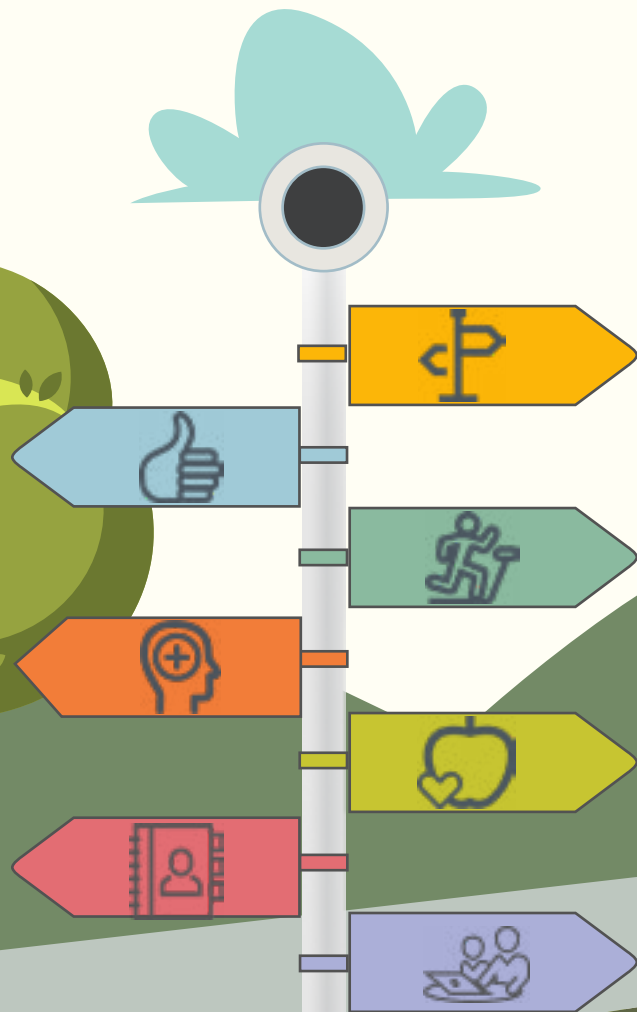




Your rights, health and well-being



Getting More Involved
- a young person's guide to health and well-being



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www.childreninwales.org.uk



Why health and well-being?

'My health is important because if I have bad health it affects other parts of my life, like my education and my time with friends.'

Care experienced young person, age 16

Poor health can affect other important things in your life such as education and relationships. It is really important that you get information, advice and support if you need it at an early stage to stop any problems starting and to prevent any problems from getting worse.

Adults working with care experienced young people have a duty to work together to ensure that their health rights are protected and that they get the support they need to be as healthy as possible.



You should be able to have a say in the health issues that affect you and what you want to happen.

Having access to clear, reliable information and advice helps you to make healthier choices now and in the future.

Your health rights

All children and young people have a right to good health.

What are children's rights?

Children's rights are all the things that you need to survive and grow, be healthy and happy, to participate and fulfil your potential.

The **UNCRC** stands for United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is an agreement that sets out a list of children's rights which countries around the world are signed up to, including the UK.

The UNCRC has lots of Articles. Most of these tell you the rights that all children and young people up to the age of 18 have. The other Articles make clear that governments and adults should work together to make sure that you can access your rights.



Some of these are:

- Article 2 - You have rights no matter what and they cannot be taken away
- Article 6 - You have a right to life and to grow up and be healthy
- Article 12 - You have a right to have a say and be listened to
- Article 24 - You have a right to good food and water and see a doctor if you are ill

You can see the full list of your rights on the [ChildrensRights.wales](https://www.ChildrensRights.wales) website.

The Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011 made Wales the first country in the UK to ensure that the UNCRC is considered by the Welsh Government when making any new laws or making changes to existing laws.

Sally Holland is the Children's Commissioner for Wales. Her job is to:

- Talk to you if you have a problem about your rights
- Listen to what you have to say
- Tell you more about your rights
- Speak up for you
- Help you and make sure that you get your rights.

If you feel your health rights are not being considered you can get information and advice from the [Children's Commissioner's Office](#) on: 0808 801 1000.

If you want to know more about the UNCRC in Wales visit the [ChildrensRights.wales website](#).



Right to privacy

You have a right to confidentiality - this means that your information is private and will not be shared with another person unless you want it to be. However if there are any concerns around your safety or the safety of another person, your information may have to be shared with your social worker for your protection.

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

In Wales we have a law called the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. It is designed to improve the care and support that children and young people who need it are given. Part 6 of the Act provides guidance for professionals working with looked after and accommodated children and young people.

This law has four main themes:

1. People - giving you more of a say in the type of care and support you get
2. Well-being - a new focus on how you are feeling and thriving
3. Early Intervention - more support at an earlier stage
4. Working Together - professionals will work more in partnership with others, including you



The Act helps to make sure care experienced young people get all the help and support they need to:

- Have a place to live
- Have an education
- Be healthy
- Keep in touch with family if it's safe
- Have support when they're leaving care and becoming an adult

If you need care and support, the local authority has to make sure you have a safe and secure home and that you are getting the support that you need. If you are in care, you will have a social worker who will create a care and support plan to meet your needs.

Your care and support plan will include details of where you will live and who with, what contact you will have with your birth family, where you will go to school, your health and well-being needs and your plan for leaving care when you are ready. Article 20 under the UNCRC states that you must be looked after properly if you don't live with your birth parents.

You can also discuss your health and well-being with your social worker if you have any questions or worries.

You have a right to say how you feel about your care and support plan and what you want to happen. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 reminds professionals about the importance of you having a say in the care and support you receive.

Read more about the [Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014 here](#).



If you are in care, you will have a looked after children's nurse who will monitor your health and well-being. An assessment is a way of finding out what you need. You will have a regular health assessment which is usually completed by your nurse (although it may be completed by a school nurse or doctor).

Your health assessment is a discussion and an opportunity to talk about issues that are worrying you. You should expect to have a health assessment at least every 12 months. After your health assessment you will then have a health plan. Your nurse may attend your review meeting to talk about your health and well-being.

A review meeting is a regular meeting that brings together all the people who are working with you. An Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) leads the meeting and will discuss your care and support plan and day to day arrangements including where you live, your education, your health and well-being and other issues that are important to you.

Your review meeting is your meeting. You have a right to attend and can ask for an advocate to attend with you if you feel this is right for you. Other people who will be at the meeting could include your social worker, your foster carers, your nurse, your birth parents and somebody from school.



Your first review meeting must take place 20 days after you go into care, and your second review meeting no more than three months later.

After this time, your review meeting should take place on average every six months (but may be sooner if anything changes in your care and support plan).



Advocacy

'Having an adult on my side helped.'

Care experienced young person, age 14

Sometimes it can be difficult to speak up and say what you want to happen. An advocate will stand up for your right to be heard and let others know your wishes and feelings. Advocacy can help you to make something happen, make something change or make something stop.

All children and young people in care have a right to an advocate. Your advocate can attend a meeting with you or talk to you about choices and options when making decisions.



Here are some other key points to remember about advocacy:

- **Advocacy is independent** - which means that your advocate won't work for social services.
- **Advocacy is confidential** - your information is yours and won't be shared unless you want it to be. However, if your advocate is concerned for your safety or another person's safety they may have to tell somebody else to make sure you are protected

If you are unhappy with any decision made about your care or support plan you can always make a complaint and an advocate can support you to do this.

If you would like the support of an advocate, you can speak to your social worker, IRO or nurse and ask for an advocacy referral. You can also refer yourself if you would prefer. The Meic helpline can give you more information about how to get an advocate.

You can call the [Meic helpline](tel:08088023456) on 0808 80 23456.



My health support hub

My name is:

My age is:

My social worker or personal adviser is:

My GP is:

My nurse is:

My dentist is:

My school nurse is:

Somebody I can speak to at school or college is:

A friend I can speak to is:



Keeping safe and well - if you or someone you know needs some more advice or support on any of the health issues raised in this guide, here are some useful contacts:

MEIC: someone on your side - 0808 80 23456
meiccymru.org Text: 84001

Meic is a free advocacy helpline service for children and young people up to the age of 25 in Wales. The service is confidential - you can call, text or chat online about any worries between 8.00am-12.00am every day.

The Children's Commissioner in Wales

- 0808 801 1000 childcomwales.org.uk

Text 80800 and start your message with COM.

The Children's Commissioner promotes and safeguards the rights and welfare of all children in Wales and can give advice and support if needed if you feel your rights are not being considered by the adults around you.

ChildLine - 0800 1111

childline.org.uk

Childline is a free and confidential service for young people to talk about any worries or get some help if needed on issues including stress or anxiety, bullying, low mood and self-harm. Includes lots of fun resources including a mood journal and games. You can call, email or chat online, anytime 24 hours a day.



NHS Direct Helpline - 0845 46 47

nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk

NHS health, advice and information service 24 hours a day. The NHS direct website has a useful symptom checker as well as a search tool for local health services.

NHS Change for Life

nhs.uk/change4life

This website has lots of really useful tips and recipes if you are interested in learning more about healthy eating and exercise.

Young Minds

youngminds.org.uk

Really helpful website with lots of information on mental health including real stories and mental health services.

Kooth

kooth.com (Monday-Friday 12.00pm-10.00pm, Saturday-Sunday 6.00pm-10.00pm)

Free, safe and anonymous online support for young people. Can chat to friendly counsellors online, read articles or write in a daily journal.

The Samaritans - 116 123

samaritans.org

Welsh language line 0808 164 0123 is free from 7.00pm-11.00pm 7 days a week

The Samaritans is a free helpline to talk about anything that's worrying you 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

WellMind App

This is a free NHS mental health and well-being app designed to help you with stress, anxiety and depression. The app includes advice tips and tools to improve your mental health and boost your well-being.

Available for free download on iOS and Android devices by searching 'WellMind.'

