

Help for Children, Young People and their Families

Introduction

Most families will experience problems at some time. Sometimes these difficulties can be overwhelming, and parents will need all the support they can get.

Our Children and Family teams work with other agencies to provide advice, guidance and support to children, young people and their families.

Sometimes it is not possible for a child or young person to live with their family and occasionally the Court will be asked to make a decision about whether the local authority should look after a child.

Children in Need of Care and Support

We help families with children assessed as being 'in need of care and support' – children and young people up to 18 whose health and well-being might suffer without support from social care services. These include:

- Disabled children and young people
- Children and young people who are looked after by the council and care leavers (up to 21, or 25 if in full-time education)
- Children and young people in need of safeguarding.
- Children and young people who are seeking asylum
- Children who are young carers

If you think your child or family needs help from Children and Family Services, please contact us. We will find out what help you need and put you in touch with the right people. Getting advice and support at an early stage can stop problems from getting worse.

If you think your child or family needs help from Children's Services, please contact us. We will find out what help you need and put you in touch with the right people. Getting advice and support at an early stage can stop problems from getting worse.

Deciding what your needs are

Before we can offer you support, we may need to find out more about your family's needs – we call this an assessment. If we undertake an assessment we can decide, together, what help can be offered to you.

What services may be available:

- **Advice and guidance**
We will provide general information and advice to children and their families. This may include providing you with details of other agencies or professionals that offer help to children and their families.
- **Support and assistance**
Following an assessment, a plan will be developed with you and anyone who is important to you and your child, which will look at the best outcomes for your family's wellbeing.
- **Safeguarding children**
We have a duty to protect and safeguard children and have to make enquiries when any allegation of abuse is reported. Abuse can take many forms, for more information please go to the Gwent Safeguarding Board

We have a duty to protect and safeguard children and have to make enquiries when any allegation of abuse is reported. Abuse

can take many forms, including neglect, physical, sexual or emotional harm, and failing to act to prevent harm. Domestic abuse also has a detrimental effect on a child's well-being.

If you are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child, please contact us.

Disabled Children and Young People

A disabled child is presumed to need care and support in addition to, or instead of, the care and support provided by the child's family.

The Disabled Children's Team will offer a specialist social care assessment where complex needs are present.

More information is available in *Children with a Disability Eligibility for Support information sheet*

Children Looked After

We want to keep children and young people with their families but sometimes this is not possible. If a child or young person cannot stay with their family, we will try to come to an agreement with the parents about how they will be cared for.

If we cannot come to an agreement with parents, we might have to provide care against the parents' wishes – this will then need to be decided in Court.

Care leavers

Torfaen Young Person Support Services (TYPSS) is a multi-agency team that includes social workers, housing and support staff. The staff team offers support to young people aged 16-25.

The young people open to the team have a range of support needs. They may be Looked After in foster care or with family

members or have 'Left Care'. In addition, we also offer support and advice to homeless young people aged between 16-18. The service offered includes advice and assistance on a wide range of issues to help young people, including care leavers, to move to independence. Individual packages of care are agreed with the young people themselves.

Fostering

We recruit and assess people who want to become foster carers for Torfaen Council. We offer ongoing support and training to all our foster carers.

For more information, see our factsheet *Interested in becoming a foster carer*.

Private Fostering

Sometimes a child or young person lives with someone who is not a close relative – this is called private fostering. If this arrangement lasts for more than 28 days, you must tell us.

We have a legal duty to visit you to offer support and promote the child/young person's welfare.

More information is available in our factsheet *Private Fostering: Do you look after someone else's child? or Does someone else look after your child?*

Adoption

South East Wales Adoption Service, which covers the area of Gwent. The team deals with birth record enquiries, adoption and step parent adoption applications.

It also provides post adoption support, including advice and counselling to adopted children, young people and adults, their birth parents, relatives, former guardians and adoptive parents; not just at the time of adoption but at any point throughout their

lives. More information is available at <https://southeastwalesadoption.co.uk/>

Young Carers

A young carer is someone who is under the age of 18 and carrying out caring and household tasks because they have a parent, brother, sister, other relative or friend who has a physical disability, learning disability, mental health issue, long term or terminal illness or a drug or alcohol misuse issue.

- Working with professionals and others to raise awareness of the issues that affect the young carer
- Providing support to reduce the worries, stress and isolation that young carers often experience
- Encouragement to look after themselves physically and mentally.
- An opportunity to enjoy activities with other young carers and make new friends
- A break from caring tasks and responsibilities
- Regular review of young carers needs
- Dedicated worker who offers support and answers young carers questions

Asylum seeking children and children who may have been trafficked

We will assess the situation of any child or young person up to 18 years who may have been trafficked or is claiming asylum. Appropriate services will then be provided, which may include foster care.

Will my views be taken into account?

We encourage our service users and carers to get involved in planning future services. We would like your opinion about our services and to hear of any ideas you may have for improving them.

Our contact details

If you need more help, please contact us.

Telephone: 01495 762200

E-mail:

socialcareCallTorfaen@torfaen.gov.uk

Our Address:

Torfaen Social Care and
Housing Services
Civic Centre
Pontypool
Torfaen
NP4 6YB

Emergencies

Our Emergency Out of Hours Service operates outside normal office hours and deals with emergency situations that cannot wait until the next working day.

Telephone: 0800 328 4432

Minicom: 0800 587 9963