



Government
of South Australia

Office of the Guardian for Children and Young People

Why You're Important to Me

Quotes from the *Report on the Significance of Quality Contact between Children and Young People in Care and their Case Workers.*



How do you have contact with your case worker?

She posts important stuff to me like birthday presents and rings me at home.

11-year-old, female

My worker contacts me mostly by phone, but sometimes I see her face to face.

We text each other a lot but I probably see her once a fortnight.

17-yearold,female in residential care

I see my worker a lot. She will organise to see me almost every week.

How do you have contact with your case worker?

Most of the time I go to her office but sometimes she comes to see me.

14-year-old, male

My worker usually rings my Mum and then Mum tells me.

11-year-old, female in foster care

I would never phone them up.

What is your case worker there to do?

She is there to help us in bad times and to keep us safe when bad stuff was going on at home.

11-year-old, female

She found me a safe place to live in... not a bad place... she told me what her job was, in her office.

11-year old, male

They keep you safe and make sure you don't get hurt.

9-year old, female

She is there if you are scared to tell anyone else what is happening.

9 year old, male

What is your case worker there to do?

My social worker keeps me safe... she keeps in contact with me and calls to ask if I am ok.

14-year old, male

Social workers help me to be happy and help with my real family.

9 year old, female

To go out places, do music, keep my life fun.

She is there to care for my future and to make me happy in my life.

9 year old, male

What is your case worker there to do?

She is there to annoy me... lol. She helped with my transition. To give me money.

18 year old, female, living independently

They help with heaps of different stuff, like problems with my carer. I can talk to my worker about anything and she is there to help arrange stuff for me.

14 year old, female

Do you have a say?

Yes because I get angry if I'm not involved. My social worker and I have a relationship that has been built over time so that I can voice my opinion. I definitely got a say about my transitioning.

I had a say in whether to go to a home with young children.

11 year old, female

She always talks to my about things in the car when I am on the way to access visits.

11 year old, male

No, I trust my social worker.

What do you like?

When she explains things really well and treats me like a normal person and not some foster kid. I think she genuinely cares when she helps me and my sister with our Story Books.

14 year old, female

He listens and does try to answer my questions.

16 year old, male

I invited her to come to my club to watch me play soccer and she came. I think she is a great woman.

17 year old male, living independently

What do you like?

She is fun and makes us smile. She is a fantastic woman. If she gets something for one of us she gets it for all of us.

9 year old, female

I don't really know him.

What don't you like?

The fact that she is so far away – something like a five hour drive – and that she doesn't really listen to me. If I do something wrong she doesn't want to listen to why, she just says it is not good enough.

Social workers won't allow me to visit friends at their home without a police check.

Do you know when you don't have a case worker?

There might have been a time when I didn't have a worker. There was definitely a time when no one contacted me for a bit. I felt lonely.

15 year old, male

Yes, it was good because we weren't bothered and we didn't really need anything anyway.

16 year old female, in foster care

Do you need a case worker?

Yes, so that things could get approved for me.

18 year old female, living independently

Yes, I would have liked to have one because there is no one else to tell if things are bad.

9 year old male

How often do you want to have contact?

Once a month at least and this should be face to face.

14 year old female

I think you should also have one-on-one contact with your worker and not always with other family members present.

15 year old female

I think fortnightly is best and this can be a text message or face to face if need be.

17 year old, female in residential care

If you had a magic wand...

...ensure they see the young people they
case manage once a week.

16 year old male

To put me back with my family.

15 year old male

To help us to have a better home, make me
feel safe and keep me safe.

11 year old female

I wouldn't change anything.

That concludes the quotations from children and young people.

Following are five suggested discussion questions and links to some resources available at the Guardian's website



Discussion question 1

Reflecting on the movie and your practice experience, what do young people in care want from their case worker?

Discussion question 2

What would you like children and young people in care to say about you as their case worker?

Discussion question 3

What might you consider in your practice if the child is from a different culture than your own?

Discussion question 4

How does a quality relationship contribute to child-centred practice?

Discussion question 5

If you were the manager of a service, what three things would you do to improve the quality of the relationship between case workers and children and young people in care?

For additional training materials to support this movie go to the DVD training resources page at <http://bit.ly/e46gRT>

Also visit the Guardian's website www.gcyp.sa.gov.au and search for:

- GCYP guide to good practice: participation of children and young people in decisions made about their care
- Literature review: participation of children in case decisions
- Our Youth Advisors' presentation on talking with children

