

As a child or young person in care I need:

- to be safe and feel safe
- to stay healthy and well and go to a doctor, dentist or other professional for help when I need to
- to be allowed to be a child and be treated with respect
- if I am an Aboriginal child, to feel proud and strong in my own culture
- to have a say and be heard
- to be provided with information
- to tell someone if I am unhappy
- to know information about me will only be shared in order to help people look after me
- to have a worker who is there for me
- to keep in contact with my family, friends and people and places that matter to me
- careful thought being given to where I will live so I will have a home that feels like a home
- to have fun and do activities that I enjoy
- to be able to take part in family traditions and be able to learn about and be involved with cultural and religious groups that are important to me
- to be provided with the best possible education and training
- to be able to develop life skills and grow up to become the best person I can
- help in preparing myself to leave care and support after I leave care.

Charter for Children in Out-of-home Care

A charter lists the rights and privileges people have. We all have rights, and as members of the community, we need to respect each other's rights.

This charter has been especially prepared for children who can't live with their parents and are in out-of-home care. It lists what you can expect from all those people who look after you and work with you when you are in care. All these people

need to make sure that the things they do for you and the things they allow you to do, keep you safe and well. Being safe and well are the most important rights, so they have been put first. It means that if there is a clash between you being safe and well and another right, your safety and wellbeing always comes first.

These are your rights.

What do these rights mean?

Right	Explanation
To be safe and feel safe	'Safe' means no one can abuse or hurt me. Where I live must be safe and not dangerous. I also need to feel safe, so there shouldn't be people or things around me that scare me.
To stay healthy and well and go to a doctor, dentist or other professional for help when I need to	I need to be given the things that will help my body and mind stay healthy and well, like being able to go to a doctor, dentist or other professional when I need to and having healthy food.
To be allowed to be a child and be treated with respect	This means I need to be treated according to my age and not be expected to act older or understand things that are too hard for me. Being treated with respect means accepting me for who I am, treating me fairly and not discriminating against me for any reason (this includes not treating me badly because I am in care).
If I am an Aboriginal child, to feel proud and strong in my own culture	This means that my carers and workers will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand, respect and value my own Aboriginal culture • Help me feel good about my own Aboriginal culture • Help me stay connected to my culture in all parts of my life.
To have a say and be heard	This means having a say and being listened to about all things that affect me, like where I will live and where I will go to school. If I need help to have a say, someone will represent me wherever decisions are being made about me, like in court or in a meeting.
To be provided with information	Information is very important because without it I won't know who I am and won't be able to have a proper say about things that affect me. Examples of information I need are my life story, my history and my family's history, the choices I have and where I can go if I have a problem.
To tell someone if I am unhappy	If my rights aren't met, or if I am unhappy about something that has happened to me in care, I can make a complaint to someone who will sort it out.
To know information about me will only be shared in order to help people look after me	Information about me can't be given to just anyone—it can only be given to people who need to have that information - so they can look after me and care for me.
To have a worker who is there for me	This means having a worker whose job it is to make sure I get the things I need, plan things for me, do things for me, and make sure things that are important to me are not forgotten, like my family and culture.
To keep in contact with my family, friends and people and places that matter to me	This means all members of my family, like brothers and sisters and grandparents, and friends from before I came into care and friends that I made when in care. People who matter are people who may not be related but are still very important, like a carer I used to live with or a teacher that I really liked. Places that matter might be places that are special, like an old school I used to go to or somewhere that is special to my family, community or culture.
Careful thought being given to where I will live so I will have a home that feels like a home	My home will only feel like a home if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carers and workers think about my needs and things like my family, culture and community when making decisions about where I will live • it is a place where I feel I belong, where I am cared for, where I have my own space and my things are safe • I am not moved around too much without good reason.
To have fun and do activities that I enjoy	There are lots of things I have to do but I also have to be able do things that I enjoy like play a sport or learn an instrument. What it is depends on what I like doing and what I am interested in.
To be able to take part in family traditions and learn about and be involved with cultural and religious groups that are important to me	This can include things like learning the language my family and community speak, going to special events, being able to follow the rules of my religion, and wherever possible visiting traditional lands and places that are sacred and special to my culture or religion.
To be provided with the best possible education and training	The best possible education means going to a school that meets my needs and getting help so I can do the best I can at school. The best possible training is training that will help me achieve what I want and will help me to get a job or to do other training or learning.
To be able to develop life skills and grow up to be the best person I can	Life skills means being able to learn from my mistakes, how to get along with people, how to live as an adult, and how to make good decisions about my future and be responsible for my actions.
Help in preparing myself to leave care and support after I leave care	I have the right to a 'leaving care plan', which is a plan that makes sure I get support to prepare myself for leaving care and support once I have left care. The sort of support I might need is being taught how to cook and budget and being given some money to help me move out of care; the sort of help kids not in care get from their parents when they move out of home.