

Corina, it's your birthday and you look sad, what's the matter?



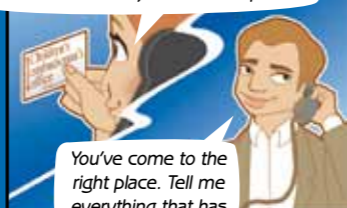
Leaving care

- ▶ You are still entitled to support after leaving care. Child welfare organisations should provide you with after-care services (counselling, training in independent living skills and different forms of financial assistance).
- ▶ Both local authorities and child welfare organisations should help you with education expenses, housing, finding a job and so forth.
- ▶ You have the right to stay in touch with caregivers, social workers and all the children and young people you made friends with while in care.

If your rights are not respected

- ▶ Make sure that you have understood the different options that you have to protect your rights and that, in case of need, you will know whom to contact.
- ▶ If you experience abuse or neglect while in care, call and report this to your social worker, the police, the children's ombudsperson or other adults you trust. If you are in a situation where you fear for your safety and well-being, you should report it immediately.

Hello, I'm calling you because not only do I have a problem with my foster family, but also with my social worker. I'm desperate and nobody wants to help me.



BUILDING A EUROPE FOR AND WITH CHILDREN



About the Council of Europe

The Council of Europe is an international organisation founded in 1949 which now has 47 member states. Its role is to promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law. It establishes common democratic principles based on the European Convention on Human Rights and other conventions and recommendations on the protection of persons, which of course includes Europe's 150 million children.

The programme "Building a Europe for and with children" was set up to secure and promote children's human rights, and to protect children from all forms of violence.

To know more about Council of Europe action in the field of children's rights:
www.coe.int/children
children@coe.int

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Children and young people in care

Discover your rights!

Knowing your rights helps you to protect them and to take an active role in the care you receive.

 SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES INTERNATIONAL



Your rights should be protected

- ▶ Children and young people living in care have the same rights as children who live with their family of origin.
- ▶ The government and child welfare organisations are responsible for making sure that these rights are respected and protected.

As you know, the court has reached its decision and has withdrawn your parental authority. From now on, Maria will live with a foster family where she will be able to start building herself up...



Your stay in care

- ▶ Your needs are the number one priority.
- ▶ You are entitled to a good standard of care (comfort, security, etc.).
- ▶ You have the right to good quality health care and regular check-ups.
- ▶ You are entitled to a high standard of education. If you were already in school when you moved into care, you should – whenever possible and if you so wish – be able to stay in the same school.
- ▶ You should have access to leisure activities, such as play, sport and cultural activities, just as other children.
- ▶ You should be protected from all forms of violence, in particular sexual violence. No one has the right to hit you!

Your privacy

- ▶ Your right to privacy should be respected. You have the right to access official information and files that deal with you.
- ▶ Your religious and cultural background should be respected.
- ▶ You and your siblings should stay together, if this is good for you.
- ▶ You should be able to maintain relations with the people around you (friends, former neighbours, relatives and so forth), as long as these relationships are not harmful to you.
- ▶ It is up to you to decide what kind of relationship you would like to have with your family of origin and how often you want to see them.

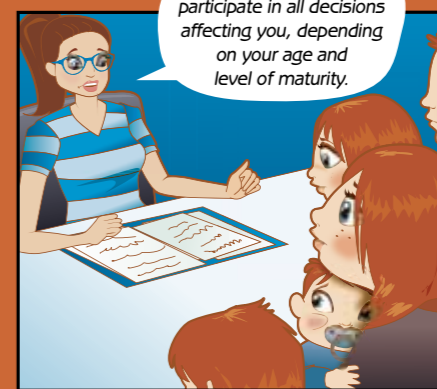
You have the right to be properly informed of your rights and choices in a timely manner.



Participation and access to information

- ▶ You have the right to participate in all decisions affecting you, depending on your level of maturity.
- ▶ Child welfare organisations should ask your opinion and make every effort to understand your concerns.
- ▶ If adults decide contrary to your opinion, they should make sure you understand the reasons for their decision.
- ▶ You have the right to be properly informed of your rights and choices in a timely manner.
- ▶ Information should be exact and explained to you in a way that you clearly understand.

You have the right to participate in all decisions affecting you, depending on your age and level of maturity.



Your needs are the number one priority. They should be defined in an individual care plan.



Your individual care plan

- ▶ You have the right to an individual care plan.
- ▶ Your care plan must be developed and reviewed periodically by a team of social workers and psychologists, together with you, your caregivers, and your family of origin.
- ▶ Preparation for leaving care is an important part of your individual care plan that should take into account your needs, opinion and preferences.