each young person who is 'looked after' for their independence. That means your Throughcare Worker will help you develop these skills before you leave care.

How am I taught these skills?

About three months before your 16th birthday you will have a needs assessment. You complete this with a Throughcare Worker, children and families Social Worker and any other person who supports you. The assessment will allow the Throughcare Worker to have some basic knowledge about you.

The pathway plan will guide you towards your independence. Your Social Worker will teach you the purpose of each plan, how you will be guided and supported and how to learn the skills to be more confident in your independence.

Do I need help?

We know having your freedom and not always having someone telling you what to do can be exciting. However, for some young people it feels lonely and can be too much to cope with. Remember, it's a big leap from having someone to rely on, to having to think and plan ahead for you.

The key to coping is to take one step at a time, listen to advice and learn from your own experiences and that of others. It is important that you are not afraid to ask for help, if you feel you need it.

Your carer will help you to develop your skills within the home. If you feel your skills are not being developed you can discuss this at your review, or with your Throughcare or Social Worker.

What if I want to move out of East Dunbartonshire?

If you have a need that requires you to be housed outside of East Dunbartonshire e.g. you are in full-time education or you have evidence of local connections in another council area, we or the Housing department will speak with a housing provider in that area and ask them if they are able to assist you in being re-housed. If you have lived in another council area for most of your time in care and have developed strong links there, we will continue to support you.

You may find the following checklist helpful:

- what are the pros of me staying where I am?
- what are cons of me staying where I am?
- what skills do I think I need to live independently?
- do I have these skills?
- where can I get help with any of the skills I have listed that I do not have?
- am I well prepared to live alone?
- how much help and support am I going to need?
- will I get this support where I want to go?

How can I demonstrate responsibility to cope alone?

You can demonstrate this by:

- keeping your appointments with your Social Worker
- showing that you have learnt the tasks that were given to you
- attending independence training skills groups
- attending your planning meetings and reviews
- helping us to plan for your independence and be prepared for your move
- wherever you live, you'll need to get some idea of how to handle independence before experiencing it

Foster Carers, Social Workers and residential staff will give you advice about living on your own

Accommodation

- It is important that you understand we cannot influence another council's housing decision, but we will do our best to advocate on your behalf
- We advise you to be flexible in the choice of areas you are willing to live as this helps find you accommodation quicker.



How will you help to settle me into my new place?

A leaving care grant may be available. This financial assistance helps you buy items for your permanent flat. A Throughcare Worker will also help you move and settle into your new home.

What type of housing is available?

- **Supported lodgings** - this is a service where you live with a carer who will provide a room for you. You will continue to work with the Throughcare Worker
- **Semi independence** - shared housing with other young people. You will have support from a Throughcare Worker
- **Training flat** - semi independent housing with tenancy support
- **Permanent** - secure accommodation owned by the Housing department

When the time is right your Social Worker will discuss and give you more information about any or all of the above housing choices and what application forms you will need to fill out.

What is supported lodgings?

- **Supported lodging** is accommodation which is available to young people who are aged 16-18 years
- You will live in a supported lodging carers home as a member of the household, but you do not have to become part of the family
- With the support of the carer and your Social Worker, you will be able to take responsibility for yourself, making your own choices and decisions
- The focus of supported lodging is to help you gain the skills you will need to live on your own. Although most young people feel they know everything about living on their own, it is nice to have the support of an adult during your preparation for this big step to independence
- Supported lodging is about helping you to prepare for living on your own and making your future successful

Isn't supported lodgings just another name for foster care?

No. Supported lodgings are not the same as foster care. Carers are not there to take the place of your family or to make decisions for you. This is a new step on your way to becoming independent and carers are there to encourage this. Supported lodging carers are available to help you and act as a mentor, not as a parent.

Will I have my own room?

Yes. In supported lodgings you will have your own bedroom, which will be fully furnished. The kitchen, lounge and bathroom will be shared with the carers.

How much does supported lodging cost?

Lodging costs are met by the Throughcare Team or Housing Benefit, if you qualify for assistance.

You may be asked to pay something toward the cost of your accommodation. If you are able to do so, as being responsible for paying rent is an important part of preparing to live on your own, you will be offered assistance. The exact amount that you will be asked to pay, depends on your income.

In supported lodgings some meals may be provided for an agreed period at the beginning of the placement. You will be encouraged to shop for yourself and prepare your own meals. However, you will be asked to make a contribution towards these meals.

Lodging also covers hot water, heating and lighting.

You will have to budget your own money and pay for some of your living expenses. This will include clothes, toiletries, and fares etc.

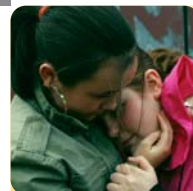
Can I meet the carer before a placement?

Yes. Before you agree to a supported lodging placement you will meet the carer in their home. These meetings are informal and a chance for you and the carer to get to know each other. Your Social Worker and someone from Children and Families will also be at this meeting.

If you want to meet the lodgings carer again without a Social Worker there, this can be arranged. We can also arrange for you to stay overnight or for a weekend with the carer. This will help you decide if you want the placement.

Supported lodging placements only go ahead if both you and the carer feel comfortable with it.

If you have other questions about supported lodging, please ask your Social Worker or Throughcare Worker for further details.



Education

If you are in education or training, Social Services are required to offer you money for the following:

- **protective clothing/equipment**
- **educational textbooks/equipment**
- **travel costs**

Social Services must also make sure you have access to a computer so you can complete your work. If you are in higher education you are entitled to vacation accommodation and support. Your Throughcare Worker must ensure your needs are met and this must be part of your needs assessment and pathway plan. Your Throughcare Worker will make sure that your personal education plan/career plan and pathway plan include your goals and how to achieve them. You can also ask for help from your Careers Advisor.

Financial support

If you are a 'compulsorily supported young person' (see description on page 1) you are entitled to the following help:

- **leaving care grant (this is called Section 29)**
- **setting up home starter pack (this is also Section 29)**
- **your rent to be paid by Social Services (this amount should be the same as or more than housing benefit) but we need to keep in mind that you will return to the Housing department for benefit when you are 18**
- **living allowance (this must be no less than the level you would receive if you claimed benefits from the DWP)**
- **incentives for attending training, education or work. You're Throughcare Worker will explain this to you in detail.**

If you are pregnant or a parent, then you will still have to claim the benefits available to you (such as income support) from the DWP, however your rent will still be paid by Social Services until you are 18.

Social Services must also "consider" helping you with:

- **travel costs (i.e. for education)**
- **materials/special equipment for education or training**
- **any other costs with education or training**
- **costs associated with pregnancy**
- **childcare**
- **clothing**
- **counselling/therapeutic costs**
- **contact with family or close friends**
- **cultural needs**
- **holidays and hobbies**

This does not mean you will get all the things you want from this list. However, we will do our best to help in whatever way we can.

When you reach 18 you are a 'prospective supported young person' (see page 2). This means that Social Services will no longer give you a living allowance or pay your rent. This means you must now claim benefits, student loans or get a job. You are entitled to the following financial support:

- **help with educational, training or employment costs**
- **if you are doing a residential education course then you are entitled to accommodation in the holidays**

The above also applies to 'discretionary supported young people' (see page 2).

Benefits

Your Throughcare Worker will help you get all the benefits you are entitled to. Help is also available from your local Citizens' Advice Bureau. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) which used to be known as the DSS administers all benefits. If you are aged between 16 and 18, Social Services are responsible for assisting you financially.

Managing your money

Your Throughcare Worker will help you manage the money you receive. If you want to know what you are entitled to as a minimum amount and what you can receive as incentives, your Throughcare Worker will give you a written breakdown - it is your right under the Children (Leaving Care) Act to receive this information. If you have a disagreement with your Throughcare Worker about money matters, you should ask to speak to the Throughcare Team Manager. If you are still not happy then you can make an appeal (see page 16 on how to complain).

Clothes

When you leave care part of your financial assessment will include money for clothes.

Please discuss your entitlement with your Throughcare Worker. You can get extra support for any special clothes or uniform you need for work, education, or training course. If you are pregnant or have had a baby you are entitled to money for clothes.

Support

When you leave care, there are many different people who will be able to help and support you.

Your Throughcare Worker will arrange for you to get the support you need and want. It should be written into your pathway plan so that you, and the people who support you, have a record of what is needed. You can also get support from other sources as well.

Leaving care and keeping in touch

The Throughcare Team will want to keep in touch with you until you are 21. If you are in education or training, they must keep in touch with you until your course finishes.

Who Cares Scotland

Who Cares is an independent service for children and young people in care and leaving care. It is based in Glasgow and was set up to represent your views, to help you meet with young people in other local authorities and to increase the understanding the general public have of young people in care.

It holds events, puts people in touch with each other and runs regional forums for young people.

A group of young people from all over the country are in charge of what the organisation does.

For more information, contact them at this address:

Who Cares Scotland,

5 Oswald Street, Glasgow, G1 4QR

Tel: 0141 226 4441 Email: enquiries@whocaresscotland.org

Where to go for other advice

This section gives advice on where other help is available to you when you feel you are ready to leave care.



Health issues

Health

Health is about how you feel, how fit you are, how much energy you have and includes mental health, physical health, sexual health and contraception, diet and consumption of poisons like drugs, cigarettes and alcohol.

If you are worried about any sort of health problem then you should speak to someone about it, even if you feel embarrassed at first.

Doctors

It is important that you are registered with a doctor. To find your nearest surgery look in the phone book or ring the NHS Helpline 08454647 or log on to:

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Your personal advisor can help you with this.

Medical card (NHS)

Your medical card is very important as it has your doctor's details, your date of birth and your NHS (National Health Service) number on it. You should receive this card when you turn 16.

Medicine

Only take medicine if your doctor has prescribed it - do not take anyone else's as you could do yourself harm. If you are unsure, talk to your doctor or nurse before taking medicine. Advice is also on hand from your local chemist.

Drugs and alcohol

Drugs and alcohol can be addictive and dangerous. It is an offence to purchase alcohol under the age of 18. Underage drinking in pubs and clubs is an offence in Britain. If there is someone you trust who is close to you it would be a good idea if you talk to him or her.

If you need information or help, or you just want to talk to someone, here are some useful contacts:

National Drugs Helpline: 0800 776 600

www.ndh.org.uk and www.trashed.co.uk

Alcoholics Anonymous

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

National Alcohol Helpline: 0845 769 7555

Contraception, HIV and sexual health

There's a lot of information about HIV, AIDS and sexual health around now, you can collect leaflets from your doctors or access the National Aids Trust website at www.nat.org.uk

It's important that you respect and protect yourself and learn how to avoid contracting the HIV virus or sexually transmitted infections.

Dentists

It is very important to take care of your teeth and mouth and a lot of dental treatment is free. All young people while in care must be registered with a dentist. Look in the phone book for a dentist near you.

Dieting

Too much dieting can be bad for your health. If you would like more information or advice on eating healthily, leaflets are available from most supermarkets and doctors surgeries. If you would like confidential information, ask your doctor. If you think you have an eating disorder, there are many organisations that can help you.

Violence

It is very important that you are safe and not being harmed in any way. No-one should have to put up with verbal or physical violence. If you need help getting away from someone who is being violent speak to your Throughcare Worker or you can contact one of these organisations:

Women's Aid National Domestic Violence Helpline:
08457 023 468
website: www.womensaid.org.uk

Care

Being in care may have been a positive or negative experience or a mixture of both. If you want to talk to someone about your experiences, the following services offer help:

Childline: 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
Who Cares Scotland: 020 7251 3117
www.whocaresscotland.org/
National Throughcare Forum
www.scottishthroughcare.org.uk/

Pregnancy, babies and children of your own

If you think you may be pregnant and need advice or a pregnancy test, you can contact the Throughcare Team on 0141 578 8855 and speak to a worker for advice.

Miscarriage

If you have had a miscarriage, you may be upset and need someone to talk to about your experiences. Contact your Throughcare Worker or Social Worker for further advice.

Pregnancy

If you are pregnant or have a young child, you are entitled to benefits but Social Services will pay your rent if you are still under 18. Your needs must be assessed and written into your pathway plan.

Advice and support is available from your Throughcare Worker or the Throughcare Team to help you contact a health advisor who will help you receive prenatal and postnatal care. If you are a young parent and want to return to education, training or employment, they can also help you look at opportunities and childcare.

Breast-feeding

If you want to breast-feed your baby, your midwife and health visitor will help and support you. Advice on eating healthily to breast-feed your baby is available from Breast-feeding Counsellors. Contact your Throughcare Worker or Social Worker.

Childcare

If you need to arrange childcare so you can go to college or work please ask for a list of nurseries and registered childminders in your area. You should speak to the Lone Parent Advisor at the Jobcentre, your personal advisor or your Careers advisor.

Adoption

If you have had a baby placed for adoption, the After Adoption Service can help you with advice and counselling. Contact your Throughcare Worker or Social Worker.
Website: www.afteradoption.org.uk

Caring

If you are caring for family members or a close friend, you may be entitled to additional benefits. For more information please contact your Throughcare Worker who will try to advise you and put you in contact with Benefits Advice. The Throughcare Team can be contacted on 0141 578 8855.

Setting up home

When you move into your own accommodation, you will have to take on some new responsibilities. You will receive help and support from the Throughcare Team with these.

When you leave care, you should receive a leaving care grant and a setting up home kit. Ask your Social Worker or your Throughcare Worker what you are entitled to.

One of the best ways to start to feel at home is to have a say in how the flat/house is decorated. It is possible to get some help in buying the things you need from Social Services. There may be some courses running at your local college if you want to learn more - if you want to be the next star of Changing Rooms it is important to make sure you know what you are doing.

Furnishing your home

Speak to your Throughcare Worker for advice and support on how to best furnish your home. They can provide guidance and handouts on the cost of furnishing your home/tenancy to make it more comfortable.

Electricity and gas

When you move into your accommodation, you will have to find out who supplies your electricity and gas and you may even have to arrange to get it turned on.

The name of your supplier could be on the meter, if not then contact your personal advisor or landlord for help with this. In most cases, you can choose your supplier to try to get the best deal.

Insurance

When you move into your own accommodation it is important to get some household insurance just in case something happens to your personal belongings i.e. theft or damage. You should speak to your Throughcare Worker for more advice.

Gardening

Your accommodation may have a garden and you need to tidy it up. If you do not have the money to buy the tools needed, you may be able to rent the equipment needed or borrow it from the Throughcare Team - your Throughcare Worker may be able to tell you more.

If you are living in rented accommodation your landlord or landlady will also have some responsibilities for the upkeep of the garden as well - read the tenancy agreement before you take on the property.

Moving away

If you want to move away, you must inform your Throughcare Worker so that you will still receive help from the Throughcare Team in the new area. The Throughcare Team here will continue to keep in touch with you until you are 19 and will continue to pay your benefits until you are 18.

Looking after your finances

Budgeting

Learning to manage your money will help you become more independent and be in control. Here is a weekly budget planner that you can use:

Budget Planner per Week

Health £
Education £
Support/contact with £
Care £
Cultural £
Council £
House £
Gas and Electric £
Cleaning £
T.V. licence £
Sports/clubs £
Cigarettes £
Credit payments £
Total £

- Do you have a bank account?
- What is your total weekly income?
- Are you having any money problems?
- Are you in debt?
- Do you have savings?
- Do you have any other concerns or issues to do with money?
- Do you want any more help advice about money?
- Does your Throughcare worker have the details of your account?
- Where you can be paid?

Discuss your budgeting skills with your Throughcare Worker; this will be part of your needs assessment and pathway planning. Your Throughcare worker will give you advice and support when you live independently.

For more information and advice and help with budgeting please see the Financial support section on page 9.

Debts

It's very easy to get in to money troubles especially when you are on a tight budget and this can cause a lot of stress. If this happens to you, talk to someone before it gets too bad.

You can contact your local Citizens' Advice Bureau and ask them for advice and help. Other helpful numbers/contacts are:

National Debt Line: 0121 359 8501

Gamblers Anonymous: 0114 262 0026

Consumer Credit Counselling Service:
0800 138 1111

Discounts

If you are in full or part-time education you can get a student card that will give discounts on many different things e.g. clothes, cheaper entry into nightclubs etc.

Compensation

If you have been the victim of a criminal offence you may be entitled to, or already have, a Criminal Injuries Compensation Award (CICA). Ask your Throughcare Worker for advice. You can see a solicitor and your first meeting with them will be free.

Ask if you are entitled to legal aid if you need to pursue a criminal injuries claim. If you have received any compensation money of any kind this could be taken in to consideration if you are claiming benefits. Take independent advice from an advisor who can help you take good care of your money.

Finding your feet -

Contact with your family & friends

You may have brothers, sisters, family members and close friends you want to have contact with. Transport costs and support to visit your family will be written into your needs assessment and pathway plan. If having contact with someone is making you unhappy, talk to your Throughcare Worker.

If you are under 16 you may not be allowed to have contact with a person if this puts you in danger. More advice and support is available from the Throughcare Team.

Emotional support

It is important that you keep in contact with the people that care about you and that you care about. They can give you the emotional support you need. If you feel you want to speak to people you do not know, there are groups where you can go to - just ask your Throughcare Worker.

In a crisis you can also contact the Samaritans on: 08457 909090. If you need to talk to someone in an emergency the Samaritans are open for calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can also log on to: www.samaritans.org.uk

Your Throughcare Worker will want to keep in touch with you until you are 21 and this contact should be at least once every six months, but more often if wanted or needed. The contact must last for longer if you are on an agreed course of education or training.

Religion

If you belong to a religion it is your right to have your beliefs respected by the people around you. You are entitled to get help and encouragement to practise your religion and to maintain it.

Respect

You have the right to be respected by the people around you, but you must also respect them, as respect is a two-way thing. If you feel that no one is respecting you and your choices and decisions, then speak to your Throughcare Worker or Who Cares Scotland (see p10).

Equal rights

No-one has the right to treat you differently or badly for any of the following reasons:

- **colour of skin or country you come from**
- **religion**
- **sexuality (lesbian/gay)**
- **female/male**
- **HIV**
- **disability**

This means that no-one should call you names or bully you. If this is happening you should tell someone like your Social Worker, Personal Advisor, Carer or you're Who Cares Scotland representative.

Racism is a crime - do not stand for it!

Racism is when you are treated badly or differently because of your race. You have the right to be respected and to be treated the same as everyone else.

You should not have to put up with jokes or comments about your race and if this is happening to you then speak to your Personal Advisor, Social Worker or Who Cares Scotland representative.

Hobbies and activities

Don't forget that making the most of your free time and improving your social life can also make a big difference to your health, happiness, confidence and even your career. If you have a particular sport or leisure activity that you really enjoy, talk to your personal advisor to see if they can help you to continue. If not, there are some schemes that you can join such as youth clubs that organise different leisure activities. For other activities, please contact:

Princes Trust National: 0800 842842

www.princes-trust.org.uk

Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

www.theaward.org

You can also find out about clubs and other leisure activities in your area by searching on the Internet or by looking in the local newspapers and Thomson Directory.

Holidays

We all from time-to-time feel like just getting away from it all and going on holiday. To be able to travel abroad you must have a passport and forms are available from the post office. If you are under 18 you need parental permission and you must talk to your personal advisor about who should sign the application form. You will also need a copy of your birth certificate to send off with the passport application. If you want to travel then speak to your Throughcare Worker about different ways you could do this. It can take time to save up and organise things needed but it is also possible to work abroad and pay for travel that way. Here are some organisations to help you with this:

Raleigh International: 020 737 18585

www.raleighinternational.org

Voluntary Service Overseas:

www.vso.org

Camp America: 020 7581 7333

www.campamerica.co.uk

Youth hostels can be a great, cheap way to have a holiday in the UK. The Youth Hostel Association website is www.yha.org.uk

Complaints

If you are not happy you can make an informal complaint. This can be made to your Throughcare Worker and they will talk to the manager. If you are still unhappy we can refer you to the Citizens' Advice Bureau who will listen to your complaint and respond to you and the Throughcare Team within 14 days.

If it is not sorted out by then you can make a formal complaint. You have a right to receive a written summary of your complaint and Social Services must try to settle the complaint within 14 days. The Social Services complaints officer must be informed.

You can make a complaint by contacting Social Work HQ - they will then send out the appropriate forms to you.
Telephone 0141 775 9000.

Files

You have the right to see what has been written about you. When you are 18 you can ask to see your Social Services file - your Throughcare Worker will help you make a written request to do this.

Please note that you will not be able to see anything written about you by third parties. A leaflet called 'Access to Files' is available from your Throughcare Worker or Social Worker.



Planning your future -

Training

Even if you do not have any qualifications it is never too late to start. You may need to train for your chosen career but there is a lot of help available from the Careers Service, Jobcentre Plus and from your Throughcare Worker. Your education, training and employment needs are a very important part of your future.

Jobs

A job is worth more than just money. It can help you meet new friends and find new opportunities for social and leisure activities. Good employers may pay you to do further training and promotion opportunities. Some companies offer staff discounts, pension schemes and paid holidays.

If you are looking for work then your local Jobcentre is the place to go as more-or-less every job vacancy in your area will be advertised there. Experienced staff can help and advise you. Please contact them (Mon to Fri 8.30am to 6pm). There is a text phone for deaf and hearing impaired people and jobs are also advertised in the local and national newspapers.

Useful web sites are:

www.fish4jobs.co.uk and www.totaljobs.com

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children was started by the UN General Assembly in 1989. It provides detailed minimum standards for all of the world's two billion children and young people and gives children and young people many different rights. If you would like to know more please ask your Throughcare Worker, Carer, Key Worker or Social Worker. A copy of the Convention is available from the ThroughcareTeam.

Quality of life

Everyone is entitled to be safe, happy and have a good quality of life. This may not happen overnight, but getting the right support at the right time will help you achieve your aims.

If you have any questions you would like answered please feel free to contact the Throughcare Team on 0141 775 0362. One of the staff there will try to answer any queries you may have.

We hope to have a website up and running in the near future which will have up-to-date information available to you.

Rights of young people entitled to throughcare services

If you have been looked after or accommodated (been in care) by East Dunbartonshire Council after your 16th birthday, you are entitled to the following:

1. The **Right** to be treated with courtesy and respect by staff.
 2. The **Right** to receive an answer to any request you make for a service within five working days (faster in an emergency).
 3. The **Right** to be consulted and fully involved in decisions made about any service you may request or receive.
 4. The **Right** to have your views recorded and for you to be able to see, and have copies of, relevant information kept about you in files or on computer.
 5. The **Right** to confidentiality and to have all personal information protected.
 6. The **Right** to receive a service which respects your race, religion, culture, language, gender, sexuality and abilities.
 7. The **Right** to receive support and preparation for leaving care while still in care.
 8. The **Right** to full and accurate information about any preparation for leaving care or any other services that are available.
 9. The **Right** to your birth certificate, or a copy, when you leave care.
 10. The **Right** to know how, where and from whom, you can get help from Social Work after you have left care.
 11. The **Right** to help finding a place of your own to live after you have left care
 12. The **Right** to suitable luggage for your belongings when you move on from care.
 13. The **Right** to make a complaint or comment about any Throughcare service or any other service provided by the department.
 14. The **Right** to receive help from the Throughcare service at least until your 19th birthday or even 24 if you are in full time education, even if you live away from East Dunbartonshire.
 15. The **Right**, if you are receiving regular help from the Social Work department, to a written pathway plan which will look at what you want for your future and how we can help you achieve this.
 16. **Help** in finding accommodation during the holiday period if you are involved in full time education.
 17. You have the **Right** for us to maintain contact with you while you are a care leaver.
- If you have been looked after for more than 13 weeks since your 14th birthday and were still looked after when you were 16, you are also entitled to the following:
1. The **Right** to ask for financial assistance to help you get accommodation, to meet expenses connected with employment or training, to help you keep in contact with your family or previous carers and for emergencies. This will be carefully thought out about before a decision is made.
 2. The **Right** to ask for financial assistance in order to help you meet expenses connected with education until your 24th birthday. (This may include rent and living expenses if you are not able to claim benefits). This will be carefully thought about before a decision is made.
 3. The **Right** to financial support with rent and living expenses for young people aged 16-18 who cannot claim benefits because they are care leavers.
 4. The **Right** to a named Throughcare Worker.
 5. The **Right** to a written Pathway Plan that is reviewed regularly that will explain what will happen and what will be provided for you when you leave our care.
 6. The **Right** to ask for an Independent Leaving Care Grant to help you meet the costs of setting up your own home. This will be carefully thought about before a decision is made.

Useful telephone numbers

Furniture Project

Address	Homelessness Team Enterprise House Southbank Business Park Kirkintilloch
Post Code	G66 1XQ
Phone	0141 578 2108

Housing - Bearsden & Milngavie

Address	17 Stewart Street Milngavie
Post Code	G62 2BW
Phone	0141 570 2500
Fax	0141 570 2514

Housing - Bishopbriggs

Address	The Triangle Kirkintilloch Road Bishopbriggs
Post Code	G64 2TR
Phone	0141 578 8000
Fax	0141 578 8550

Housing - Homelessness

Address	Enterprise House Southbank Business Park Kirkintilloch
Post Code	G66 1XQ
Phone	0141 578 2161/2133

Housing - Lennoxtown

Address	Main Street Lennoxtown
Post Code	G66 7DB
Phone	01360 319000
Fax	01360 312574

Kirkintilloch Learning Centre

Address	50 Southbank Road Kirkintilloch
Post Code	G66 1NH
Phone	0141 777 2077
Fax	0141 777 2088

Project 101 Townhead Kirkintilloch

Address	101 Townhead Kirkintilloch
Post Code	G66 1NZ
Phone	0141 578 0282
Fax	0141 578 0282 (Fax Phone)
Comments	Youth Housing

Welfare Rights Unit 1 Whitegates

Address	Unit 1 Whitegates Kirkintilloch
Post Code	G66 3BL
Phone	0141 578 8299
Fax	0141 776 7487

William Patrick Library

Address	2/4 West High Street Kirkintilloch Social Work
Post Code	G66 1AD
Phone	0141 775 9000
Fax	0141 777 6203

Garelochhead Outdoor Centre

Address	Old School Road Garelochhead
Post Code	G84 0AT
Phone	01436 810315
Fax	01436 810457

Huntershill Outdoor Centre

Address	Crowhill Road Bishopbriggs
Post Code	G64 1RP
Phone	0141 772 5907
Comments	Booking Line 0141 574 5735

The Leisuredrome - Reception

Address	147 Balmuildy Road Bishopbriggs
Post Code	G64 3ET
Phone	0141 772 6391
Fax	0141 772 1628

Auchinairn Nursery

Address	Beech Road Bishopbriggs
Post Code	G64 1NE
Phone	0141 563 0289
Fax	0141 762 0294

Gartconner Nursery

Address	Gartshore Road Kirkintilloch
Post Code	G66 3TH
Phone	0141 775 0170
Fax	0141 775 3671

Hillhead Nursery

Address Newdyke Avenue
Kirkintilloch

Post Code G66 2DQ

Phone **0141 578 1200**

Fax **0141 578 1300**

Lenzie Nursery

Address Kirkintilloch Road
Lenzie

Post Code G66 4LF

Phone **0141 578 0109**

Fax **0141 777 7381**

126 Cowgate - Advice & Response

Address 126 Cowgate
Kirkintilloch

Post Code G66 1HF

Phone **0141 775 1311**

Fax **0141 578 0051**

2 Luggiebank Road - Children & Families

Address 2 Luggiebank Road
Kirkintilloch

Post Code G66 1LR

Phone **0141 775 2110**

Fax **0141 777 6450**

Bishopbriggs Social Work Office

Address 1 Balmuildy Road
Bishopbriggs

Post Code G64 3BS

Phone **0141 772 6384**

Fax **0141 762 4677**

Comments 1 Balmuildy Road,
Bishopbriggs,
G64 3BS

Canal Project NCH Scotland

Address 34 Industry Street
Kirkintilloch

Post Code G66 3AB

Phone **0141 776 5277**

Fax **0141 775 1905**

Comments National Children Home

Milngavie Social Work Office

Address 38 Stewart Street
Milngavie

Post Code G62 2BW

Phone **0141 570 2400**

Fax **0141 955 0197**

Comments 38 Stewart Street, Milngavie,
G62 2BY

Social Work Headquarters

Address William Patrick Library
2/4 West High Street
Kirkintilloch

Post Code G66 1AD

Phone **0141 775 9000**

Fax **0141 777 6203**

Whitegates - Unit 6 Addiction Service

Address Whitegates
Kirkintilloch

Post Code G66

Phone **0141 588 5143**

Housing Department

Address The Triangle
Kirkintilloch Road
Bishopbriggs

Post Code G64 2TR

Phone **0141 578 8554**

Fax **0141 578 8550**

Is this booklet useful?

Does it answer your questions? If you think we can improve this leaflet, why not complete the tear off strip and return it to us.

Name:

Address:
.....
.....
.....

When and where did you get this leaflet/booklet from?

.....

If you took it from a reception point, were the staff helpful?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Was the leaflet/booklet easy to obtain?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Was the layout of the leaflet/booklet easy to follow?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Was the information:

Understandable? Yes ☐ No ☐

Useful? Yes ☐ No ☐

Your comments:

.....
.....

Please detach the form along the perforated line

moisten strip

Handwriting practice area consisting of 20 rows of dashed lines on a white background.

moisten strip

moisten strip

Regulated Services

If your complaint is about the Regulated Care Service, you can also contact the Scottish Care Commission. Regulated Care Services include Residential Care Homes for Children and Young People or Adults, a Support or Day Care Service, a Home Care Service, a Housing Support Service or a Fostering or Adoption Service.

Please note the Care Commission will generally advise you to have attempted to resolve your complaint locally before making contact with them. For East Dunbartonshire Council area, the contact address and telephone number is:

Care Commission
Central West Region
4th Floor
1 Smithhills Street
Paisley, PA1 1EB
Tel: 0141 843 4230

Would you like to comment on the service you get?

If you would like to make a suggestion, comment or complaint about the service you have received from us please speak to a member of staff at your local area office. Any comments we receive help us plan our future services. You could also pick up a leaflet called 'Comments, suggestions & complaints about Social Work' at your local office, which explains how to comment in writing or by phone.

If we are unable to resolve your complaint to your satisfaction, you will then have the right to refer the matter by writing to:

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
4 Melville Street
Edinburgh, EH3 7NS
Tel: 0800 377 7330
Email: ask@spso.org.uk

You must do this within 12 months of first being notified of the matters you are complaining about.

Is this leaflet useful?

We would like you to tell us if this leaflet was useful. Please complete the tear off slip overleaf and return it to us (no stamp required).

Other formats

This document can be provided in large print, Braille or on audio cassette and can be translated into different community languages.

Contact the Public Affairs Unit at: East Dunbartonshire Council,
Tom Johnston House, Civic Way, Kirkintilloch G66 4TJ, tel 0141578 8000

本文件可按要求翻譯成中文，如有此需要，請電 0141 578 8152。

Gabhaidh an sgrìobhainn seo cur gu Gàidhlig ma tha sin a dhìth oirbh. Cuinibh fòin gu 0141 578 8152

अनुरोध करने पर यह दस्तावेज़ हिन्दी में भाषांतरित किया जा सकता है। कृपया 0141 578 8152 पर फ़ोन कीजिए।

ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਮੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0141 578 8152 ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

本文件可按要求翻譯成中文，如有此需要，請電 0141 578 8152。

BUSINESS REPLY SERVICE
Licence No. GW 3641

2

Social Work Headquarters
East Dunbartonshire Council
2/4 West High Street
Kirkintilloch
G66 1AD