



# Charter of Rights

## Information for staff

## for Children and Young People in Care

### Background Information

The Charter of Rights for Children and Young People in Care was initiated following the introduction of the *Children and Community Services Act 2004*. It is a requirement of the Act that all children in care know their rights.

The Department of Communities (the Department) worked together with CREATE Foundation WA to develop the Charter. In consult with children and young people in care and those that left care, the design of the age-group Charters represent their voices and creativity.

All departmental staff and carers play a vital role in ensuring that children and young people in care have access to the Charter and understand its meaning.

All children and young people entering care should be given their own copy of the Charter and have their rights explained in a developmentally appropriate way.

The Charter is part of the work we already do and is included in legislation. It reaffirms the efforts we already make with children and young people in care.

### Ways to build a relationship with kids in care.

Children and young people come into care for various reasons. They need to have explained to them in an age appropriate way, why they are in care and how long they are likely to remain in care.

- Understand the child's case history to see the bigger picture.
- See things from the child's perspective.
- Respect the child or young person that you're working with.
- Follow up on things and if there is a delay, let the child know.
- Get to know the child (for example likes, dislikes, favourite book or TV show etc).
- Be contactable whenever possible (give the child your work number if appropriate).
- Let the child know that you have other cases to work on but that the child is just as important as the others.
- Let the child know that it is okay to talk to you about things that the child does not want the carer or anyone else to know.

### The Charter

1. You have the right to receive proper health care including medical and dental when you need it.
2. You have the right to receive guidance and encouragement in your education and activities such as hobbies, sport, music, dance and art.
3. You have the right to be kept informed about your care plan and your views about the plan considered.
4. You have the right to be respected (and to treat others with respect too).
5. You have the right to raise an issue with your case worker, foster carer and/or Advocate for Children in Care.
6. You have the right to privacy and to have your personal belongings.
7. You have the right to be heard (and show the same to other people's views and opinions).
8. You have the right to get help and support to go to court regarding your care.
9. You have the right to have contact with family members and friends whenever possible.
10. You have the right to be encouraged and supported in your religion and culture.
11. You have the right to proper planning before leaving care.
12. You have the right to be safe.

If you would like more information about the Charter of Rights for Children and Young People in Care please contact:

#### Advocate for Children in Care

Office hours (9am - 5pm Monday to Friday):

Freecall\* 1800 460 696

0429 086 508 (you can call, text or leave a message).

Email: [advocate@communities.wa.gov.au](mailto:advocate@communities.wa.gov.au)

#### Other useful numbers

(any time, any day including public holiday):

**Crisis Care** (08) 9223 1111 or Freecall\* 1800 199 008

**Kids Helpline** 1800 551 800

**Police** 131 444 or 000 (emergency only)

\*freecall number - charges may apply for some mobile plans

#### CREATE Foundation WA

Tel: (08) 6336 9726 Freecall: 1800 655 105

Email: [wa@create.org.au](mailto:wa@create.org.au)

Website: [www.create.org.au](http://www.create.org.au)