

PATHWAY TO SUCCESS

THE PATHWAY PLAN IS A REALLY IMPORTANT DOCUMENT WHICH SETS OUT WHAT YOU WANT TO DO, WHAT SUPPORT YOU NEED AND HOW THE COUNCIL WILL HELP YOU GET IT.

This is from a series of FREE factsheets for young people with care experience, produced by The Who Cares? Trust

What's a pathway plan and why is it important?

Every looked after child must have a pathway plan, usually starting around your 16th birthday. It's the law!* Your pathway plan says how the council will help you prepare to live independently. It's like a contract between you, the council and other important professionals in your life. Most importantly, it gives you a chance to get your wishes and feelings written down, as the plan must take your views into account.



When preparing your pathway plan, remember:

- Raise anything you're unhappy about.
- There should always be a 'plan B' in case things don't turn out as expected.
- Disagreements with your SW/ PA should be noted carefully so everyone's point of view is clear.
- Other people can be asked about your plan, such as your family, foster carer, teachers, health services, IRO and advocate (but not without you knowing).
- The last year of your pathway plan should focus on support you can get while living independently. Good pathway plans should say who's there to help you, what they can do and how you can get in touch.

Reviews

Your pathway plan should be reviewed at least every 6 months, but you can ask for it to be reviewed any time. If there are any big changes in your life, there should be a review, because your plan should reflect what's happening now.

Whenever your pathway plan is reviewed, you and your Social Worker/PA should sign it and you should get a copy. Keep it safe and check it regularly to make sure everyone's sticking to it!

Don't forget:

- It's about your life
- You must be involved in completing it
- It should say how your council will help you
- You should always have a copy



FOR SUPPORT AND ADVICE, OR INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS, CALL THE CARE ADVICE LINE WEEKDAYS, 10:30AM-3PM

Care
ADVICE LINE
020 7017 8901

What should my pathway plan cover?

Health

If you have health problems, your pathway plan should say how the council will help you manage them. It's not just for problems though: it should also say how the council will help you live a healthy lifestyle (e.g. helping you with gym membership).

Education, training and employment

Your plan should make sure you have everything you need to succeed and are on track to achieve your career goals. This includes clear aims for you to meet and how the council will support you, including financially (need a laptop for your studies...? Raise that here!).

How you feel

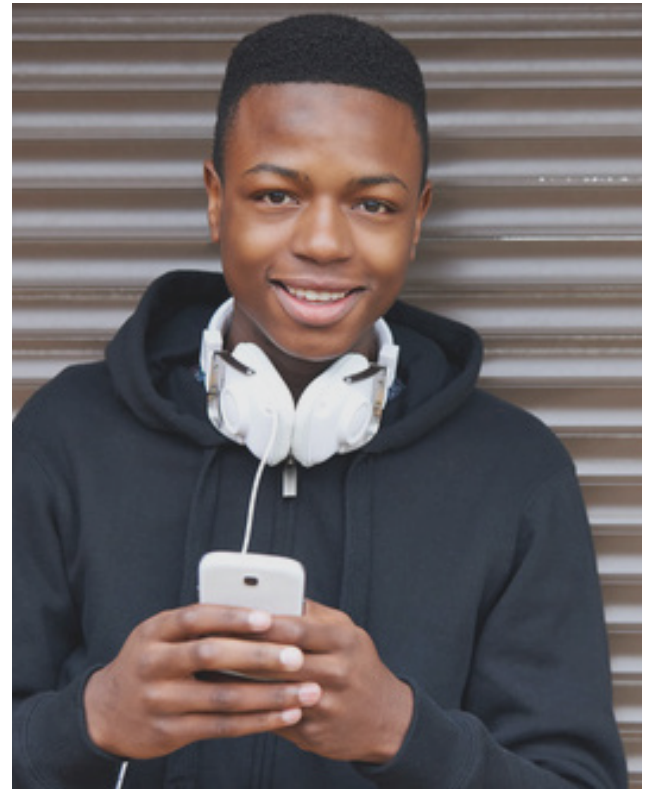
How do you feel about yourself? How do you get on with other people? Are there things that could help? Let your social worker/PA know so they can follow it up.

Family and social network

Do you have a good relationship with your family? Have you got people to turn to when you need them? Your plan should say how the council will help you have good social and family relationships. If you're unhappy about contact arrangements with your family, speak up here!

Identity

This is about what makes you... you!! Your council should help you with any questions you have about your past, support you need around language, religion, ethnicity and sexual orientation, as well as ensuring you have the right ID documents and know how to access your files.



Your practical skills

This should look at how prepared you are for life as an adult. What do you need to learn to be ready to live independently – and how will the council help you do that?

Money

It's really important there's a clear statement of the financial support you'll get from your local authority. This should state your entitlements and other help you'll get, how to get it and when. It should cover help you might need to budget, savings you may have and benefits you're entitled to.

Where you live

Your council should assess your accommodation (current or planned) and see if it's suitable for you, including location, safety, bills and rent. Future housing options should be explained, including plans to move to independent accommodation and what needs to be done for this to happen. Not happy where you live? Let them know!