

Lorimer Fostering

Leaving Care - Expectations & Support (Young People) Course Handbook

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Lorimer Fostering
Lorimer House
2a Carrington Lane
Manchester
M33 5ND

0161 972 7760

learning@lorimerfostering.com

INTRODUCTION

This coursebook is aimed at young people.

There is no need to complete a feedback form for courses aimed at young people.

If you would like clarification or additional support or advice on any aspect of this material, please contact your supervising social worker.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course aims to develop knowledge and understanding of what it is like to leave care. The objectives of the course are:

- a. to know what you can expect as a care leaver
- b. to understand the role that the law plays
- c. to be aware of the support that is available to care leavers

DISCUSSING YOUR FUTURE - THE STATUTORY REVIEW MEETING

If you're leaving care, you'll have a 'statutory review meeting' to discuss your future, including what support you'll need.

THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE YOUR MEETING

These things will be discussed at your statutory review meeting:

- where you're going to live (you can move somewhere where personal support and advice is always available if you want to)
- if you're going to work, get training, or continue in education
- how much support you think you'll need from your social worker or personal adviser

WHO SHOULD BE AT YOUR STATUTORY REVIEW MEETING?

- you
- an advocate, if you ask for one (an adult you choose who can help explain things)
- your social worker
- your carers
- any other people responsible for supporting you (like a mentor or a member of staff from your school or college)
- an Independent Reviewing Officer (a neutral person appointed to make sure that everything is done properly)

MAKING A COMPLAINT ABOUT YOUR STATUTORY REVIEW MEETING

You can make a formal complaint if you're not happy with how your meeting went. Your social worker or personal adviser from the leaving care service and the Independent Reviewing Officer will tell you how to do this.

WHAT THE COUNCIL MUST DO TO HELP YOU

The council must:

- give you a personal adviser who stays in touch with you once you've left care
- carry out an assessment to find out what advice and support you need
- they must also prepare a plan to make this happen (called a 'Pathway Plan')
- make sure that you've got somewhere to live and enough money (until you turn 18)

Your local council must write a 'pathway plan' when you reach 16, which helps you prepare for leaving care and says what support you should get.

It must include plans for your:

- health
- education, training, and development
- contact with family
- financial management

Your personal adviser must take part in any pathway plan reviews until you're 21, or older if you're still in education.

Your plan must be reviewed:

- every six months at least
- if you ask for a review
- if your personal adviser or the council asks for a review



FINANCE

SUPPORTING YOU IN EDUCATION

You should get a bursary of £1,200 a year if you stay in full-time education. Contact your education provider (e.g. school or college) to find out how to claim the 16-19 bursary.

You may be eligible for a higher education bursary of £2,000 from your local council if you're going on to higher education (e.g. university).

You can get support from a personal adviser until you're 25 if you're in education or training.

SETTING UP HOME ALLOWANCES

You can get a setting-up home allowance (also known as a leaving care grant) to help you buy essential things when moving into your own home.

Contact your local council to find out how much is available.

BENEFITS

You might be able to claim some benefits, like:

- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support

PREPARATION

Leaving care does not always mean that you have to leave where you are currently living.

For example, if you are living in foster care and cease to be a looked after young person, you may still continue to live with your carers!

WHY DO YOU NEED PREPARATION?

Care leavers come from many different types of backgrounds and circumstances, and so may need different levels of support from a wide variety of people.

The more prepared you are to leave care, the more successful your move will be and the more confident you will become.

WHAT PREPARATION WILL I GET?

Your preparation for leaving care should help you build good relationships, develop self-esteem, and help you to learn and develop the skills needed for independent living.

You should also be involved in the decisions made about your future. You can do this by taking part in your planning and review meetings.



WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE TO CARE LEAVERS?

Personal support can include:

- drop-in centres
- out-of-hours or outreach support
- mentoring and befriending schemes
- life skills training
- listening ear
- planned, regular contact with your personal adviser

Any support you need should be included in your Pathway Plan.

MOTIVATION AND GOALS

1. write down a goal you want to achieve
2. list the reasons you have for wanting to achieve this goal
3. list what it will cost you if you do not achieve this goal
4. list the benefits you will receive from achieving this goal

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5. now list the actions you will take to achieve this goal:-
- with the date that you will complete the action by
 - who can support you in completing this action

LIST OF USEFUL WEBSITES AND LINKS

ORGANISATION	LINK/CONTACT	INFO
CATCH 22	https://www.catch-22.org.uk/offers/looked-after-children-and-care-leavers	Providing support for looked after children and care leavers
THE CARE LEAVERS ASSOCIATION	http://www.careleavers.com	The Care Leavers Association is a national user-led charity aimed at improving the lives of care leavers of all ages
NEW HORIZON YOUTH CENTRE	https://nhyouthcentre.org.uk	New Horizon Youth Centre has been supporting vulnerable and homeless youth since 1967
THE PRINCE'S TRUST	https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/about-the-trust/initiatives/fc2i	The Prince's Trust supports nearly 4,000 young people across England who have been in care
NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BUREAU	National Children's Bureau (ncb.org.uk)	National Children's Bureau - Young NCB, free membership network for young people aged 17 and under, to speak out on important issues
THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH	https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/children-leaving-care-and-aftercare	The Department of Health website has guidance on the law for Care Leavers
ALBERT KENNEDY TRUST	www.akt.org.uk	Supports LGBT young people in crisis
CARE	www.care.org.uk	Care provides social caring and educational projects
CHILDLINE	www.childline.org.uk	A free and confidential helpline
CHILDREN'S LEGAL CENTRE	www.childrenslegalcentre.com	Legal advice and information for young people
CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU	www.citizensadvice.org.uk	The Citizens Advice Bureau offers free independent advice
CRIMESTOPPERS	www.crimestoppers-uk.org	Crimestoppers works to help prevent crime
MIND	www.mind.org.uk	Mind - advancing views and needs of people with mental health problems
NACRO	www.nacro.org.uk	NACRO (National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders). They support, house, educate, advise, and speak out for and with disadvantaged young people and adults.
NATIONAL DEBT LINE	www.nationaldebtline.co.uk	

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REFUGE	www.refuge.org.uk	24-hour domestic violence helpline for women and children
REFUGEE COUNCIL	www.refugeecouncil.org.uk	
SHELTER	www.shelter.org.uk	24-hour national housing service
WOMEN'S AID	www.womensaid.org.uk	Works to end domestic violence against women and children
CARE LAW	www.carelaw.org.uk	Information on rights and legal matters for young people in care or leaving care
FPA (FAMILY PLANNING ASSOCIATION)	www.fpa.org.uk	Sexual health advice and free contraception
NATIONAL AIDS HELPLINE	0800 567 123	
TERRENCE HIGGINS TRUST	www.tht.org.uk/	Support and guidance regarding sexual health issues
ADFAM	www.adfam.org.uk	Confidential support for families and friends of drug users
ALATEEN AND AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS	www.al-anonuk.org.uk	For young people and families who think they may have a drinking problem
DRUGSCOPE	www.drugscope.org.uk	Information on drugs
NATIONAL DRUGS HELPLINE	www.talktofrank.com	
QUIT	www.quit.org.uk	Advice on giving up smoking
OPEN UNIVERSITY	www.open.ac.uk	
SKILL	www.skill.org.uk	Promotes opportunities for young people with disabilities in post-16 education, training, and work
VOLUNTARY SERVICE OVERSEAS	www.vso.org.uk	
BARNARDOS	www.barnardos.org.uk	A range of service for young people