



INFORMATION FOR STAFF

Who is the Charter for?

The Charter is for all children and young people in out of home care in the Northern Territory.

The *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* is a Convention in international law that has been agreed to by 191 countries, including Australia, and outlines the basic human rights that apply to all children, across all countries of the world.

The Charter is consistent with the rights outlined in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020* and the *National Standards for Out of Home Care*. The Charter draws special attention to and helps to promote the rights of children who live in out of home care.

What is the purpose of the Charter?

The Charter builds on the work that Caseworkers, Staff and Carers already do to ensure children and young people in out of home care are protected and have opportunities to realise their full potential.

The Charter contains a list of rights that every child in out of home care can expect to have, the things they should be able to do and what they can expect from the people who care for them. Its implementation demonstrates commitment by the Department of Children and Families to ensuring children in out of home care know their rights, understand them and have these promoted by the people that care for them.

The Charter of Rights was developed with input from children and young people who are in care and young people who have left care. Their voices are represented by the words used to explain the rights contained in the Charter.

What are a Caseworker's responsibilities?

Under section 68A of the *Care and Protection of Children Act* it is a requirement that a copy of the Charter of Rights be given to all children and young people as soon as practicable after coming into out of home care and explained to them in age appropriate language.

Some children will be too young to receive a copy of the Charter or discuss their rights. A copy of the Charter can still be provided to their Carer and the child's rights promoted through the care they receive, casework and their Care Plan.

The concept of rights will often be new for a child or young person to understand and discuss. Caseworkers will be supported through training opportunities to develop skills in engaging children and having conversations about rights.

The rights outlined in the Charter may be different to circumstances that a child has come from or experienced before. Discussing these rights with a child may bring up sensitive issues and where and when these conversations take place should be planned in advance.

It is a Caseworker's responsibility to ensure that the child or young person they are responsible for is aware of the complaint process and role of the Children's Commissioner and understands who to contact if they have questions or concerns about their rights.

Questions?

If you have questions or concerns about the Charter of Rights and what it means for you in your role caring for children and young people you should talk to your Team Leader in the first instance, and then Manager as necessary.

