

Advice for young people who have left care

Like many others, you are not alone if you are feeling anxious or concerned at this time. As the services you may access for support are likely to have changed in some way, you may not know how you can access support and information in the same way you had previously.

If you are worried about how your support may be affected, remember to contact your Personal Advisor, Support Worker or Social Worker.

If you do not have a dedicated worker and need support, contact your local authority, as they may be able to advise you on specific changes and how you can continue to access help and support.

If you are having trouble accessing these, please contact our Investigation and Advice Service.

We are working alongside other organisations to help make sure you have the support, information and advice you need.

Go to <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/contact/> for the most up-to-date contact information.

Below is some information which may help you in understanding your rights and entitlements, how to stay safe and how you can access support if you need it.

If you think you may have Coronavirus

There are symptoms that are associated with Coronavirus;

These are:

- a new cough
- a fever (feeling unusually warm)
- A loss of smell and taste.

You can check your symptoms here:

<https://111.wales.nhs.uk/SelfAssessments/symptomcheckers/COVID19.aspx>.

If you think you have these symptoms, it is important that you stay at home and do not go out in public for 7 days.

Many people can manage these symptoms alone and will not need to go to the doctors. But, if you are finding it very difficult to do this or you do not get better after 7 days, call NHS 111 or use this link:

<https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/covid-19-symptom-checker/>

If you do need to isolate yourself because of your symptoms – please contact those who can support you. They may be able to help.

“Staying In” and Staying Safe

Even if you do not have symptoms, it is important to keep your distance from others at the moment.

You may have heard the phrase “Stay at Home, Protect the NHS, Save Lives” or seen the #StayAtHome tag trending. This advice has been given to **everyone** by the UK Government to help us protect ourselves from Coronavirus and to help stop it spreading.

If you would like more information on what you can and can’t do you can find information here;

[UK Government](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

[Welsh Government](#)

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

You may have heard the term “social distancing”. This is about keeping a safe physical distance from others who do not live in your household. This is an important way of stopping illnesses and Coronavirus spreading.

Because of “social distancing”, meeting lots of people face to face is not always safe. If we are to meet other people we need to keep two metres apart from each other, wash hands regularly and meet others who live in a different house outside. This is why you may not have seen your family and friends as you normally would or any adults in your life who provide support, such as social workers and personal advisers.

The services that support you and the people who work there are still there – they are just working differently.

You still have your rights and it is important that any adult working to support you works in your best interests. It is important that your views, wishes and feelings are listened to by adults and you are helped to be involved in decisions made about your life.

Welsh Government

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-social-distancing-guidance>

Income and benefits

If you want further information on how your Universal Credit may be impacted or want advice on employment and support if your job has been impact, you can find advice here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-guidance-for-employees>

Also, don't forget, that the St David's Day fund is there to help young people during the Coronavirus crisis. If you need help and assistance financially, or support for basic things like money for food, or support with rent, please contact your Personal Adviser, Social Worker or Local Authority support services to make an application to this.

Housing

If you want advice on housing support and live in a privately rented home, you can access advice here;

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-tenants-private-rented-sector>

If you are worried about homelessness, eviction or uncertainty with your housing arrangement you can find support and information here;

<https://sheltercymru.org.uk/get-advice/coronavirus/>

<https://sheltercymru.org.uk/>

If you want additional housing advice their phone number is 08000 495 495

It is important that you let your Personal Adviser, Support Worker, Social Worker or your local authority know if you are experiencing challenges with your housing.

If you are finding it very difficult to stay in your home because of those around you or you feel unsafe in your relationships, these services can help you. Do not hesitate to call for help if you feel unsafe or vulnerable with those in your home:

Llamau:

Llamau can support young people needing emergency accommodation and help if they are at risk of abuse or homelessness

<https://www.llamau.org.uk/Pages/FAQs/Category/coronavirus-how-to-get-support-if-you-need-it>

It is important to stay safe during this time and to ask for help if you need it if you are worried about yourself or anyone else's safety

The Live Fear Free Helpline is operating as usual which can help those who may be experiencing domestic abuse and sexual violence during the coronavirus emergency.

Live Fear Free: 0808 8010800 or call 999

<https://gov.wales/live-fear-free/staying-safe-during-coronavirus-emergency>

Higher Education

If you are a current care-experienced student, you can contact your college or university for advice and support, especially if you're living alone or in university accommodation.

If you don't know who to get in touch with, the named contacts for care-experienced students can be found at <https://propel.org.uk>

If you type the name of where you are studying in the search box you will then be able to select your university.

General advice, support and help:

There are many different organisations in Wales that can help you in this difficult time. Do not hold back in asking for support if you are concerned or worried.

Here are some organisations which may be helpful:

Become

Become is the national charity for children in care and young care leavers. Their corona virus advice page for care-experienced young people is below.

<https://becomecharity.org.uk/coronavirus>

You can get in touch with them on 0800 023 2033 or at advice@becomecharity.org.uk.

If you are feeling particularly isolated, they can provide ongoing 1:1 support through phone or Skype.

Voices from Care

Voices From Care Cymu aim to improve the lives of care experienced children and young people in Wales by being an independent voice for care experienced children and young people in Wales. A link to their website is below.

<http://vfcc.org.uk>

They are providing advice and support to care experienced young people who are concerned about the coronavirus. Below is a link to their coronavirus webpage and their offer of support to care experienced young people with contact details.

<http://vfcc.org.uk/coronavirus/>

<http://vfcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/VFCC-Our-Offer-English-1.pdf>

NYAS

The National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) is a rights based charity which operates across England and Wales for children, young people and adults. Below is a link to their website -

<https://www.nyas.net/>

NYAS has a helpline **0808 808 1001** and help email address - help@nyas.net

TGP Cymru

[TGP Cymru are a rights-based charity who support children and young people and families. They can provide advocacy and emotional support. Access their website here:](#)

<https://www.tgpcymru.org.uk/>

MEIC Cymru

Meic is the information, advice and advocacy helpline service for children and young people up to the age of 25 in Wales.

You can call them anytime between 8.00am and midnight. Their freephone helpline is 08880 23456. Their free text number is 84001. There is also online chat available through their webpage which is below and which provides coronavirus advice.

<https://www.meiccymru.org/>

Children in Wales

Below is a link which takes you to a resource aimed at care experienced young people or any young person looking for advice or support during the outbreak. It includes advice on how to care of your well-being, how to mindfully use social media, useful websites and tips on how to relax and look after yourself during this turbulent time.

<https://www.childreninwales.org.uk/news/news-archive/new-resource-produced-wellbeing-coronavirus>

NSPCC

Below is a link NSPCC Childline service website about the coronavirus which they are updating regularly.

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/>

Barnardo's

Barnardo's provide support to Care Leavers in Wales. You can access their website here to find out more about services in your area:

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/what-we-do/supporting-young-people/leaving-care>