



Getting in touch with your leaving care workers

Hertfordshire Co-produced standards of support from leaving care Personal Advisers July 2021

Hertfordshire wanted to ensure all care leavers were aware of the support they were entitled to and they all received a consistent level of support from their Personal Advisers (PAs). Their young people co-produced a set of standards setting out what young people can expect from their PAs.

Why

70% of their care leavers found it easy to contact their worker all or most of the time, but some reported uncertainty about the level of support they would receive. Managers wanted to ensure that despite being a large authority with over 750 care leavers a consistent service was offered to all its care leavers.

What did they do?

- The Children in Care Council co-produced standards that set out the minimum levels of support a care leaver could expect to receive up to the age of 21.
- The standards will be adjust to meet individual needs and cover:
 - **Contact with their workers-** frequency of calls/ visits, names and number of managers and duty and cover arrangements
 - **Support at meetings and help with forms-** what meetings the PA will attend and how to build YP confidence to manage on their own
 - **Moving into their own flat** – PA to attend ‘sign up’ meeting, the essentials for moving in and who will help with DIY/ decorating
 - **Support through difficult times-** the level of extra support, PAs have received mental health first aid training,
- Young people shared the standards with the leaving care services and they have been adopted by workers and managers
- The standards are being shared with social workers, IRO and fostering staff so Eligible young people and those working with them are aware of the available support
- Managers are using them in supervision to confirm the tasks they expect a worker to complete.

What difference is it making

- Young people were very positive about their work and felt they had been listened to.
- Both young people and PAs felt they were helpful as it gave clarity about their work and support available.
- Standards give a basis to agree individual support plans.

Supporting you when you get your own flat

- Your worker will attend the tenancy sign up and keys collection with you and help you understand your responsibilities for paying rent, gas, electric, water rates and will help you understand the conditions of your tenancy
- Your worker will help you to move in, and help you to identify who can help decorate and with DIY
- Once you’ve moved in, your worker will call or text you every week for a month to make sure you are ok

“As a worker the standards are very useful, as it highlights the things that are important to the care leaver and what they expect from us as a team, but also it is honest and real about what as service we can do, true co-production!”