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Supporting care leavers

A TRAINING AND RESOURCE PACK FOR PEOPLE WORKING WITH

YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING CARE



firstkey

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*

Supporting care leavers

A training and resource pack for people
working with young people leaving care

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The authors wish to recognise the contribution made by **Serita Robinson** in preparing materials and co-presenting the piloting.

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Designed by: Third Column
Cartoons by: Fran Orford
Printed by: CM Print

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Acknowledgements

First Key, with the University of York, produced this pack on behalf of the Department of Health under the Training Support Programme. We are grateful to the following, who helped in the preparation of the pack:

Serita Robinson, for providing the benefit of her care experience and social work qualifications

Caroline Boswell

Mark Burrows and his colleagues at the Department of Health

Tony Dewhurst

Yoni Ejo

First Key staff, with special thanks to Heidi Hakanovich

Barbara Fletcher

Lesley Goode

Maria Lagos

Alan McKenzie

Keir Parsons

Lorraine Reid, Department of Health Project Manager for the pack

Thanks also for advice on the case studies to:

Joan Cupples

Judith Dennis

Dawn Holt

And to Fran Orford for the cartoons

These training materials were piloted on two occasions. Special thanks to Stewart Betts and the staff at Norfolk Social Services at the first event, and to the multi-authority staff (Bexley, Brent, Brighton & Hove, Enfield, Hounslow, Middlesbrough, Peterborough, Sheffield, Sutton, West Sussex) at the second, for enthusiastically sharing their experience and best practice with us.

The structure of the pack is based on Frost and Stein (1995), *Working with Young People Leaving Care*, London: HMSO. The pack builds on the workshop notes produced by First Key in partnership with the Department of Health and the Association of Directors of Social Services for the DH seminars on the implementation of the Children (Leaving Care) Act held in June 2001.

section 1

Introduction: USING THE PACK

Aims of the pack

Recipients of training

Personal Advisers

Level of training

NVQ/PQ Awards: mapping and assessment

Guidance to trainers

 Training formats

 Case studies

 Exercises

Icons

Local situation

Involving young people in the training

Exercise

Quiz

Aims of the pack

This pack has been prepared to support the effective implementation of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. The Act places new responsibilities on local councils in their role as corporate parents to provide greater support to young people living in and leaving care. Successful implementation of the Act will require effective collaboration across local government departments and between a range of partner agencies, including Social Services, health, housing, education and voluntary-sector organisations.

It is important that those working with these young people have a thorough knowledge of the legislation and possess skills in assessing, planning for and meeting the needs of young people on an inter-agency basis. In particular, therefore, the materials aim to:

- provide a thorough knowledge of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, and the accompanying Regulations and Guidance, within the broader context of policies intended to reduce social exclusion, including the Quality Protects Programme
- provide a knowledge and understanding of the role and functions of other agencies working in this field, including the Connexions Service
- develop the skills of working collaboratively with other individuals and agencies
- develop skills in assessment, pathway planning and review within the dimensions of the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families
- promote an understanding of the experience of young people in transition
- develop the skills required to assist young people through and after care, and
- develop the skills of Personal Advisers.

Recipients of training

The main users of the pack will be trainers. The primary group for whom the training materials are intended is people who work directly with care leavers in local authority Social Services and in voluntary agencies that provide a contracted service to local authorities: field social workers, leaving-care workers, Personal Advisers, members of specialist children's disability teams, foster carers and residential staff, independent visitors and mentors.

The materials are also directed to people who have responsibility for the management and development of leaving-care services. The aim here is not to train them in management skills, but rather to provide them with knowledge of the issues their staff are facing.

In addition, the materials are designed for use in multi-agency and joint training with staff of other relevant agencies, such as housing, education and health, who enable the local authority to fulfil its role as corporate parent.

Personal Advisers

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 requires local authorities to appoint a Personal Adviser for certain care leavers between the ages of 16 and 21, or older under certain circumstances. The Connexions Service will eventually give all young people between the ages of 13 and 19 (up to 25 in the case of young disabled people) access to a Connexions Personal Adviser. The role of the Connexions Personal Adviser is to provide help with the advice, guidance, and personal development young people need to prepare for the transition to work and adult life.

To avoid duplication and confusion, central Government envisages that the leaving-care adviser will normally also act as a young person's Connexions adviser when the young person becomes 16. Although the materials are not designed to train them to be advisers, both types of advisers will benefit from the training.

Level of training

The materials recognise that these people have different roles and responsibilities and are a heterogeneous group in terms of their qualifications and experience. This pack takes a new approach to training by linking with the appropriate National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) and Post Qualifying (PQ) awards. The training materials provide part of the underpinning knowledge (knowledge specification) for several units in the NVQ, Caring for Children & Young People – Level 3, and also the Child Care Award for Social Workers at post-qualifying level.

NVQ/PQ awards: mapping and assessment

These training materials contribute in part to what candidates for the NVQ and PQ awards need to know in order to meet the knowledge requirements of several units in the NVQ, Caring for Children & Young People – Level 3, and also the Child Care Award, post-qualifying level. Trainers may also advise candidates that they can go back to their workplace and together with their line managers or assessors map the specific knowledge given by these training materials to the elements within the units and to the specific performance criteria. An NVQ/PQ Award Mapping guide to the units is provided at Appendix C.

Each module of the pack specifically identifies learning outcomes that are measurable and evidenced-based. The content of each module focuses on the

knowledge and understanding needed to meet the learning outcomes. In addition, a range of appropriate assessment methods can be used to measure performance, both during training and at the workplace. These include:

- case studies
- scenarios
- observation
- self-assessment
- reflective practice, and
- Individual Action planning.

Participants may be encouraged to collect evidence by developing a portfolio of learning, which may include amongst other things a learning journal and witness testimonies.

Guidance to trainers

- **Training Formats.** There are two potential audiences for the training: direct providers or multi-agency staff. Each module has a front sheet that indicates to which of the audiences it is applicable. In general, all the modules are suitable for direct providers. Courses can be designed to meet local requirements and priorities and the needs of particular participants. Estimated time frames are also indicated on the front sheet of each module. We recommend that prior to designing the training course, the trainer should ask the participants' managers to complete a training needs questionnaire. A sample questionnaire to assist in designing an appropriate training programme is included at Appendix D.
- **Case Studies.** The case studies can be used either as a training course on their own or in conjunction with the modules. In order to assist the latter approach, the relevant case study exercises are signposted in each module. The introduction to the case studies in section 2 of this pack discusses the use of the case studies in greater detail.
- **Exercises.** Each module contains a handout, overhead projection slides, and one or more exercises. An icebreaker exercise designed to introduce participants to the subject area was used successfully in the piloting of this pack. Figure 1: Youth Transitions Framework in module 4 of this pack may also be used as an introduction. Most trainers have such an exercise they find works well. At the end of each day of piloting a quiz about the areas covered that day was also used. An example of an icebreaker and a quiz are included at the end of this section.

Icons



HANDOUT

Handout



OHP 1A

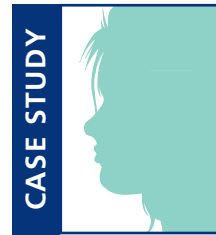
OHP



EXERCISE

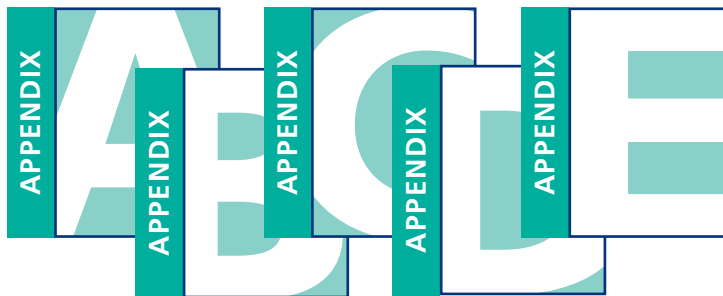
Exercise/
Quiz

CASE STUDY



CASE STUDY

Case studies



APPENDIX

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Appendices



10 min.

Time estimate

Local situation

The Children (Leaving Care) Act allows for local authority discretion in the way in which services will be delivered in each area. Local authorities are expected to develop, for example, an appropriate Pathway Plan and transparent criteria for financial arrangements, as well as comprehensive and comprehensible policies and procedures. Therefore, use of this pack will require knowledge of the local context in which the participants will be providing services. Local areas will have Children's Services Plans, Quality Protects Management Action Plans and other plans that identify resources that exist or are planned in the area. Some of the exercises will involve mapping local resources and developing skills in obtaining such knowledge. The case study exercises will be answered on the basis of local resources.

Involving young people in the training

The importance of listening to young people's views about the planning and delivery of services is now commonly accepted. Equally important is involving them in training people who provide young people with services. It is not only appropriate to involve young people in training but also necessary to involve them in order to deliver training effectively.

- **Address the relationship between the trainer and young people and make it known to participants.** Before involving young people in training, consideration must be given to the nature and level of their contribution and involvement during the training: will they be co-trainers? will they contribute their own and other young people's experience? or will they do both? During the piloting of these training materials, a number of methods was used successfully. On one occasion, the young care leaver gave a personal presentation about her care experience to kick-start the first session. During the opening session of another pilot, the care leaver and her co-trainer carried out an interview of the care leaver about aspects of her care experience. (See Exercise: Interview in module 3 of this pack) On both occasions, the care leaver also designed some of the materials, helped plan the programme, shared her experience throughout the training, and brought in the perspective of other young people.
- **Design and planning.** It is important that the young people be involved in the design and planning of the programme.
- **Boundaries.** As part of preparation for training, the boundaries of what the young person will and will not talk about need to be established.
- **Ground rules.** At the start of training, participants should be advised not to 'quiz' the young people about their care experience. It must be the young people's choice whether to talk about themselves and what to say.
- **Support, supervision and feedback.** Generally, young people, particularly those who are still looked after, will need support during the training. One effective way of providing this is to ensure that two young people are involved in the training. Guidance on written and oral presentations should be provided. There should be an opportunity for the young person to receive supervision before and during the training. Feedback and an opportunity to reflect on the experience is also important.
- **Practical issues.** Dress, travel and other arrangements/expenses, and payment should be agreed at the beginning.



Icebreaker Exercise: Leaving Home



Total time: 15 min.

With a partner, tell each other about leaving home by answering these questions:

- 1** At what age did you leave home?
- 2** What were the circumstances?
Why did you leave?
How did you leave?
- 3** Who supported you and for how long?



10 min. (5 min. for each partner)

As a whole group, discuss how you think these experiences compare with those of care leavers.



5 min.



Children (Leaving Care) Act Quiz

-
- 1** What is the purpose of the Children (Leaving Care) Act?

 - 2** What are the main aims of the Children (Leaving Care) Act?

 - 3** Name and define the three new categories of young people created within the Children (Leaving Care) Act.

 - 4** The Children (Leaving Care) Act requires which young people to have an allocated Personal Adviser?

 - 5** When should the Needs Assessment required by the Children (Leaving Care) Act be carried out with young people?

 - 6** What is the purpose of the Pathway Plan?



-
- 7** Where a young person does not want face-to-face contact, what can you do as a worker?
-
- 8** What new duty has been added to the complaints procedure under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000?
-
- 9** Who will continue to be eligible for benefits, including Job Seeker's Allowance and Income Support but not Housing Benefit, in accordance with the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000?
-
- 10** How many of the 9 priorities in the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Guidance can you name?
-
- 11** What else have you learned about the Children (Leaving Care) Act today?
-



Children (Leaving Care) Act Quiz

TRAINER'S NOTES – ANSWERS

1 What is the purpose of the Children (Leaving Care) Act?

- *To improve the life chances of young people living in and leaving care.*
-

2 What are the main aims of the Children (Leaving Care) Act?

- *To delay young people's discharge from care until they are prepared and ready to leave*
 - *To improve the assessment, preparation and planning for leaving care*
 - *To provide better personal support for young people after leaving care*
 - *To improve the financial arrangements for care leavers.*
-

3 Name and define the three new categories of young people created within the Children (Leaving Care) Act.

- *An eligible child is one who is aged 16 or 17, has been looked after by the local authority for a period of 13 weeks since the age of 14 and remains looked after.*
 - *A relevant child is one who was previously an eligible child but is no longer looked after and is under the age of 18.*
 - *A former relevant child is one who has reached 18 but not 21 and who is eligible and/or relevant prior to becoming 18.*
-

4 The Children (Leaving Care) Act requires which young people to have an allocated Personal Adviser?

- *Those who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and are now 16/17 either currently being looked after (eligible) or who have been in care and now left (relevant). Also young people who have fulfilled the above and are aged 18–21 (former relevant), or beyond if they are still in an agreed programme of education or training.*
-

5 When should the Needs Assessment required by the Children (Leaving Care) Act be carried out with young people?

- *The responsible authority must complete the Needs Assessment within three months of a young person becoming an eligible or a relevant child.*
-



6 What is the purpose of the Pathway Plan?

- *The purpose of the Pathway Plan is for young people to map out their future, articulate their aspirations and identify interim goals along the way to realising their ambitions; it also plays a critical part in making the new Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 arrangements work.*
-

7 Where a young person does not want face-to-face contact, what can you do as a worker?

- *Respect their wishes*
 - *Telephone the young person and in extreme cases write them a letter*
 - *Record what you have done in the Pathway Plan.*
-

8 What new duty has been added to the complaints procedure under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000?

- *New duty to provide a 14-day informal-resolution stage.*
-

9 Who will continue to be eligible for benefits, including Job Seeker's Allowance and Income Support but not Housing Benefit, in accordance with the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000?

- *Lone parents and disabled children.*
-

10 How many of the 9 priorities in the C(LC)A 2000 Guidance can you name?

- *Travel costs*
 - *Educational materials/special equipment*
 - *Other educational costs*
 - *Costs associated with special needs (such as disability or pregnancy)*
 - *Clothing*
 - *Contact with family or other significant relationships*
 - *Racial/cultural/religious needs*
 - *Counselling or therapeutic needs*
 - *Hobbies/holidays.*
-

11 What else have you learned about the Children (Leaving Care) Act today?

section 2

CASE STUDIES

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2 Kellie Feeley	22
3 David Roberts	31
4 Brian Smith	40
5 Elani Osman	49

Introduction

The case studies in this section are designed to help trainers and participants apply to practical situations both the contents of the Children (Leaving Care) Act and best practice in leaving-care work. The five case studies are designed to explore the wide range of circumstances young people face as they leave care. However, we recognise that a significant number of young people have a relatively straightforward transition to adult life. The aim of the case studies is not to pathologise young people but to reflect the diversity and complexity of many young people's care careers and the concomitant challenges facing people who provide them with support and services.

Use of the case studies

The case studies can be used as a training course either on their own or in conjunction with the modules. In order to assist the latter approach, the relevant case study exercises are signposted in each module.

In planning a training course, the trainer may find it appropriate to use all five case studies. Alternatively, trainers and managers may decide to concentrate on one or more that best represent their local situation, priorities or audience for the training.

Each case study follows the same structure. Background information is provided about the young person, followed by four separate scenarios and exercises that track the young person's progress to adulthood. For the purposes of the exercises, a form for recording the pathway planning ("Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan Form") is to be found at the end of this section. Each exercise is followed by suggested answers. Supplementary information will be found in the Handouts in the modules. These answers can be only a guide to best practice. Local policy, services and resources will determine the realistic plans and action for the young person.

Participants should be divided up into small groups, who will feedback to the whole group after doing each exercise. If different groups use different case studies, the feedback will begin with informing the whole group about the background information or the update for the case study that the small group has been considering.

Areas and issues addressed

All five case studies address the core principles of the Children (Leaving Care) Act and best practice in leaving care. Therefore, they include discussion of:

- Eligibility
- Needs Assessment and pathway planning
- Personal Advisors

- Personal support
- Accommodation
- Education, training and employment
- Family and social relationships
- Practical and other skills
- Financial support
- Health
- Race, culture, and religion
- Contingency planning.

In addition, the case studies cover issues that arise in working with the following young people:

Case Study 1: **Arlene Gayle** – young black people







Case Study 2: **Kellie Feeney** – out-of-authority placement; rural provision; lone parents

Case Study 3: **David Roberts** – young disabled people

Case Study 4: **Brian Smith** – young people with challenging behaviour

Case Study 5: **Elani Osman** – young unaccompanied asylum seekers.

Suggested time allocations for case studies

Exercise 1:	Read background information	10 min.	
	Prepare Pathway Plan	50 min.	
	Feedback to whole group	20 min.	
Exercises 2, 3 & 4:	Read update	5 min.	
	Review & update Plan	30 min.	
	Feedback to whole group	20 min.	



Arlene Gayle

● Background information

Arlene is a young British African-Caribbean woman. She was accommodated at the age of 13, when her mother had a nervous breakdown and refused to care for her any longer. Her mother is recovering, but still has bouts of depression that lead her to be very inconsistent toward Arlene.

Arlene does not have much contact with her mother at present. She feels angry at her mother's rejection of her and the way her attitude to her fluctuates.

Arlene's father left them when she was a baby, and has not had contact since then. She occasionally wonders where he might be, but if her mother knows, she is not prepared to tell Arlene.

Arlene does not have any brothers or sisters.

Arlene has maintained contact by telephone with her maternal grandmother, who lives in another part of the country. She is now disabled and cannot travel.

After a difficult first year in care, when she spent time in two residential units and one foster home, she has been settled with her present foster carers for two years. They are happy for her to stay as long as she wants.

After a period of not going to school, Arlene has been attending regularly, and will be taking GCSEs in a few months' time. She says that if her results are good enough, she wants to stay on into the 6th Form. She has a good relationship with her year tutor, who says that if she works hard between now and her exams, she can get the results she wants. She will, however, have to work particularly hard at her maths and science.

Arlene suffers from epilepsy, which is not serious, provided that she remembers to take her medication. With the medication she has not had a seizure for nearly a year. Her foster carer says that she needs to remind Arlene most days to take her tablets.

Arlene has lots of friends at school, but does not like any but her closest friends to know that she is in care. They hang out at different friends' homes. In the past Arlene has said that she would like to take her interest in music further by learning to sing, but nothing has come of this.

Arlene has a Social Worker that she does not see very often. They communicate by phone and have agreed that whilst everything is going OK, this suits Arlene. Her foster carer has concerns about Arlene's practical skills. She says Arlene does little around the house and does not cook. She says that she is very messy and disorganised.



Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan

Arlene is almost 16. You are her Social Worker. You have been told to prepare a Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan under the Children (Leaving Care) Act.

QUESTIONS

- 1** When she is 16, what will Arlene's status be under the Children (Leaving Care) Act?
- 2** What are your responsibilities now?
- 3** What should you be doing now? Whom should you involve?
- 4** What are the issues that you should be addressing in the Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan?



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Eligibility

Arlene will be an 'eligible' young person.

Personal support and accommodation

It is agreed that Arlene will remain with her foster carers.

Education

Arlene will receive extra tuition in maths and science, then hope to stay on into the 6th Form to take AS levels.

Arlene was offered singing lessons. She said that she wanted this, and it was agreed that her Social Worker would find the telephone number of a teacher.

Family and social relationships

Arlene was offered family therapy with her mother to try to work through her anger, but she said that although she could see that this might be a good idea, she did not want it just now.

Practical skills

Arlene agreed that she needed to learn to look after herself a bit better. She will be paid extra pocket money to help with household chores and cook meals for the family.

Health

Arlene agrees for the time being for her foster carer to retain control of her medication for epilepsy, but to work towards Arlene taking responsibility for this.

Race, culture and religion

It was felt that Arlene would benefit from joining a group for young black women held at a local voluntary project. The group discusses black history and art, and visits cultural events.

Contingency plan

A plan is needed for the time when Arlene will no longer live with her foster carers.



Review of Pathway Plan

Arlene got good enough GCSE grades to go into the 6th Form, where she started AS levels in English and art. This went well for the first term, but she has recently been attending school less and is falling behind. She says the courses are boring and there is too much work. She says she will never keep up, so there is no point in doing it. Her tutor says that she is capable of doing the work, but needs to apply herself better.

Arlene's relationship with her foster carer has become strained, partly because of her non-attendance at school. Also, Arlene has not kept to her agreement about doing housework and cooking, and consequently, has not received extra pocket money. This, she says, is unfair because she has so much schoolwork that she has no time for housework and so should get the money anyway. She says that her foster carer treats her like a child.

Arlene has seen her mother once in the year.

Arlene still has a Social Worker, but now also has a Personal Advisor from the leaving-care team. She has visited Arlene a number of times, and invited her to join the group for young black women. There, Arlene met other care leavers. Many of them have already moved into supported accommodation, where they say they have a lot more freedom to do what they want.

There was a delay in finding the number of a singing teacher. Recently, a number was provided, but Arlene has not called to arrange lessons.

Arlene has decided that she wants to move into the supported-accommodation project, where she will be treated like an adult, not a child.

Arlene's foster carer has asked for a review of the Pathway Plan. You are the Personal Advisor.

QUESTIONS

- 1** How would you prepare for this meeting?
- 2** What will you advise Arlene to do?
- 3** What will you do if she does not like your advice?
- 4** If Arlene refuses to stay with her foster carer, what options will be open to her? If she moves into a supported-accommodation project, what financial support will be available?

Prepare your preferred Pathway Plan.



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Personal support and accommodation

You thought that if possible Arlene should stay with her foster carer, and therefore you would not offer her the option of moving into the supported-accommodation project at this time. However, if Arlene attends school and does the other things already agreed, the project should be considered in six months' time. You made it clear that this was what you thought was best for her at the moment, as it would not be in her interests to have more independence than she can handle. Arlene agreed that the problem was being in foster care and feeling she is treated like a child. This was discussed at the review, and her foster carer agreed to take a different approach.

Education

Arlene was offered extra help if she needs it. It was agreed that she should discuss with her tutor whether she has chosen the right courses.

Family and social relationships

You said that you were concerned that Arlene had not seen her mother more. You discussed this and felt that Arlene needed more help to resolve her feelings about her mother. You recommended some meetings with a family therapist.

Practical and other skills

Arlene agreed to do more around the house. It was agreed she would be encouraged to do this, and an incentive for it would be discussed with her foster carer.

Financial support

You agreed that Arlene should get a financial incentive to go to college. This would be a weekly amount if she attends every day. It will not be linked to housework.

Health

It was agreed that now was not the right time for Arlene to take more control over her medication.

Race, culture and religion

Arlene will continue to go to the young black women's group.

Contingency plan

You investigated the option of Arlene moving into the supported-accommodation project as a contingency plan. You found that there will be a placement fee, but your manager said that it could be paid if it is felt best for Arlene in the future. If she moves there, Arlene will need money for her living expenses and a small service charge, as well as money to get to college, see her mother, and get to the young black women's group. Your local authority has a written policy on financial support, and you are able to give Arlene information about what she will be entitled to in the future.



Relevant young person

Your attempts to persuade Arlene to stay with her foster carer failed. She said that even if nothing else was found, she was leaving next week. Despite your efforts to get her either to stay or to look at an available supported-lodgings placement, Arlene said it was the supported-housing project or nothing. You arranged the move.

Events have taken an ominous, but not very surprising turn for the worse. Arlene is still living in the supported accommodation, but is hanging on by a thread.

She has given up going to school and missed her exams.

She is not looking after herself. She frequently has no money for food and has lost a lot of weight. She seems to struggle to get her money from the bank and has lost two debit cards.

She had an epileptic seizure and was taken to hospital by the staff of the accommodation. However, you were not told about this until a few days afterwards. You strongly suspect that she is not taking her medication, but the staff do not seem to know about this.

Arlene had an arranged meeting with her mother, but it ended in an argument and Arlene says she never wants to see her again.

Arlene does very little with her time. She hangs out with her friends from the accommodation project, none of whom is in education or training. The staff say they offered to take Arlene to see a Careers advisor, but she has not taken up the offer.

The project says that unless Arlene starts to pay the £5 per week for her utilities bills, she will be evicted.

Throughout the six months, however, Arlene has kept contact with you although she tends to miss meetings you arrange. You have tried to address the issues as they arose, but you feel that you are only 'fire fighting' – dealing with the crises, but not the underlying problems.

There is a review coming up of her time in the project, and you arrange a review of the Pathway Plan for the same time. Arlene agrees that things are not going well, but is not prepared to discuss other options.

QUESTIONS

- 1** What do you do now to address all the problems that have arisen?
- 2** Do you think that where Arlene is living is suitable accommodation under the terms of the Children (Leaving Care) Act?
- 3** What contingency plans will you put in place to prepare for the possibility that Arlene will have to leave the project?



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Personal support and accommodation

At the meeting, you said that you felt that the current placement was not meeting Arlene's needs and that she needed more support. You said that the supported lodgings with a family was still on offer. Arlene said she would not go there, but agreed that things were not going well.

You agreed to give Arlene another opportunity to make it work at the project. She agreed to a new contract whereby she would do the following:

Education

Go to the Careers office.

Practical and other skills

Pay her £5 a week and discuss with the staff budgeting her money better.

Health

Take her medication and allow the staff to remind her about it every day.

She agreed to meet with you every two weeks.

In return you said that you would start to plan for her to have her own flat in six months' time. The staff said that they would become more proactive in seeking to support her and report to you weekly about her progress.

You arrange for a further review in one month's time.

In supervision, you raised your concerns about the level of support being offered by the project. Your manager agrees to discuss these with the local authority commissioning manager.

Contingency plan

You investigate the availability of the supported lodgings. You are told that it is still available.



Former relevant young person

You had a phone call from Arlene saying she was being evicted next week. The project also phoned to say that Arlene got angry when they reminded her about her agreement to go to the Careers office and told them she was leaving.

You told Arlene that the department could not offer her a flat: she is still 17; they have a duty to provide her with suitable accommodation; and a flat at this stage would not be suitable. You said that the supported lodgings was still available, and that was what you would pay for. She reluctantly agreed to give it a try.

Arlene has turned 18. After a difficult first month, she settled into the supported lodgings. She says that although her landlord and landlady keep an eye on her, they are fair and not 'in your face'. She is doing so well that you have nominated her for a council flat, which she should receive in about three months' time. Arlene has asked you what help she will receive to help her move into her flat.

You have had a review of her Pathway Plan. Arlene says that she wants to go back to college to take up where she left off, and is going to study for three A levels. She needs help as she will not be able to claim benefits, and needs money for books, equipment, travel and other things.

She wants to apply for university but is worried about a number of things:

- She will be 20 when she starts university
- She wants to go to university away from where she is currently living, but is worried about her flat
- She is scared of student loans.

She says that she has been thinking about her mother, whom she has not seen for a year. She thinks she needs some counselling before making contact again. Her landlady recommended a private counsellor, whom she has contacted. She will, however, have to pay £25 per session. Arlene also said that she has not had a holiday since she was in foster care, and she and her boyfriend want to go away but she cannot afford it.

QUESTIONS

- 1** What are your responsibilities under the Act?
- 2** How would you respond to her various requests? Are there any issues left over from when she was younger that have not been addressed?
- 3** What is your authority's policy in relation to supporting former relevant young people? What information could you give Arlene about how she will be supported from now on?



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Eligibility

Arlene is a former relevant young person. The local authority has a duty to:

- *keep in touch*
- *provide a Personal Advisor*
- *provide general assistance*
- *provide assistance with her education, training and employment, which can last beyond 21 if the course of study is included in a Pathway Plan.*

The assistance you provide for Arlene will depend on the policies of your local authority. If you do not know the details of this, you should investigate.

Personal support and accommodation

When Arlene gets a flat, you will have to ensure she receives Housing Benefit. When she goes to university, she will be entitled to have the local authority provide her with vacation accommodation or the means to pay for it. This must be planned.

Education

Arlene will need a package of assistance according to your local authority policies.

Family and social relationships

You agree to investigate whether less expensive counselling is available elsewhere. Otherwise you agree to pay for the private counsellor.

Practical and other skills

You agree that this is now coming along well.

Financial support

A package of support will have to be agreed. At college, Arlene will not be able to claim Income Support.

Health

Arlene is now managing her epilepsy better, but the supported-lodgings provider agrees to monitor this.

Race, culture and religion

Arlene no longer goes to the group. You discuss hair care and skin care, and it may be necessary to give her a small grant to pay for this.

Contingency plan

University is a long way off. You agree that Arlene will discuss other options with you and the employment service if her plan changes.



Kellie Feeney

● Background information

Kellie Feeney is 16 years of age and of British Irish descent. She entered care at the age of 13, when she was accommodated under section 20 of the 1989 Children Act.

Kellie's mother is of British Irish descent. Kellie's mother became pregnant at 15 years of age with Kellie's brother, and then at 19, with Kellie. Kellie's mother was not married to her children's father, and Kellie's maternal grandmother returned to Ireland shortly before Kellie's mother gave birth to Kellie. Kellie's mother is now in full-time employment as a secretary. Kellie's father is Irish, and from other relationships has several children, both older and younger than Kellie. He works full time as a tailor. He has had no real involvement in the upbringing of either Kellie or her brother.

Both Kellie and her older brother were neglected for the majority of their childhood, and were also frequently physically abused by their mother. When Kellie was nine, her older brother, with whom she had formed a close attachment, was accommodated.

When Kellie was 12, it was reported to the police that she had been sexually assaulted. No other details are recorded about this, although she says that around this time she began to truant from school and abscond from home. Shortly after this incident, Kellie ran away from home for a period of three weeks. It was on her return home that her mother literally abandoned Kellie to the Social Services Department.

Kellie's brother is 20 years old. He has left care and lives in his own flat near both of his parents. He is expecting a child with his girlfriend.

Kellie has little contact with her family. She does not want to have contact with her parents, but would like to see her brother and writes to her grandparents in Ireland. She says she would like to see them. Kellie also remains in contact with her close friend since childhood, who lives near her mother.

Kellie got on well with her last key worker from the residential home.

Kellie is generally in good health and attends the local health-centre gym once a week with a friend from her part-time job.

When she entered care, the local authority placed Kellie in a short-term residential children's home, from which she could travel to school and visit her friends and family. After three months, they moved her to an out-of-authority long-term placement, which was a 1½-hour train journey from her placing authority. This closed down six months ago. As a result, Kellie has recently moved into a studio flat near the home, in a small village miles from the nearest town.



Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan

You are a Social Worker from the leaving-care team. You have never met Kellie and because she is placed outside the authority, she was not visited by her previous Social Worker as often as she should have been. Other than what is on her file your information about Kellie has come mostly from the staff at her last children's home. It has just been realised that she must have a Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan within the next month. You have been appointed her Personal Adviser.

Kellie has been informed that a Personal Adviser will contact her, and you are meeting her for the first time.

She completed her GCSEs in June, and although she did not obtain her anticipated grades, she was still accepted by the local college to study graphic design. Kellie plans to remain in her part-time employment in a local aquatic centre until she begins college after the summer.

She is adamant that she does not want to return to her original local authority.

QUESTIONS

- 1** What is Kellie's status under the Children (Leaving Care) Act?
- 2** What services can you provide Kellie with under the Children (Leaving Care) Act? Who is responsible for providing these services?
- 3** Whom else might you ask to provide services?
- 4** What particular difficulties do you foresee because of the isolated nature of Kellie's living situation?
- 5** What financial responsibilities do you have towards Kellie?

Prepare a Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan with Kellie.



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Eligibility

Kellie is a relevant young person.

Personal support

You agree to contact the leaving-care team in the new authority to negotiate an agreement about the support they can offer her. With Kellie's consent you contact her former key worker to introduce yourself.

Accommodation

Kellie's home authority will pay her rent. If she wants accommodation that might be more suitable, it can be found in her home authority.

Education

Kellie will go to college and will be funded for this.

Family and social relationships

You offer to discuss the reasons why she does not want to see her mother. You offer her fares to visit her family and friend if she needs it. You discuss whether she would like to have contact with her grandparents in Ireland. It may be possible to help pay for her fares to visit.

Practical skills

Kellie thinks she is coping well. You agree she does not need any help now.

Financial support

A package of financial support is agreed that covers her living costs, accommodation, travel and other expenses for college, and an incentive payment to go to college. You agree she can keep the money from her weekend job. She requires some bedding and kitchen equipment. You agree an advance on her setting-up-home allowance.

Health

You are concerned that Kellie does not seem to have had any help in dealing with the suspected abuse. You agree to talk some more about this. You agree that Kellie will carry on going to the gym with her friends.

Race, culture and religion

Contact with her family in Ireland is a priority.

Contingency plan

You think Kellie's situation is far from ideal. It is possible she will not be able to carry on living alone, and her isolated situation may cause difficulties getting to college. You are worried about the level of support she will receive. Your contingency planning may involve two alternative plans: for her to move into supported accommodation in the area where she lives now; or for her to return to her home authority.



Review of Pathway Plan

In the past six months you have managed to visit Kellie only twice. The arrangement with the leaving-care worker in the authority where she lives is not working very well. He has an enormous area to cover, and cannot find the time to visit Kellie very often.

Kellie now attends college full time. However, she is having problems. She has to set off very early in the morning and cannot stay at college after hours because there is only one bus home. She has, therefore, not made any new friends. She is angry that she has been expected to pay out for three day trips to national museums as part of her course and missed out on one as she did not have the money. She is required to purchase essential course materials, which are expensive.

When she began college, she contacted and visited her previous key worker. She is Kellie's main support, visiting her once a week. She has been in contact with you to say that she is worried about how lonely Kellie is. Kellie has also said that she is unhappy in her accommodation: it is very cold and has only a small electric heater. She believes that her incoming post sometimes goes missing, and says that she feels alone because she doesn't have access to a telephone.

Kellie says that she no longer attends the gym with her friend because it is too expensive and she cannot afford to waste her money.

Kellie has visited her family once over the past six months to see her brother's baby. She spent Christmas day on her own and Boxing Day with her former key worker. The trip to Ireland that was agreed in her Pathway Plan has not happened.

Despite the problems in her flat, Kellie has told you that she does not want to move to the town. She says that she is used to the countryside and the town is too dangerous.

QUESTIONS

- 1** What issues should be addressed in her Pathway Plan review?
- 2** How might you try to provide Kellie with the support she needs whilst recognising her desire not to move?
- 3** What contingency plans should you be investigating?

Prepare a new Pathway Plan for Kellie.



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Personal support

You agree to find out why Kellie is not getting the support promised from the leaving-care team. You suggest that it may be possible to formalise the arrangement with her ex-key worker by paying her on a sessional basis to support Kellie, if her employers agree. You agree to investigate youth groups, voluntary organisations and others with whom Kellie might want contact.

Accommodation

You are still prepared to allow Kellie to carry on living where she is despite the problems. You agree to contact her landlord about the problems. However, you want to keep this situation under review and have other options ready.

Education

Kellie remains at college, but you need to reassess her financial needs.

Family and social relationships

It is a priority for you that the relationship with her family is addressed. You do not think that contact is impossible. You offer to pay for her brother to come to see her and offer Kellie help with re-establishing contact with her mother. You raise with Kellie that she never mentions her father. She says she wants nothing to do with him.

Practical and other skills

Kellie and her key worker tell you that she is coping well.

Financial support

A new assessment is carried out. You agree to investigate more creative solutions to the problem of getting to college, such as whether Social Services could pay for a moped for Kellie.

Health

You offer Kellie counselling, and make a contribution to gym membership.

Race, culture and religion

You are concerned that Kellie has not arranged her trip to Ireland. You agree to take responsibility for doing this.

Contingency plan

You already have your contingency plans in place.



Relevant young person

Kellie informs you that she is three months' pregnant. She met her boyfriend at college. He is on a similar course, and lives at home with his parents. His parents will not allow Kellie in their home because they feel that she is a bad influence on their son. She had only known her boyfriend for a month before she became pregnant. She is excited about being pregnant, and says that she and her boyfriend are going to live together. He says he is going to find them a flat near where his parents live.

Kellie wants to continue at college after the baby is born, but has not considered the practical problems involved.

The leaving-care worker in the authority where Kellie lives has told you that if Kellie wants a council flat, she will have to spend a long time in temporary accommodation, which is not regarded as safe or suitable for a young woman.

Kellie has told her family that she is pregnant. Her mother visited her, but Kellie would not see her. She recently visited her grandparents in Ireland. The visit went well, and Kellie has promised to go to see them again before very long.

You are very concerned about Kellie's lack of parenting skills and what you perceive as her unrealistic plans and expectations. You know that you are not going to be able to offer her the day-to-day support she needs.

QUESTIONS

- 1** Do you go along with what Kellie is planning?
- 2** What other options might you suggest?
- 3** What might you do about your fears for Kellie's baby?



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Personal support

You agree to visit Kellie more often. You contact the local leaving-care team to ask about other agencies that might support her. You ask her key worker to help her get to ante-natal appointments and classes.

You agree to meet with Kellie and her boyfriend to discuss their future plans.

Accommodation

Kellie's current accommodation is no longer suitable. You offer to investigate other options, such as mother-and-baby units. You decide that Kellie and her boyfriend's plans are not reliable.

Education

You agree with Kellie to talk to the college counsellor about help that the college can give her both before and after the baby is born, and the implications of Kellie taking a break from her course.

Family and social relationships

You agree with Kellie that now that her mother has taken the initiative to visit her, she will take advantage of counselling which might prepare her for a reconciliation. It is agreed that this will be the focus now; later, you will discuss contact with her father.

Practical and other skills

Kellie will need help with parenting skills. You agree to speak to the leaving-care team about any local services that will help her.

Financial support

Kellie's situation has changed again. Another financial-needs assessment will have to be done. This will take account of her additional needs as a young pregnant woman and the fact that once the baby is born, she will be able to claim Income Support but not Housing Benefit. The assessment will take account of two possible scenarios: one in which she lives on her own; the other, where she lives with her boyfriend.

Health

You agree to send her written materials about pregnancy and parenting. Her health needs as a young pregnant woman are bound up with personal support. She needs to get good health care and information.

Race, culture and religion

You encourage Kellie to keep in contact with her family in Ireland.

Contingency plan

You need to have two plans in place: one for a mother-and-baby unit, and one for a move to the town to accommodation more suitable than her current arrangements.



Former relevant young person

Kellie is 18, and has had her baby. She was provided with a temporary flat by the Housing Department, in a very rundown part of the town. Her boyfriend is living with her, but he is hardly ever in and offers Kellie little help. She has told you that he frequently gets angry when she asks him to help, and he has hit her and shaken the baby. He collects their Income Support and does not give Kellie enough to look after herself or the baby. She says that she wants him to leave, but is too afraid to do anything about it.

You have managed to visit once a month for the last three months, but are under pressure to stop these visits because Kellie is now 18 and you have other priorities.

Kellie is having difficulty looking after herself and the baby. She has a health visitor, who sees her regularly, but you have had no contact with her and she has no contact with the local Social Services.

You have discussed again with Kellie the possibility of moving closer to you. Also, her family in Ireland has told her that she can come there for a while. Kellie's mother has contacted you to say she is concerned about the situation, and offering for Kellie to return to her.

Kellie says that she would still like to get her own flat with the baby, then return to college in the next academic year. However, you are not sure that she really believes in this plan any more.

QUESTIONS

- 1** What are your responsibilities under the Act?
- 2** What do you do about her boyfriend?
- 3** How would you set about resolving Kellie's safety and accommodation problems?
- 4** What is your authority's policy on supporting young lone parents going to college?



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Personal support

Kellie needs help from everyone involved. You are becoming increasingly concerned that the network of people you have in place is not sufficient. You feel that Kellie may no longer be able to make her own decisions and wants someone to take control. You discuss various options with her.

You contact the local child-protection team to alert them to the situation.

You argue successfully with your manager that rather than limiting contact, you must increase your involvement for a short period.

Accommodation

Her current accommodation is not suitable. It is not safe for her and is not what she wants at the moment. You cannot wait for a permanent flat to become available. In your planning with Kellie, you decide to start from the position that she cannot stay where she is and discuss her various options.

Education

You agree that this is not on the agenda for a short time.

Family and social relationships

Kellie's family are offering her support, and it is now Kellie's decision whether to take it up. She agrees that she will see her mother and start the process of getting to know each other again.

Practical and other skills

There are still concerns about Kellie's parenting skills. The best way to address them is for Kellie not to live on her own.

Financial support

Kellie does not have enough money to look after herself and her baby. You do not want to accept that her boyfriend can carry on taking her Income Support. You agree some emergency payments to her. You arrange for her to collect this money from the local Social Services Department so that her boyfriend cannot intercept it.

Health

Kellie's and her baby's health are at risk while she is living with her boyfriend. They need help from Social Services and the health visitor.

Race, culture and religion

The increasing contact with her family will address her cultural needs.

Contingency plan

Plans need to be made to take the initiative at short notice and remove Kellie from her flat to somewhere safe. You need to discuss with the child-protection team the possibility that if Kellie refuses to move, the baby may have to be removed.



David Roberts

● Background information

David Roberts is a young British white man who was taken into care under a care order when he was seven, following allegations that he had been physically abused by both his father and older brothers. He is described as having learning difficulties and difficulty in verbal communication, but when one knows him, he can make himself understood very well, mostly verbally but also using Makaton sign language.

David had irregular contact with his mother until he was 12, when his mother discontinued the contact because she said it upset David too much.

David's father still lives with David's mother, but rarely acknowledges David's existence and does not want contact with him. His older brothers have left home.

After a number of placements in residential units and with foster parents, David settled with his current foster carers when he was 12. He now regards this family as his own, and does not seem to remember much about his birth family.

His foster carer says that generally David has been happy living with them. He likes the same things most children do, but she does not trust him to be out on his own. She says he is easily led, and there are boys living near by who enjoy making fun of him.

David has been attending a local special school, where he has a number of friends who are more able than he. His teachers say he could remain at the school until he is 19.

In the past six months his foster carer has started to find his behaviour more and more difficult. He becomes angry when he is prevented from going out with his friends. When angry he has destroyed household items and has been threatening to his foster carers' own younger children. He has also started to behave in a way that his carer describes as 'overly sexual', although it is not clear what she means by this.

His foster carer has said that she is unsure about whether David can stay with the family. He is getting too big and strong to control, and she is afraid that he may harm her and her children.

David says that he wants to stay with his foster carers and wants to spend more time with his friends outside of school. He thinks that he is old enough to go out on his own, and that he is not allowed to do anything for himself. He wants to have pocket money like his friends.



Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan

David has just turned 16.

You are a Social Worker from the specialist disabled-children's team. You have not known David very long, and he is not yet prepared to communicate openly with you.

You are preparing for his statutory review, and you have been told he must have a Needs Assessment done and a Pathway Plan prepared under the Children (Leaving Care) Act at the same time.

QUESTIONS

- 1** What is David's status under the Children (Leaving Care) Act?
- 2** Who else should be involved in the Needs Assessment, the Pathway Plan preparation, and the review?
- 3** Who will be David's Personal Advisor?
- 4** How would your local authority's leaving-care team be involved?
- 5** What are the issues to be dealt with in David's Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan?



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Eligibility

David is an eligible young person.

Personal support and accommodation

It was decided that David will stay with his foster carers, and a package of short-break support is arranged. David will go to a respite-care unit every other weekend. This is in a home used mostly by younger children.

A Personal Advisor will be appointed who will also act as his Connexions advisor.

A mentor from a scheme run by the leaving-care service was introduced to David. He will take him out and sometimes help him meet up with his friends but will not leave him alone. He will arrange other social opportunities in the area.

Education

It is planned that David will stay at the special school until he is 19. It is too early to make other plans.

Family and social relationships

David's mother is to be contacted to try to restore the contact.

You agree to investigate a Gateway youth club.

Practical and other skills

It does not seem appropriate at the moment to put pressure on David to practice practical skills.

Financial support

You discuss pocket money and decide that David will have a small amount to spend for himself.

Health

It was decided that David needs sex education. Attendance at a group for young men, which meets at a local voluntary organisation on Thursday evenings, was recommended.

Contingency plan

It is hoped that the measures taken will enable David to stay with his foster carers. However, it is thought wise to investigate other, residential options.



Review of Pathway Plan

Respite care is working well for the foster carers, but David does not seem to be enjoying it. The staff say that he is unhappy there, and they find it difficult to persuade him to eat his meals. David says he enjoys going there only when two young men he has made friends with are also there.

You have spoken to David's mother who told you that the real problem about contact is that she feels left out and no longer with a role. She says the foster carer did not allow David to spend time alone with her.

David is starting to be interested in being more independent. He has become interested in clothes, and has asked to go to watch the local football team play. He does not seem interested in looking after himself in other ways, and it is not felt that he is able to accept responsibilities for cooking or other household tasks.

The review of David's Statement of Educational Needs has confirmed that he will stay at the school until he is 19. David is happy about this.

David is going to the young men's group. He says he enjoys meeting with the others, but does not see them outside the group. He has attended a Gateway youth club on a number of occasions.

David is getting his pocket money, but no one is sure where it goes. It is likely he is giving it away to other young people at school.

David now has a Personal Advisor from the leaving-care team as well as his mentor. His Personal Advisor is also his Connexions advisor.

A review of David's care plan and Pathway Plan is due.

QUESTIONS

- 1** What approach will you take concerning David's contact with his mother?
- 2** What needs to be done now to prepare David for becoming an adult?

Carry out a review of David's Pathway Plan.



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Personal support

David now gets support from a number of sources. All are working with him but the Pathway Plan needs to identify who does what.

Accommodation

There are no plans for David to leave his foster carer. You agree to find out whether it is possible for him to go to the respite-care unit when his friends are there.

Education

The plan is for him to remain at the special school. It is agreed that preliminary planning about what happens when he leaves at 19 should start.

Family and social relationships

David's mother would like contact. It is agreed that this can be arranged initially away from the foster home, and his mentor agrees to accompany him. You agree to speak to his foster carer to seek her help in overcoming his mother's fears.

David is offered help to see more of his friends.

It is agreed that the leader of the social-education group should be contacted to see whether the issues of appropriate and inappropriate touching can be addressed.

Practical and other skills

It is agreed that if David is to go out more on his own, he needs to be taught road sense and how to find his way home from different places.

Financial support

David will continue to get his pocket money, but his foster carer should monitor where it goes. It is agreed he can have more choice over what he wears and he can go to the football, but no one volunteers to take him.

Health

David's health is generally good.

Contingency plan

You agree to investigate other respite-care units to be used if David remains unhappy.



Transitional planning

David is now nearly 18.

He is still living with his foster carers and going to the respite-care unit every other weekend. He is happier there since it was arranged that he would usually be there with his two friends. Recently, however, a young woman of his age has been staying at the centre, and they have become friends. David describes her as his girlfriend. They hold hands, but there is little opportunity for them to be more intimate. David would like to see her outside of the respite unit.

David has seen his mother a few times. She does not want to go to his foster carers', and he cannot go to her house because his father and brothers are almost always there. They still do not want to see him.

David now goes out more and sees his friends from school. On two occasions he has been very late coming home, and has not been able to explain where he has been.

His mentor left, so many of his other trips have stopped. The young men's group came to an end.

His transitional plan for education says that the preferred option is for him to go to college when he is 19. He cannot stay with his foster carers after then.

The respite unit have been teaching David some basic skills, and he can now make a cup of tea and a sandwich. He never does this at home.

He no longer gives away his pocket money: he spends it on sweets and football cards.

David is now going to be transferred to adult services.

QUESTIONS

1 Is there a clear policy to guide the transfer to adult services?

Review David's Pathway Plan, which is needed to assist the transfer.



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Personal support

As David does not have anyone to take him out any more, his Personal Advisor agrees to find him a new mentor from their project.

A care manager from Adult Social Services will be appointed as soon as possible. Additional personal support from adult services cannot be relied on, so it is accepted that the principal support will come from his Personal Advisor, foster carers and workers at the respite-care unit.

Accommodation

Plans need to be made for what happens when David has to leave his foster carer at 19. All the options need to be considered.

Education

A suitable college course needs to be identified.

Family and social relationships

It is agreed that the arrangement for neutral venues for contact with his mother is a problem. A meeting between his mother and foster carer will be arranged to try to resolve the problem. You also agree to contact his father and brothers to begin the process of making it possible for David to visit home.

Practical and other skills

David's foster carers agree to allow him to do more at home. It is agreed that the carers and the respite unit will liaise about the particular skills he is learning at the unit so that he can practice at home.

The problem of David going missing will be addressed by asking the school to include work on personal safety in their curriculum for David.

Financial support

It is agreed that David will be encouraged to decide how to spend his clothes money. He will not be given the cash yet, but this may be allowed in the future.

Health

The review realises that there has been little discussion of David's health needs on the assumption that his health is good. You agree to check whether he has had dental check-ups and his eyes tested before he is transferred to adult services.

Contingency plan

It cannot be assumed that in a year's time there will be a care manager appointed and decisions made about David's future accommodation. The Personal Advisor and respite-care unit agree to research the possibilities.



Former relevant young person

David is now nearly 19.

The plan made last year is running late. There was a delay in adult services appointing a care manager. The Personal Advisor did not know enough about disability services to progress the plans for when David leaves school. A care manager has now been appointed, and he has met David a number of times.

The Education Department identified a college course. David visited the college, and said that he liked it. David understands that he will soon be leaving his foster carer and school, but is not sure why or where he will be going. He has not appreciated that this will mean leaving his friends at school. He still sees his girlfriend at the respite unit, and they have started saying to others that they are going to get married when they are older.

The management of his relationship with his mother has progressed without the input of a Social Worker. Mother and foster carer have resolved their problems. David sees his mother more often. He is happy about this and now understands the relationship and why he is in foster care. He has also visited his family home when his father and brothers have been out.

He is doing more at home and now washes up, sometimes does his own washing and makes snacks for the family.

At the encouragement of his girlfriend, David has asked for a lot more pocket money so he can take her to the cinema and buy her presents.

It has been discovered that David needs glasses. It is not clear who will pay for them.

QUESTIONS

- 1** What will be the content of David's new Pathway Plan?
- 2** How will the Children (Leaving Care) Act balance with his status and the services available to him as a disabled adult?
- 3** What do you know about accommodation options in the statutory, voluntary and private sector in your area?



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Personal support

There will be changes when David leaves his foster carers and school. A new plan for his personal support needs to be made. It needs to address how many of the previously important people in his life can continue to be involved.

Accommodation

There is little time to sort out where David will live. The decision will have to be made quickly. If there are financial considerations, they will have to be approved by adult services. The cost may be considerable.

Education

The decision is made that David will go to the college. He can stay there until he is 22, and will carry on his general education as well as simple vocational skills that will help him in the future.

Family and social relationships

The progress of David's relationship with his mother is encouraging, but must not be lost if he goes to college. The work with his brothers and father must be prioritised. It is not out of the question that he may go to live with them during the holidays, but not just yet.

David is anxious that he will not see his girlfriend any more. It is agreed to contact her parents to see how they feel about the relationship and how it can be maintained if that is what the couple want.

Practical and other skills

It is agreed that David has made more progress than was anticipated. When he goes to college, this ought to be developed further.

Financial support

David will become entitled to Social Security benefits. Applications need to be made and decisions made about his access to this money.

Health

The adult-services care manager says that his service cannot pay for David's glasses. Children's services agree to pay.

Contingency plan

It cannot be guaranteed that David will settle at college or in his new placement. Plans ought also to be begun for David's long-term future.



Brian Smith

● Background information

Brian is 16 years old. He is a young British white man. He is subject to a care order. He is the only child of Marie, 32, and her previous partner, James, 51. Marie and James met whilst they were living in a residential home for people with learning disabilities. Before Brian was born, Marie and James moved into a flat of their own with floating support provided by the Social Services Department.

Despite the support, Brian was placed on the child-protection register at the age of one year. James left the family home and moved into a hostel. The Social Services Department continued their support to Marie, and her care of him improved. He remained at home until the age of eight. He was however made the subject of a care order.

Marie had a stroke when Brian was eight. She was in hospital for three months, during which time Brian lived with foster carers. When Marie came out of hospital, she could no longer live independently and moved into a residential unit. Brian stayed at the foster carers, but they were unable to care for him on a long-term basis. At age nine he moved to the home of Alison Swaine, a single permanent foster carer. He had regular contact with his first foster carer and visited his mother regularly.

When 14, Brian committed an indecent assault upon another male pupil of the same age at his high school, and was charged with the offence. The word quickly spread around school and Brian could no longer attend. He was excluded from school by the school Governors, at the request of the victim's parents.

Living close to the school, Alison and Brian were targeted by local youths. She felt she could no longer protect Brian or come to terms with his offence, and asked for him to be placed elsewhere. Brian was placed in residential care just after his 15th birthday.

At 15, Brian was charged with and convicted of another indecent assault, and was given a 12-month supervision order. He refused to attend the school close to his children's home and was bullied by the other young person who lived there. Brian was very unhappy, spending less and less time at home, despite the efforts of his key worker, Sally, who developed a programme of daytime activities with him.

He was reported as a missing person 21 times in one month. His social worker made an application for a secure accommodation order on the grounds that he was not adhering to his supervision-order conditions and was at risk of significant harm. Whilst in secure accommodation, he was contacted by Peter, his Personal Advisor from the leaving-care team.

Brian was released from secure after three months. He refused to return to his children's home and ran away immediately. Brian is now on the Sexual Offenders Register.



Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan

You are Peter, Brian's Personal Advisor. Brian has returned to the residential unit, and you have to carry out a Needs Assessment and prepare a Pathway Plan.

QUESTIONS

- 1** How might you attempt to engage with Brian?
- 2** How might you provide care for him that he will accept?
- 3** Whose help might you seek?



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Offending behaviour support

As a Schedule 1 offender Brian could be referred to a specialist service from, for example, the NSPCC. This service will be an individual and group-work programme offered to young people who sexually harm other young people. Prior to Brian's court appearance, the Youth Offending Team (YOT) and the NSPCC should have agreed this package.

Personal support

Despite his difficulties, Brian has a number of positive relationships, with his former foster carer and his key worker. Brian should be asked to decide who he would like to be his main contact. As a newly introduced Personal Advisor, it is not reasonable to expect it to be you straightaway.

Accommodation

Brian is not happy at the children's home; yet he is vulnerable and on a care order. He should be asked what would help him stay there, perhaps financial or other incentives.

Education, training and employment

Brian is reaching the statutory school-leaving age. Options for alternative education or training can be discussed with him. A Connexions advisor should be involved in this.

Family and social relationships

His contact with his mother appears to have lapsed recently. He may want to renew his relationship with his mother and track his family, if not now at some point in the future.

Practical and other skills

The Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan should address Brian's practical skills. He will quite likely be living more independently soon.

Financial support

Financial support given to Brian will follow allowances to looked-after young people. He might be offered rewards for following the Pathway Plan drawn up with him.

Health

The Needs Assessment should consider Brian's health needs, and the Pathway Plan should ensure at a minimum that Brian has access to a General Practitioner and dentist.

Contingency plan

Despite your efforts, it is far from certain that Brian will return and stay at the residential unit. With him and the other individuals in his life, alternatives should be discussed and other suitable accommodation investigated.



Review of Pathway Plan

It is six months later. Despite your efforts Brian ran away from the children's home.

Brian slept rough, sleeping in skips and on the street. He began picking up men in the red-light area of the city, and sometimes stayed at their houses, stealing their money and credit cards and hoping the men would not report it. Brian lived like this for six months. He did not attend any appointments with the YOT, and did not meet any of the conditions of his order. A warrant was issued for his arrest.

You tried to contact him through Streetreach, a project for young men and women involved in the sex industry, and also through St Joseph's homeless persons project, but to no avail.

Brian has arrived in your office having been badly beaten by one of the men he picked up. He told you he has been using heroin for two months.

You have to carry out a review of his Pathway Plan.

QUESTIONS

- 1** How do you respond to the new situation?
- 2** Whom else should you involve in the review?
- 3** What other agencies ought you to involve?



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Offending behaviour support

Brian has not been charged with any other offences. He needs to continue with the support offered by the YOT and the NSPCC. This may be a condition of his remaining out of custody. Both agencies are keen to re-engage Brian in this support to avoid a custodial sentence.

Personal support

Brian has come to your office, so is asking for something from you. Only he can decide whose support he would like. The various alternatives can be discussed with him.

Accommodation

The immediate need is for Brian to have somewhere to stay now. If he is not willing to return to the residential unit, a hostel will be the next best option. It is not likely that bed and breakfast would be regarded as suitable in this case. A long-term plan needs to be agreed with Brian if some immediate stability can be achieved.

Education, training and employment

Although this area has not been forgotten, you and Brian may decide that it is unrealistic to make definite plans until he has stable accommodation.

Family and social relationships

Brian has said that he wants to see his mother. You agree to find out whether this is possible.

Practical and other skills

Brain has had to acquire survival skills. More specific independent-living skills can wait while his accommodation is sorted out.

Financial support

Brain is still looked after, so the local authority should meet his financial needs. An assessment of his financial needs should be carried out. The fact that he cannot claim Social Security benefits makes him particularly vulnerable. With Brian you should agree how he will be given financial support. Doing this via your office may be a way of ensuring you keep in touch. In light of his heroin habit, one option may be for the two of you together to buy his food and other necessities. You may want to offer him incentives to keep to the plan.

Health

Brain has serious health needs, both in relation to his prostitution and his heroin habit. You should discuss with him the possibility of entering a detox programme, and offer him counselling and practical advice about safer sex. Even though you are taking measures to prevent his involvement in prostitution, there is no guarantee that this will work.



17-year-old eligible young person

Brian is now 17. He has visited his mother at her residential home twice, but was refused entry the second time because he appeared to be high on drugs. He has found a place to stay in a shared flat with a 19-year-old girl, who is also a heroin addict and prostitute. He doesn't want you to know where he lives as he thinks you will shop him to the police.

He has phoned you for help with money, and says he'll meet you once a week in town.

Brian's physical health is deteriorating, and Streetreach are keeping in touch with him through their collection nighttime outreach service.

Brian has also phoned Sally, his former key worker, and told her where he is living and that he would consider detox, if it were somewhere safe where he wouldn't be bullied.

QUESTIONS

- 1 How do you deal with Brian's request that you not know where he lives?
- 2 What financial support can you offer?

Prepare a new Pathway Plan.



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Personal support

Again after a period of avoiding contact, Brian has decided to contact both you and Sally, his original key worker. You may decide that because Sally and Streetreach know where he lives, you will agree for the time being to his request that you not know. It is more important that you are able to provide the help that is needed. The YOT will have to be informed that he is still in breach of a care order.

Accommodation and health

You have already investigated the possibility of a detox programme, and were told that there would be about a six-month waiting list. You have a duty to maintain Brian, an eligible young person on a care order, in suitable accommodation. You do not consider his current accommodation to be suitable, but are aware that all other efforts to provide accommodation for Brian have been unsuccessful. You may agree that he can live where he is until the detox programme becomes available, but you want Brian to agree to maintain regular contact with you, Sally, Streetreach and his YOT worker.

Education, training and employment and practical skills

It is agreed to leave these for the time being.

Family and social relationships

Brian wants contact with his mother, but has not gone about this appropriately. You agree with him that you will facilitate contact with his mother, but he must not go to the residential home. You do not know what his relationship is with the younger woman he is living with. You decide that this is not necessarily relevant at the moment.

Financial support

The previous arrangement by which Brian had to come to see you to get money did not work. As you still have a responsibility to support him with living and accommodation expenses, you discuss with him the best way to provide him with money, perhaps through Streetreach or Sally. If he has to pay rent, you say that you want to pay the rent directly to the landlord. If he will not agree to this, you may give Brian cheques made payable to the landlord.

Contingency plan

Given past experience, every aspect of the new plan should have a contingency plan built in.



Former relevant young person

Brian is nearly 19.

Brian completed his detox programme and is now drug-free. He moved into the community-support placement offered by the detox unit, where he can stay for three months.

His support to develop independent living skills is focussing upon positive choices and self-esteem. The unit staff team – mainly Jason, his link worker, who feels it is early days for Brian – voice concerns about Brian’s vulnerability and his ability to protect himself. Brian is facing many new challenges as his life becomes more settled, these include:

- Managing on a limited budget that is not subsidised by illegal means or by being sexually exploited
- ‘Catching up’ on time within a supportive environment, where he can explore options without being viewed as a failure
- Continuing to remain drug-free and taking up the support offered by the project, which currently includes a confidential counselling service and floating support 14 hours a day, seven days a week
- Taking part in education, training or employment to catch up with the time he has missed, taking into consideration his schedule/status
- Not committing any further offences and behaving in an appropriate way with young people his own age
- Being in a community setting and adhering to the restrictions placed on him as a sex offender.

QUESTIONS

- 1** As Brian’s Personal Advisor what support do you need to co-ordinate for him?
- 2** What appropriate options can you offer him when his community-support placement ends?

Carry out a review of Brian’s Pathway Plan.



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Personal support

Many people will have to be involved in his future planning and support. He will keep in touch with you and Sally. Others include the outreach worker from the detox unit, his Probation Officer, his Connexions advisor and Streetreach. A detailed plan will have to be drawn up of the type of support, who will be undertaking the support, the frequency of contact by each person, and the number of hours of floating support required. Support needs to be available seven days a week.

Accommodation

When Brian leaves the community-support placement, he will need to live somewhere where he receives support and a high level of supervision.

Education, training and employment

Brian will need the specialist advice of his Connexions advisor. His future education and training will need a holistic, co-ordinated approach, linking with his pathway planning and an assessment of additional learning and social needs. Options may include college courses, New Deal training or further education, again taking into consideration his schedule/status.

Family and social relationships

Supervised contact with his mother may help Brian's recovery. Brian's contact with friends from his previous life will have to be the subject of careful consideration.

Practical and other skills

The community-support placement and his future placement should focus on Brian's desire to lead a healthy lifestyle and develop the skills he needs to enable him to do so.

Financial support

Brian will be receiving Job Seeker's Allowance and Housing Benefit. This may change if he wants to attend college full time, in which case he may have to rely on the Social Services Department. If he joins a New Deal scheme, he will receive a training allowance. He may have additional needs that the local authority would meet under their C(LC)A duties to provide general assistance and to assist with education, training and employment.

Health

He has ongoing health needs, which should be the subject of regular consultation with the medical staff at the detox unit. His previous activities as a prostitute have exposed him to other health risks, such as HIV, and he should be counselled to have an HIV test if he has not already done so.

Contingency plan

Brian is still in a vulnerable situation. Plans should be made that address the possibility that he might not remain drug-free.



Elani Osman

● Background information

Elani is a young man aged nearly 16. He arrived in the U.K. unaccompanied when he was 14. His family still live in Kosovo. He is of Muslim descent. He was brought to the Social Services Department by a friend of his father's, whose address he was given before he left Kosovo. Elani has a mobile phone number for him and you think he has spoken to him in the past, but he doesn't talk about him.

He does not know where his family is. His father disappeared and his mother and brother and sister fled to Albania shortly before he was sent to the U.K.

He was accommodated by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act, and placed in a residential unit, where he has lived ever since. There are six other young people living in the home, one of whom is also Kosovan.

When Elani arrived he spoke no English and refused to speak to anyone except an interpreter who got to know him very well. He did not like going out and was afraid of being left on his own. He would say nothing about the circumstances of his family or his journey to the U.K.

He has applied for refugee status, and his case is being dealt with by a local solicitor.

In the past six months Elani has started to be more communicative, but still talks very little about his life at home. There has been no contact with his family. Elani has a SAL document, proving he has applied for refugee status, but there has been no contact from the Home Office or solicitor since then.

Six months ago Elani started going to school. Since then his English has improved a great deal. The school says that he is very bright but has missed too much education to consider taking GCSEs.

Elani has said that he is interested in animals and misses having livestock around now that he is living in a city.

The staff at the home say Elani is better than he was, but he still gets frightened very easily, often shuts himself in his room, and wakes up a lot at night.

He has no contacts among the local Kosovan community, which is small. He is not a practising Muslim, and has shown no inclination to get involved in religious life.

Many of these issues have been discussed in previous reviews, but little progress has been made with them.



Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan

You are Elani's Social Worker, and it is expected that you will also be his Personal Advisor under the Children (Leaving Care) Act. You have been told that his Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan under the Act are due at the same time as his next statutory review. A member of the leaving-care team will be present.

QUESTIONS

- 1** What is Elani's status under the Children (Leaving Care) Act?
- 2** What are your responsibilities now?
- 3** What issues will have to be dealt with in the Needs Assessment?
- 4** Are there particular issues which relate to Elani's status as an asylum seeker?
- 5** Who else should be involved in the review?

Prepare a Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan.



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Eligibility

Elani is an eligible young person.

Personal support

Elani would benefit from contact with someone from his own background. The worker from the leaving-care team says that a Kosovan youth worker may be able to spend time with him. He might take him out for social visits and trips, and arrange for Elani to volunteer at a local city farm. Elani may need an interpreter on occasion.

Accommodation

It is agreed that Elani will remain in the residential unit as long as he needs to, at least until his refugee status is resolved.

Education

Elani's school said he can attend beyond his GCSEs. They suggest he receive extra help with English and extra tuition in most subjects to help him reach GCSE standards. Plans for his education beyond 16 need to be made.

Family and social relationships

It is agreed to ask the Red Cross to try making contact with Elani's mother and siblings.

Practical and other skills

Elani needs to start to learn some practical skills and to deal with money. The residential unit agree to include him in the chores that the other older residents have to do and to allow him more control over his pocket money and clothes money.

Financial support

Elani gets pocket money in the residential unit.

Health

There are concerns about Elani's fears and nightmares. You agree to investigate options for trauma counselling as a first step.

Race, culture and religion

It is agreed to make contact with the local Kosovan Muslim community to investigate options for community support. You will discuss with Elani whether he would like to be introduced to the local mosque.

Legal

A person is named to link with the solicitor.

Contingency plan

Longer-term plans must take account of the possibility of different outcomes to Elani's asylum application.



Review of Pathway Plan

Six months have passed since the Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan. Elani is still living in the residential unit. Elani is now the oldest young person in the unit.

The Red Cross have failed to find his family. Due to a mix up at the residential home, Elani was told this without an interpreter present, so he ended up receiving the letter without adequate support being given. He seems less trustful of staff now.

There have been difficulties police-checking the man who brought him to Social Services, so no further contact has been encouraged.

Elani is not happy at the residential unit. He believes that he is too old to be living there, but he has not shown much interest in looking after himself. He does not think that he should be doing his own chores and prefers for the staff to do everything for him.

He has been receiving extra tuition in English from a private tutor. Although he is happy with this, he is not happy at school. He says he cannot see the point of carrying on and would prefer to be working.

The Children & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) have been very slow at assessing Elani for counselling or other help, and it has not happened yet. He is still unable to discuss events prior to his leaving Kosovo and has become more rather than less withdrawn as time has passed.

Elani was introduced to the Kosovan youth worker, but after meeting twice he said he did not like him and refused to see him any more. Elani has not taken up suggestions that he make contact with other young Kosovans.

Elani has received exceptional leave to remain (ELR) until he is 18. He is confident that his application will ultimately be successful because other people he has heard of have been granted refugee status.

The local authority policy is that the leaving-care team will take over responsibility for Elani and provide the Personal Advisor if Elani moves to semi-independent accommodation and ceases to be looked after. You call a review of Elani's Pathway Plan to discuss the present situation and available options.

QUESTIONS

- 1** How should you be advising Elani now?
- 2** How can you make progress on the issues agreed in the first Pathway Plan?
- 3** What other agencies should be involved in the planning?



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Personal support

Elani does not have one person with whom he has a close relationship. This is a serious concern. A plan needs to be made about who is the most appropriate person to take the lead in supporting him. He needs to be reassured that everything that can be done to resolve his situation will be.

Accommodation

In the short term Elani agrees with you that he should remain at the residential unit. However, efforts will be made for him to develop independence skills.

Education

If Elani wants to work, he will have to receive permission from the Home Office. You agree to make this application whilst consulting a Careers advisor about possible work or training options. In the meantime he will have to remain at school.

Family and social relationships

The Red Cross is asked to continue their efforts to contact his family. It is a concern that will have to be discussed with Elani that he has little contact with other Kosovan people. His Personal Advisor agrees to continue discussing this. Elani may change his mind but not feel able to say so.

Practical and other skills

The residential unit have agreed to make opportunities for this.

Financial support

If Elani moves to a semi-independent unit, the local authority will be responsible for his accommodation and living expenses until he is 18. An assessment of his financial needs should take place.

Health

The continuing concern about Elani's emotional health needs urgent attention.

Race, culture and religion

Further efforts need to be made to give Elani every opportunity to have contact with other Kosovan and Muslim individuals and agencies.

Legal

There needs to be regular contact with Elani's solicitor and the Refugee Council Panel of Advisors. Elani needs to be aware that the success of his application for refugee status is not guaranteed.

Contingency plan

The possibility of his not being able to stay in the U.K. must be considered in long-term plans.



Relevant young person

Elani is now 17. He has moved out of the residential unit into semi-independent accommodation.

You are still concerned about his unwillingness to look after himself. He is still depressed. He does not cook or keep his room clean. He is not interested in getting to know the staff of the project, and he keeps himself apart from the other young people. He has, however, made a relationship with a worker from a local refugee organisation.

Elani received permission to work. He left school, and has been encouraged by his Connexions advisor to enrol on a college course in horticulture. He is going to this, but has found the work experience in a local garden centre very hard. Although his English is now quite good, he does not communicate with colleagues or customers, and his employer is threatening to ask him to leave.

He is worried about his future. He has not heard about the final outcome of his asylum claim. There has been no success in tracing his mother. Someone has told him that when he becomes 18, he could be sent to another part of the country to live.

He has been offered counselling for his feelings about his past and present situation. He went to the therapy twice, but will only go if someone goes with him. This has not always been possible, so he has missed a number of sessions. You feel there is a danger that he will stop going altogether.

QUESTIONS

- 1** What are your responsibilities?
- 2** What financial help ought to be available to Elani in this situation?
- 3** What is likely to happen to Elani when he becomes 18? What NASS (National Asylum Seekers Service) accommodation is available in your area?
- 4** What can you be doing for Elani now to make his situation more optimistic?

Review the Pathway Plan.



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Personal support

Given the difficulty Elani has had making relationships with adults, the worker from the refugee organisation should be included in all planning and this relationship used as a springboard for other positive relationships.

Accommodation

Elani's position when he becomes 18 needs to be clarified. An application to NASS must be made at least a month before he becomes 18, with a covering letter saying that he is a care leaver and he is in suitable accommodation at present. If you are in an area where dispersal normally takes place, this ought not to happen to care leavers. Contact a NASS regional manager to explain the situation. Your role may depend on whether there is an adult asylum-seeker team in your local authority. Difficulties Elani is having in his present accommodation need to be discussed with him and the staff. Whether he is entitled to permanent accommodation when he turns 18 will depend on his refugee status then.

Education

You agree to contact the manager at the garden centre and his tutor at college to discuss with Elani how he can engage with his work better.

Family and social relationships

It is agreed that the efforts already made to trace Elani's family and develop friendships will be continued. The refugee-organisation worker agrees to encourage him to make more contacts with others and help him do this.

Practical and other skills

It is agreed that Elani will find it difficult to look after himself better until he feels better about himself. The attention should be focused on his self-esteem.

Financial support

Planning needs to be made for when Elani is 18. Whether he remains in accommodation arranged by you or by NASS, he will receive vouchers and cash amounting to £31.95 from NASS if he has no other income. However, you can also give him financial help such as expenses for work, travel and his therapy if that is continuing. If he is in accommodation paid for by Social Services, NASS will contribute to the cost.

Health

You agree to continue offering the therapy, and it is decided who should accompany him until he is more comfortable with it.

Race, culture and religion

This continues to be a priority.

Contingency plan

Different plans for the possible outcomes are still needed.



Former relevant young person

Elani is now 18. When he became 18, he moved to accommodation provided by NASS, where he met with other asylum seekers, who resented the fact that he was receiving help from Social Services on top of the vouchers provided by NASS.

After two months living on vouchers, during which he got very depressed and did not use the skills he learned in the semi-independent unit, Elani got a full-time job at a garden centre. Although he is only paid on the minimum wage, this has made him feel much better about himself.

He has just heard from the Home Office that he has been given ELR for a further four years. This means that he can now be nominated for a permanent flat.

Elani now has more contact with other Kosovans in the area, and has joined a basketball team set up by the refugee organisation.

He has a girlfriend, who is a local young woman from a Catholic background. He does not see this as a problem, but her parents refuse to accept the relationship.

Elani has been attending his therapy and wants to continue with it now that he has become aware of its value.

He is asking for the continued involvement of his Personal Advisor because he does not feel able to continue becoming more independent without support.

QUESTIONS

- 1 How can you continue to support Elani?
- 2 How can you plan for his long-term future?



SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Personal support

You agree with Elani the form your continued support will take. You and your manager agree the frequency of contact after he moves to his flat. You and Elani make similar agreements with others.

Accommodation

You make an application for a permanent council flat. Elani can stay in NASS accommodation only for two weeks after further ELR is granted, so another place is needed in the meantime.

Education, training and employment

Elani seems to be settled in his job for now. He may, however, want more education now, or to return to education full time in the future. You explain the local authority's policy on supporting former relevant young people in further and higher education.

Family and social relationships

You are concerned no further efforts to make contact with his family were made. You agree to ask the Red Cross to try again.

Practical and other skills

You discuss with Elani the further help he will need. Whilst living in NASS accommodation, he has not been responsible for his bills. You agree to explain the different outgoings he will have in his flat and help him prepare a budget.

Financial support

You explain to Elani the setting-up-home allowance he will receive. He may have other financial needs. When he gets his flat, he will not be very much better off than on benefits. You may be able to guarantee an income that will make working worthwhile through a top-up. You also agree to continue to pay for his therapy.

Race, culture and religion

You are reassured that Elani is now making contact with individuals and agencies from his own community. You offer to discuss the difficulties he is having with his girlfriend's family if he wants to.

Health

You agree to pay so Elani can continue his therapy.

Legal

You ask his solicitor to explain the current situation and what might happen in four years' time.

Contingency plan

It is probable that you will not be in contact with Elani in four years' time. You need to ensure that he is aware that he might not get refugee status, and help him prepare for such an outcome.

Needs Assessment & Pathway Plan Form

Heading	Assessment of Need	Pathway Plan Action
1. Personal support		
2. Accommodation		

Needs Assessment & Pathway Plan Form – *continued*

Heading	Assessment of Need	Pathway Plan Action
3. Education, training and employment		
4. Family and social relationships		

Needs Assessment & Pathway Plan Form – *continued*

Heading	Assessment of Need	Pathway Plan Action
5. Practical and other skills		
6. Financial support		

Needs Assessment & Pathway Plan Form – *continued*

Heading	Assessment of Need	Pathway Plan Action
7. Health needs		
8. Race, culture and religion		

Needs Assessment & Pathway Plan Form – *continued*

Heading	Assessment of Need	Pathway Plan Action
9. Contingency plans		

section 3
THE MODULES

LAW AND POLICY

module 1

The policy context

AUDIENCE: Multi-agency audience




LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **Knowledge:** Participants understand the Government's agenda on tackling social exclusion and improving education and health outcomes
- **Skills:** Participants are able to identify the roles and responsibilities of Government agencies that impact on care leavers and apply them to their work
- **Values:** Participants work in ways that reflect the importance of corporate parenting, partnership and inter-agency co-operation in meeting the needs of care leavers

Module 1 includes:

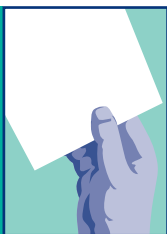
Handout:	The policy context
OHP 1A:	Learning outcomes
OHP 1B:	Relevant policy and guidance
OHP 1C:	Relevant central government agencies

Suggested time allocations:

Introduction and learning outcomes (OHP 1A)		5 min.
Presentation (Handout; OHP 1B & OHP 1C)		30 min.
Discussion and clarification		10 min.

Suggested materials and references:

Local Children's Services Plan, Health Improvement Plan, Quality Protects Management Action Plan – whichever documents have the best description of local agencies working with Social Services to support young people in and leaving care; see also Modules 8, 9 and 10: Health, Education and Accommodation



The policy context

Children and young people in and leaving care

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 is based on the Government consultation document, *Me, Survive, Out There? – New Arrangements for Young People Living In and Leaving Care* (July 1999). It enacts commitments made within the White Paper, *Modernising Social Services* (1998), and *The Government's Response to the Children's Safeguards Review* (1998). The Act realises two fundamental policy objectives: young people should not leave care until they are ready to do so, and leaving care should not mean the withdrawal of personal support.

The Act recognises that different approaches have been developed to the delivery of services to young people leaving care. Many local authorities have developed specialist services for care leavers. There are various models, including those where the local authority provides the service "in house" and others where the services are bought in from the voluntary sector. The principle that preparation for leaving care is to be regarded as an integral part of any care placements from the outset should underpin the development of specialist services.

The Children (Leaving Care) Act exists in a wider policy context of work to secure a better future for both care leavers and other young people. It is part of the Government's wider programme to modernise public services, improve inter-agency working, strengthen family life, reduce social exclusion, tackle youth crime, and reform the welfare state.

1. Quality Protects Programme

In September 1998, the Secretary of State for Health launched 'Quality Protects,' a three-year programme (now extended to March 2004) to improve children's services. It set out eleven objectives for children's social services, including the following:

Objective 4: To ensure that children looked after gain maximum life chance benefits from educational opportunities, health care and social care.

Objective 5: To ensure that young persons leaving care, as they enter adulthood, are not isolated and participate socially and economically as citizens.

In relation to looked-after children, the programme emphasised the importance of local authorities improving their performance as corporate parents. The Quality Protects Programme included payment of a Children's Special Grant (from the Social Services Modernisation Fund), and one of the six priorities for use of the grant money was increasing support for care leavers. The grant was also designed to assist local authorities in taking steps to prevent the inappropriate discharge from care of young people at 16 and 17.



2. Social Services and health and education

In September 1998, the Department of Health issued *National Priorities Guidance for Modernising Health and Social Services*. The lead priority for children's welfare is: "To promote and safeguard the welfare of socially excluded children, and particularly of children looked after by local authorities." The Guidance set targets to improve the level of education, training and employment of looked-after young people. In addition, the Beacon Council Scheme was established, and helping care leavers was set as the Social Services priority for the first year of the scheme. Improving leaving-care services was further supported by the publication in July 2000 of *Getting it Right: Good Practice in Leaving Care Resource Pack*. *NHS Plan* (July 2000) targets include improving the level of education, training and employment outcomes for care leavers aged 19 (also a Connexions Service target), and improving the educational attainment of children and young people in care. *Work*, expected to take two years, has recently begun on a Children's National Service Framework.

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires local education authorities to produce Education Development Plans setting out key targets and how they will be met, including the National Priorities Guidance target for looked-after young people. Based on the Act, the Standards Fund was introduced, with ring-fenced funds for the education of looked-after young people.

3. Inter-agency co-operation and the assessment framework

Wider policy and practice guidance on inter-agency working to protect children is contained within *Working Together to Safeguard Children – A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children* (1999). Inter-agency work to promote and safeguard the welfare of children is supported by the new guidance on assessment, the *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families* (2000), which will help local authorities make sound professional judgements based on evidence.

New Children and Young Persons Strategic Partnerships are multi-agency strategic bodies that will increasingly take over the responsibility for children's services planning. They will have to include a multi-agency strategy for care-leaving services in their strategic plans. In the rare cases where local authorities do not form such Strategic Partnerships, the authorities will still be under a statutory duty to produce Children's Services Plans.

4. Voluntary organisations

Inter-agency co-operation recognises links with the voluntary sector, particularly in this area of work. A substantial number of leaving-care schemes in the U.K. is provided or jointly funded in partnership with voluntary organisations.



5. Integrated Children's System

The Integrated Children's System will provide an assessment, planning, intervention and reviewing model for all children in need under the Children Act 1989. Its development will bring together the Assessment Framework and Looking After Children System, so that the dimensions in the Assessment Framework will be common to work with all children in need and their families. It will also include pathway planning under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. The Integrated Children's System is designed to ensure that assessment, planning and decision-making lead to good outcomes for children. The Integrated Children's System will set out what information will be collected when working with children in need, including those looked after away from home, children for whom the plan is adoption, and care leavers.

6. Related social policy initiatives

The broader Government agenda of tackling social exclusion and improving educational achievement and employment opportunities incorporates a number of policy initiatives with implications for children and young people in and leaving care.

These include a range of Social Exclusion Unit reports in relation to youth homelessness, young people excluded from education, training and employment, teenage parenthood, and the development of the Connexions Service.

The Connexions Service aims to establish a comprehensive service for all children and young people between the age of 13 and 19, including looked-after children. Connexions is being implemented in a phased way as from April 2001. Useful documents, available on the Connexions website (www.connexions.gov.uk), include the *Planning Guidance Document* (DfEE 2000) and the *Guidance on Personal Advisers* (DfEE [now DfES] 2000).

The New Deal for young people, implemented in 1998, is aimed at young people aged 18–24 who are unemployed. (See www.dfes.gov.uk/secondchances) It aims to support these young people in finding work or an appropriate training scheme or getting into a voluntary scheme.

Other relevant documents include the joint DfEE/DH *Guidance on the Education of Children and Young People in Public Care (2000)*, the DH *Draft Guidance on Promoting the Health of Looked After Children (1999)* and the DETR (now DTLR) *Revisions to the Code of Guidance on parts VI and VII of the Housing Act 1996*. The latter of these, currently in draft, says:

In the Housing Policy Statement (The Way Forward for Housing, December 2000), the Government proposed to extend the priority need categories of homeless people to include 16 and 17 year olds; care leavers aged 18 to 21; and applicants who are vulnerable as a result of an institutionalised background or as a result of fleeing domestic violence or harassment.



The DTLR recently completed a consultation exercise on the extension of homelessness 'priority need' categories – the draft Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2001.

The Supporting People programme will provide support services to a wide range of vulnerable people. Through working partnerships with local government, service users and support agencies, the programme is designed to promote straightforward, cost-effective and reliable housing-related solutions that complement available care services and support independent living. It will support young people leaving care to prepare for and move toward independence. (See www.dtlr.gov.uk)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Knowledge:**

Participants understand the Government's agenda on tackling social exclusion and improving education and health outcomes

- **Skills:**

Participants are able to identify the roles and responsibilities of Government agencies that impact on care leavers and apply them to their work

- **Values:**

Participants work in ways that reflect the importance of corporate parenting, partnership and inter-agency co-operation in meeting the needs of care leavers

RELEVANT POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- **Quality Protects Programme (1998)**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children – A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (1999)**
- **Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (2000)**
- **Connexions Planning Guidance Document and Guidance on Personal Advisers (2000)**
- **DfEE (now DfES)/DH Guidance on the Education of Children and Young People in Public Care (2000)**
- **DETR (now DTLR) Code of Guidance on Parts VI and VII, Housing Act 1996**
- **DH Draft Guidance on Promoting the Health of Looked After Children (1999)**

RELEVANT CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Housing

- Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR) (was DETR)

Education, training & employment

- Department for Education and Skills (DfES) (was DfEE)

Health

- Department of Health

Refugees & asylum seekers

- Home Office

Financial support

- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) (was DSS)

Youth justice

- Home Office

The legal framework

AUDIENCE: Multi-agency audience





LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **Knowledge:** Participants understand the legal framework for local authority responsibilities to care leavers
- **Skills:** Participants are able to identify who is eligible for what services under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and who is responsible for providing the services
- **Values:** Participants work in ways that recognise the principles of the Children Act 1989 and further the purpose and aims of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000

Module 2 includes:

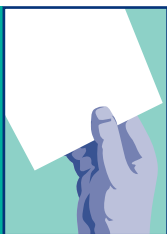
Handout:	The legal framework
OHP 2A:	Learning outcomes
OHP 2B:	Key points
OHP 2C:	Purpose of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
OHP 2D:	Main provisions of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
OHP 2E:	Who is entitled to services under the Children (Leaving Care) Act?
OHP 2F:	What services are young people entitled to?
Exercise:	Eligibility
Case Studies:	Do Exercise 1 of each case study

Suggested time allocations:

Introduction and learning outcomes (OHP 2A)		5 min.
Presentation (Handout; OHPs 2B–2F)		30 min.
Exercise in small groups		15 min.
Feedback & discussion		40 min.

Suggested materials and references:

Local policies and procedures concerning who is eligible for what leaving-care services; Children Act 1989; Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and Regulations & Guidance



The legal framework

Introduction: The Children Act 1989 remains the general legal framework for care leavers

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and its associated Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Regulations and Guidance provide care leavers with important new entitlements designed to improve their chances in life. However, apart from section 6, which deals with income support and other state benefits, the Children (Leaving Care) Act accomplishes this simply by amending and supplementing the leaving-care provisions of the Children Act 1989. Thus, the Children Act 1989 remains the general legal framework for young people leaving care. Keeping this in mind should make it easier to understand and use effectively the new leaving-care provisions.

A general knowledge and understanding of the 1989 Act is also necessary because it affects virtually all aspects of a child's passage into, through and out of the care system. Therefore, before looking at the new provisions, we should review briefly the underlying principles of the Children Act as well as some definitions and provisions of the 1989 Act and Regulations that are relevant to care leavers.

The Children Act 1989

On 14 October 1991, the Children Act 1989 came into force and radically changed the law applying to the care and upbringing of children. It was described as an Act:

- to reform the law relating to children
- to provide for local authority services for children in need and others
- to amend the law with respect to children's homes, community homes, voluntary homes and voluntary organisations
- to make provision with respect to fostering, child minding and day care for young children and adoption and
- for connected purposes. [Children Act 1989]

1. Key principles of the 1989 Act that apply specifically to local authorities in relation to children looked after by them

- to safeguard and promote the child's welfare [sec. 22(3)(a)]
- to make use of services that are available for children cared for by their own parents [sec. 22(3)(b)]



- before making any decision about the child, to consult the child, taking into account his or her wishes and feelings [sec. 22(4)], and to give due consideration to his or her wishes, race, culture, religion and linguistic background [sec. 22(5)]
- to advise, assist and befriend the child with a view to promoting his or her welfare when ceased to be looked after [Sched. 2, para. 19A]
- to advise and befriend young people between the ages of 16 and 21 who are no longer looked after (as well as the power to assist them) [sec. 24A]
- to keep the child informed [Sched. 2, para. 1(2)], review the care plan at least every six months [sec. 26], and provide a procedure for making complaints [sec. 26]
- to work in partnership with families where reasonable [e.g., sec. 20(7)]
- to carry out their responsibilities to children on an inter-agency basis, as a 'corporate parent' [sec. 27].

2. Key definitions of the 1989 Act that are relevant to care leavers

- **child in need:** child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without local authority services, or their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the services, or they are disabled [sec. 17(10)]
- **looked-after child:** a child who is either in the care of a local authority under a care order, or who is provided with accommodation by a local authority [sec. 22(1)]; also covered are children or young people who are remanded into the care of a local authority [Note: although legally a child is only 'in care' or 'in the care system' if a care order has been made about them, in practice these terms are commonly used to refer to all children looked after by the local authority whether under a care order or as a result of being accommodated]
- **accommodation by a local authority:** a service provided by the local authority to enable a child who is not under a care order to be cared for away from home for a continuous period of more than 24 hours [secs. 20, 21 and 22(2)]
- **accommodation for 16-year-olds:** every local authority must provide accommodation for any child in need within their area who has reached the age of 16 and whose welfare they consider is likely to be seriously prejudiced if they do not do so [sec. 20(3)]
- **care order:** an order made by a court placing a child in the care of a local authority [sec. 31], whereby the local authority acquires shared parental responsibility



- **person qualifying for advice and assistance:** person between the ages of 16 and 21 (or older in certain cases) who at any time between the ages of 16 and 18 was looked after by a local authority or accommodated in certain ways or privately fostered, but is no longer so looked after, accommodated or fostered [sec. 24] [usually referred to as a 'care leaver', see Note after 'looked after' above]
- **care plan:** individual written plan for each looked-after child setting out the arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare [Arrangements for Placement of Children Regulations; Children Act Guidance, vol. 3].

3. Guidance to the Children Act 1989

The Guidance to the 1989 Act is still relevant to care leavers. The leaving-care sections – Volume 3, Chapter 9, and Volume 4, Chapter 7 – have been updated and removed to the Guidance to the Children (Leaving Care) Act. The material includes:

- key organisations, including the responsible local authority, voluntary organisations, Health Authority, Housing Department, and other agencies
- principles underlying preparation for leaving care
- local authority planning and policy on leaving care
- young disabled people
- the nature of preparation for leaving care
- Needs Assessment and planning
- Personal Advisers
- the delivery of services
- support and accommodation
- financial arrangements
- care leavers aged 18–21.

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 takes a new, more prescriptive approach to the local authority's responsibilities for care leavers. Now local authorities have a duty to provide services in many cases where before they had only discretion. Also, the types of services and the upper age limits for which they are responsible have been extended. However, the principle underpinning this approach is not new. It is the general Children Act principle, that local



authorities with responsibility for the welfare and protection of young people who are separated from their families should provide them with the kind of support that parents provide their children at home.

Purpose and Aims of the Children (Leaving Care) Act

The purpose of the Children (Leaving Care) Act is:

- to improve the life chances of young people living in and leaving care.

The main aims are:

- to delay young people's discharge from care until they are prepared and ready to leave
- to improve the assessment, preparation and planning for leaving care
- to provide better personal support for young people after leaving care, and
- to improve the financial arrangements for care leavers.

New local authority duties under the Children (Leaving Care) Act

- assess and meet needs
- Pathway Plans
- Personal Advisers
- assistance to achieve goals agreed in Pathway Plans
- support and accommodation
- financial support
- keep in touch.

Local authorities' Children's Special Grants for years 2001–2004 include ring-fenced budgets to assist them in carrying out their duties under the Children (Leaving Care) Act.

Who is entitled to leaving-care services?

INTRODUCTION

Under the Children (Leaving Care) Act, the entitlement of a young person to leaving-care services is determined by the category they fall into under the Act and Regulations.

Three new categories of young people have been created, and it is to these young people that the responsible local authority owes important new duties. The categories are called: '**eligible**', '**relevant**' and '**former relevant**' children.



In addition, the general category of young people who leave care after they reach the age of 16, called '**persons qualifying for advice and assistance**', has been retained in amended section 24. The local authority has limited powers, existing duties and new duties toward some of these young people.

Finally, there will be some children and young people who leave care who will not meet the eligibility criteria for any of these categories, and will therefore not be eligible for services under the Children (Leaving Care) Act. However, they might be eligible for services from the local authority under section 17 of the Children Act (provision of services for children in need) based on an assessment of their needs.

It should also be kept in mind, of course, that children and young people have entitlements to services under other legislation and programmes, such as the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act or the Connexions Service (available to all children between the ages of 13 and 19, until 25 if they are disabled). Children and young people may need assistance in obtaining such services.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility for each category is based on:

- the young person's age
- length of time looked after, and
- current care status.

1. Eligible children

- **Age:** 16 or 17 years old
- **Time Looked After:** a total period of at least 13 weeks after reaching the age of 14, and
- **Current Care Status:** currently looked after. [Sched. 2, para.19B(2); C(LC)A Reg. 3]

Notes

- The period of 13 weeks does not have to be continuous: it could be made up of shorter periods so long as they are not a planned series of short-term placements and so long as a part of the total period took place while the young person was 16 or 17 years old.
- Eligibility is not affected by other special status; for example, young people remanded into local authority care for a period of 13 weeks or more are considered 'eligible' and unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people who are looked after for at least 13 weeks are considered 'eligible'.



Not eligible children

The following group of children is **not 'eligible'**:

- Children looked after in a **planned** series of **short-term placements** (but they might be a 'person qualifying for advice and assistance', see below). 'Short term' refers to placements that are each no longer than four weeks and at the end of each one the child returns to his or her parents or someone with parental responsibility. [C(LC)A Reg. 3(3)]

This will particularly apply to young disabled people who have regular, planned periods of short-term respite care.

2. Relevant children

- **Age:** 16 or 17 years old
- **Time Looked After:** a total period of 13 weeks after reaching the age of 14, including at least one day while they were 16 or 17 (that is, they were previously 'eligible' children), and
- **Current Care Status:** no longer looked after. [sec. 23A(2)]

Notes

- Two categories of relevant children, **lone parents and disabled children**, are treated as 'relevant' for all purposes except that they will continue to be eligible for Income Support and Job Seeker's Allowance (see below).

Additional group of relevant children:

Children **detained or in hospital on their 16th birthday**

- **Age:** 16 or 17 years old
- **Time Looked After:** immediately before being detained or admitted to hospital were accommodated (i.e., not on a care order) by a local authority for a period of at least 13 weeks after reaching the age of 14, and
- **Current Care Status:** no longer looked after (may or may not still be detained or in hospital). [C(LC)A Reg. 4(2)]

Notes

- 'Detained' means detained in a remand centre, a young offender institution or a secure training centre, or any other institution pursuant to an order of a court.



- 'Hospital' means any health service hospital within the meaning of the National Health Service Act 1977, and any mental nursing home. [C(LC)A Reg. 4(4)]
- If they are the subject of a care order, rather than accommodated, they remain 'eligible' children, because they continue to be 'looked after' until they are 18 unless the care order is discharged.

Not relevant children:

The following group of children is **not 'relevant'**:

- Looked-after children who **return home successfully** to a parent or person with parental responsibility for a continuous period of six months or more will not be treated as relevant children. [C(LC)A Reg. 4(5)] Whether or not the return is 'successful' will be decided through a review at least six months after the return home. Children who return home but are still on a care order remain eligible children until and unless the care order is discharged by a court, or they reach 18 and the care order expires. Young people who are not considered relevant because they return home successfully might qualify for services from the local authority as a 'person qualifying for advice and assistance' under section 24 or as a 'child in need' under section 17. In addition, if the placement at home were afterwards to break down before their 18th birthday, they could become 'eligible' children (if they were looked after again), or 'relevant' children, following an assessment by the local authority. [C(LC)A Reg. 4(7)]

3. Former relevant children

- **Age:** 18 to 21 years old (or older if still receiving agreed services)
- **Time Looked After:** were either (a) relevant children and would be if under 18 or (b) looked after at their 18th birthday and immediately before that were eligible children (i.e., after reaching the age of 14, were looked after for a period of 13 weeks, a part of which took place while they were 16 or 17, unless they returned home successfully), and
- **Current Care Status:** no longer looked after. [sec. 23C(1)]

Notes

- Local authorities who are responsible for asylum-seeking young people who become former relevant children owe them the same duties as they do any other former relevant children. To enable this to happen, the Home Office National Asylum Support Service (NASS) has agreed that they will not seek to disperse former relevant asylum seekers, except in exceptional circumstances. (See C(LC)A 2000 Guidance, p. 15)



4. Persons qualifying for advice and assistance

- **Age:** 16 to 21 years old (or 24 if still receiving specified services)
- **Time Looked After:** for any period of time after reaching 16 but before reaching 18, they were looked after, accommodated or fostered, and
- **Current Care Status:** no longer looked after, accommodated or fostered. [sec. 24]

Notes

- The 'Time Looked After' for one group of 'persons qualifying for advice and assistance' – those persons accommodated by a Health Authority, Special Health Authority, Primary Care Trust or local education authority, or in any care home or independent hospital or in any accommodation provided by a National Health Service trust – is a consecutive period of at least three months. [sec. 24(2)(d)] However, the period of three months could have begun before the child reached the age of 16. [sec. 24(3)]
- Relevant and former relevant children meet the eligibility requirements for this category. However, because relevant and former relevant children have greater entitlements than persons qualifying for advice and assistance, this fact is not important.

Who is responsible for providing leaving-care services?

The local authority that is looking after an eligible child or who last looked after the relevant or former relevant child is the one responsible for providing him or her with services under the Children (Leaving Care) Act. For young people who were accommodated by an entity other than a local authority or were privately fostered, the responsible local authority is the one where the young care leaver is living.

It is important to keep in mind that the local authority's responsibility is a corporate one. Social Services has the lead, but it shares the responsibility with the other departments of the local authority and with its partner agencies, such as health and voluntary organisations. This is based on the Children Act's underlying principles of co-operation and partnership, as well as on section 27. Without the co-operation of all relevant agencies, the local authority's duties toward care leavers can not be fulfilled.



What leaving-care services are young people entitled to?

It has already been shown that young people's entitlement to leaving-care services depends on which category of care leaver, if any, they fall into. This section looks at each category and identifies the services to which care leavers in that category are entitled.

Eligible children

- all the provisions of the looked-after system, such as a care plan
- a Personal Adviser
- Needs Assessment, and
- Pathway Plan and review.

Relevant children

- a Personal Adviser
- Needs Assessment
- Pathway Plan and review
- maintenance and accommodation
- assistance to reach goals, such as educational ones, based on the Needs Assessment and as agreed and set out in the Pathway Plan
- general assistance and personal support
- access to the representations procedure, and
- the responsible authority must keep in touch.

Former relevant children

- a Personal Adviser
- Pathway Plan and review
- assistance with employment, education and training
- general assistance
- vacation accommodation for higher education or residential further education, if needed



- access to the representations procedure, and
- the responsible authority must keep in touch.

Persons qualifying for advice and assistance

- same as under section 24 before the Children (Leaving Care) Act
- Also, for those who were **looked after by a local authority**, the relevant authority:
 - must keep in touch
 - may assist with education and training up to the **age of 24**
 - must provide vacation accommodation if it is needed.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Knowledge:**

Participants understand the legal framework for local authority responsibilities to care leavers

- **Skills:**

Participants are able to identify who is eligible for what services under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and who is responsible for providing the services

- **Values:**

Participants work in ways that recognise the principles of the Children Act 1989 and further the purpose and aims of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000

KEY POINTS

- **Children Act 1989**
- **Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 amends leaving-care provisions of Children Act**
- **New provisions create new duties and responsibilities for local authorities**
- **Knowledge of Children Act still essential**
- **Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Regulations expand and limit the provisions of the Children (Leaving Care) Act**
- **Children Act Guidance about leaving care updated and set out in Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Guidance**

PURPOSE OF THE CHILDREN (LEAVING CARE) ACT 2000

- Improve the life chances of young people living in and leaving care

Main aims of the Act

- Delay young people's discharge from care until they are prepared and ready to leave
- Improve the assessment, preparation and planning for leaving care
- Provide better personal support for young people after leaving care
- Improve the financial arrangements for care leavers

MAIN PROVISIONS OF THE CHILDREN (LEAVING CARE) ACT 2000

- Duty to assess and meet needs
- Personal Adviser
- Pathway Plan
- Assistance to achieve goals agreed in Pathway Plan
- Support and accommodation
- Financial support
- Keep in touch
- Assistance with education, training and employment
- Vacation accommodation
- Support for young people aged 18 and over
- Representation & complaints procedure

WHO IS ENTITLED TO SERVICES UNDER THE CHILDREN (LEAVING CARE) ACT?

- Eligible children
- Relevant children
- Former relevant children
- Persons over 16 qualifying for advice and assistance

WHAT SERVICES ARE YOUNG PEOPLE ENTITLED TO?

Eligible children

- All the provisions of the looked-after system
- Personal Adviser
- Needs Assessment
- Pathway Plan and review

Relevant children

- Personal Adviser
- Needs Assessment
- Pathway Plan and review
- Accommodation, maintenance and support
- Assistance to achieve goals
- Responsible authority must keep in touch
- Representation procedure

Former relevant children

- Personal Adviser
- Pathway Plan and review
- Assistance with employment
- Responsible authority must keep in touch
- Assistance with education & training
- Assistance in general
- Vacation accommodation
- Representation procedure

Persons qualifying for advice & assistance

- Same as under sec. 24 before the C(LC)A
- Also, for those looked after by a local authority, the relevant authority:
 - must keep in touch
 - may assist with education and training up to the age of 24
 - must provide vacation accommodation, if needed



ELIGIBILITY EXERCISE

Discuss these 10 scenarios. For each one say whether the young person is eligible, relevant, former relevant, qualified for services under Sections 24, 24A and 24B, or not entitled to leaving and after-care services at all.

	Eligible	Relevant	Former relevant	S24	Not covered by Act
Andrew is 16, has lived in foster care for 5 years, but is planning to leave care quite soon.					
Belinda is 17, was accommodated for 4 years and has recently moved out of residential care into a supported-housing project. At her last review it was decided that she should no longer be looked after.					
Carla is 17, has been subject to a care order since she was nine, but is living in supported lodgings.					
David is 18, was accommodated for a total of 4 months between age 14 & 17, but is now living in his own flat.					
Elizabeth is 17, was accommodated for two months when she was 16. She has subsequently gone home to live with her parents, where she has been for more than 6 months.					
Fred is 17. He was remanded into the care of the local authority when he was 15, spent four months on remand and later was given a custodial sentence.					
Gillian is 16 and has a learning disability. She lives with her parents, but has regular respite care for one week at a time. In the last two years this has amounted to four months in total.					
Hairi is 17. He arrived in this country as an unaccompanied minor and was accommodated by the local authority. His application for refugee status has not yet been decided. He is still in foster care.					
Irene is 18. She was accommodated for 10 weeks when she was 15. She then went home but this did not work out and she returned to care when she was 16. She is now living in her own flat.					
Jason was accommodated for two years until he was 15. He was then sent to a Young Offenders Institution for 18 months. He is now 17, has been released and is living in a hostel.					
Karen is 17. She was accommodated from the age of 15, and has been living at home for the last six months. Her last review said that she should remain at home and no longer be accommodated.					



TRAINER'S NOTES

ELIGIBILITY EXERCISE

Discuss these 10 scenarios. For each one say whether the young person is eligible, relevant, former relevant, qualified for services under Sections 24, 24A and 24B, or not entitled to leaving and after-care services at all.

	Eligible	Relevant	Former relevant	S24	Not covered by Act
Andrew is 16, has lived in foster care for 5 years, but is planning to leave care quite soon.	X				
Belinda is 17, was accommodated for 4 years and has recently moved out of residential care into a supported-housing project. At her last review it was decided that she should no longer be looked after.		X			
Carla is 17, has been subject to a care order since she was nine, but is living in supported lodgings.	X				
David is 18, was accommodated for a total of 4 months between age 14 & 17, but is now living in his own flat.			X		
Elizabeth is 17, was accommodated for two months when she was 16. She has subsequently gone home to live with her parents, where she has been for more than 6 months.				X	
Fred is 17. He was remanded into the care of the local authority when he was 15, spent four months on remand and later was given a custodial sentence.		X			
Gillian is 16 and has a learning disability. She lives with her parents, but has regular respite care for one week at a time. In the last two years this has amounted to four months in total.				X	
Hairi is 17. He arrived in this country as an unaccompanied minor and was accommodated by the local authority. His application for refugee status has not yet been decided. He is still in foster care.	X				
Irene is 18. She was accommodated for 10 weeks when she was 15. She then went home but this did not work out and she returned to care when she was 16. She is now living in her own flat.			X		
Jason was accommodated for two years until he was 15. He was then sent to a Young Offenders Institution for 18 months. He is now 17, has been released and is living in a hostel.		X			
Karen is 17. She was accommodated from the age of 15, and has been living at home for the last six months. Her last review said that she should remain at home and no longer be accommodated.				X	

THE CARE EXPERIENCE

The care experience

AUDIENCE: Multi-agency audience

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **Knowledge:** Participants understand the care experience from the point of view of young people in care
- **Skills:** Participants are able to make links between the impact of the care experience on young people and the leaving-care process and apply this in helping young people
- **Values:** Participants support care leavers in ways that reflect their understanding that young people have diverse needs arising from their different care experiences

Module 3 includes:

Handout: The care experience
OHP 3A: Learning outcomes
OHP 3B: Key messages
Exercise: Interview of care leaver

Case Studies: Kellie Feeney, background information: Consider Kellie's feelings about her care experience and how it might affect her reactions to leaving care

Suggested time allocations:

Exercise: Interview



20 min.

Introduction and learning outcomes (OHP 3A)



5 min.

Presentation (Handout; OHP 3B)



10 min.

Case study exercise in small groups



20 min.

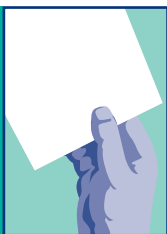
Feedback and discussion



20 min.

Suggested materials and references:

Current DH looked-after-children statistics for local area, and data from the Children's Services Plan and the QP MAP, including number of moves in care, age entering care, length of stay in care, ethnicity, disabled children; Stein & Wade 2000; Rabiee, Priestley & Knowles 2001



The care experience

Coming into care

Children and young people become 'looked after' by local authority Social Services Departments mainly because their parents are unable to care for them for a variety of reasons. They may be the victims of abuse or neglect or their parents may be overwhelmed by problems and be unable to cope. Some young people whose families have difficulties may experience problems as they grow up – getting into trouble at home or at school or experiencing mental health problems. And some young people become looked after when they arrive in the U.K. without their parents, seeking refuge from war or oppression.

Many of these young people – currently just over 58,000 – will spend a short time in care and return home. However, a significant number – just under 7,000 – will leave the care of Social Services between the ages of 16 and 18, and the majority of these young people will be expected to live independently in the community.

Being in care

Research studies (see Stein and Wade 2000 for a summary) have highlighted the diversity of the care experience and shown that care leavers are not a homogeneous group in terms of their pre-care experiences, their care histories, their needs and abilities, or their cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Care may have been valued by young people and helped them. Research evidence clearly demonstrates that placement stability, continuity of caring, positive family links, all-round preparation, a supportive and encouraging environment for study, and leaving care 'older' contribute to positive outcomes for young people. These are the essential care foundations that after-care support must build upon.

But being in care may have also contributed to other problems. Too many young people are likely to have experienced further movement and disruption during their time in care and some have been abused or ill-treated. For those in care longer term there is often a weakening of links with family, friends and neighbourhood and for some young people identity confusion stemming from incomplete information, separation and rejection. These feelings and confusions could be amplified for young black and mixed-heritage people brought up in a predominantly 'white' care system, particularly if they became detached from families and communities.

The research has also shown that many young people leaving care have lower levels of educational attainment and post-16 participation rates than young



people in the general population, and this may be due to their damaging pre-care experiences, non-attendance at school, exclusion from school, low expectations of carers and teachers, the prioritisation of welfare above educational concerns, and disruption caused by placement movement.

Young people have pointed to inadequate preparation and the limited opportunities to participate in decision-making. Also, research relating to the health needs of looked-after young people has shown inconsistencies in the maintenance of health records and in the provision of general and specialist health care.

Leaving care

Most young people, whether they are living with their own families or in foster care or a children's home, experience some problems during their journey to adulthood. Care leavers share a lot in common with other young people, but the research evidence points to some key differences.

In comparison to their peers in the general population young people leaving care have to cope with the challenges and responsibilities of major changes in their lives – in leaving foster and residential care and setting up home, in leaving school and entering the world of work, or more likely, being unemployed and surviving on benefits, and in being parents – at a far younger age than other young people.

Young disabled people leaving care may experience abrupt or delayed transitions from care due to restricted housing and employment options and inadequate support. Young black, Asian and mixed-heritage people may face additional problems due to their isolation from their families and communities as well as racism. Young asylum seekers may also face language difficulties in addition to problems relating to their status.

Leaving-care data

The most recent Government information about care leavers reveals:

- 6,800 young people, ages 16–18, left care and accommodation during 1999/2000
- Of the 6,800 young people, 4,000 (59%) were aged 16 and 17; 2,700 (39%) were aged 18; and 150 (3%), older than 18
- Of the 6,800, 56% were boys and 44% were girls
- 45% of these young people left from a foster-care placement, and 19% from a children's home
- 24% left from community placements, including lodgings, living independently or from their parents' home



- 53% of these care leavers had been looked after for more than two years
- Since 1996 there has been a drop in the total number of young people leaving care – from 8,700 to 6,800, but until this past year (1999/2000), there was an increase in the percentage of young people leaving care at ages 16 and 17 – from 51% in 1993/1994 to 67% in 1998/1999 – and a decline in the percentage leaving at age 18 or over – from 49% in 1994 to 33% in 1999.

Some key issues in helping care leavers

- Recognising each young person's unique history and journey
- Identifying what works and what contributes to positive outcomes
- Being aware of the impact of damaging pre-care and care experiences: loss, separation, placement movement and disruption, and
- Building on strengths and positive experiences.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Knowledge:**

Participants understand the care experience from the point of view of young people in care

- **Skills:**

Participants are able to make links between the impact of the care experience on young people and the leaving-care process and apply this in helping young people

- **Values:**

Participants support care leavers in ways that reflect their understanding that young people have diverse needs arising from their different care experiences

KEY MESSAGES

Coming into care

- Diverse group in terms of needs, abilities, culture, ethnicity, religion, and pre-care and care histories

Being in care

- Diverse experiences, ranging from safe and well-cared-for to abused and neglected
- Positive outcomes
- Separation and loss
- Coping with change

Key issues in helping care leavers

- Recognise each young person's unique history
- Identify what works and contributes to positive outcomes
- Be aware of the impact of damaging pre-care and care experiences
- Build on strengths and positive experiences



TRAINER'S NOTES

Interview of care leaver

This interview aims to bring to life the nature of the care experience by exposing participants to the experience of one or more care leavers. Suggested topics and questions follow, but the actual topics and specific questions should be ones that are meaningful to the young person(s) and should be prepared ahead by the trainer and young person(s) together.

1 Foster Care: What was it like?

- *How many times did you move?*
- *Was it your choice?*
- *Did moving from one place to another affect you? If so, how?*

2 Residential Care: What was it like?

- *How many homes were you in?*
- *What was good and bad about each home you were in?*
- *How well do you think you were cared for?*
- *What things in particular made living in a home different from living in a family?*

3 Education

- *How many schools did you attend?*
- *Were your carers supportive of your education?*
- *Did they attend parents evenings and read your reports?*
- *Did they help you with your homework?*
- *Did you have books or a computer in the home(s)?*

4 Health

- *Did you feel your care experience affected your health? If so, how?*
- *Did you have regular dentist appointments?*
- *Were you offered counselling?*
- *Do you think your health and fitness were given a high enough priority while you were in care?*
- *Were you made aware of sexual health issues?*

5 Leisure

- *Were you encouraged to participate in leisure activities?*
- *Were you provided with the transport, finance and equipment necessary to participate in leisure activities?*
- *Were you able to carry on the same leisure activities you were doing before you came into care?*

6 Reviews and Planning Meetings

- *Were they positive experiences? If not, why not?*
 - *Did you feel involved in the decisions that were being made?*
 - *What was good in your experiences of reviews?*
 - *What was bad in your experiences of reviews?*
-

Transitions and leaving care

AUDIENCE: Multi-agency audience

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **Knowledge:** Participants understand the process of transition to adulthood
- **Skills:** Participants are able to use their understanding to support care leavers through the transition process
- **Values:** Participants work in ways that reflect the varied experiences of diverse groups of care leavers

Module 4 includes:

Handout: Transitions and leaving care






OHP 4A: Learning outcomes

OHP 4B: Approaches to working with care leavers

Exercise: Transitions approaches

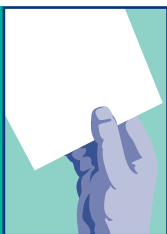
Case Studies: Consider issues of appropriate approaches to supporting the young person in Exercise 2 in each case study

Suggested time allocations:

Introduction and learning outcomes (OHP 4A):		5 min.
Presentation (Handout; OHP 4B):		15 min.
Discussion of issues		30 min.
Exercise in small groups		15 min.
Feedback and discussion		20 min.

Suggested materials and references:

DH statistics about age at leaving care; Stein & Wade 2000; Rabiee, Priestley & Knowles 2001



Transitions and leaving care

A journey to adulthood

Most young people, whether they are living with their families, in foster care or in a children's home, experience challenges during their journey to adulthood. It is a journey from a childhood status, characterised by dependency on family, school, friends and neighbourhood, to an adult status, based in part on choices such as becoming a householder, partner, parent, student and employee (see **Fig.1**). Such life-course choices, from which adult rights and responsibilities flow, are mediated by the impact of gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status and disability. Youth or 'adolescence' is a key period in this journey, a time of excitement, challenge, preparation, risk taking and change.

Transitions and leaving care

Young people leaving care face the challenge of making this transition from the role of young person in care to that of adult out of care. They share a lot with other young people during this journey. Arguments with parents or carers about school, choice of careers, loud music, close friends, and many other lifestyle issues are common. However, whilst this journey is difficult for most young people, young people in care may need additional support and help – because of their damaging pre-care experiences, or movement and disruption whilst they have been in care, or problems or difficulties they may have at home or school. In addition, they may need help with disability or emotional problems they may have.

The research evidence (see Stein and Wade 2000) suggests that it is very important for young people to have stability and continuity in their lives to give them the platform and personal confidence to experiment, make mistakes, take risks, and rise to the challenges and responsibilities of adulthood.

Becoming independent or inter-dependent?

It is a difficult and exciting journey at the same time. But it is not, as sometimes portrayed, a journey from dependence to independence, a domestic combat course! In a complex and diverse society such as ours we are all dependent on others from the most every-day, practical assistance to emotional and personal support. Reciprocity, mutuality and inter-dependence are far more relevant to our lives, and this has implications for how we help and prepare young people on their journey to adulthood.



Figure 1: *Youth Transitions Framework*

Childhood status	→	Youth status	→	Adulthood status
Dependency	→	Semi-dependent	→	Inter-dependent
School		College/training		Labour market
Child in family		Peers		Partner–parent
Parental home		Parental home/student/ transitional housing		Householder
Economically dependent		Student loan/training income		Salary/wage
Citizenship dependent		Semi-citizenship		Citizen

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Knowledge:**

Participants understand the process of transition to adulthood

- **Skills:**

Participants are able to use their understanding to support care leavers through the transition process

- **Values:**

Participants work in ways that reflect the varied experiences of diverse groups of care leavers

APPROACHES TO WORKING WITH CARE LEAVERS

PARENT

Young people need protection

Mistakes are tolerated
learning is important

Keeping in touch
is pro-active

Leaving care is
a process

All of young person's
life is the concern of
the adult

Time frames flexible

Relationships
are the key

ADULT RESPONSIBILITY

Young people are adult
with adult responsibilities

Mistakes bring
sanctions

Young people choose
level of contact

Leaving care is
an event

Adult gives
advice
as asked

Time frames fixed

Expectation is
the key

TRAINER'S NOTES

APPROACHES TO WORKING WITH CARE LEAVERS

As discussed in the Handout, during the transition from childhood to adulthood young people are torn between their need to be protected and their desire to be treated like an adult. This can be particularly difficult in the case of young people in care. This can result in their giving contradictory messages to adults who care for them. Their demand to be treated like an adult does not always match their behaviour, which seeks to be absolved from the cruel realities of adult responsibilities and expectations.

The approaches to providing care and support that workers and agencies use should reflect this paradox at the core of the adolescent experience. Agency policies and procedures and individual workers' practice should mirror this process that young people are undergoing. OHP 4B identifies some of the characteristics of two different approaches to working with young people. One is called 'Parent', the other, 'Adult Responsibility'.

General points raised by the overhead are:

- The two approaches are not absolutes, but opposite ends of a continuum
- Neither approach is right if used to the exclusion of the other
- Young people are often saying one thing, but asking for something different
- Organisations and teams have cultures favouring one approach over the other, and individual workers within teams have their own preferences for ways of working with young people. They should be encouraged to understand this and to recognise that they might on occasions have more success using another approach.

The following experience of First Key's illustrates the challenge. In a meeting between young people in care and senior managers of the local authority Social Services Department, a 21-year-old care leaver said to a manager: "When I was 16, I said to you, 'I want to be treated like an adult.' You treated me like an adult. Don't you think that was stupid?"



Transitions approaches exercise

- 1** What do you think is the culture in your team? Do you think the dominant culture tends towards parenting or adult responsibility?

- 2** Think of an individual young person you have been working with.
 - *Did you make judgements about the best approach to use with the young person?*
 - *Would a different approach have been more successful?*

Preparation for leaving care

AUDIENCE: Direct providers





LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **Knowledge:** Participants understand the importance of the process of preparing young people to leave care
- **Skills:** Participants are able to assist in the process of preparing young people to leave care
- **Values:** Participants work in an inclusive way that ensures that all young people are fully involved in gaining life skills, as a holistic and participatory process

Module 5 includes:

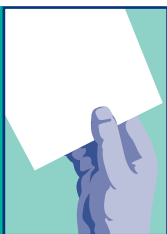
Handout:	Preparation for leaving care
OHP 5A:	Learning outcomes
OHP 5B:	Aspects to preparation for leaving care
Exercise:	Arlene Gayle case study: Identify Arlene’s preparation needs based on the elements in OHP 5B. How might her foster carer assist her in each of these aspects?
Case Studies:	Do Exercise 1 of each case study

Suggested time allocations:

Introduction and learning outcomes (OHP 5A)		5 min.
Presentation (Handout; OHP 5B)		20 min.
Exercise in small groups		40 min.
Feedback and discussion		20 min.

Suggested materials and references:

Local policies about preparation for leaving care, information for young people and others about their involvement in the preparation process; Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Regulations and Guidance



Preparation for leaving care

Preparing for life

For most young people preparation for adult life is a **gradual process** beginning in childhood and progressing with increasing age and personal development. It is also a **supported process** usually taking place in the context of the family, and it is a **participatory process** involving discussion – or arguments! – negotiation, risk taking, making mistakes and trying again. Finally, it is also **holistic in approach**, attaching equal importance to practical, emotional and inter-personal skills. This is the challenge in preparing young people for leaving care.

Preparation and leaving care

For looked-after young people the main elements of preparation are **self-care skills** – personal hygiene, diet and health, including sexual health; **practical skills** – budgeting, shopping, cooking, and cleaning; **inter-personal skills** – managing a range of formal and informal relationships, including sexual relationships; **education** – planning and supporting positive progress; and **identity** – developing a positive self-image, knowledge of and links with family and community, sexuality, and cultural knowledge and skills for young people from minority ethnic communities.

Particular attention may be necessary to meet the preparation needs of young people with learning or physical disabilities, for whom there is evidence that preparation opportunities may be overly restrictive.

Evaluations of best practice in preparing young people leaving care point to the importance of **assessment** to identify young people's needs and how they will be met; **support and participation**, involving discussion, negotiation and risk taking in the context of a **stable placement**; and the **gradual opportunity** to learn skills.

Involving young people

A key principle connecting all these different elements and processes is that young people should be fully involved in all planning and decision-making that affect their lives. This means that they should be treated as people in their own right, as active partners in the care process. Indeed, the Children Act 1989 states that children and young people should be consulted *before* any decision is made which affects their welfare, and young people's participation is central to the Children (Leaving Care) Act and accompanying Regulations and Guidance.

Providing clear, accessible information, guidebooks, consultation, and involvement in decision-making at an individual, foster-family, birth-family or group-care level will all contribute to preparation for adult life.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Knowledge:**
Participants understand the importance of the process of preparing young people to leave care
- **Skills:**
Participants are able to assist in the process of preparing young people to leave care
- **Values:**
Participants work in an inclusive way that ensures that all young people are fully involved in gaining life skills, as a holistic and participatory process

ASPECTS TO PREPARATION FOR LEAVING CARE

- **Inter-personal skills**
- **Education**
- **Identity**
- **Self-care skills**
- **Practical skills**
- **Young people fully involved**

PRACTICE UNDER THE CHILDREN ACT 1989

**As amended by the
Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000**

Role of the personal adviser

AUDIENCE: Direct providers





LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **Knowledge:** Participants understand the role of the Personal Adviser, particularly with regard to assessing the needs of young people, the pathway-planning process, the brokering of services, and the Connexions Service
- **Skills:** Participants are able to carry out the role of the Personal Adviser or assist the Adviser to carry out his or her role
- **Values:** Participants' work reflects their awareness of the diverse nature of care leavers and of the multi-agency approach necessary to meet their needs

Module 6 includes:

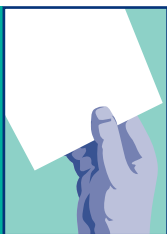
Handout: Role of the Personal Adviser
OHP 6A: Learning outcomes
OHP 6B: Role of the Personal Adviser
Q & A Exercise: The Personal Adviser role
Case Studies: Do Exercise 2 of each case study

Suggested time allocations:

Introduction and learning outcomes (OHP 6A)		10 min.
Presentation (Handout; OHP 6B)		20 min.
Q and A exercise in small groups		30 min.
Feedback and discussion		20 min.

Suggested materials and references:

Local job description for Personal Adviser and for Connexions Personal Adviser; local policy and procedure concerning the role of the Personal Adviser; induction and training materials for Personal Adviser; Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Regulations & Guidance



Role of the Personal Adviser

Introduction

Local authorities are required to appoint a Personal Adviser for eligible and relevant children and to continue the appointment for former relevant children. Children (Leaving Care) Regulation 12 sets out the adviser's functions. Young care leavers should be able to view their Personal Adviser as someone who is committed to their well being and development on a long-term basis.

Functions of the Personal Adviser

1. To provide advice (including practical advice) and support

The adviser is required to build and develop a network of support for the young person, whose needs will change as time goes on. The extent to which the Personal Adviser is the main source of advice and support will depend on the young person's individual circumstances and how much support may be available from other people, e.g., foster carers, befrienders, independent visitors, mentors, specialist-care workers and family networks. The nature and source of advice and support should be agreed and recorded in the Pathway Plan.

The adviser must be the principal point of contact in any matter relating to the Pathway Plan.

2. To be involved in assessing the young person's needs and preparing a plan to meet them (Pathway Plan)

The Personal Adviser will have a key role in the assessment and pathway-planning process, although the young person's Social Worker may continue to take responsibility for the conduct and management of the process. In that case, the Personal Adviser's role is likely to be a negotiating one, ensuring that the plan is realistic and deliverable whilst meeting assessed need.

When the young person leaves care, it is likely that the Personal Adviser will take over responsibility for updating and reviewing the Pathway Plan, although authorities may use dedicated review staff to carry out the reviews for all looked-after children and care leavers.

3. To be involved in reviewing the Pathway Plan

Pathway Plans should be reviewed at least every six months until the young person is 21 (or older if the young person is on an agreed education or training course). The Personal Adviser will have responsibility for agreeing any changes



to the Pathway Plan with the young person and the local authority. For most relevant and former relevant children, the Personal Advisor will convene the review meetings, linking with other organisations where needed, although authorities may have dedicated review staff to carry out reviews for all looked-after children and care leavers.

4. To liaise with the authority to ensure the Pathway Plan is carried out

The Personal Advisor should monitor progress in close discussion with the young person and those organisations who have been identified in the plan as required to deliver a service to the young person. The responsible authority must arrange a review if the Personal Advisor says that it is needed.

5. To co-ordinate the provision of services and to take reasonable steps to ensure that the young person makes use of such services

The Personal Advisor is expected to act as a broker to ensure that:

- the range of services identified in the Pathway Plan is agreed by those responsible for the services
- services are provided at the right time, and
- agencies understand their respective contribution.

The Personal Advisor needs to involve the young person fully in the making and reviewing of the Pathway Plan.

6. To keep informed about the young person's progress and well being

The adviser will need to monitor progress through regular contact with the young people and those agencies and individuals who are supporting them.

7. To keep written records of contact with the young person

8. To keep in touch

- The responsible authority is required to keep in touch with eligible, relevant and former relevant young people up to the age of 21 (or beyond if the young person is on an approved programme of education or training). This will normally be a role for the Personal Advisor.
- Where advisers lose touch with young people they should take reasonable steps to re-establish contact until they succeed in regaining contact with the young person.
- Advisers should be proactive in expressing interest and concern.



- Advisers will need to judge the appropriate degree of contact with young people.
- Advisers should respect the wishes of young people whilst adopting the spirit of the 'good parent' and continuing to convey an interest in the young person's well being.

Appointment

There is no prescribed professional or occupational qualification for Personal Advisers. However, they will generally require high levels of knowledge and skill to work effectively with young people living in and leaving care. Many Personal Advisers will have a qualification and/or extensive experience in working with adolescents, e.g., Social Workers, teachers or youth workers. Specialist leaving-care team staff are likely to be an important source of suitable people.

Local authorities will need to ensure that there is a range of advisers that is sufficiently wide to provide young people with a choice. Young people's wishes should be accommodated as far as possible, but the local authority must be satisfied that the person has the requisite abilities and the necessary availability. The final decision is the authority's.

Continuity of support, accessibility, and emergency support are important aspects of services that are likely to be best accommodated by advisers working as members of teams or as part of a network.

Linkages with the Connexions Service and the Careers Service

The Connexions Service aims to provide young people aged 13–19 (25 for young disabled people) with the advice, guidance, support and personal development they need to prepare them for the transition to work and adult life. It is a universal service with targeted support for vulnerable young people, who will include looked-after children and care leavers. When the young person reaches 16, it is expected that the leaving-care Personal Adviser will usually also be the Connexions Personal Adviser.

The Careers Service will be a key member of local Connexions partnerships. It provides the link between the worlds of work and further education. Local authorities will need to ensure that all young people in care receive careers advice through the Connexions Service. Personal Advisers who act also as Connexions advisers will have to ensure that young people are able to make the best use of the Careers Service.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Knowledge:**

Participants understand the role of the Personal Adviser, particularly with regard to assessing the needs of young people, the pathway-planning process, the brokering of services, and the Connexions Service

- **Skills:**

Participants are able to carry out the role of the Personal Adviser or assist the adviser to carry out his or her role

- **Values:**

Participants' work reflects their awareness of the diverse nature of care leavers and of the multi-agency approach necessary to meet their needs

ROLE OF THE PERSONAL ADVISER

- Exploring options, advising, providing practical support
- Understanding the young person's needs
- Preparing the Pathway Plan, & ensuring it is carried out
- Keeping informed about the young person's progress and well being
- Linking with the Connexions / Careers Service
- Co-ordinating the provision of services
- Maintaining written records of contact
- Keeping in touch



The Personal Adviser role: question and answer exercise

-
- Q** Which young people are by law required to have an allocated Personal Adviser?
-
- Q** What is the Personal Adviser required to do?
-
- Q** Who should be appointed Personal Advisers?
-
- Q** Who has the responsibility to appoint and train Personal Advisers?
-
- Q** Can the young person 'choose' their Personal Adviser?
-
- Q** How does this role fit with the role of the Connexions Personal Adviser?
-
- Q** How often is the Personal Adviser required to keep in touch with the young person?
-
- Q** What about those young people who left care and then lost touch?
-
- Q** What about those young people who have indicated they no longer wish to have contact with their Personal Adviser?
-
- Q** What support is available to young people who leave local authority care after reaching the age of 16 but are not relevant or former relevant young people?
-



The Personal Adviser role: question and answer exercise

TRAINER'S NOTES

Q Which young people are by law required to have an allocated Personal Adviser?

A *Eligible, relevant and former relevant children.*

Q What is the Personal Adviser required to do?

- A**
- *Build and develop a network of support services.*
 - *Be involved in assessing the young person's needs and preparing a Pathway Plan to meet them.*
 - *Review the Pathway Plan with the young person at a **minimum** of six-month intervals until they are 21 (longer if the young person is on an agreed education or training programme).*
 - *Ensure the needs identified within the Pathway Plan are met by monitoring the young person's progress and accessing a wide range of service provision on behalf of the young person.*
 - *Offer continuity of support and accessibility, probably by operating within a team and/or network of support services.*
 - *Work closely with other agencies and professionals to ensure that services are provided at the right time and that agencies understand their respective contribution.*
 - *Keep the young person fully involved.*
 - *Maintain a written record of contacts and discussions with the young person (part of Pathway Planning process).*
 - *Ensure that the young person has access to Careers advice and the Connexions Service.*

Q Who should be appointed Personal Advisers?

A *Those who have extensive experience of working with adolescents, have high levels of skill and knowledge, and are able to engender trust and confidence. Suitable people are likely to include members of specialist leaving-care teams, Social Workers, Youth Workers, etc.*

Q Who has the responsibility to appoint and train Personal Advisers?

A *The local authority.*



Q Can the young person 'choose' their Personal Adviser?

A *Local authorities should try to accommodate any requests the young person has, e.g., their mentor, befriender, residential key worker. But the local authority has the final decision on who is appointed.*

Q How does this role fit in with the role of the Connexions Personal Adviser?

A *When the young person reaches the age of 16, the local authority is expected to appoint a leaving-care Personal Adviser. Prior to this, the Connexions adviser will have been working with the young person since age 13. It is expected that the leaving-care adviser will usually also be the young person's Connexions Personal Adviser to allow the young person one key point of contact.*

Q How often is the Personal Adviser required to keep in touch with the young person?

A *The Personal Adviser is expected to know the young people and their circumstances well enough to judge the right degree of contact. They will want to be in contact to carry out a Pathway Plan review at a minimum of every six months. The duty to keep in touch continues until the young person is 21 (or beyond if on an agreed education or training programme).*

Q What about those young people who left care and then lost touch?

A *Advisers should take reasonable steps to re-establish contact with these young people until they succeed.*

Q What about those young people who have indicated they no longer wish to have contact with their Personal Adviser?

A *Whilst respecting the wishes of the young person, and not harassing them, each Personal Adviser should act as a 'good parent' and continue to convey an interest in the young person's well being. They should take a proactive role in expressing interest and concern.*

Q What support is available to young people who leave local authority care after reaching the age of 16 but are not relevant or former relevant young people?

A *The local authority has a duty to take appropriate steps to contact them so that it can discharge its functions under Section 24A and 24B of the Children Act.*

Needs assessment and pathway planning

AUDIENCE: Direct providers





LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **Knowledge:** Participants understand the importance of the Needs Assessment framework and pathway-planning provision to meeting the needs of young people aged 15+
- **Skills:** Participants are able to assist in conducting a Needs Assessment and developing a Pathway Plan
- **Values:** Participants work within a child-centred holistic framework

Module 7 includes:

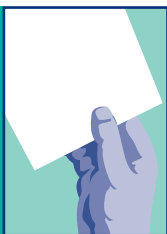
- Handout:** Needs assessment and pathway planning
- OHP 7A:** Learning outcomes
- OHP 7B:** Relationship with the assessment framework and LAC materials
- OHP 7C:** The Pathway Plan
- Exercise:** Using the model Pathway Plan in Appendix E, make a Pathway Plan for a young person you are working with
- Case Studies:** Do Exercise 1 of each case study

Suggested time allocations:

Introduction and learning outcomes (OHP 7A)		10 min.
Presentation (Handout; OHP 7B & OHP 7C)		30 min.
Exercise in small groups		60 min.
Feedback and discussion		20 min.

Suggested materials and references:

Local forms for Needs Assessments, Pathway Plans, and Pathway Plan reviews; local policies and procedures for conducting Needs Assessments (including the local authority's pro forma written statement about how the needs of eligible and relevant children are to be assessed), preparing Pathway Plans, and conducting Pathway Plan reviews; local directory of children's and young people's services; Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Regulations & Guidance



Needs assessment and pathway planning

Introduction

The Act requires the responsible authority to carry out a multi-agency assessment of the needs of each eligible and relevant child. The assessment will be the basis for the Pathway Plan, which must be prepared as soon as possible after the assessment is completed. Children (Leaving Care) Regulations 5–9 spell out the mandatory procedures and contents of the assessment and plan.

Needs assessment

1. Responsibility for co-ordinating the assessment of needs

Each local authority must prepare a written statement setting out how the needs of eligible and relevant children are to be assessed. This statement must include information about:

- who will be responsible for co-ordinating and taking forward the assessment
- the timescale for the assessment and who is to be consulted
- how the outcome is to be recorded
- what the child can do if he or she is unhappy with any part of the process or the outcome of the assessment.

A copy of the statement must be given to the child and the people consulted.

2. Timing and recording of the assessment

Preparation can take place before a young person's 16th birthday when the responsible authority knows that a young person is about to become eligible or relevant, but cannot be finalised until the young person has reached age 16. The responsible authority must complete the Needs Assessment within three months of a young person becoming an eligible or a relevant child. A written record should be kept of the information obtained during an assessment, decisions taken and the outcome of the assessment itself.

3. What should be addressed

The process of assessment should be streamlined so that the Needs Assessment takes place as far as practicable at the same time as any special assessments required, e.g., concerning a disability or issues of identity, self-esteem, mental health or parenting skills.



The essential issues to be addressed in the Needs Assessment are:

- the young person's health and development
- education, training or employment needs
- the support available from family and other relationships
- financial needs
- the extent to which he or she possesses the practical and other skills necessary for independent living, and
- needs for care, support and accommodation.

4. Relationship between the existing care plan and the needs-assessment process

Eligible children will already have had a needs assessment in order to develop their Care Plan, and that assessment should form the basis for the assessment required under the 2000 Act. The 2000 Act assessment will have particular emphasis on the areas that will require intervention to support the young person until the age of 21 or older.

The 2000 Act assessment follows the seven dimensions of the *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families*. In turn, the Framework assesses young people's needs across the same seven developmental areas as the *Looking After Children* materials, including the Care Plan (see OHP 7B).

The assessment Framework (para. 3.58) identifies categories of children who will require particular care and attention during assessment. They include children and young people:

- in transition, including moving schools, leaving school or leaving care, or moving into young adulthood and into the remit of adult services
- with specific communication needs, either because English is not a first language or they do not communicate through speech
- with a long history of contact with Social Services
- involved in the use of drugs
- about whom there are concerns that they are becoming or might be involved in prostitution
- who are separated from their country of origin (unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people).



5. Whom to involve

- **Children and young people.** The responsible authority must take all reasonable steps to seek out and have regard to the views and wishes of the young people and to enable them to attend and participate in meetings about them. Methods of assessment and review must take full account of any communication or cognitive impairment in order to involve young people fully. A flexible and creative approach, which actively engages with young people, will help ensure that the eventual plan is realistic and likely to be met. Copies of the results of the assessment, the Pathway Plan, and each review of the Pathway Plan must be given to the child or young person and the contents explained in accordance with the level of understanding, unless not reasonably practicable.

Practical assistance, including travel or subsistence costs, should be provided to help young people attend meetings and to ensure the process is young-person friendly.

- **Family and other appropriate people.** The views and wishes of the young person should be central to the decision about whose views the responsible authority should take into account. Other people who should normally be involved include: parents or anyone with parental responsibility, carers, a representative from school or college, an independent visitor, GP or other appropriate health professional, the Personal Adviser or anyone else whom the responsible authority or the young person considers relevant. For young people with particular needs relating to communication or cognitive impairment, there should be at least one person involved in the needs-assessment process who has a clear understanding of how they express their wishes and feelings.

Family links often remain very important to care leavers, and for this reason the assessment Framework underscores the value of working in partnership with children and their families during this transition period.

Pathway planning

1. The purpose of pathway planning

The Pathway Plan should be pivotal to the process whereby young people map out their future, articulating their aspirations and identifying interim goals along the way to realising their ambitions. It will also play a critical part in making the new arrangements contained within the Act work. ... The authority should work to ensure that the Plan is owned by the young person and is able to respond to their changing needs and ambitions. It should look ahead at least as far as the young person's 21st birthday and will be in place beyond that where the young person is in a programme of education or training which takes them past that age.

Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Guidance, Chapter Five



2. Pathway Plans and best practice

The Pathway Plan should reflect best practice, as follows:

- young people must have the option to remain looked after until they are prepared and ready to leave
- for eligible children, the Pathway Plan should complement and be part of the Care Plan; pathway planning will run parallel to Looking After Children planning, including the Care Plan, Personal Education Plan, Health Plan, or Connexions plan
- pathway planning should take place early, recognising the need for structure and stability
- all people with an interest in or involved in supporting the young person should be fully involved in the process
- pathway planning should be at the young person's pace and ensure that young people are fully involved and informed about options available
- real choice is vital, as a young person's assessment of need will have identified which options will be most suitable and agreeable to the young person
- specialist leaving-care teams must be involved at an early point in order to ensure that they offer specialist knowledge to young people and help focus the pathway-planning process.

3. Content of the Pathway Plan

Schedule 1 of the Children (Leaving Care) Regulations sets out the minimum areas that the Pathway Plan must cover:

- the nature and level of personal support to be provided
- details of the young person's accommodation
- a detailed plan for education and training
- how the authority will assist in employment or seeking employment or alternatives to employment
- support to be provided to enable the development and maintenance of appropriate family and social relationships
- a programme to develop practical and other skills necessary for independent living
- financial support to be provided, in particular where it is to meet accommodation and maintenance needs



- health needs, including mental health needs, and how they are to be met
- contingency plans should the plan cease to be effective.

The Pathway Plan must also record key details, such as:

- name, age, and contact details of the young person
- name and contact details of the Personal Adviser and those of any other person who will be actively involved in delivering aspects of the plan
- due date for review of the plan.

Other matters, such as arrangements for keeping in touch, should also be recorded.

4. Review of the Pathway Plan and contingency arrangements

Reviews of the Pathway Plan must take place if the young person or the Personal Adviser asks for one, or at least every six months, and arrangements must be made to enable the young person to attend meetings. The purpose is to check that the goals and milestones are still right and that they are being met. Levels of support should be reviewed to ensure they are adequate and being delivered according to plan.

The Personal Adviser would normally take charge of setting up the review and be responsible for recording the outcomes. It may be appropriate for someone other than the Personal Adviser to run the review, for instance, the caseholder or dedicated review staff.

Contingency plans should be in place that recognise potential difficulties young people may face and arrange for appropriate support mechanisms. Planning should be flexible and sensitive to any problems and acknowledge the right of young people to return for support.

PATHWAY PLANNING CHECKLISTS

1. PERSONAL SUPPORT

- Identify areas in which personal support and advice are likely to be needed and present clear arrangements as to who will meet those needs, including independent visitors who can provide cultural, religious and community liaison and support
- Clarify roles and responsibilities of all those providing informal and formal support
- Agree arrangements for contact with the young person
- Address practical issues, such as National Insurance Number and passport.



2. ACCOMMODATION

- Consider pre-care and care experience, family contact, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, readiness for leaving care
- Set out the specific assistance identified in the Needs Assessment in relation to accommodation and what types of accommodation are suitable
- To ensure the best chance of a successful accommodation:
 - avoid moving young people who are settled unless it is unavoidable or offers clear advantages
 - assess young people's needs and prepare them for any move
 - where practicable, offer choice in type and location of accommodation
 - set up a package of support to go with the accommodation
 - have a clear financial plan for the accommodation
 - have a contingency plan in case the proposed accommodation breaks down
- Bear in mind the wish of some young people to remain in their foster home, including, where young people have left care, converting the arrangement to supported lodgings or other funding arrangements.

3. EDUCATION & TRAINING

- Build on educational progress made whilst young person was looked after
- Take account of the young person's Personal Education Plan
- Reflect the needs and potential of the young person
- Ensure a stable placement/accommodation to enable young people to make the most of learning opportunities
- Provide for the Personal Adviser (and Connexions adviser, if different) to encourage and to intervene as necessary to tackle problems, including keeping in contact with school/college
- Cover any remedial education required, including the English-language needs of unaccompanied asylum seekers
- Provide special help or encouragement with 'lifelong learning' for those returning to learning, including advice on finance for educational and training courses, and liaise with the Education Department (or local Learning and Skills Councils) with responsibility for further education
- Link with the Connexions Service/Careers Service.



4. EMPLOYMENT

- Gather information about achievements and potential
- Assess capabilities with regards to employment
- Identify what work needs to be done to increase employability
- Explore and open up employment opportunities
- Develop links with local employers
- Identify different sources of support for young people
- Ensure meaningful activities for young people, such as those with profound learning difficulties, for whom full-time paid employment may not be an option.

5. FAMILY & SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

- Explore sources of informal support and ability to make and sustain relationships with family, including extended family, and friends and assess potential for care leavers to live with or close to such support
- Assess potential for substitute carers to support care leavers
- Cover any planned contribution from specialist leaving-care schemes to help combat social isolation and enable young people to strengthen their resistance to exploitation by others.

6. PRACTICAL AND OTHER SKILLS

- Use a holistic approach, attaching equal importance to practical, emotional and inter-personal skills
- Assess and agree a plan in respect of the following:
 - *self-care skills* (personal hygiene, diet and health, including sexual & mental health)
 - *practical skills* (budgeting, shopping, cooking & cleaning)
 - *inter-personal skills* (formal & informal relationships, including sexual)
 - *identity* (knowledge of & links with family & community & religious organisations, sexuality, cultural knowledge/skills for young people from ethnic minority communities)
 - *young disabled people* (information about their impairment, & advice, support & information about tackling disabling barriers)
- Gauge readiness to leave care and what work needs to be done.



7. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- Set out financial support arrangements, including how support is to be delivered (details are in Children (Leaving) Care Act 2000 Guidance, chapt. 9).

8. HEALTH NEEDS

- Based on the *Draft Guidance on Promoting the Health of Looked After Children* (Department of Health, 1999a, expected final publication: November 2001), carry out a holistic health assessment and maintain detailed health records:
- Promote a healthy lifestyle
- Ensure appropriate use of primary health-care services
- Provide access to specialist health & therapeutic services
- Promote leisure interests
- Help young people to take responsibility for their own health care
- Specify entitlement to free prescriptions, where appropriate
- Provide and help complete HC1 or HC1(SC) form to access NHS Low Income Scheme, where appropriate
- Address need for accessible information on healthy living, sexual health and sexuality, and mental health, as well as the health, dietary and cultural needs of young people from minority ethnic communities
- Ensure young disabled people obtain access to mainstream health-care services (GP, dentist, optician, etc.), as well as to any specialist services related to their impairment.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Knowledge:**

Participants understand the importance of the Needs Assessment framework and pathway-planning provision to meeting the needs of young people aged 15+

- **Skills:**

Participants are able to assist in conducting a Needs Assessment and developing a Pathway Plan

- **Values:**

Participants work within a child-centred holistic framework

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK AND LAC MATERIALS

Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need/LAC Materials	Children (Leaving Care) Act Regulations	
Child's developmental needs	Needs Assessment	Pathway planning
Health	Health and development	Health needs, including mental health needs, how they are to be met
Education	Education, training and employment	A detailed plan for education or training, or assistance in employment
Emotional and behavioural development including identity	Health and development	Health needs, mental health needs, how they are to be met
Family and social relationships	Family and other relationships	Support to develop and sustain family and social relationships Nature and level of personal support
Social presentation and self-care skills	Practical and other skills necessary for independent living	Programme to develop practical and other skills to live independently
Parenting capacity		
Basic care, ensuring safety, stimulation, guidance and boundaries, stability	Support available from family Support to sustain other relationships	Family and social relationships Nature and level of personal support Contingency plans
Family and environmental factors		
Family history and wider family	Support available from family and other social relationships	Support to maintain family and social relationships
Housing	Care, support, accommodation	Details of accommodations
Employment	Education, training and employment	Assistance in employment
Income	Financial needs	Financial support
Family's social integration	Support available from family and other social relationships	Support to develop and sustain family and other social relationships
Community resources	Areas identified above	

From "Figure 1: The Assessment Framework, *Looking After Children* and the Assessment of Needs and Pathway Plans." C(LC)A Guidance, chapter 5

THE PATHWAY PLAN

- Nature and level of personal support
- Accommodation
- Education and training
- Employment
- Support to sustain appropriate family and social relationships
- Practical and other skills necessary to live independently
- Financial support
- Health needs
- Contingency plans

The Pathway Plan should also include

- How the responsible authority proposes to meet the young person's needs
- The date by which actions will be carried out

Promoting the health of young people leaving care

AUDIENCE: Multi-agency audience





LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **Knowledge:** Participants understand the health needs of young people leaving care
- **Skills:** Participants are able to participate effectively in ensuring that the health needs of young people leaving care are successfully addressed
- **Values:** Participants' approach to promoting the health of young people leaving care is holistic, respects cultural, ethnic, religious and sexual diversity, and empowers young people to take appropriate responsibility for their own health

Module 8 includes:

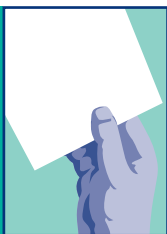
Handout:	Promoting health
OHP 8A:	Learning outcomes
OHP 8B:	Checklist of care leavers' health issues
Exercise 1:	Mapping exercise
Exercise 2:	Arlene Gayle or David Roberts: Identify the health needs that Arlene's or David's Social Worker should be addressing in the Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan
Case Studies:	Do Exercises 1–4 of each case study in respect of meeting the young person's health needs

Suggested time allocations:

Introduction and learning outcomes (OHP 8A)		<i>5 min.</i>
Presentation (Handout; OHP 8B)		<i>30 min.</i>
Exercise 1/Exercise 2 in small groups		<i>60 min.</i>
Feedback and discussion		<i>20 min.</i>

Suggested materials and references:

Children's Services Plan, QP MAP – whichever documents have the best description of available health services, provider agencies and agencies' roles; C(LC)A 2000 Guidance; DH 1999a; Wyler 2000; Stein & Wade 2000; Saunders & Broad 1997; Rabiee, et al. 2001; Take Care, Take Control 2001



Promoting the health of young people leaving care

The health needs of young people leaving care

Introduction

There is clear evidence (see Stein and Wade 2000; Wyler 2000) that looked-after children have greater levels of health need than children in the general population. To make matters worse, they are less likely to receive adequate health care, including mental-health care and monitoring. Greater need may be partly the result of their environment and experiences prior to being looked after. However, responsibility for this situation has also been attributed to “a failure of corporate parenting” or “lack of effective parenting within the care system and of thorough partnership across agencies to ensure a fully joined up service between birth parents, carers, children and the health services.” (Department of Health 1999a, p. 3)

Evidence

Evidence about the health needs of looked-after children reveals:

- undiagnosed chronic health conditions, including poor and uncorrected eyesight, significant weight problems, glue ear, asthma and eczema
- uncompleted immunisation programmes and courses of treatment
- serious and widespread mental ill-health, including self-harming, attempted suicides – most between the ages of 15–18 (when the majority were leaving care) – and stress, loneliness and risk-taking behaviours, particularly amongst young people leaving care
- particular health-care needs of some groups of children, such as asylum-seeking and refugee children
- an estimated 25% of young people in care have some form of disability, including findings of 10% with hearing impairments, 9% with visual impairments, 8% with mobility problems, and 8% learning disabilities
- ineffective health education and sexual education
- poor physical health, with high levels of substance abuse
- far higher rate of teenage pregnancy
- unhealthy lifestyles, including lack of exercise and poor diet.

(House of Commons Health Committee. 1998, p. lvii; Wyler 2000, pp. 9–10; Saunders & Broad 1997; and Smith, ed. 1988, reported in Stein and Wade 2000)



Young care leavers' views of their own health needs

Young people have reported that their education on health matters was inadequate, particularly in preparing them to take responsibility for their own health. (Department of Health 1999a)

Young people who took part in a study of the health needs of care leavers in Surrey produced a holistic model for understanding their health needs. (Saunders and Broad 1997) The model had two dimensions, one social and the other personal. The social dimension contained relationship and practical issues, such as accommodation and employment. The personal dimension addressed mental, physical and emotional states. The most important determinants of health according to the young people interviewed were:

- feelings about life
- housing
- close personal relationships
- care experience
- depression
- employment
- using drugs/solvents
- leisure
- experience of leaving care
- relaxation
- mental-health services.

'Less important' issues were education and training, eating habits, physical-health services, smoking, and drinking alcohol. "The fact that four of the top five determinants of health identified by young people are not generally considered to be health issues, and that four of the bottom five were, demonstrates the wide scale and inter-agency nature of the challenges that need to be met." (p. viii)

A study of young disabled people leaving care also found that issues generally considered health issues were "not very important to the young people themselves." (Rabiee, Priestly and Knowles 2001, p. 29)



Local authority responsibilities

Quality Protects Programme

The Government's Objectives for Children's Services and the Quality Protects Programme require local authorities as corporate parents to achieve better outcomes for looked-after children, including health outcomes. Objective 4 aims to ensure that children looked after gain maximum life chance benefits from health care.

- Sub-objective 4.2: children looked after should enjoy a standard of health and development as good as all children of the same age living in the same area.
- Sub-objective 4.4: children looked after from black and ethnic minority groups should gain maximum life chance benefits from health.
- A performance indicator for achievement of the aims of Objective 4 is concerned with children's access to information and advice about health and healthy lifestyles.

The Children Act 1989

Under the Children Act 1989 the responsible authority must ensure that looked-after children are provided with health-care services, including medical and dental care. Health considerations to which the responsible authority must have regard are set out in regulations and guidance. (see Children Act 1989 Guidance, vol. 3; Arrangements for Placement of Children (General) Regulations 1991, Regs. 4,7, Sched. 2; Review of Children's Cases Regulations 1991, Regs. 5, 6 & Sched. 3)

'Health care' implies "a positive approach to the child's health" and is defined broadly to include providing health surveillance and promoting the physical, social and emotional health and development of all children. One of the "[i]ngredients of a positive approach" to health is "a holistic approach". (Department of Health 1999a) It is vital that all the factors that affect children's health are recognised, understood and taken into account in meeting the child's health needs.

Needs Assessment and pathway planning

In addition, for care leavers the Children (Leaving Care) Regulations and Guidance require that the Needs Assessment address their health and development (Reg. 8), and that the Pathway Plan and reviews address their health needs, including any mental-health needs, and how they are to be met. (Reg. 9, Sched.)

The Needs Assessment will be 'holistic' and follow the 'dimensions' of the *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families*, including



health. The focus of a health assessment in adolescence and at leaving care should be:

- Educational and social progress
- Communication and inter-personal skills – to value the elements of constructive relationships and to recognise the ‘give and take’ which these involve
- To develop confidence and responsibility for their own lives and health, including management of specific health conditions, such as asthma and diabetes
- How to recognise and cope with physical and emotional changes associated with puberty
- To understand issues relating to sexuality and sexual activity, including its role in relationships; contraception; sexually transmitted infection and the particular risks of early sexual activity
- Lifestyle, including diet and physical activity
- To access sources of information and advice about a range of health issues, including the risks of alcohol, tobacco and other substance use and access to sources of advice on modifying health-risk behaviours
- To ensure that immunisations are up to date
- For care leavers to have a full copy of all social-care health records (including genetic background and details of illness and treatments) and be equipped to manage their own health needs. (Department of Health 1999a)

The mental-health care of young people looked after is particularly important. Conduct and anxiety disorders, depression and attentional disorders are particularly common. These young people have often experienced family break-up, bereavement or abuse. (Department of Health 1999a)

Based on a holistic health assessment and the maintenance of detailed health records, **Pathway Plans** should:

- Promote a healthy lifestyle
- Ensure appropriate use of primary health-care services
- Plan access to specialist health and therapeutic services
- Promote leisure interests
- Help young people to take responsibility for their own health care
- Ensure access to free prescriptions, where eligible



- Provide for help to complete an HC1(SC) form to access the NHS Low Income Scheme, where appropriate
- Pay attention to need to have accessible information on healthy living, sexual health and sexuality, and mental health, as well as the health, dietary and cultural needs of young people from minority ethnic communities
- Ensure that young disabled people obtain access to mainstream health-care services (GP, dentist, optician, etc.), as well as to any specialist service related to their impairment. (C(LC)A 2000 Guidance)

Good practice recommendations

General

- Movement within the care system is a major factor in children's failing to access appropriate health services. In assessing the suitability of a placement, consideration must be given to whether it can meet all identified health needs
- Ensure adequate information about a child's health is obtained
- Be aware of the consequences of inadequately treated earlier health problems
- Be aware of where the child's health history is located so that important aspects of a young person's health needs are not overlooked, such as genetically caused diseases. Loss of health history may have social consequences as well as preventing a young person from accessing early treatment or screening for certain conditions
- Social Workers and carers need to have skills and knowledge about children in key areas such as: child development; managing children's behaviour, including risk-taking behaviours; mental-health issues; health promotion and healthy living; and how the issues apply to children separated from their own families
- Carers particularly should understand what is needed actively to promote health, including helping children and young people understand their own responsibilities and contributions to growing up healthy
- There are strong links between separation, loss, and poor attachments and depression and other forms of ill health. The stigma of being in care and the issues of bereavement, loss and trauma need to be addressed. Carers can promote the development of self-esteem
- The transitional period, as young people prepare to leave care through to the time when they are ready for independent living, is fraught with uncertainty, and requires continuity and stability from those providing support



- Respect for confidentiality is essential
- Social and emotional well being, and housing and economic status, are among the main determinants of care leavers' health
- Solutions which involve young people themselves in design and delivery have a better prospect of success. (Department of Health 1999a; Wyler 2000)

Good practice recommendations regarding particular groups of children

Young care leavers are not a homogeneous group and many may require some specialised approach, for example:

- **Disabled children:** recognise the importance of identifying any disabling barriers in the child's environment that exacerbate the effects of the child's impairments. Steps should be taken to ensure the child's environment promotes the development of the child's potential
- **Black and minority ethnic children:** take an accurate family health history to identify certain hereditary illnesses such as sickle-cell anaemia; ensure interpreting arrangements are made where English is not the first language; prior discussion about any religious factors, such as the gender of the doctor
- **Care leavers and transition to independence:** multi-agency approaches are particularly crucial for care leavers as at this stage health needs cannot be separated from wider needs
- **Refugees:** may be at significant risk of an HIV-related illness; many come from cultural and religious backgrounds and may have suffered events with which the statutory sector are unfamiliar; their resilience and resourcefulness need to be acknowledged and respected; unlikely to have medical records; may have had no previous child-health surveillance; may suffer from malnutrition and diseases such as malaria; response to stress might manifest itself with physical signs; good interpreting services are needed.

Young people's recommendations

Young people involved in several research studies have made a wide range of suggestions for improvements in meeting their health needs:

- to be treated with respect as individuals
- to have access to basic health services as of right
- to have long-term relationships which they can trust. (Wyler 2000)



“Take Care, Take Control” is a partnership project involving First Key, The Children’s Society’s Rights and Participation Project and the London Borough of Lewisham, which is funded by the Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham Health Action Zone. It aims to promote the mental, emotional and physical health of young care leavers by enabling young people to take control of their health care and ensuring that professionals involved in the care of young people are more responsive to their needs. It is providing training for a group of care leavers to create a pool of care-experienced advocates able to provide support, advice and information for young care leavers in Lewisham. One of the aims of the project is to research how young people view their health needs and make recommendations. After training, young care leavers questioned 46 children and young people between the age of 11–18 about their knowledge, views and access to people and information concerning a range of health issues.

The young people involved in the research supported the need for an integrated approach to young people’s health, for example, a multi-disciplinary health team under one roof that was able to deal with a whole range of health issues, from preventive services to rapid-response counselling. Such a service would make it easier to obtain the information they needed. It would also reinforce the importance of good health care. (Take Care, Take Control Project Group 2001, p. 38)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Knowledge:**

Participants understand the health needs of young people leaving care

- **Skills:**

Participants are able to participate effectively in ensuring that the health needs of young people leaving care are successfully addressed

- **Values:**

Participants' approach to promoting the health of young people leaving care is holistic, respects cultural, ethnic, religious and sexual diversity, and empowers young people to take appropriate responsibility for their own health

CHECKLIST OF CARE LEAVERS' HEALTH ISSUES

- Ability to take responsibility for own life and health
- Communication and inter-personal skills
- Mental health and emotional well being
- Adequate housing and economic status
- Educational and social progress
- Healthy lifestyle, including diet and physical activity
- Understands issues relating to sexuality and sexual activity
- Access to information and advice about a range of health issues
- Up-to-date immunisations
- Has full copy of all social-care health records and is equipped to manage own health needs
- Different groups may require some specialised approaches



Mapping exercise: health

A large number of local agencies have responsibility for and are concerned with meeting the health needs of young people.

These exercises help participants to identify the range and roles of these agencies and how to contact as many of them as possible.

In small groups participants should brainstorm and identify the agencies they know that are concerned with young people's health.

Having done this, they should consider each of those identified, asking these additional questions:

1 What is the agency's particular role?

2 Whom do they work with?

3 How can they be contacted?

Participants should record the information on a flipchart sheet.

When they have finished, the whole group should compare the information provided by each small group.

An additional follow-up task may be for participants to research any gaps in their knowledge.

Time

Introduction



5 min.

Small groups



30 min.

Compare & discuss



25 min.

Education, training and employment of care leavers

AUDIENCE: Multi-agency audience





LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **Knowledge:** Participants understand the importance of providing young people leaving care with maximum education, training and employment opportunities
- **Skills:** Participants are able to fulfil their role in ensuring that the education, training and employment needs of young people leaving care are addressed
- **Values:** Participants work in ways that reflect that care leavers are a diverse group and that with help appropriate to their needs, they can achieve as much as other young people

Module 9 includes:

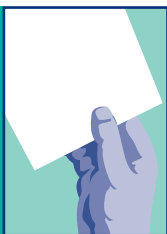
Handout:	Promoting education, training and employment
OHP 9A:	Learning outcomes
OHP 9B:	Factors in the educational success of care leavers
OHP 9C:	Improving employment opportunities
Exercise 1:	Mapping exercise
Exercise 2:	Kellie Feeney: Identify the education, training and employment needs that Kellie’s Social Worker should be addressing in the Needs Assessment and Pathway Plan
Case Studies:	Do Exercises 1–4 of each case study in respect of meeting the young person’s education, training and employment needs

Suggested time allocations:

Introduction and learning outcomes (OHP 9A):		5 min.
Presentation (Handout; OHP 9B & 9C):		30 min.
Exercise 1/Exercise 2 in small groups		60 min.
Feedback and discussion		20 min.

Suggested materials and references:

Children’s Services Plan, QP MAP; list of local secondary and tertiary education institutions; information-sharing protocols; information about local Connexions Partnership/Careers Service, about education grants; protocols on education of looked-after children; C(LC)A Guidance, DfEE/DH 2000



Education, training and employment of care leavers

Education, training and employment needs of young people leaving care

Introduction

Education is the key to every child's life chances. Yet young people leaving care have poor educational outcomes and limited career opportunities. Research (see DfEE/DH 2000; Stein and Wade 2000) has shown that 75% leave care with no academic qualifications compared with 6% of their peers, and that as few as 12% to 19% go on to further education compared with 68% of the general population. The most recent data (DH 2000b) showed that 70% of young people leaving care at 16 did so with no formal qualifications.

It should be no surprise that the lack of education qualifications puts many young care leavers at a disadvantage when looking for a job. Estimates for the number of unemployed 16 to 24-year-olds who have been in care range from 50% to 80%, whilst the national rate of unemployment for their peer group is 17%.

Barriers to success

Numerous causes of this situation have been identified (see DfEE/DH 2000; Stein and Wade 2000), including:

- frequent, often unplanned moves in care and schooling
- workers', teachers' and carers' low expectations
- low self-esteem
- although young people in care are thought to be six to eight times more likely to have a Statement of Special Educational Needs than the general school population, the special educational needs of some looked-after young people are not identified or addressed
- local authorities, local education authorities and schools do not gather and share information that would help them to plan effectively
- Social Services and LEAs, individual schools, carers, Social Workers and teachers are unclear about their respective roles and responsibilities
- those responsible for the day-to-day care of looked-after young people do not place sufficient value on education
- the needs of black and ethnic minority children are not always adequately considered in the care placement or educational placement



- practical obstacles, such as the lack of a quiet place to do homework
- emotional stress prior to and during care
- welfare issues being given priority over education
- schooling being given a low priority when moves are organised.

Local authority responsibilities

Quality Protects Programme

The Quality Protects Programme recognises and reinforces the principle that education is the key to each child's life chances. It seeks to ensure that policies and practices are in place to secure educational progress for looked-after children and care leavers.

- **Objective 4** of the Quality Protects Programme is concerned with looked-after children gaining "maximum life chance benefits from educational opportunities". To achieve this objective, the National Priorities Guidance (NPG) sets specific targets for local authorities to meet:

Improve the educational attainment of children looked after, by increasing to at least 50% by 2001 the proportion of children leaving care at 16 or later with a GCSE or GNVQ qualification; and to 75% by 2003.

The NHS Plan (July 2000) set a further target:

Increase to 15% by 2003/4 the proportion of children leaving care aged 16 and over with 5 GCSEs at grade A*–C.
- For care leavers, **QP Objective 5** seeks to "ensure that young people leaving care, as they enter adulthood, are not isolated and participate socially and economically as citizens." Its sub-objectives for local authorities includes: "For young people who were looked after on their 16th birthday, to maximise the number engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19."

The related NPG target is:

"Demonstrate that the level of employment, training or education amongst young people aged 19 in 2001/02 who were looked after by local authorities in their 17th year on 1 April 1999, is at least 60% of the level amongst all young people of the same age in their area."

Early results

The first results of a new collection of data designed to monitor progress toward QP Objective 4 (DH 2001, *Outcome Indicators for Looked after Children*) support earlier research findings. For the year ending 30 September 2000, the academic performance of looked-after children worsens for older children. At the end of school year 11, 52 % of young people looked after continuously



for at least one year remained in full-time education compared with 71% of all school-leavers. 25% were unemployed the September after leaving school; for 2% this was due to ill health or disability.

A collection of data concerning care leavers (DH 2000b) shows the progress toward meeting the NPG and NHS Plan targets. The main finding was that 70% of young people left care with no GCSE or GNVQ qualification, 30% obtained one or more GCSE or GNVQ equivalent, and only 4% left care with 5 or more GCSE's at grade A*–C.

A further analysis of this data (DH 2001, *Educational Qualifications and Care Histories of Care Leavers in England*) cautiously suggests the following possible relationships between factors in a child's care history and their educational qualifications on leaving care:

- Children whose longest single placement was a foster placement attained better qualifications than children whose longest single placement was of another type
- Children in foster placements located within the area of the local authority did better than those in foster placements outside the area of the local authority
- Children whose duration in care was less than 2 years did not do as well as those children who had been in care for 2 years or more
- As the total duration in care increases, the proportion of children leaving care with no qualifications decreases
- Children with only a few placements in their care history did better than children who had experienced a large number of placements
- Girls did better than boys.

Children Act 1989

Under the Children Act 1989 the responsible authority must ensure that looked-after children are provided with education. Educational considerations to which the responsible authority must have regard are set out in regulations and guidance (see Children Act 1989 Guidance, vol. 3; Arrangements for Placement of Children (General) Regulations 1991, Reg. 4, Sched. 3; Review of Children's Cases Regulations 1991, Reg. 5, Sched. 2).

Needs Assessment and Pathway Planning

In addition, for care leavers the Children (Leaving Care) Regulations and Guidance require that the Needs Assessment address their education, training and employment needs (Reg. 8), and that the Pathway Plan and reviews address those needs and how they are to be met. (Reg. 9, Sched.)



The assessment of educational needs should not view 'education' solely in terms of performance in academic assessments and tests, but more holistically, as the education and personal development of the whole child. Access to leisure and culture, for example, are important aspects of education, particularly for care leavers, who are responsible for organising their own lives.

Meeting the education, training and employment needs of care leavers

The **Pathway Plan** builds on the Care Plan and the Personal Education Plan (PEP), which is now required for every looked-after child. (DfEE/DH 2000) Pathway planning is the key to success for young people from age 16, and it is most effective when young people are involved fully in the planning and decision-making. The Pathway Plan should:

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- build on educational progress made whilst young person was looked after
- take account of the young person's Personal Education Plan
- reflect the needs and potential of the young person
- ensure a stable placement/accommodation to enable young people to make the most of learning opportunities
- provide for the Personal Adviser (and Connexions adviser, if different) to encourage and to intervene as necessary to tackle problems, including keeping in contact with school/college
- cover any remedial education required
- provide special help or encouragement with 'lifelong learning' for those returning to learning, including advice on finance for educational and training courses, and liaise with the Education Department (or local Learning and Skills Councils) with responsibility for further education
- link with the Connexions Service/Careers Service.

EMPLOYMENT

- gather information about achievements and potential
- assess capabilities with regards to employment
- identify what work needs to be done to increase employability
- explore and open up employment opportunities
- develop links with local employers



- identify different sources of support for young people
- ensure meaningful activities for young people, such as those with profound learning difficulties, for whom full-time paid employment may not be an option.

Factors contributing to the educational success of those who have been in care

- understanding the importance of education for future life chances
- stable and consistent care
- early reading
- regular school attendance
- support from well-informed foster carers and residential staff
- having a mentor
- financial support for further and higher education.
- continuing interest and encouragement by the Social Worker, Personal Adviser and Connexions adviser
- information and advice about education and training courses, including about finance.
- good proactive placement/school links
- positive attitude from teachers
- provision of extra, remedial support
- positive links with the Education Service for re-integrating young people who are truanting, refusing to attend or excluded
- a Designated Teacher at schools, who understands the child's needs and can act as a resource and advocate on their behalf
- effective collection and sharing of data
- high priority given to educational needs by Social Workers, foster carers and residential staff. (DfEE/DH 2000, citing Jackson 1998, *Educational success for looked after children: the social worker's responsibility*; Stein and Wade 2000; C(LC)A Guidance)

Corporate-parenting education principles

The entitlement to education needs to be upheld by "vigorous corporate parents applying principles of good parenting." (DfEE/DH 2000, p.14) Local authorities should:



- prioritise education
- have high expectations – raise standards
- be inclusive – change attitudes: be aware of the danger of discrimination, and of double discrimination against disabled children or those from ethnic minorities
- achieve continuity and stability
- intervene early – priority action
- listen to children – involve them fully in planning and decision-making.

Multi-agency co-ordination

Four key measures to bring about better co-operation between agencies concerned with improving educational outcomes for looked-after children:

- Personal Education Plan for every looked-after child
- Designated Teacher at each school to act as a resource and advocate for looked-after children
- local council protocols for sharing information about care, placements and education
- making the securing of an educational placement one of the main criteria to be used in identifying a suitable care placement. (DfEE/DH 2000)

Young disabled people

Young disabled care leavers may have needs specifically related to impairment. Local authorities should ensure that these needs are met when preparing them to leave care and also when providing aftercare services. At the same time, authorities must guard against underestimating their potential. Special care should be taken to ensure that the young people are fully involved in planning and decision-making.

- Pathway planning should take account of any transition plan drawn up under the SEN Code of Practice. Social Services should continue to liaise with the Education Department, which is responsible for providing adequate facilities for further education and which must consider the needs of those over compulsory school age who have learning difficulties. (Learning and Skills Act 2000; Further and Higher Education Act 1992)
- The community-care or adult-services division of Social Services should be included in the pathway-planning process to ensure that young disabled people's needs are met and that there is a smooth transition from children's to adults' services. Particular attention should be paid to adapting and



developing aftercare services for young disabled people who were cared for through children's disability services but who do not meet the threshold for adult disability services.

- Under the Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act of 1986, Social Services must assess young disabled people's needs for welfare services before they leave full-time education.
- The Connexions Service will continue to assist young people with learning difficulties or disabilities up to the age of 25 if they are not yet ready to access adult services.

Out-of-authority placements

Young people placed outside the local authority, often at considerable distance, are particularly vulnerable. There is a separation between the placing authority (responsible for their care) and the local education authority where they live (responsible for their educational provision). It is therefore particularly important that out-of-authority placements are planned and that the child's education place is secured in advance.

Local councils should have in place agreements that clarify funding, exchange of information and review procedures concerning children placed outside their home authority. They should ensure that the same standards of care and education are applied, and that Social Services and Education are working well together in the interests of these children. Social Workers should weigh carefully how educational life chances are likely to be affected by placement decisions.

Post-16 education and careers planning

Ongoing support from 'corporate parents' to access and sustain participation in education and training is vital at the point that young people between the ages of 16 to 18 are preparing to leave care. The following all have a role to play in this process.

- *Publicly funded schools* must provide a 'programme of careers education and guidance for pupils in years 9, 10 and 11'. (Education Act 1997, sec. 43) Currently schools provide careers guidance through a Partnership Agreement with the local Careers Service. Opportunities exist for extended work experience and 'disapplication' at Key Stage 4 to allow for more work-related learning programmes.
- *Responsible local authorities* provide Personal Advisers, pathway planning, financial assistance for education and training, accommodation or vacation accommodation, and personal support.
- *Education Maintenance Allowances* are provided as a pilot programme for post-16 learning of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.



- *Care Leavers Grants for Higher Education* are available for vacation-accommodation costs of care leavers in full-time higher education (also eligible for the institution's Access Funds).
- *Learning Partnerships* identify gaps in provision and pull together the activities on which different partners lead, e.g., learning provision for 16 to 19-year-olds.
- *Youth Service* should play a crucial role in enhancing the leisure and recreational aspect, and can offer another link to health and other services.
- *Excellence in Cities* applies to a limited number of local authorities but provides an important service: learning mentors in certain schools.
- *Other statutory & voluntary services* are often contracted to provide after-care and/or Personal Advisor services. It is important to be aware of local services and link them into both strategic and individual planning.
- *The Learning Gateway* for 16 and 17-year-olds aims to encourage disengaged 16 to 17-year-olds to take up learning opportunities. Careers Service provides advisers, who will arrange assessment, guidance, and a development plan, and continually assess and monitor progress.
- *New Deal for Young People* aims to support unemployed 18 to 24-year-olds in finding work, an appropriate training scheme or voluntary scheme.
- *Careers Service's* overall objective is to help young people make successful transitions into post-16 learning, and to stay in touch. Provides careers advisers. The Service will focus on areas where it can make the most difference, e.g., 16 to 18-year-olds who have left education and are not continuing in learning.
- *Connexions Service* is a universal service to support all 13 to 19-year-olds (up to 25 if disabled) in the transition from adolescence to adulthood, particularly in relation to education, training and employment. It is being introduced on a phased basis from April 2001. Looked-after young people are considered a priority group for the provision of services, including a Connexions Personal Adviser. Local Connexions Partnerships are formed in areas where the Connexions Service exists (eventually will exist nationally). The Careers Service will be a key member of the local Connexions Partnerships, providing the link between the worlds of work and further education.

Employment

Pathway planning for employment will be greatly assisted by work already carried out in regard to education and training.

In addition to the factors identified earlier (see Pathway Plan above), other actions that can improve employment opportunities for care leavers are:



- support young people to take employment that includes training, not dead-end jobs
- provide a targeted-support worker to help young people, for example, to identify the right training or job and by accompanying them to interviews and conducting regular three-way link-ups with tutors and others
- provide incentive payments to encourage young people to take up and sustain training, further education and employment.

Particular attention must be given to the role of the local authority as corporate parent. The local authority is usually the largest local employer, and should provide corporate opportunities for work experience and employment. It is important for departments other than Education and Social Services to be involved in meeting this aspect of the needs of looked-after young people. Other departments also should prioritise looked-after children and care leavers in the delivery of their services.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Knowledge:**

Participants understand the importance of providing young people leaving care with maximum education, training and employment opportunities

- **Skills:**

Participants are able to fulfil their role in ensuring that the education, training and employment needs of young people leaving care are addressed

- **Values:**

Participants work in ways that reflect that care leavers are a diverse group and that with help appropriate to their needs, they can achieve as much as other young people

FACTORS IN THE EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS OF CARE LEAVERS

- Understand importance of education for future life chances
- Stable and consistent care
- Planning: start early; involve the young person; review
- High expectations by carers, teachers and Social Workers
- Regular school attendance
- Positive links with Education Service & schools for re-integrating those truanting, refusing to attend or excluded
- Support from well-informed foster carers/ residential staff
- Mentors
- Continuing support by Personal and Connexions Advisers
- Extra, remedial support
- Designated Teachers at school
- Financial support for further and higher education
- Information/advice about education & training, & the finance
- Effective collection and sharing of data

IMPROVING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING CARE

- Gather information about their achievements and potential
- Help them assess their capabilities in relation to employment
- Identify with them what work needs to be done to increase their employability, who will do it and when
- Open up employment opportunities for young people
- Develop links with local employers
- Link young people to the different sources of support
- Make efforts to ensure that young people for whom full-time paid employment is not an option, such as those with profound learning difficulties, have something meaningful to do during the day
- Provide on-going support for participation in education and training when young people are preparing to leave care
- Support young people to take employment that has training included – not dead-end jobs
- Provide targeted-support worker
- Provide incentive payments to take up and sustain training, further education and employment



Mapping exercise: education, training & employment

A large number of local agencies have responsibility for and are concerned with meeting education, training and employment needs of young people.

These exercises help participants to identify the range and roles of these agencies and how to contact as many of them as possible.

In small groups participants should brainstorm and identify the agencies they know that are concerned with young people's education, training and/or employment.

Having done this, they should consider each of those identified, asking these additional questions:

1 What is the agency's particular role?

2 Whom do they work with?

3 How can they be contacted?

Participants should record the information on a flipchart sheet.

When they have finished, the whole group should compare the information provided by each small group.

An additional follow-up task may be for participants to research any gaps in their knowledge.

Time

Introduction



5 min.

Small group



30 min.

Compare & discuss



25 min.

Support and accommodation for care leavers

AUDIENCE: Multi-agency audience





LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **Knowledge:** Participants understand the issues involved in the suitability of supported accommodation for young people
- **Skills:** Participants are able to carry out their role effectively in ensuring that care leavers have suitable accommodation
- **Values:** Participants' way of working reflects their awareness of the diverse needs of care leavers and the need for planned multi-agency work to ensure suitable accommodation will be available when they leave care and/or need vacation accommodation

Module 10 includes:

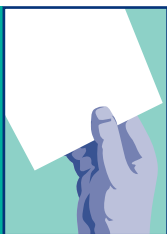
Handout:	Support and accommodation
OHP 10A:	Learning outcomes
OHP 10B:	Accommodation issues
Exercise 1:	Suitable accommodation exercise
Exercise 2:	Mapping exercise
Case Studies:	Do either Exercise 3 of Arlene Gayle or Exercises 1–4 of each case study in respect of meeting the young person's accommodation needs

Suggested time allocations:

Introduction and learning outcomes (OHP 10A)		10 min.
Presentation (Handout; OHP 10B)		30 min.
Exercise 1/Exercise 2 in small groups		60 min.
Feedback and discussion		20 min

Suggested materials and references:

Children's Services Plan, QP MAP; local homelessness strategy, local protocols between Social Services and Housing; Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Guidance; materials concerning Supporting People



Support and accommodation for care leavers

Introduction

Young people leaving care are a diverse group, and their accommodation and support needs are similarly diverse. Local authorities have had mixed success in meeting these needs. Young care leavers are over-represented among young homeless people, and studies suggest (see Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Guidance) that between a quarter and a third of people sleeping rough have experienced being looked after by local authorities.

Local authority responsibilities

Looked-after children

Under the Children Act 1989 the responsible authority must ensure that looked-after children, including eligible children, are provided with accommodation and maintenance. These matters are among the general considerations to which the responsible authority must have regard, as set out in regulations and guidance (see Children Act 1989 Guidance, vol. 3; Arrangements for Placement of Children (General) Regulations 1991, Reg. 4, Sched. 1; Review of Children's Cases Regulations 1991, Reg. 5, Sched. 2).

Relevant children and young people

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 amended the Children Act [sec. 23B(8)] to impose a duty on local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of relevant children and young people and to support them, unless the authority is satisfied that their welfare does not require it, by:

- maintaining them
- providing them with or maintaining them in suitable accommodation
- providing support of such other descriptions as may be prescribed.

This duty also applies to former relevant young people (see module 12 of this pack).

'Suitable accommodation'

Suitable accommodation is defined [C(LC) Reg. 11(2)] as accommodation:

- (a) which so far as reasonably practicable is suitable for the child in the light of his needs, including his health needs,



- (b) in respect of which the responsible authority has satisfied itself as to the character and suitability of the landlord or other provider,
- (c) in respect of which the responsible authority has so far as reasonably practicable taken into account the child's-
 - (i) wishes and feelings; and
 - (ii) their education, training or employment needs.

The accommodation needs of eligible and relevant young people must be addressed in the Needs Assessment, and the Pathway Plan and reviews must set out how these needs will be met. The assessment should determine the type of accommodation, where it should be located, and the degree of support required, including needs relating to impairment. The plan will specify the particular accommodation which most closely matches that.

No type of accommodation is prohibited. However, the C(LC)A 2000 Guidance counsels that it would not be sensible for 16 and 17-year-olds to live completely independently without proper support, and that bed and breakfast accommodation should not be considered suitable for anything but emergency, short-term use.

Accommodation options

The range of accommodation options likely to be required include:

- young people remain in the accommodation in which they lived whilst being looked after, e.g., foster placement converted to supported lodgings
- supported lodgings
- other transitional accommodation with varying degrees of support, such as trainer flats or hostels
- specialist accommodation – such as self-contained accommodation with personal-assistance support – for young people with particular support needs, for example, young disabled people, young pregnant women or single parents
- foyers and other supported accommodation that combine accommodation with opportunities for education, training and employment
- self-contained accommodation with floating support
- independent tenancies
- self-build schemes
- accommodation under section 20 of the Children Act.



Corporate and multi-agency strategy

The development of accommodation resources will require a multi-agency accommodation strategy. This should include formal agreements with statutory and voluntary housing providers to plan services and to ensure access to a range of tenancies, and partnerships or joint ventures to establish a range of accommodation options. Local authorities will also wish to seek the views of young people who have had first-hand experience of the system. The strategy should allow for young people to fail at initial attempts at living independently and to return to more supported accommodation in the event of crisis.

The local authority can request the help of another statutory authority in complying with its responsibilities (Children Act, sec. 27), including any local housing authority. That authority must comply with the request if it is compatible with their own statutory or other duties and obligations. Local authority Housing Departments have the primary legal responsibility for securing accommodation for young homeless people. Guidance issued under the Housing Act 1986 makes clear that care leavers ought normally to be regarded as vulnerable and therefore in priority need for housing if homeless. It is expected that future housing legislation will include 'former relevant children' as a priority group for accommodation if homeless.

Support

- PERSONAL SUPPORT

Relevant young people are entitled to support to help them maintain settled accommodation. They should also be provided with other forms of personal support comparable to that provided by most families – for example, care leavers in the armed forces may need a place to stay when they are on leave – and pathway planning should address such needs. Personal support should be provided in a flexible way. General assistance may be in cash or in kind.

- ASSISTANCE IN RELATION TO EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

Local authorities have a new duty to assist relevant and former relevant young people in connection to education, training or employment. The assistance may be in cash.

- VACATION ACCOMMODATION

The local authority has the duty to provide relevant and former relevant young people with suitable vacation accommodation, or paying them enough to secure such accommodation themselves, if their term-time accommodation is not available while they are in full-time higher education or residential further education. This duty extends to persons qualifying for advice and assistance who had been looked after by a local authority.



Representations

The Representations procedures must be available to young people dissatisfied with decisions about accommodation. See Appendix A, 'Representations, Complaints and Advocacy,' for further information.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Knowledge:**

Participants understand the issues involved in the suitability of supported accommodation for young people

- **Skills:**

Participants are able to carry out their role effectively in ensuring that care leavers have suitable accommodation

- **Values:**

Participants' way of working reflects their awareness of the diverse needs of care leavers and the need for planned multi-agency work to ensure that suitable accommodation will be available when they leave care and/or need vacation accommodation

ACCOMMODATION ISSUES

- **Accommodation issues in Needs Assessment**
[Reg. 7(4)(f)]
- **Accommodation in pathway planning**
(C(LC)A Guidance, Chapt. 5)
- **Maintaining relevant children in suitable accommodation**
[S23(B)(8)(b)]
- **Definition of suitable accommodation**
[Reg. 11(2)]
- **Duty to provide vacation accommodation**
[S24B(5)]
- **Role of Housing Department**
(C(LC)A Guidance, Chapt. 3)



Suitable accommodation exercise

A best practice checklist

Yes No

- | | | Yes | No |
|----------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Do young people have access to supported emergency, direct-access accommodation? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | Is there available a range of accommodation with different levels and types of support? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | ● How many bed spaces? _____ | | |
| | ● What is the level and nature of support offered? _____ | | |
| 3 | Are decisions about moves to supported accommodation based on an assessment of need and included in Pathway Plans? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 | Is supported accommodation provided by external agencies governed by written service-level agreements? Do these: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | ● Define the client group suitable for the accommodation? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | ● Define the level and nature of the support provided? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | ● Describe the referral process and who is responsible for the final decision? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | ● Include a set of service standards? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | ● Allow for the involvement of young people in the management and running of the service? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | ● Make provision for regular monitoring and inspection of the service provided? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | ● Establish the levels of qualifications, skills and training of support staff? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | ● Ensure that all those working with 16 and 17-year-olds have been police-checked? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 | Is in-house provision supported by a Statement of Purpose and system of Quality Assurance? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 | Is information available to young people about the range of supported-housing options open to them? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 | Are protocols and agreements in place with all housing authorities to facilitate young people's access to permanent social-housing tenancies? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 | When young people move into permanent accommodation in the private rented sector, has the local authority satisfied itself as to the character and suitability of the landlord, and has the accommodation received a health and safety check? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Mapping exercise: accommodation

A large number of local agencies have responsibility for and are concerned with meeting accommodation needs of young people.

These exercises help participants to identify the range and roles of these agencies and how to contact as many of them as possible.

In small groups participants should brainstorm and identify the agencies they know that are concerned with young people's accommodation.

Having done this, they should consider each of those identified, asking these additional questions:

1 What is the agency's particular role?

2 Whom do they work with?

3 How can they be contacted?

Participants should record the information on a flipchart sheet.

When they have finished, the whole group should compare the information provided by each small group.

An additional follow up task may be for participants to research any gaps in their knowledge.

Time

Introduction		5 min.
Small group		30 min.
Compare & discuss		25 min.

Financial support: 16 and 17-year-olds

AUDIENCE: Multi-agency audience

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **Knowledge:** Participants understand the new financial arrangements for 16 and 17-year-olds and the financial-support arrangements for care leavers aged 18+
- **Skills:** Participants are able to conduct a financial-needs assessment
- **Values:** Participants work in ways that reflect that care leavers are a diverse group and that the assessment must be holistic and individualised

Module 11 includes:

Handout: Financial support for 16 and 17-year-olds





OHP 11A: Learning outcomes

OHP 11B: Financial support for 16 and 17-year-olds

Exercise: Financial support

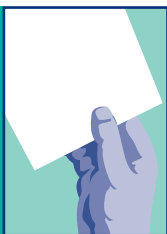
Case Studies: Do Exercises 1–4 of each case study in terms of meeting the young person's financial needs

Suggested time allocations:

Introduction and learning outcomes (OHP 11A)		10 min.
Presentation (Handout; OHP 11B)		30 min.
Exercise in small groups		60 min.
Feedback and discussion		20 min.

Suggested materials and references:

Local transparent criteria for financial support, local policies and procedures for financial arrangements for relevant children, and for other care leavers under the Children (Leaving Care) Act; C(LC)A 2000 Guidance



Financial support: 16 and 17-year-olds

The primary income-maintenance role: 16 and 17-year-olds

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 has amended the Children Act to impose on local authorities the primary income-maintenance role for both eligible and relevant children. [Sec. 23B(8)(a)]

Exceptions to the duty to maintain

Unless they are looked after under a care order, young people who have returned home successfully for a period of six months or more will not be treated as eligible or relevant children, and therefore the duty to maintain will not apply to them (although they can acquire the status of relevant child and thus the right to be maintained by the local authority if the home situation breaks down before their 18th birthday). [Reg. 4(5) and (7)] The duty to maintain persists in relation to a child subject to a care order regardless of whether they are living with their parents: they continue to be eligible children until they are 18 or the care order is discharged. (See module 2 of this pack for further details)

In addition, children who are looked after on a planned series of short-term placements (less than four weeks) will not be defined as eligible children even where the total period looked after is more than 13 weeks. Ongoing responsibilities under section 24 of the Children Act, as amended, will remain.

Disqualification from benefits

Under clause 6 of the C(LC)A 2000 eligible and relevant children will *not* be entitled to Income Support, Job Seeker's Allowance or Housing Benefit. Lone parents and disabled children *will* continue to be eligible for benefits, including Job Seeker's Allowance, Income Support and any other benefits due to them because of their disability or parental status. They will not, however, be eligible for Housing Benefit. Independent advice from a welfare-rights specialist should be sought to assist in potential claims for benefits.

Those defined as lone parents and as disabled, and therefore able to claim benefits, include:

Lone parent "means a person who has no partner and who is responsible for, and a member of the same household as, a child or young person."



Those defined as **disabled** include someone who:

- is entitled to statutory sick pay
- is incapable of work because of incapacity
- has appealed against a decision that they are not incapable of work
- is registered as blind
- is in work but because of a physical/mental incapacity their hours or earnings are 75% or less than that of a person without that disability in the same job
- is in non-advanced education and because of a severe disability they would be unlikely to get a job in the next 12 months. (Sched. 1B of the IS (General) Regulations 1987)

In addition, if they meet the eligibility requirements, lone-parent and disabled care leavers will be treated as relevant children. Receipt of benefits will be taken into account when assessing their needs and drawing up their Pathway Plans.

Other 16 and 17-year-old care leavers who remain entitled to benefits

16 and 17-year-old care leavers who do *not* meet the qualifying period for eligible or relevant children will remain entitled to benefits. In addition, the local authority may provide them with financial assistance, in kind or, in exceptional circumstances, in cash (sec. 24A) to meet their particular needs. They may also provide assistance in relation to work, education or training up to the age of 24 to care leavers who had been looked after by the local authority. They also must assist care leavers who had been looked after by the local authority and are in residential further education or higher education by providing vacation accommodation, if needed. (See Guidance, chaps. 9 and 7)

Financial support for former relevant children

The responsible authority does not have the primary financial-support role for this group. It is expected that the young person's income should be derived from the same sources as the young person's peers – i.e., employment, benefit entitlement, student loans, etc. However, the local authority now has a duty, rather than a power as previously, to provide assistance in kind or in cash in respect of the special needs of former relevant children, based on the same considerations set out in Volume 3 of the Children Act 1989 Guidance & Regulations.

Payments made under section 23C (as previously under sec. 24 of the Children Act) are disregarded by the Benefits Agency and will therefore not affect the young person's benefits claim.

Other previous powers to provide financial assistance with expenses in relation to employment, education and training are also now duties.



The duty to provide financial assistance in relation to education and training does not cease at 21 but runs until the young person has completed the agreed programme of education or training specified in the Pathway Plan. Such assistance might include travel, clothing or equipment costs.

The responsible authority also has a duty to provide vacation accommodation (or funds to secure it) to **all** care leavers in Higher Education at some time after reaching the age of 16 or residential further education who were looked after by the local authority, not just those defined as former relevant children.

The assessment of financial need and pathway planning

The Guidance states that “in each case the responsible authority will have to agree with the young person his personal support package and how it is to be managed. The details will be recorded in the Pathway Plan.” Decisions on how much financial support to provide or how that support is to be provided must be based upon a full assessment of the child’s needs. (See Guidance, Chapt. 5, and module 7 of this pack on the Needs Assessment and pathway-planning process).

Regulation 7 places the assessment of financial needs within a wide range of considerations, including the child’s:

- health and development
- needs for education, training or employment
- available support from family and others
- practical and independent living skills, and
- needs for care, support and accommodation.

The views of the child should be taken into account, and the child should be involved in the decision-making process (Reg. 6). Written copies of the assessment and Pathway Plan should be provided and explained to the young person (Regs. 5 and 6) together with details of how and when the financial support will be provided (Reg. 8). A review of the plan must be held at least every six months or at the request of the young person or their Personal Adviser (Reg. 9).

Local discretion and transparency

Local authorities operate within limited resources and competing demands, which they may not always be able to meet in full. Transparent criteria should be set out to ensure that young people are aware of the authority’s responsibilities in this area. The authority should produce a written schedule setting out what they would normally expect to provide funds for and how other sources of income are to be treated.

The C(LC)A 2000 Guidance states that “accommodation and maintenance are essentials which must always be provided unless the young person’s welfare



does not require it" together with assistance to meet needs in relation to education, training and employment [Reg. 11 (1)].

National guidance on priorities

The C(LC)A 2000 Guidance states that items to be considered a priority for funding include, but should not be restricted to:

- travel costs, e.g., for education
- educational materials/special equipment
- other educational costs
- costs associated with special needs (such as a disability or pregnancy)
- clothing
- contact with family or other significant relationships
- cultural/religious needs
- counselling or therapeutic needs
- hobbies/holidays.

Information on locally agreed priorities should be available to all interested parties and should be explained clearly to the young people themselves.

Minimum standards

It is expected that the requirement to focus on young people's individual needs in relation to particular areas, unrestricted by DWP (formerly DSS) rules on accommodation options, should ensure that the value of the package "should generally be well above the level which would have been supplied through the benefits system." (C(LC)A 2000 Guidance)

Minimum standards are included in the Guidance "to protect young people against the possibility that they might be offered inadequate assistance. They are not to be seen as the norm." Indeed, "[n]o young person should receive a package for his accommodation and maintenance ... which comes to less than he would have received if he had been entitled to claim Income Support or Job Seeker's Allowance, and Housing Benefit (or equivalent successor benefits) at the rates which would have applied to him and his circumstances." For most 16 and 17- year-old care leavers this would normally be the higher rate of Personal Allowance plus any Premiums due to any special circumstances. However, it is important to bear in mind that the 'overall package' might include income from employment. Concerns that a young person may be receiving less than these minimum standards should be referred to an independent specialist advocate. (See Disputes, below)



Claims for health benefits such as free prescriptions, dental treatment, sight tests and glasses, fares to hospital, etc. should be processed by the Personal Adviser as part of the six-monthly assessment and pathway-planning process. In most cases this will mean that the young person will receive an NHS charges certificate for full help, valid for 12 months or to the young person's 18th birthday, whichever is longer.

Care leavers should be covered by adequate insurance for their personal goods and their property, if not covered by the landlord's insurance policy.

Access to financial support

Payment through a bank account, wherever possible, is recommended, with arrangements to pay young people in cash possibly through an out-of-hours service should this be required.

Guidance suggests that decisions on which elements of the financial assistance will be paid directly to the young person and which will be managed on their behalf should take account of the individual needs and abilities of the young person. Best practice would suggest that such decisions should take full account of the views of the young person and be set out in the Pathway Plan together with details of any leaving-care grant to be paid.

In some instances the responsible authority may have concerns that financial support, over and above what is being provided to cover accommodation and maintenance costs, is not being used for the agreed purposes. In these circumstances the Guidance states that "the Plan may need to be revised" or specific funding withheld. It is important to note that any sanctions applied should not reduce the package of support to less than the accommodation and maintenance allowances (equivalent to the appropriate Income Support or Job Seeker's Allowance, and Housing Benefit rates).

Emergency assistance

The Guidance recommends that section 17 of the Children Act 1989 be used to meet any short-term needs for assistance. For young people who have moved from another authority, contact will have to be made with the originating authority and agreement reached, together with the young person, on how support should best be provided.

Disputes

Disputes in relation to financial matters must be dealt with by means of the 14-day informal-resolution stage before the full complaints procedure may be invoked. The responsible authority should ensure that the young person has access to an independent advocate. Clearly, in relation to a dispute in this area it will be important to ensure that the advocate is a specialist in both child-care and welfare-rights law. (See Appendix A of this pack)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Knowledge:**

Participants understand the new financial arrangements for 16 and 17-year-olds and the financial-support arrangements for care leavers aged 18+

- **Skills:**

Participants are able to conduct a financial-needs assessment

- **Values:**

Participants work in ways that reflect that care leavers are a diverse group and that the assessment must be holistic and individualised

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR 16 AND 17-YEAR-OLDS

- The primary income-maintenance role
- Exceptions to the duty to maintain
- Disqualification from benefits
- Other young people who remain entitled to benefits
- The assessment of financial need and pathway planning
- Local discretion and transparency
- National guidance on priorities
- Minimum standards
- Access to financial support
- Emergency assistance
- Disputes



Financial support: exercise

Agree / Disagree

The aims of this exercise are to assess participants' understanding of their local authority's financial policies and procedures and to identify the level of common understanding within the group.

Statements	Agree	Disagree
1 All Social Workers, leaving-care workers, residential staff, foster carers and workers in other relevant agencies have received copies of your local authority's policies and procedures concerning the authority's financial arrangements under the Children (Leaving Care) Act for eligible, relevant, former relevant, and qualifying young people.		
2 In your authority all young people receive incentives to remain in education.		
3 Your local authority will help young people learn how to drive under certain circumstances.		
4 Your local authority will pay for young people's leisure activities.		
5 Information on your local authority's financial policies for care leavers under the Children (Leaving Care) Act is widely distributed.		
6 Your local authority provides guidance on how to work out a financial-support package for young people who are leaving or have left care.		
7 Your authority provides young people with information about the financial support available to them under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.		
8 In your authority you know where to find answers to things you don't know.		

Support for care leavers aged 18 and above

AUDIENCE: Multi-agency audience





LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **Knowledge:** Participants understand what responsibilities local authorities have in relation to 'former relevant' young people and young people 'qualifying for advice and assistance'
- **Skills:** Participants are able to contribute successfully to meeting the needs of 'former relevant' young people and young people 'qualifying for advice and assistance'
- **Values:** Participants work in ways that reflect that this group of young people, although no longer legally children, continues to need support to participate socially and economically in life as fully as their peers

Module 12 includes:

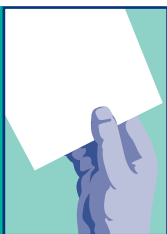
Handout:	Support for care leavers aged 18 and above
OHP 12A:	Learning outcomes
OHP 12B:	Local authority duties toward 'former relevant' young people
OHP 12C:	Responsibilities in relation to care leavers aged 18+ who are not 'former relevant children'
Exercise:	What is keeping in touch?
Case Studies:	Do Exercise 4 for each young person

Suggested time allocations:

Introduction and learning outcomes (OHP 12A)		10 min.
Presentation (Handout; OHP 12B & 12C)		30 min.
Exercise in small groups		60 min.
Feedback and discussion		20 min.

Suggested materials and references:

Local policies and procedures concerning support for care leavers aged 18 and above, including inter-agency protocols; C(LC)A 2000 Guidance



Support for care leavers aged 18 and above

Introduction

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 amended the Children Act to impose on local authorities a number of additional duties in relation to young people aged 18–21 who have been either ‘eligible’ or ‘relevant’, or both. These duties continue beyond the age of 21 if the young person is on an approved programme of education or training as agreed and set out in the Pathway Plan.

Care leavers aged 18+ who are not former relevant children

Not all young people meet the eligibility requirements for being ‘former relevant children’. In addition, as the new Act is not retrospective, it does not apply to those young people leaving care before the Act comes into effect on 1 October 2001 who would otherwise meet the definition of former eligible children. *However, best practice would promote responsible authorities’ adopting the same approach for all their care leavers, regardless of whether they are covered by the new Act or not, by using their powers under section 24 of the Children Act, as amended.*

Young people in this category, who left care after attaining the age of 16, are covered by amended section 24 and sections 24A–D, of the Children Act and the associated Guidance and Regulations.

Support for former relevant children

The responsible authority has a number of new duties in relation to former relevant children. These duties include:

- to keep ‘in touch’ with the young person [sec. 23C(2)]
- to provide each young person with a Personal Adviser [sec. 23C(3)]
Normally the same person who undertook the role when the child was eligible and/or relevant
- to review and revise regularly the Pathway Plan [sec. 23C(3)]
- to provide general assistance [sec. 23C(4)(c)]
- to provide assistance with expenses associated with employment [sec. 23(4)(a)]



- to provide assistance with expenses associated with education and training [secs. 23(4)(b) and 23(7)]
- to provide vacation accommodation (or the funds to secure it) to care leavers in higher education or on a residential further-education course which requires them to live away from home as agreed in the Pathway Plan [sec. 23C(9)]

Function of the Personal Adviser

There will normally be one person fulfilling the role of the Personal Adviser and Connexions adviser. The functions of the Personal Adviser will be the same for this older group as for those aged 16/17. (See module 6 of this pack)

The Pathway Plan

This will continue and cover the same areas as for 16/17-year-old care leavers. (See module 7 of this pack) The process should be sensitive to the young person's increasing need to take control, i.e., in determining who should be consulted, what the Pathway Plan should cover and when it should be reviewed.

The Pathway Plan should identify goals and the assistance required to meet them. It should be reviewed at least every six months.

Maintaining contact with young people aged 18 and above

The duty to maintain contact continues to apply even if the responsible authority has lost contact with the young person. Steps taken to regain contact must be recorded in the Pathway Plan.

Contact must be made *at least* every six months (linked to a review of the Pathway Plan). The responsible authority should act as a 'good parent' – it should be patient and must persevere with keeping in touch even if the young person seems to be unresponsive.

Where the young person does not want face-to-face contact, their wishes must be respected. If the young person prefers, contact may be maintained by telephone or, in extreme cases, letter or electronic mail. Where a review of the Pathway Plan involves the young person travelling, the responsible authority should cover reasonable travel and expense costs.

Financial support for former relevant children

The responsible authority does not have the primary financial-support role for this group. It is expected that the young person's income should be derived from the same source as the young person's peers – i.e., employment, benefit



entitlement, student loans, etc. However, the local authority now has a duty, rather than a power as previously, to provide assistance in kind or in cash in respect of the special needs of former relevant children, based on the same considerations set out in Volume 3 of the Children Act 1989 Guidance.

Payments made under section 23C (as previously under section 24 of the Children Act) are disregarded by the Benefits Agency and will therefore not affect the young person's benefits claim.

Other previous powers to provide financial assistance with expenses in relation to employment, education and training are also now duties.

The duty to provide financial assistance in relation to education and training does not necessarily cease at 21 but runs until the young person has completed the agreed programme of education or training specified in the Pathway Plan. Such assistance might include travel, clothing or equipment costs.

The responsible authority also has a duty to provide vacation accommodation (or funds to secure it) to **all** local authority care leavers in higher education at some time after reaching the age of 16 or residential further education, not just those defined as former relevant children.

Other responsibilities in relation to care leavers aged 18 and above who are not former relevant children

Entitlements of young people qualifying for advice and assistance under former section 24 of the Children Act are continued in new sections 24, 24A and 24B:

- **Advise and befriend.** If they had been looked after by a local authority or accommodated by or on behalf of a voluntary organisation, the relevant authority has a duty to advise and befriend them if needed; for other young persons, the relevant authority has the power to do so.
- **General assistance.** The relevant authority may give general assistance, in kind or in cash, to all persons for whom the authority has either a duty or a power to advise and befriend.
- **Assistance with employment.** For persons formerly looked after by a local authority, the relevant authority may contribute to expenses to live near employment, and may do so until the age of 24.
- **Assistance with education and training.** For persons formerly looked after by a local authority, the relevant authority may contribute to expenses to live near education or training or make a grant for education or training expenses, and may do so until the age of 24.
- **Representation procedure.** All persons qualifying for advice and assistance are entitled to access to the representation procedure. (See Appendix A of this pack).



In addition, for persons formerly looked after by a local authority, the relevant authority has the following duties:

- must keep in touch and
- must provide suitable vacation accommodation during full-time further or higher education, if needed.

Young people who leave care before they are 16-years-old are not covered by the provisions of the new Act, but assistance may be available under other initiatives and legislation, such as the Connexions Service.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Knowledge:**

Participants understand what responsibilities local authorities have in relation to 'former relevant' young people and young people 'qualifying for advice and assistance'

- **Skills:**

Participants are able to contribute successfully to meeting the needs of 'former relevant' young people and young people 'qualifying for advice and assistance'

- **Values:**

Participants work in ways that reflect that this group of young people, although no longer legally children, continues to need support to participate socially and economically in life as fully as their peers

LOCAL AUTHORITY DUTIES TOWARD 'FORMER RELEVANT' YOUNG PEOPLE

- **Keep in touch**
Section 23C(2)
- **Provide a Personal Adviser**
Section 23C(3)
- **Regularly review and revise the Pathway Plan**
Section 23C(3)
- **Provide general assistance**
Section 23C(4)(c)
- **Provide assistance with expenses associated with employment**
Section 23C(4)(a)
- **Provide assistance with expenses associated with education and training**
Section 23C(4)(b) and (7)
- **Provide vacation accommodation for HE or residential FE course**
Section 23C(9)
- **Provide a representation procedure**
(see Appendix A of this pack)

RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO CARE LEAVERS AGED 18+ WHO ARE NOT FORMER RELEVANT CHILDREN

- Advise or befriend
Section 24(1)b
- Provide assistance in kind, or, in exceptional circumstances, cash
Section 24A(4) & (5)
- Provide assistance with expenses associated with employment, education and training, up to the age of 24 where connected to an agreed course of education or training
Section 24B
- Provide a representations procedure
Section 24D(1)(b)
- Provide vacation accommodation for HE or residential FE course (if looked after by a local authority)
Section 24B(5)
- Keep in touch up to the age of 21, or 24 if receiving assistance with education or training (if looked after by a local authority)
Section 24(4)



What is “keeping in touch?”

You are the Personal Adviser.

Consider the following scenarios.

1 A 22-year-old care leaver is being financially supported in higher education 50 miles away from her local authority.

- *How will you keep in touch?*
- *How often will you keep in touch?*

2 A 19-year-old care leaver wants nothing more to do with the local authority.

- *How will you keep in touch?*
- *How often will you keep in touch?*

3 A 21-year-old care leaver wants you to visit them every week. You do not think that this is either necessary or reasonable.

- *How often will you keep in touch?*
- *What alternative to your visiting every week might you suggest?*

4 A 19-year-old disabled care leaver does not qualify for services from the disability service.

- *How will you keep in touch?*
 - *How often will you keep in touch?*
-

section 4
APPENDICES



Representations, complaints and advocacy

1. Right of care leavers to complain about local authority services

Under the new arrangements brought in by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 (C(LC)A), local authorities will continue to have a duty to provide most care leavers with the full representations and complaints process required by section 26 of the Children Act 1989 and the Representations Procedure (Children) Regulations 1991. The definition of 'complainant' in Reg. 2 will include the following care leavers:

- relevant children (sec. 23A)
- former relevant children (sec. 23C)
- persons qualifying for advice and assistance [sec. 24(1)]
- persons qualifying for advice and assistance, formerly looked after by a local authority, and receiving assistance in connection with education/training [sec. 24B(2)].

The procedures, which apply to complaints made to local authorities about their services under Part III of the Act, 'Local Authority Support for Children and Families', will include complaints about services provided to these care leavers under the C(LC)A.

- The duty is set out in Reg. 4(1)(a) [as amended by C(LC) Reg. 13(4)(a)].
- The new definition of 'complainant' in Reg. 2 is set out in C(LC) Reg. 13(2)(a).
- The type of care leavers' complaints covered by the procedures is set out in Reg. 2 [as amended by C(LC) Reg. 13(2)(b)] and section 24D(1).

2. Duty to provide 14-day informal-resolution stage

From 1st October 2001, local authorities have a new duty to provide an initial 14-day informal-resolution stage in the complaints process to the care leavers listed in section 1, above.

The time period begins when the local authority receives the complaint. Upon receipt the authority must provide a written summary of the complaint to their designated complaints officer and must try "by informal means" to reach a settlement to the "satisfaction" of the young person.

If the young person is not satisfied with the resolution of his or her complaint at the end of the 14-day period, the local authority must notify the complaints officer of the failure and the young person of his or her right to begin the formal complaints process. Notices must be in writing.

- The new duty is set out in Reg. 3A of the Representations Procedure (added by C(LC) Reg.13(3), as authorised by sec. 24D).
- The right to pursue a complaint formally if the informal resolution is unsuccessful is found in Reg. 4(1)(a) of the Representations Procedure [as amended by C(LC) Reg. 13(4)(a)].
- The requirement that notices be in writing is in Reg.2(2) of the Representations Procedure.

The local authority must attempt to resolve complaints about all care-leaving services by means of the informal-resolution stage before the formal complaints procedures are followed. It should be noted that during the process of a complaint about the level and/or provision of maintenance for a relevant child, emergency assistance should be provided. (Note that the draft C(LC) Regulations excluded from the informal-resolution stage complaints about maintenance. The exclusion was eliminated in the final Regulations.)

Aims of the informal-resolution stage

The C(LC) Guidance notes that the formal complaints system is under review, and recommends that there be consistency between the C(LC)A provisions and any new system put in place as a result of the review. Further guidance may be available if changes are made.

At present, the Children Act Guidance to the general Representations Regulations can be instructive in setting up and using the new stage. The chapter dealing with the complaints procedure discusses the possibility of resolving problems satisfactorily before a formal complaint is made (vol. 3, chapt. 10, "Problem Solving"). It notes that the "aim should be to resolve dissatisfaction as near to the point at which it arose as possible." Actions to further the aim include "discussion and reconsideration as well as explanations of decisions made and actions taken." Advice and support made available to the dissatisfied person at this stage through a children's rights officer or independent advice in the community "would assist problem-solving." Attempts at problem-solving should not end once a formal complaint has been registered.

3. Minimum standards

The Representations Regulations set the "minimum standard provision that responsible authorities should establish to meet the requirements of the Children Act". The Act and the Regulations are "a common framework" on

which responsible authorities should construct procedures that best suit “their local needs and organisational structure.” This Children Act Guidance to the full complaints process (vol. 3, chapt. 10) should apply equally to the new informal stage.

4. Overall aims of the representations and complaints procedure

- A procedure that provides an accessible and effective means of making complaints
- Close to the point at which the problem arose
- Independent persons to be involved
- Child and others to have confidence in their ability to make their views known and to influence decisions made about the child’s welfare
- Procedure to be understood and accepted by all involved
- Implementation of Representations Procedure should take account of the need for consultation with the community so that the procedure reflects the needs of those who may need to use it
- Adherence to the principles of the Race Relations Act 1976 and other equal opportunities legislation requires consultation with community groups reflecting the racial and cultural diversity of the local community.

Apart from the requirement that independent persons be involved, this Guidance is also relevant to the new stage. (Vol. 3, chapt. 10)

5. Advice, support and advocacy

The C(LC)A Guidance (chapt. 10, para. 5) clearly states that the “responsible authority should ensure that a young person who needs or requires it should have access to an advocate both to help them formulate their complaint and then to present it to the authority and throughout the complaints procedure.”


 A large white letter 'B' is centered within a green square. To the left of the square, the word 'APPENDIX' is written vertically in white capital letters on a green background.

APPENDIX B

References & further resources

A

References

Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000

Children (Leaving Care) (England) Regulations 2001 (Statutory Instrument 2001 No.2874) and Guidance

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- Wylter S (2000), *The Health of Young People Leaving Care*, King's Fund/Oak Foundation

B

Further information on best practice in leaving care is available from the Regional Development Workers within the SSI:

LONDON

John Dennington

Tel: 020 7972 1099

e-mail: john.dennington@doh.gsi.gov.uk

Andrew Turnbull

Tel: 020 7972 1118

e-mail: andrew.turnbull@doh.gsi.gov.uk

Office address for John and Andrew:

Social Services Inspectorate

Eileen House, Room 519

80–94 Newington Causeway

London SE1 6EF

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Christine Humphrey

Home telephone: 020 7973 7596

e-mail: chris@dene.clara.co.uk

Social Services Inspectorate

Eileen House, Room 520

80–94 Newington Causeway

London SE1 6EF

Jo Blake

e-mail: jo.blake@doh.gsi.gov.uk

South Eastern address:

Social Services Inspectorate

Eileen House, Room 519

80–94 Newington Causeway

London SE1 6EF

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Eastern address:

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45–46 Stephenson St, Birmingham B2 4DH

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Email: dorothy.lewis@doh.gsi.gov.uk

Consultancy@dorothylewis.demon.co.uk

Social Services Inspectorate

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501 Chester Road, Old Trafford

Manchester M16 9HU

NORTHERN & YORKSHIRE

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8th Floor, Room 8E30

Quarry House

Quarry Hill

Leeds LS2

TRENT

Angela Milne

Tel: 0114 282 064

e-mail: angela.milne@doh.gsi.gov.uk

Quality Protects, SCR – Trent

Room 603, Fulwood house

Old Fulwood Road

Sheffield S10 3TH

Specific queries in respect of implementation of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 can be made to:

lorraine.reid@doh.gsi.gov.uk

tessa.ing@doh.gsi.gov.uk

C

Copies of the Children (Leaving Care) (England) 2001 Regulations and Guidance are available from the Department of Health at:

http://www.doh.gov.uk/qualityprotects/work_pro\project_5.htm.

D

Copies of "Getting it Right: Good Practice in Leaving Care Resource Pack" are available from:

DH Publications
PO Box 777, London SE1 6XH
Fax: 01623 724 524
e-mail: doh@prologistics.co.uk
NHS Response line: 0541 555 455

Please quote CI (2000) 13

E

The following people and organisations are available to provide information and advice concerning issues affecting care leavers:

A National Voice

23 New Mount Street, Manchester M4 4DE
Tel: 0161 9534011
Fax: 0161 9534019
e-mail: office@anv.u-net.com

An organisation run by and for young people who are or have been in care.

Action on Aftercare Consortium

Chair: Amanda Allard
85 Highbury Park, London N5 1UD
Tel: 020 7704 2537

The Bibini Centre for Young People

60A Wood Road, Whalley Range
Manchester M16 8BL
Tel: 0161 881 8558
Fax: 0161 882 0420
e-mail: information@bibinicentre.fsnet.co.uk

The Bibini Centre for Young People provides residential accommodation and support services to African, Caribbean, Asian and Black British young people. The Bibini Centre also provides a range of support for Black young people leaving care.

Children's Rights Officers and Advocates (CROA)

c/o Save The Children Fund
Cambridge House
Cambridge Grove
London W6 0LE
Tel: 0771 255 4338

Citizens Advice Bureau

For details of your local Citizens Advice Bureau call 0207 833 2181

Connexions Service

Communication Unit
Connexions Service National Unit
W4D Moorefoot, Sheffield
South York S1 4PQ
Tel: 0114 259 1104

Fostering Network

(formerly National Foster Care Association)
Ena Fry
87 Blackfriars Road
London SE1 8HA
Tel: 020 7620 6412
e-mail: ena.fry@fostercare.org.uk

Get Connected

North Acton Business Park
Wales Farm Road
London W3 6RS
Tel: 020 8896 4774
e-mail: admin@getconnected.org.uk

A free and confidential helpline that puts young people in touch with the appropriate source of help from the thousands of telephone support lines and drop-in centres throughout the U.K.

Mencap National Centre

123 Golden Lane
London EC1Y 0RT
Tel: 020 7454 0454

National Children's Bureau

8 Wakley Street
London EC1V 7QE
Tel: 020 7843 6000
www.ncb.org.uk

National Youth Advocacy Service

1 Downham Road South
Merseyside CH60 5RG
Tel: 0151 342 7852

Regional Leaving Care Forums

See KeyNotes or contact First Key for up-to-date contact details of your Regional Forum

The Voice for the Child in Care

Nicola Wyld
Unit 4 Pride Court
82 White Lion Street
London N1 9PF
Tel: 020 7833 5792
e-mail: nicola@vcc-uk.org

Who Cares? Trust

Kemp House
150–160 City Road
London EC1V 2NP
Tel: 020 7251 3117

Young Minds

Children's Mental Health Charity
102 Clerkenwell Road
London EC1
Tel: 020 7336 8445
Fax: 020 7336 8446

F

Further information on this training pack is available from:

- First Key at:

Leeds Office

Oxford Chambers
Oxford Place
Leeds LS1 3AX
Tel: 0113 244 3898
Fax: 0113 243 2541
e-mail:
information@firstkeyleeds.com

London Office

LVSRC
356 Holloway Road
London N7 6PA
Tel: 020 7700 8130
Fax: 020 7700 8174
e-mail: FkeyLdn@aol.com

Midlands Office

Koco Centre
The Arches, Unit 15
Spon End
Coventry CV5
Tel: 02476 716259
Fax: 0247 6677554
e-mail: fkeyJK@aol.com



NVQ and PQ Award Mapping

These training materials provide part of the underpinning knowledge (knowledge specification) for several of the units in the following National Vocational Qualification in Caring for Children & Young People, Level 3, and the Post Qualifying Level Award for Child Care.

1. NVQ in Caring for Children & Young People, Level 3

Mandatory Units

- O2** Promotes people's equality, diversity & rights
- CU5** Receive, transmit, store & retrieve information
- SC8** Contribute to the development, provision & review of care programmes
- SC14** Establish, sustain and disengage relationships with clients

Option A Units

- CYP1** Promote and maximise educational opportunities and achievements for individual children and young people
- CYP2** Contribute to promoting health and social well-being for individual children and young people
- CYP4** Encourage young people to develop and maintain a positive sense of self and identity
- NC2** Enable individuals, their family and friends to explore and manage change
- NC8** Enable individuals and families to address issues which affect their health and social well-being
- W3** Support individuals experiencing change in their care requirements and provision
- W5** Support clients with difficult or potentially difficult relationships
- W8** Enable individuals to maintain contacts in potentially isolating situations
- Z8** Support individuals when they are distressed

Option B Units

- CJ14** Assist individuals with negotiations and formal hearings
- CU7** Develop one's own knowledge and practice
- Y2** Enable individuals to find out about and use services and facilities
- Y5** Assist individuals to move from a supportive to a more independent living environment
- Z2** Contribute to the provision of advocacy for individuals

2. Child Care, PQ Level

- Unit A** Work Directly with Children and Young People to Achieve Optimal Outcomes
- Unit B** Work with Parents, Families, Carers and Significant Others to Achieve Optimal Outcomes for Children and Young People
- Unit C** Undertake and/or Co-ordinate Work with Networks, Communities and Agencies to Achieve Optimal Outcomes for Children and Young People in Need
- Unit D** Contribute to the Development of Services, Policies and Practices which Optimise Life Chances for all Children and Young People



Training needs analysis questionnaire

Thank you for expressing an interest in our training services. Advanced planning and preparation are an integral feature of effective training. We have always found the quality of information received from commissioning clients invaluable in assisting us in this process, and would welcome your responses to the questions detailed below:

1 Who is the training for? Practitioners, managers, other.

2 Can you identify the core competencies these practitioners/managers require to undertake their duties on a day-to-day basis?

3 What specific practice and policy issues will you expect the training to address?

4 Please specify the skills and/or knowledge you would like participants to develop by attending this course.

5 Please identify any particular learning needs from this group.

6 How do you envisage this programme will inform practice?

7 What training has this group received in the past six months?

May we take this opportunity to thank you for your time. This information will enable us to produce a skills-based training programme, that is relevant to local as well as national issues.



My Pathway Plan

The aim of this plan is to help you make the most of your life as you make your journey to adulthood. For each of the important areas of your life there will be a plan and this will record:

- Your needs as seen by yourself – ‘my say’ – and other people who care for you
- A plan of work to be carried out to help you meet your needs
- This plan will say what you will do, who will help you and what help you will be given
- The plan will also give the timescale for the work to be carried out
- A summary of the work carried out since the last planning meeting
- A plan to help you if things don't work out as you expected
- Your views on whether you agree or disagree with the plans

MY PATHWAY PLANNING MEETING

About me

My name is _____ My date of birth is _____

My current address is _____

Telephone no/s _____

About my Personal Adviser

My Personal Adviser is _____ Telephone no _____

Contact address _____

About my meeting

My meeting was held on _____ at _____

It was attended by _____ from _____

and _____ from _____

and _____ from _____

and _____ from _____

and _____ from _____

My next meeting will take place on _____ at _____

MY ACCOMMODATION

My say

I would like to stay where I am for now because _____

I would like to move because _____

The type of accommodation I would like is _____

My Personal Adviser's views are _____

My Accommodation Plan is _____

What I need to do is _____

I will be helped by _____

Who will help me by doing _____

The timescale will be _____

Summary of work since my last Planning Meeting _____

MY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

My say

I have gained qualifications in _____

I would like to achieve _____

My Personal Adviser's views are _____

My Education, Employment and Training Plan is _____

What I need to do is _____

I will be helped by _____

Who will help me by doing _____

The timescale will be _____

Summary of work since my last Planning Meeting _____

MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS

My say

I like to see my family, in particular my _____

I would like to see my _____ more often

I think my _____ could help me

My best friends are _____

I would like to keep in touch with _____

My family say _____

My Personal Adviser's views are _____

My Family and Friends Plan is _____

What I need to do is _____

I will be helped by _____

Who will help me by doing _____

The timescale will be _____

Summary of work since my last Planning Meeting _____

MY HEALTH

My say

I would say that the state of my health is _____

I keep healthy by _____

My main health problems are _____

In the past I have had problems with _____

My Personal Adviser's views are _____

My Health Plan is _____

What I need to do is _____

I will be helped by _____

Who will help me by doing _____

The timescale will be _____

Summary of work since my last Planning Meeting _____

MY MONEY

My say

My income is _____ and this comes from _____

I think I handle my money _____

My main problems are _____

I would like help with _____

My Personal Adviser's views are _____

My Money Plan is _____

What I need to do is _____

I will be helped by _____

Who will help me by doing _____

The timescale will be _____

Summary of work since my last Planning Meeting _____

MY COOKING AND SHOPPING

My say

I can cook _____

I would like to learn to cook _____

I shop for _____

I would like to be helped to _____

My Personal Adviser says I need help to _____

My Cooking and Shopping Plan is _____

What I need to do is _____

I will be helped by _____

Who will help me by doing _____

The timescale will be _____

Summary of work since my last Planning Meeting _____

LOOKING AFTER MYSELF

My say

The main issues that affect my personal safety are _____

I would like help with _____

I look after my personal hygiene by _____

I would like help with _____

My Personal Adviser thinks I need help with _____

My Self-Care Plan is _____

What I need to do is _____

I will be helped by _____

Who will help me by doing _____

The timescale will be _____

Summary of work since my last Planning Meeting _____

MY CONFIDENCE AND SOCIAL SKILLS

My say

I get on well with _____

I find it difficult to get on with _____

Sometimes I feel bad about myself because _____

I think I will need help with _____

My Personal Adviser thinks _____

My Confidence-Building and Social Plan is _____

What I need to do is _____

I will be helped by _____

Who will help me by doing _____

The timescale will be _____

Summary of work since my last Planning Meeting _____

MY PERSONAL SUPPORT

My say

I currently am given personal support by _____

I would like to continue to receive support from _____

My Personal Adviser thinks _____

My Personal-Support Plan is _____

What I need to do is _____

I will be helped by _____

Who will help me by doing _____

The timescale will be _____

Summary of work since my last Planning Meeting _____

MY CONTINGENCY PLAN

My say

If my plans do not work out how will I be helped?

I will be helped by _____

My agreed Contingency Plan will be _____

MY FINAL SAY ... FOR NOW

I agree with my plans for _____

I disagree with my plans for _____

My signature _____ Date _____

