

My rights in care

INFORMATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



What is the charter of rights for children in care?

The charter of rights sets out the way children and young people in Queensland are to be treated and looked after if they are in care.

If you are in care, or if you have a long-term guardian or a permanent guardian, you need to know about your rights — like your right to have a safe place to live, to be cared for, to take part in decisions, and be given help if you need it.





Your Child Safety Officer will:

- give you information about your rights

- help you understand your rights

- do everything possible to make sure the way you're cared for upholds your rights

- let you know who can help if things are not happening in the way they should be.

This book helps you understand your rights. It lets you know who to talk to if you have questions or concerns about your rights, your safety, or how you are being cared for.

My rights in care

I have the right to be safe and healthy

This means you have a right to:



have a safe and stable place to live



have somewhere safe to keep your things





play and take part in activities like sport, music and art

see a doctor or dentist, or get other medical or therapeutic help you need



be treated fairly and with respect



have privacy

I have the right to be myself

This means you have a right to:

- keep in touch with and be part of your family and community – the people who are important in your life
- stay close to your culture and be cared for in a way that meets your cultural needs
- if you are an Aboriginal child or young person, to develop, stay connected and enjoy Aboriginal tradition



- if you are a Torres Strait Islander child or young person, to develop, stay connected and enjoy Islander custom
- choose to speak more than one language
- choose to take part in one or more religions
- be who you want to be and express your identity in the way you want to
- be given information about your family and family history.



I have the right to take part in decisions that affect me

This means you have a right to:

- be asked for your views about what is best for you
- be given the help you need to express your views
- be given information you need to take part when decisions and plans are made about you





- have a say in decisions about where you live, when you see your family, where you go to school, and how to look after your health

- have a say about who your private information is shared with

- make a complaint to Child Safety if your rights are not being upheld.

I have the right to learn and earn

This means you have a right to:

- go to school and get the support you need to receive an education
- get help to prepare you for what you want to do when you're grown up
- get the support you need to help you achieve your goals



- get help to access further education or job training opportunities when you're old enough
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- be supported to think about and prepare for your future.
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Who can I talk to about my rights?

If you have questions or concerns about your rights, your safety, or the way you are being cared for, you can talk to a person you trust.

You can talk to your Child Safety Officer. Part of their job is to talk to you about your rights and answer any questions or concerns you might have.

You can also talk to a Community Visitor or Child Advocate from the Office of the Public Guardian. They can help you talk to Child Safety, or they can talk to Child Safety for you, if you want them to.

If you are an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child or young person, you can talk to a worker in an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisation, if you want to.

These people will be able to tell you about the options you have for getting the matter sorted out.



Here's how to contact people who can help:

- **Child Safety Officer** – You can talk to your Child Safety Officer at your local Child Safety Service Centre. If you have kicbox, you can send them a message through kicbox to let them know you want to talk to them.
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- **Child Safety After Hours Service Centre** – If you need to talk to someone after 5pm during the week or on a weekend, you can talk to a Child Safety Officer at the Child Safety After Hours Service Centre.

1800 177 135

- **Office of the Public Guardian** – You can talk to your Community Visitor or a Child Advocate.

1300 653 187



If things still aren't right, you have a right to make a complaint to Child Safety.

Making a complaint is a way of having your voice heard. Child Safety will get someone to look into what you are worried about and talk with you about what can be done to sort it out.

- To make a complaint to Child Safety call **1800 080 464**

- You can email Child Safety to make a complaint to **feedback@cyjma.qld.gov.au**

If you make a complaint, you will be listened to. What you say will be and kept confidential. This means only the people who need to know about it and who can help you, will be told about your complaint.



These services can also give you information and may be able to help:

- **Kids Helpline** has a free counselling service for young people. No problem is too big or too small. You can talk to them anytime you want, about anything.

1800 551 800

- **CREATE Foundation** is for all young people in care. They can connect you to other young people and your community and help you have your say.

1800 655 105

To find out more about your rights, go to
www.qld.gov.au/myrightsincare



