



Ministry
of Justice

Youth Justice Charter





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Introduction

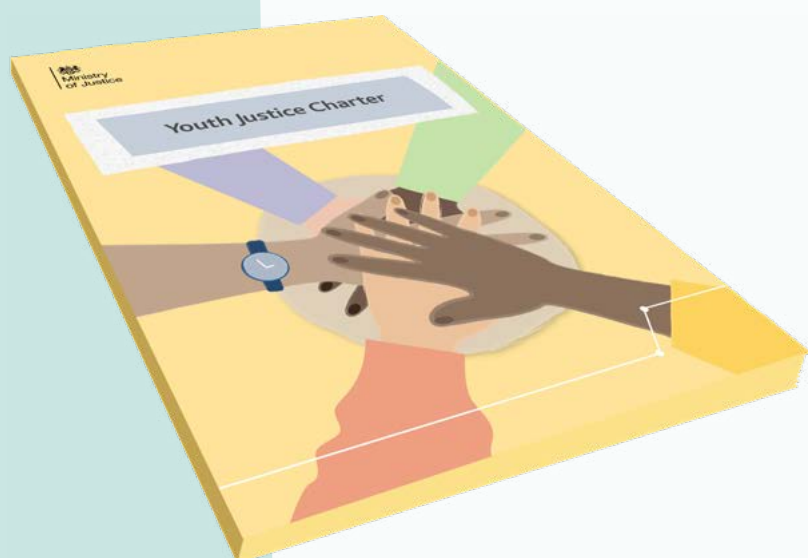


The law is a set of rules that must be followed to keep people safe and protect people's property. If you are a child aged 10 to 17 years old and are suspected or guilty of breaking the law, you may come into contact with the youth justice system.

Breaking the law is also known as 'offending' or 'committing a crime'. The main aim of the youth justice system is to prevent children from offending.

No matter who you are or what crime you've been accused of, all children have special rights.

This Youth Justice Charter explains what your rights are. It sets them out as standards, so you know what to expect from all the different people and organisations you might meet in the youth justice system.



At all stages, you have the right to:



**be treated with dignity
and respect**



**be treated fairly, no matter
your race, language, sex,
religion, gender, sexual
orientation or disability**



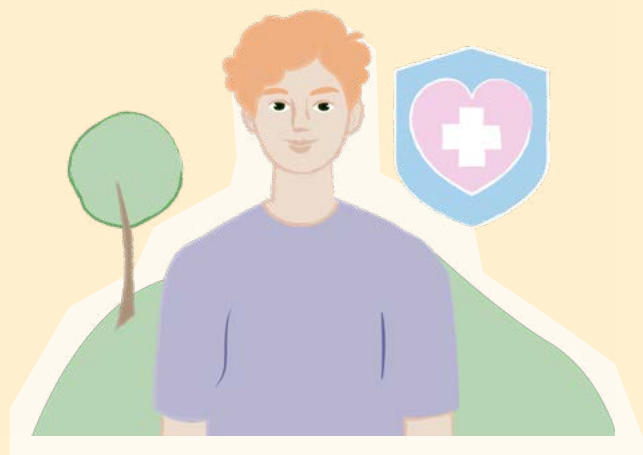
**have legal help from someone
who will put your best
interests first**



**get information to help
and support you**



**be listened to and have your
views taken seriously**



**be healthy and kept
safe from harm**



**have opportunities to learn,
develop and make positive
choices for the future, no
matter what has happened
in the past**



**complain if you do not
think these standards
have been met**



Using the charter as a child

If you need help understanding this charter, you can ask someone you trust to go through it with you. This might be your parent, guardian, carer, social worker, Youth Justice Service case manager, a lawyer or an appropriate adult. You don't need to read it all at once. We have used some words in this charter that you might not understand. We have put these words in **bold**. We have explained what they mean at the end of the charter in a list called 'difficult words'.

The youth justice journey map shows the different stages of the system. You can use it to decide which parts of the charter will be most helpful for you.

You can also read the easy-read charter, which is a simpler version.



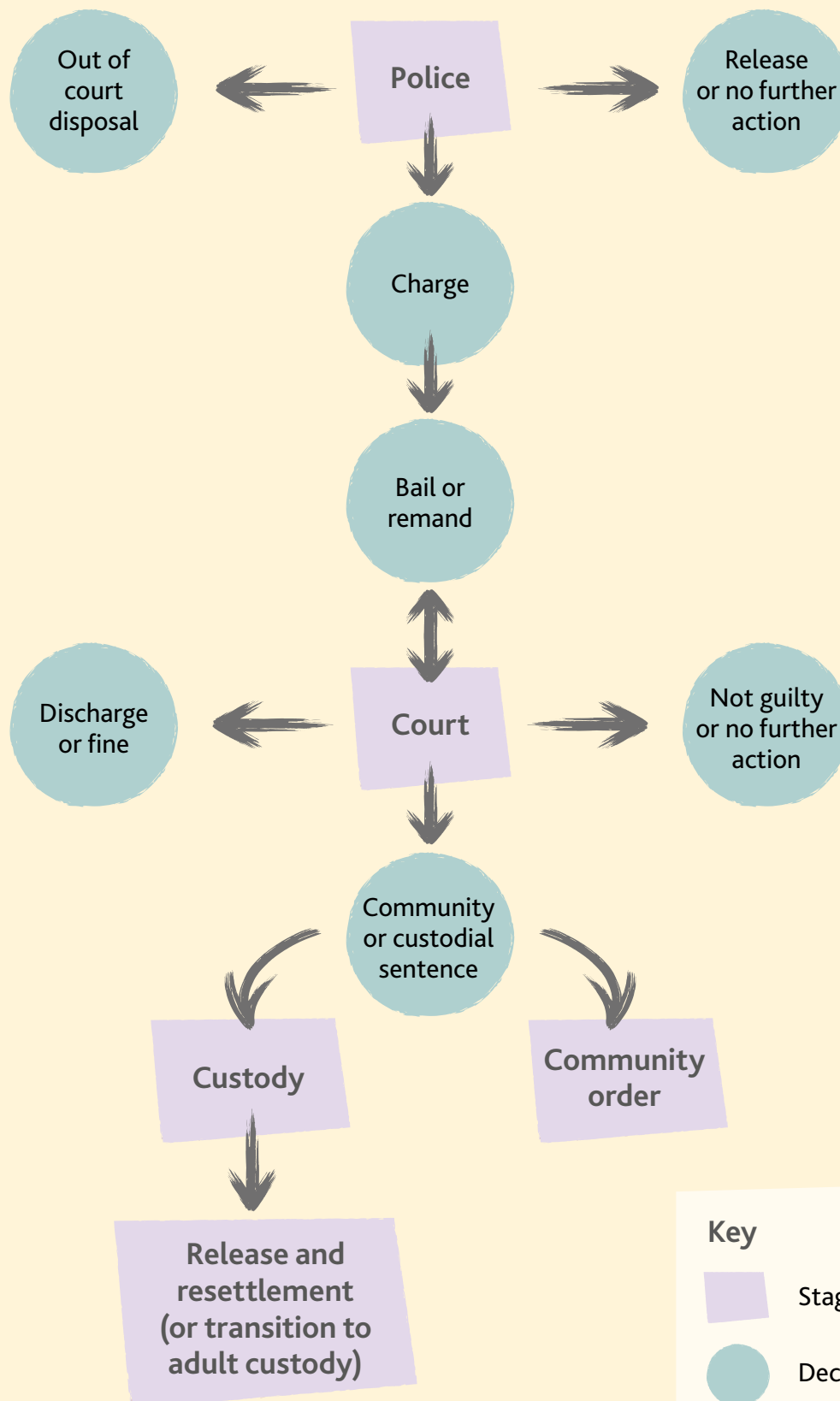
Using the charter as a practitioner

For people working in the youth justice system, you should use this charter as part of your engagement with the child to help them understand and participate in the justice process.

This charter does not replace existing guidance, standards or documents, but brings together the most important information that children should know as a charter standard. Some standards are expressed as something that 'must' or 'will' happen (based on the law), while others use words such as 'should' (based on guidance and best practice). You should familiarise yourself with the charter to ensure that you are delivering the expected standards. You can search 'Youth Justice Charter' for a web version.

Youth justice journey map

This shows the main stages in the youth justice system and the decisions made. You can find out more information on each stage in the charter.



**What happens if I am
stopped by the police?**



The police have an important job of keeping you and everyone safe. They work with people in your neighbourhood to make sure everyone follows the rules and feels secure.

The law gives the police powers to help them solve crime and stop it from happening. But they have to make sure that they use these powers fairly, only when necessary, and in the right way.

The police standards below explain how you should be treated if you come into contact with the police.

Police
standard

1

I can be approached by the police at any time and they must provide proof of who they are if they are not in uniform.

- It is important you know that the person stopping you is from the police. If the person is not in uniform, they should show you their warrant card, which is a form of ID that proves they are part of the police.

Police
standard

2

I can be stopped and searched by the police but they must explain why they are searching me and follow specific rules before, during and after the search.

- You can be **stopped and searched** by the police if they have **reasonable grounds** to think you are carrying something you shouldn't have, for example, illegal drugs or a knife. You might also be stopped and searched if you are in an area that a senior police officer has decided is at risk of serious violence.
- You cannot say no to being searched if there are reasonable grounds, and the police can stop you from walking away if you try to.
- If the police record the search on their **body-worn camera**, they should tell you they are recording you.
- If you are asked to take off something you wear for religious reasons, like a turban or hijab, the police should take you somewhere private where others can't see.
- The police must complete a record to say they have searched you and either give you a copy of that record or tell you how you can get a copy.
- The police should contact your parent or carer if you are stopped and searched.

Police
standard
3

If I am taken to a police station, the police must organise for an appropriate adult to come and support me.

- The **appropriate adult** could be your parent, carer, a **social worker** or a trained adult from an appropriate adult scheme, but they must be independent from the police.
- The appropriate adult's job is to protect your interests, rights and welfare. This includes helping you communicate, making sure you understand your rights, and checking that the police are acting fairly and respecting your rights. They can't give you legal advice or answer questions on your behalf.
- You have the right to ask to speak privately to your appropriate adult at any time.
- Your appropriate adult must be with you during many police procedures. These include interviews, fingerprinting, taking samples (such as hair, blood or urine), non-urgent strip searches, giving you a **youth caution or youth conditional caution**, or **charging** you. Being charged with an **offence** means you will have to go to court, and the court will decide what happens next.



Police
standard

4

If a police search exposes intimate parts of my body, the police must respect my rights and dignity.

- If the police need to do a search which exposes intimate parts of your body, an **appropriate adult** must be with you during the search.
- There are some situations where an appropriate adult doesn't need to be with you. This includes in urgent cases where there is a risk of serious harm, or if you don't want an appropriate adult to be there (the appropriate adult must sign a record agreeing to this).
- If the search is not urgent, then a minimum of two people must be with you. This could be two police officers (if you do not want your appropriate adult to be there). There shouldn't be any more than three people with you, unless in exceptional circumstances.
- Everyone present must be the same sex as you, except if you have requested a specific appropriate adult.
- The search must take place in a private space, usually inside a police station and never in a police vehicle.
- You must be searched as quickly as possible, allowed to dress as soon as the search is complete, and won't normally have to take all your clothes off at once.
- If the police record the search, they should cover the camera or turn it away when your intimate body parts are exposed.

Police
standard
5

If the police want to ask questions about whether I was involved in a crime, they must explain and respect my rights.

- The police cannot ask you any questions unless you have an **appropriate adult** with you.
- The police must ask you and your appropriate adult whether you want a **lawyer**. If either of you do, they cannot ask their questions until the lawyer arrives.
- Your lawyer works for you and not the police. They will explain the interview process to you, give you advice before the interview starts and support you during the interview.
- The police must explain that a **caution** means you don't have to answer their questions, and that what you decide to say could be used as evidence later.

Police
standard
6

If I am arrested, the police should explain what is happening and their reasons for arresting me.

- You cannot be **arrested** if you are under 10 years old.
- You should not be arrested at school or college unless this is unavoidable.
- You should be taken straight to a police station unless you are **de-arrested**.

Police
standard

7

My health and wellbeing will be looked after while I am at the police station.

- The police might ask a specialist health worker to meet with you if they are worried about your health or wellbeing.
- The health worker gives advice on how best to support people with any health needs. This includes if you take any medication, you have mental health difficulties or a learning disability, or you are neurodivergent (for example, if you have autism or ADHD).

Police
standard

8

The police will only keep me at the police station for as long as necessary, and they will keep me safe and respect my rights while I am there.

- You should be able to make a phone call to your parent or **guardian**.
- You should not be put in a **cell** unless there is nowhere else safe and comfortable at the police station. You must never be put in a cell with an adult.
- The police must try to contact someone who is responsible for you (like a parent, carer, guardian or **social worker**) to let them know where you are.
- If you are female, a female member of staff will look after you.
- You will have food and water, a place to sleep, clothes or blankets to keep you warm, and sanitary products if you need them.
- You can ask for a book to read, or something to draw or write with. The police should give you an activity unless they think it is a risk to your safety and wellbeing.
- You should not be kept at the police station for more than 24 hours before the police decide whether to **charge** you, unless you are accused of a serious crime.

Police
standard
9

I have the right to free, independent advice from a lawyer and the police should arrange this for me.

- If you don't already know a **lawyer**, you can ask for the **duty lawyer**.
- The lawyer will come to the police station but might speak to you on the phone first.
- The lawyer works for you (not the police). They will make sure you know your rights, explain to you what is happening and give you legal advice.
- The legal advice is free: you do not need to pay anything.
- You will be able to speak to the lawyer in private, without your **appropriate adult** if you want.
- If you have a lawyer, they must be with you when the police ask you questions about the crime you are accused of.



Police
standard
10

I will be given additional help with communicating if I need it.

- Your **appropriate adult** can help you understand what the police are saying in your police interview. They can also help make sure the police understand what you are saying.
- You may also be able to get extra help with communication from someone called an **intermediary**, who is independent from the police. Their job is to help you and the police understand what each other say.
- If you speak a different language to English or Welsh, the police can organise for someone who speaks your language (an interpreter) to help you understand what everyone is saying and to speak for you.
- The interpreter might be with you in person, on a video call or on a phone call.

Police
standard
11

If I am offered an out of court disposal, I will be helped to understand what this means.

- An **out of court disposal** means you do not have to go to court if you accept the disposal.
- There are different types, with different rules and things you will need to do.
- An **appropriate adult** must be with you if you are offered a **youth caution** or **youth conditional caution**.
- The police should explain to you what is involved with your out of court disposal, and what will happen if you don't stick to any rules.
- Out of court disposals can show up on your criminal record in future. You can ask a **lawyer** for advice on whether the out of court disposal is the best option for you.

Police
standard
12

If I am charged with an offence, the police will explain what happens next and any rules I have to follow until I get to court.

- If you are **charged** with an **offence**, you will need to go to court.
- While waiting to go to court, you usually have a right to **bail**. Bail means that you can leave but will have to go to court at a specified time and date. If you do not show up to court at that time and date, this means you are committing a crime and may be charged with another offence.
- The police might give you some rules to follow – for example, where you must live until you go to court, or people you are not allowed to contact. This could be to keep you or others safe.
- If you are not charged with an offence, the police might release you under investigation. This means you are free to go home and there are no rules you need to follow, but the police will continue to investigate the offence they think you committed. They could **arrest** you and charge you in the future.



Police
standard
13

If I am not given bail by the police, they will explain the reasons why and where I will stay.

- You may be refused police **bail** if the police aren't certain where you live or if you have been **charged** with a very serious **offence** like murder. They will always explain why you have been refused bail and you are not free to go.
- Your **local authority** and **Youth Justice Service (YJS)** must try to find a safe and secure space for you (for example, with a relative, in foster care or in a children's home). If they cannot find a space, you will stay at the police station. This is called staying in **police custody**.
- The police will explain the rules that you have to follow and what will happen if you don't. They will also tell you whether you have temporarily become a **looked after child** and what this means.

Police
standard
14

If I am kept in police custody, they will explain how long this will last and what the next steps will be.

- If the police decide that you need to stay in **police custody**, you will stay until your first court **hearing**. This will usually be within 24 hours of you arriving at the police station.
- You will be taken straight from police custody to the court.
- Your first court hearing is called a bail hearing. The court will decide whether you can be **bailed**, **remanded to local authority accommodation**, or should stay in custody until your next court hearing (usually your **trial**). This type of custody is not the same as police custody, and you will be placed into the **youth secure estate**.



What can I do if these standards are not met?

If you think these standards have not been met, you should tell the person who is named in the standard (for example, the police officer), or any adult who supports you can tell them for you. If you do not want to do this or are unhappy with the response you get, you can make a complaint.

There are different ways to complain and you can choose which way you prefer.

Complaining about the police

- Speak to the duty officer at your local police station.
- Dial **101** to make a complaint by phone.
- Send a complaint to the **Independent Office for Police Conduct**. They are not part of the police and they make all of their decisions independently. [Read more about the complaints process](#), or [send a complaint through their website](#).

Complaining about your lawyer

- You can [complain about your lawyer to the Solicitors Regulation Authority](#).

More support

- Call the **Children's Commissioner's** advice line. If you are in England, the number is **0800 528 0731**, or you can [contact them on their website](#). If you are in Wales, the number is **0808 801 1000**, or you can [contact them on their website](#).
- Ask your local **Citizens Advice Bureau** for advice. If you are in England, you can call on **0800 144 8848**. If you are in Wales, you can call on **0800 702 2020**.

**What happens
if I go to court?**



If you have been **charged** with a crime, you will usually go to a **youth court**. There will be either a **judge** or **magistrates** who will make decisions about your case.

If you have been charged with a serious crime (like murder), you will then go on to a **Crown Court**. There will be a **jury** made up of ordinary people who will decide whether you committed the crime you've been accused of. The job of the judge, magistrates and jury is to listen to everyone's side of the story and make a decision that is fair.

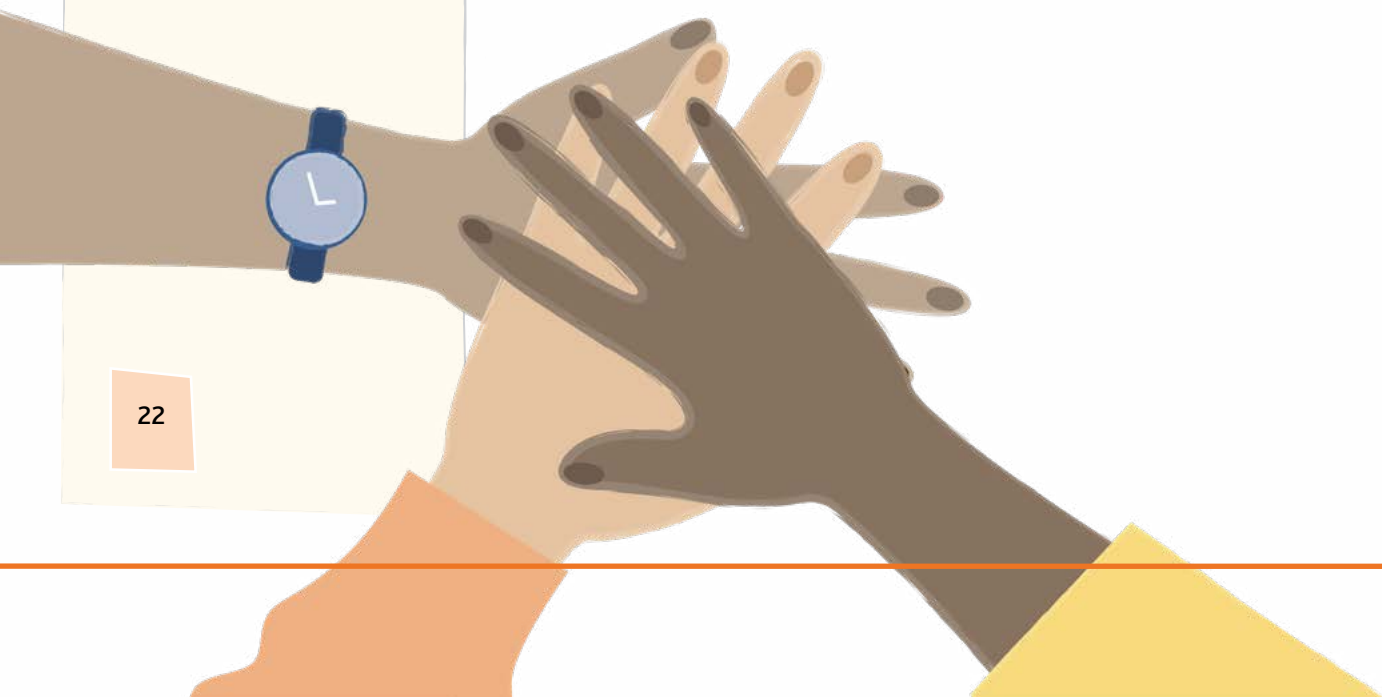
The court standards below explain how you should be treated before, during and after you go to court.

Court
standard

1

I should be given support to
prepare for going to court.

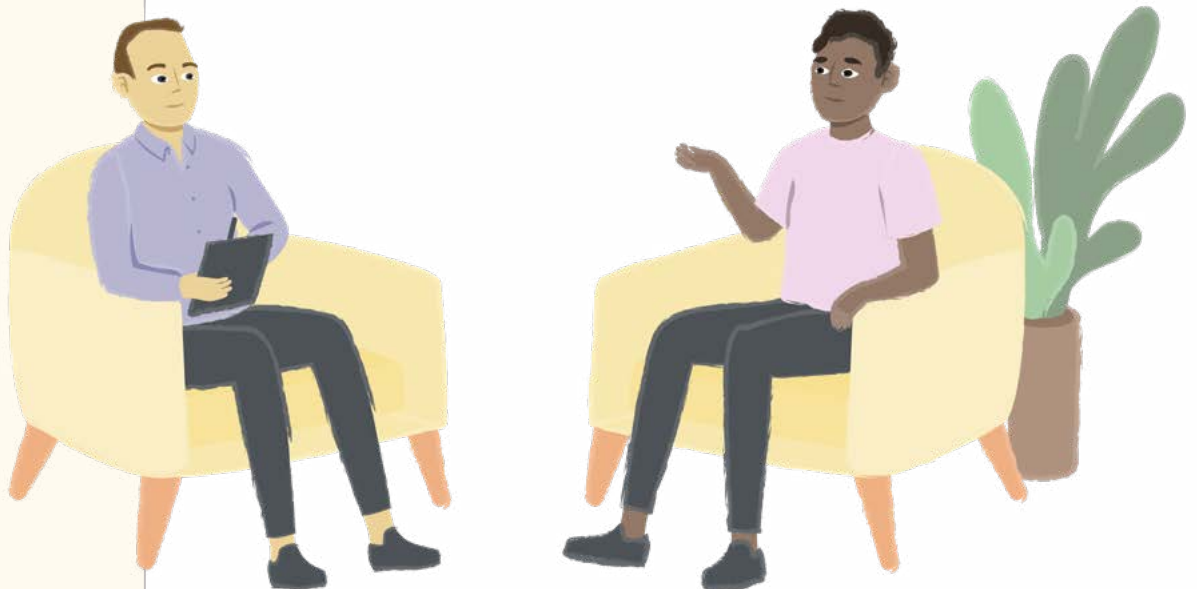
- ✓ You should be told as early as possible when you need to go to court.
- ✓ Your local **Youth Justice Service (YJS)** should contact you and your parents or carers before your court appearance and answer any questions you have. They should make sure you know where to go, what time to be there and what will happen when you get to court.
- ✓ If you are going to court from **custody**, your YJS, **lawyer** or custody officer will give you this information. They will help make sure you and your parents or carers can get to court and help organise how you will travel there.
- ✓ Your lawyer can arrange for you to visit the court and see what it looks like before your court date so you know what to expect.
- ✓ If you are taken to court by secure transport from the police station, you should not travel with adult prisoners and you should be in the vehicle for the shortest time possible.



Court
standard
2

I will have a lawyer at court who will be on my side and will stand up for me.

- ✓ You have the right to free legal advice, from someone who puts your best interests first.
- ✓ Your **lawyer** works for you, not anyone else in the court room. They will listen to you and take you seriously. They will be honest with you and will make sure you understand what is happening.
- ✓ You will be able to speak to your lawyer before, during and after court. The court staff should find you somewhere you can speak in private.
- ✓ If you don't have a lawyer and you want one, there will be a **duty lawyer** at court who can support you in court.
- ✓ When you are in the court room, you should usually be seated close to your lawyer so you can speak with them if you need to.



Court
standard
3

**I should be able to sit next to my
parents or carers in court.**

- ✎ You should be able to sit with your parents, carers or another adult who supports you in the court room.
- ✎ If you are brought into the court wearing handcuffs, your **lawyer** can ask for you to come out of the **dock** (the secure area) and sit next to your parents, carers or other **appropriate adult**.
- ✎ If the **magistrates** or **judge** are concerned about your safety or the safety of others, they may decide you need to stay sitting in the dock and will explain their reasons.

Court
standard
4

**I will have a bail application if I have
been charged with a crime.**

- ✎ A **bail hearing** should take place within 24 hours of you being **charged** with a crime. This may mean you are taken to an adult court rather than a **youth court**, but there should still be someone there who knows how youth courts work.
- ✎ Somebody from a YJS should be there to talk to you about bail and find out about your situation so they can help the court to make a **bail decision**.
- ✎ There are three possible outcomes for you at your bail hearing: bail, **remand to local authority accommodation** or **remand to youth custody accommodation**.
- ✎ If you are remanded, the **judge** or **magistrates** will tell you out loud in court what will happen to you and which local authority is now responsible for you.

Court
standard
5

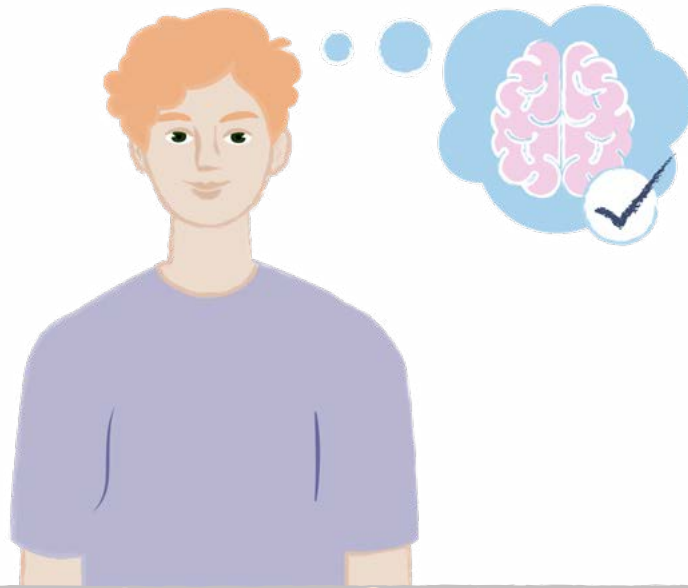
I will be given help to understand what is being said in court and to make sure others in the court can understand me.

- ✎ If you speak a different language to English or Welsh, court staff will organise for someone who speaks your language (an interpreter) to help you understand what everyone is saying and to speak to others for you.
- ✎ If you need help communicating for any reason, for example, because you have a disability, learning difficulty, or you are neurodivergent (for example, if you have autism or ADHD), your **lawyer** can ask the **judge** for an **intermediary** who is independent from the court. Their job is to help you and the people in court understand what each other say.
- ✎ The adults in the court room will speak clearly and the judge or **magistrates** will check to make sure that you understand what has been said.
- ✎ You will be able to ask any questions and you can ask to take a break if you need one.



Court
standard

6



My mental health and wellbeing will be looked after while I am at court.

- ✎ A specialist health worker may meet with you at court if anyone is worried about your mental health or wellbeing. They give advice on how best to support people with any mental health needs.

Court
standard

7

The judge or magistrates will help me to understand what their decisions mean for me.

- ✎ The **judge** or **magistrates** will check that you understand the decisions they make about your case.
- ✎ The judge or magistrates will explain anything you need to do as part of your **bail**, **remand** or **sentence**, including any rules you need to follow (these are called conditions). They will also explain what will happen if you don't do what they have asked you to do.

Court
standard
8

If the court has remanded me into custody, the reason for the decision will be set out in writing and I will be given help to understand it.

- Being **remanded into custody** means you need to stay in **secure accommodation** until your next court appearance, and often until your **trial** is over.
- The **judge** or **magistrates** must explain this to you clearly. When you are in custody, the **custody staff** will give you a written copy of the judge or magistrates' explanation either by email or on paper.
- Your YJS will be able to write a **bail application** for you while you are in custody and your **lawyer** can ask for bail a number of times. The court must review your case if you are in custody waiting for your trial for a certain amount of time.



Court
standard
9

I will have help from the Youth Justice Service and my lawyer to understand what happens after court.

- After you have been to court, the YJS and your **lawyer** will check that you understand the **judge or magistrates'** decision.
- If you have been found not guilty or have been given an **absolute discharge**, you are free to go home and do not need to follow any rules.
- If you have been given a **court order** that doesn't involve **custody**, your YJS will arrange to meet with you and will tell you where you need to go for your appointments.
- If you have been given conditional **bail** or **remanded to local authority accommodation**, your YJS will make sure you know any conditions you need to stick to and may discuss a timetable for **supervision**.
- If the judge or magistrates decide you need to be in custody, you will be taken from the court room to the court **cells** by security staff.
- You will wait in the court cells until transport arrives to take you to your custody **placement**. You should be told where you are going and you should be able to call your family if they have not been in court. You should have refreshment and toilet breaks on the journey.
- Your lawyer and YJS will come and speak to you while you are waiting to go to your placement.



What can I do if these standards are not met?

If you think these standards have not been met, you should tell the person named in the standard, or any adult who supports you can tell them for you. If you do not want to do this or are unhappy with the response you get, you can make a complaint.

There are different ways to complain and you can choose which way you prefer.

- ✍ Speak to your **lawyer** (if you have one).
- ✍ Contact the YJS who are supporting you.
- ✍ If you think the court was wrong to find you guilty or you are not happy with your **sentence**, you need to follow a separate '**appeal**' process. Your lawyer can give you advice on this.
- ✍ Ask your local **Citizens Advice Bureau** for advice. If you are in England, you can call on **0800 144 8848**. If you are in Wales, you can call on **0800 702 2020**.
- ✍ Call the **Children's Commissioner's** advice line. If you are in England, the number is **0800 528 0731**, or you can [contact them on their website](#). If you are in Wales, the number is **0808 801 1000**, or you can [contact them on their website](#).
- ✍ You can complain about your lawyer to the [Solicitors Regulation Authority](#) or the [Bar Standards Board](#).

[Read more about the complaints process](#) for your experience in court.

**How will the Youth
Justice Service help me
in the community?**



The **Youth Justice Service (YJS)** is a very important part of the youth justice system. They are also sometimes called **Youth Offending Teams (YOTs)**.

YJS teams are made up of different people, including **social workers**, education specialists, and speech and language therapists. You may meet with several of them about different things, but you will have one **case manager** who will be your main point of contact. They will get to know you and make a plan with you and other professionals to support you.

This section explains what to expect from your YJS team if the court has given you **bail**, **community remand** or a **community sentence**.

A community remand is also known as a remand to local authority accommodation. This can be living at home, with a relative, in foster care or in a children's home. There are usually rules, such as places you can't go or people you can't talk to.

A community sentence is a **court order** with rules you need to follow for a certain amount of time.

YJS teams may also help you if you have come into contact with the police, if you have been given an **out of court disposal** or if you are on bail waiting to go to court.

The YJS standards below explain how you should be treated by your YJS team in the community.

YJS
standard
1

I will know who my case manager is and how to get in touch with them.

- You will be told the name of your **case manager** and when and where you will next need to meet them. They will explain how often you will meet and how to contact them.
- They will want to see you face to face. This may be at the YJS office, your home or somewhere else such as a café. They may also message, video call or voice call you.

YJS
standard
2

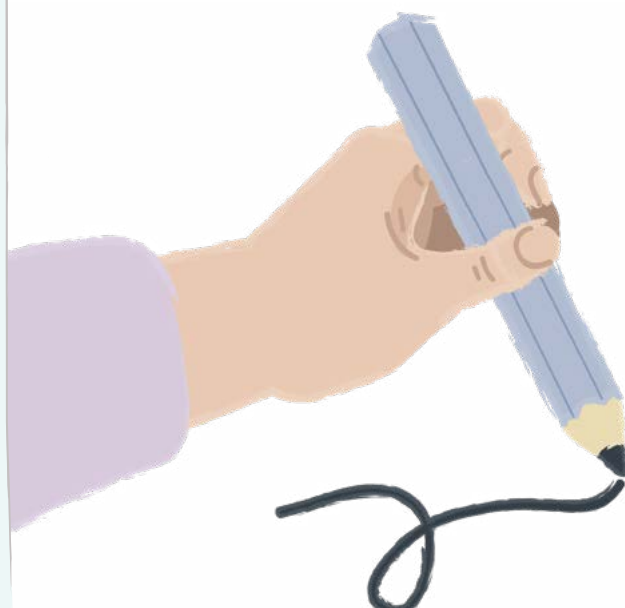
I will be given help to understand the role of the YJS team and how I will work with them.

- Your **case manager** will explain clearly why they are involved and what will happen while they are working with you.
- They will explain the different requirements and which things are compulsory (what you must do) and which are voluntary (what you can choose to do).
- Your case manager will see you at agreed days and times – this is called **supervision**. They will try to make it as easy as possible for you to get to your appointments. You should tell your case manager if you are worried about how to pay for your travel.
- Your case manager will explain what will happen if you don't attend your appointments or don't do the things that are asked of you. This could include being contacted again by the police or going back to court.

YJS
standard
3

My case manager should understand my individual needs and should help other people to understand them too.

- Your **case manager** will spend time getting to know you. They will want to know more about what has happened and why, what and who is important in your life, and if you have any hobbies. They will want to visit you at home to understand your situation and meet with your parents or carers.
- Your case manager will encourage you to share your story in your own way. That could be through drawing, writing or just talking.
- They may ask other professionals to meet with you if they think that would be helpful.
- Your case manager will write a report to help the court make decisions about your future.
- If you don't follow the rules you have been given as part of your **bail** or **court order**, then your case manager can start breach proceedings. This is a formal process. They will ask what has happened and support you if you need to go back to court.



YJS
standard
4

I will be involved in developing a plan to help me achieve future goals.

- Your **case manager** will make a plan to support you. This plan is meant to give you the best possible chance of achieving your goals and to help you avoid breaking the law in the future.
- Your case manager will share the plan with you written down, as pictures, or as something you can listen to later on.
- You can ask your case manager to change the plan if something is not working for you.
- Your case manager will help you understand the plan and answer any questions you might have. They will also explain what having a criminal record means for you and when you might need to tell potential employers or **education providers** about it.
- Your parents or carers will be asked to get involved in deciding the plan.



YJS
standard
5

I will be given help to understand what happens at the end of my court order.

- If your **court order** is coming to an end, your **case manager** will talk to you about what help and support you may need to help you avoid breaking the law again. This could include ongoing wellbeing support if needed.
- They may recommend getting help from other organisations or services, such as a youth support mentor.
- If you agree to what they suggest, they will arrange this for you.



YJS
standard
6

If I am turning 18 soon, my case manager will organise my move to the adult probation service.

- If you are approaching 18 years old but haven't completed your **sentence** or time on **bail** or **remand**, you may have to move across to the **adult probation service**. This change will be carefully planned and discussed with you.
- Your **case manager** will share important information with the probation worker, so they understand all about you and what you need help with. This will include your healthcare, special educational needs or any other support you may need.
- You will be able to meet your new probation worker before the change so you can get to know them.





What can I do if these standards are not met?

If you think these standards have not been met, you should tell the person named in the standard, or any adult who supports you can tell them for you. If you do not want to do this or are unhappy with the response you get, you can make a complaint.

There are different ways to complain and you can choose which way you prefer.

- Speak to your **YJS case manager**.
- Ask to speak to the manager of your YJS.
- Contact your **local authority** complaints department.
- Call the **Children's Commissioner's** advice line. If you are in England, the number is **0800 528 0731**, or you can [contact them on their website](#). If you are in Wales, the number is **0808 801 1000**, or you can [contact them on their website](#).
- You can complain about your **lawyer** to the [Solicitors Regulation Authority](#).

**What happens while
I am in youth custody?**



If the court decides to **remand** or **sentence** you to **custody**, you will be looked after by staff in the **youth secure estate**. If you are in custody on remand, you will stay in custody until you go back to court for your **trial** or for sentencing. If you are sentenced to custody, the court will tell you how long you need to stay there for.

You will stay at either:

- ✍ a young offender institution (YOI) – a larger site with multiple living units, and 30 to 60 children and young people staying in each unit
- ✍ a secure training centre (STC) – a site with multiple living units, with 4 to 8 children and young people staying in each unit
- ✍ a secure children's home (SCH) – a site with 5 to 20 children and young people staying in each home
- ✍ a secure school – a site with multiple living units, and up to 6 children and young people staying in each unit

You should tell your Youth Justice Service (YJS) **case manager, custody staff, social worker** or **personal advisor** if you are a **carer** or have any caring responsibilities before going into custody. They can make sure that the people you care for continue to get the help or support they need.

The custody standards below explain how you should be treated while you are in custody.

Custody standard

1

I will be helped to understand why I am being placed in custody, for how long and where I will be staying.

- ✎ Your YJS **case manager** and **lawyer** will explain what is happening before you leave the court building.
- ✎ The **Youth Custody Service** will decide where you stay, with advice from your YJS case manager.
- ✎ The decision will be based on where you live, your age, your sex, whether you've been in **custody** before, your safety, your health needs, your education needs, your wellbeing and what spaces are available.
- ✎ You, your parents, carers or your lawyer can **appeal** the decision if you don't agree with it. This means the decision will be looked at again.

Custody standard

2

I will know if and when I need to go back to court and custody staff will organise for me to get there.

- ✎ If you are in **custody** on **remand**, the **judge** or **magistrates** will decide when you need to come back to court.
- ✎ Your YJS **case manager** will tell you the date of your court **hearing** as early as possible and will tell you if you can reapply for **bail** at any time.
- ✎ You will be able to speak to your **lawyer** about what is happening.
- ✎ **Custody staff** must get you to court on time. They will arrange for you to travel in a van from custody to the court.
- ✎ In some cases, you might be able to have your court hearing via video call, without leaving custody.

Custody
standard
3

I will meet with the people who will support me while I am in custody, and they will make plans to support my education, health and wellbeing.

- It is important that you feel familiar with your surroundings. You will be given information as soon as you arrive, and then receive a fuller induction within your first couple of weeks in **custody**. There are rules to keep you and others safe, and staff will explain these rules to you.
- You might stay on an induction unit during this time, which is a separate area to help new people settle in.
- You should have extra help with communication if you need it – for example, if English is not your first language or if you have a disability.
- You will have a health assessment and a nurse will ask about your health needs. They will use your answers to help make a care plan for you.
- You will meet regularly with a lead staff member who will support and care for you during your stay.
- Your YJS case manager, your **social worker** or **personal advisor** (if you have one) will keep in regular contact with you.
- You will be given support from other members of staff from different teams, such as health, **chaplaincy**, safeguarding or **substance misuse**. They will each explain what their role is.
- The people supporting you will understand your story and should find out about your life, any problems you face and the help you may need.
- At the end of your induction, you will be given information about your daily and weekly programme.

Custody
standard

4

Planning for what happens when I leave custody will begin right at the start of my stay.

- Helping you to prepare for leaving **custody** is really important. This is sometimes called release or resettlement.
- While you are in custody, you will have a **resettlement worker**. They may also be called a **case manager**. They will meet you within 10 days of your arrival and will start planning for what happens when you leave custody.
- Your resettlement worker will work with you, your YJS case manager, your **social worker** or **personal advisor** (if you have one) to develop the plan. The plan will cover all of your needs to support your resettlement, including health needs, plans for education or employment, and where you will live after custody.



Custody
standard
5

I will have a comfortable place to sleep, somewhere I can wash and access to books in a library.

- ✍ When you arrive, you will be given a tour to help you get to know your surroundings.
- ✍ You will have your own bedroom with a bed, bed sheets, heating and lighting.
- ✍ You will have regular access to a shower or bath. The shower may be in your bedroom or separate to your bedroom, but you will have a toilet and a sink in your room.
- ✍ You will be given things to keep yourself clean, such as shampoo for free. You can ask for things that suit your hair and skin.
- ✍ You can ask for a haircut if you want one.
- ✍ You can ask to use the library or to read books. Library access may be part of your education schedule.



Custody
standard

6

I will be able to spend time out of my room.

- ✓ You will be able to spend time out of your room with other people. The amount of time may be different depending on where you are staying and your individual needs.
- ✓ Education and exercise will usually take place outside of your room, and there will also be shared areas where you can spend time with others.
- ✓ You will have access to a gym or an outside area to help you stay healthy. This could be part of your time out of your room or as part of your physical education playing sports.

Custody
standard

7

I will be given personal care items to look after myself and I will be given some money to buy additional items I need.

- ✓ On your first night, you will be given stationery, writing materials, toiletries (including sanitary products if you need them), clean clothes and snacks. There are different rules about what clothing to wear depending on where you are staying, and these will be explained to you.
- ✓ If you run out of any supplies, you can ask for more.
- ✓ You will be given phone credit (if needed) and some money at the beginning of your stay so that you can buy additional items you may need.

Custody
standard

8

I will know how often I can see or speak to family or friends while I am in custody.

It is important that you can stay in touch with family, friends and other people in your life (for example, your **social worker** or **personal advisor**) while you are in **custody**.

Phone calls

- Within two hours of your arrival, you will be allowed to call someone and tell them where you are if you couldn't call before you arrived. If you arrive late at night, you may be asked to wait until the following morning.
- Each site has its own rules about how many calls you can make or receive, and you will be told what these are during your **induction**. In some secure accommodation, there is a phone in your room that you can use to make these calls.
- You can also ask to receive a video call in some secure accommodation.



Visits

- ✍ You will be allowed a visitor within three days of arriving in **custody**.
- ✍ If you are in custody after being **sentenced**, you will be allowed a visit at least once every two weeks, including one weekend visit every four weeks.
- ✍ If you are in custody on **remand**, you can have a visit three times each week in a young offender institution or one visit a week in a secure training centre. The number of visits in a secure children's home or a secure school may vary.
- ✍ These visits can be from your friends or family.
- ✍ In some cases, your family may be able to get financial support to visit you. A member of staff can tell you more about this when you arrive.
- ✍ Each visit will last at least one hour.
- ✍ Custody officers or key workers might stay with you during the visit.
- ✍ As part of the rules, sometimes visits may be different if there is a behaviour or a security issue that makes them a risk. You may have to have closed visits where you are not allowed physical contact with the person visiting. If you feel that this is unfair, you can appeal the decision by speaking to a member of staff or an independent **advocate**.

Custody
standard

9

Letters

- ✍ You will be able to send at least one letter a week and will be given stationery and stamps for free. Each place has its own rules about how many letters you can send or receive, so ask a member of staff if you have any questions.
- ✍ In some places, **custody staff** are allowed to read letters you have written before sending them to check the content is appropriate. The law says that if they find the content inappropriate, they may decide not to send the letter.
- ✍ If you would like to send a letter to someone, but would like help writing the letter, you can ask a member of staff. They can also help you read any letters you receive.
- ✍ In some secure accommodation, you have access to a secure email service where you can also write to people.

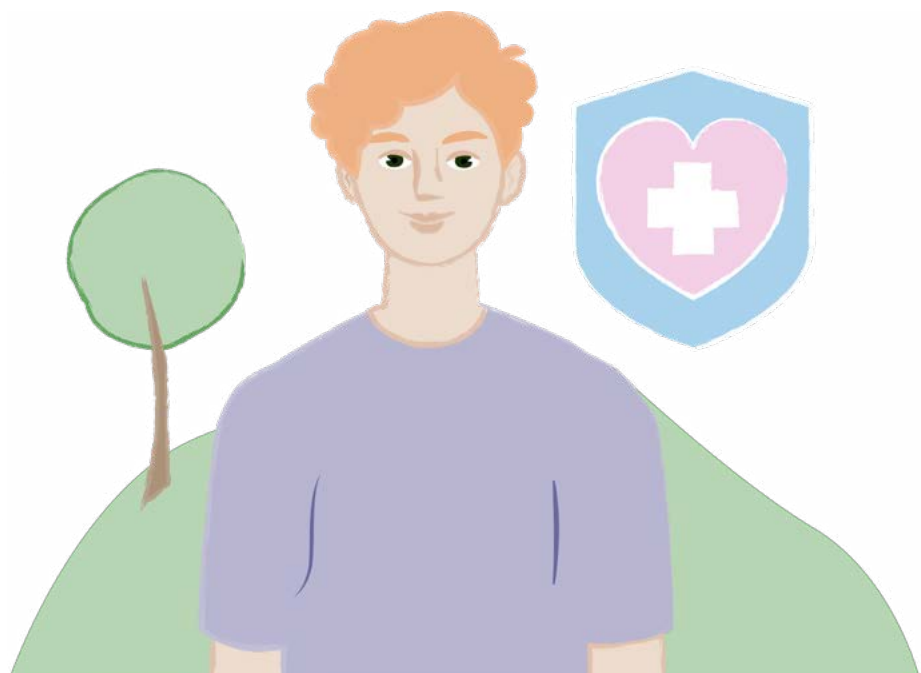
I will be provided with healthy food and drink during my stay in custody.

- ✍ You will receive food and drink that is good for your health and in line with your religious beliefs.
- ✍ In some **secure accommodation** you can buy additional food and drink using an ordering system called 'canteen'. Money to buy things can be sent to you in different ways. This will all be explained to you as part of your induction.

Custody
standard
10

**I will receive health care so that
I can stay fit and healthy.**

- ✍ A health team will care for your mental and physical health while you are in **custody**.
- ✍ If you need specialist support for additional needs (for example, if you are neurodivergent), this will be arranged for you.
- ✍ You will be asked about any medication you take. You will be offered any immunisations and vaccinations that you have missed and help with dental, hearing and eye care.
- ✍ Smoking and vaping are not allowed while you are in custody. You can get support to stop smoking.
- ✍ You are not allowed to have any alcohol while you are in custody. You can get support to stop drinking alcohol.
- ✍ Keeping you safe is everyone's priority. If there are concerns about your safety or mental health, it might mean you are moved to stay somewhere different or have someone watching you closely.



Custody
standard
11

I will be able to get independent advice and support while I am in custody.

- It is important that you are able to voice your opinions or concerns, and get the advice and support you need.
- An **advocate** is someone who doesn't work for the custody service and can give you information, advice and support. They can help you to raise concerns if you are unhappy about something, if you think you have been treated unfairly, or if you want to make a complaint about your experience in **custody**.
- You will be given information on how to contact an advocate and can request an advocate at any time. You can ask **custody staff** for this information.
- You also have the right to free legal advice from a **lawyer** while you are in custody. If you have not kept in touch with a lawyer, an advocate can help you contact one.

Custody
standard
12

My religious beliefs and practices will be respected while I am in custody.

- Secure accommodation** can differ, but in many you have the right to meet with the **chaplain** if you want to. They can help you practise your faith and beliefs. They can also support you if you're feeling sad, even if you are not religious.
- You can spend time worshiping or meditating in a dedicated space outside your room. This will be supervised.
- You can ask if you need to worship or meditate at specific times of the day so your timetable can allow for this.
- You will be able to celebrate religious holidays. If you need special religious items, like clothes or headwear, they will be provided.
- You can talk to the chaplaincy team or visiting chaplain before you leave **custody** if you want to.

Custody
standard
13

I will have access to education and learning opportunities which will help prepare me for life after custody.

- ✎ You should have access to at least 15 hours of education or training every week while you are in **custody**.
- ✎ Your learning will usually include maths, English, IT, life skills, and opportunities for personal and social development.
- ✎ Your education programme will include physical wellbeing and exercise. You will have an exercise class at least once a week and there will be other activities outside of school hours on evenings or weekends.
- ✎ All your learning will be adjusted to meet any additional needs you may have.



Custody
standard
14

The priority of all the people looking after me is to keep me and those around me safe.

- ✓ Staff will check on you regularly to make sure you are safe and that you have settled in. They will only wake you up on purpose if something is wrong.
- ✓ Sometimes custody officers, youth justice workers or key workers may need to search you by holding a metal detector or by patting you down to check that you are not hiding anything which could be dangerous to you or others. This can include a more thorough search of your clothes or body.
- ✓ You can ask to see an **advocate** if you want support after a search.
- ✓ Keeping you and others safe is a priority, so you will be kept separate from another child when there might be a safety risk to either of you. You should tell custody officers if you are worried about any other children.
- ✓ Sometimes staff may need to use force to stop you hurting yourself or others, but only after they have tried other ways to prevent harm.
- ✓ If they use force, you should always have the chance to talk through what happened afterwards with a member of staff who was not involved and a member of the health team. You can also ask to speak to an advocate at any time.



Custody
standard
15

**I will be supported if I need to
move to an adult prison.**

- After you turn 18, you may be moved into an adult prison (even if you are on **remand**). This is sometimes called transition.
- Your YJS **case manager** will meet with you at least twice to discuss what will happen and create a plan for you. They will explain the main differences between youth custody and the adult prison. You will also talk about your health and education needs, as well as any worries you have about the move.
- The first meeting will be at least one month before you move into the adult prison and the second meeting will be at least 10 days before you move.
- Your parents or carers, **social worker** and **personal advisor** (if you have one) will be invited to join these meetings.





What can I do if these standards are not met?

If you think these standards have not been met, you should tell the person named in the standard, or any adult who supports you can tell them for you. If you do not want to do this or are unhappy with the response you get, you can make a complaint.

There are different ways to complain, and you can choose which way you prefer. The type of **placement** you are in affects who you should complain to.

If you don't agree with the placement decision

- ✍ If you, your parents or carers, or your **lawyer** are unhappy about where the **Youth Custody Service** have placed you, any of you can **appeal** the decision. This means that the decision will be looked at again.
- ✍ To place an appeal, you must write out your reasons in an email to YCSTransfers@justice.gov.uk

In all placements

- ✍ You can speak to your key worker, any staff member that you trust, your health worker, the **chaplain**, your **YJS case manager**, an independent **advocate**, your **social worker**, your **personal advisor** or your **independent reviewing officer** if you have one.
- ✍ You can call the **Children's Commissioner's** advice line. If you are in England, the number is **0800 528 0731**, or you can [contact them on their website](#). If you are in Wales, the number is **0808 801 1000**, or you can [contact them on their website](#).
- ✍ If your complaint is about something to do with your health care, you can complain to the health team. If you are in England, you can also complain to NHS England. Their number is **0300 311 2233**, or you can [find out more on their website](#). If you are in Wales, you can complain to Public Health Wales. Their number is **0300 003 0383**, or you can [find out more on their website](#).
- ✍ You can [complain about your lawyer to the Solicitors Regulation Authority](#).

If you're in a young offender institution (YOI)

- ✍ You can contact your **Independent Monitoring Board**, or you can speak to them when they visit. They check whether YOIs are safe and that you are being treated fairly there.
- ✍ You can complain to the **Prisons and Probation Ombudsman** or the **Independent Prisoner Complaint Investigations**. You can ask an independent **advocate** to help you.
- ✍ You can write down your complaint and put it in a box. There are different coloured boxes for different types of complaint.
- ✍ Barnardo's can provide an advocate to support you. You can call Barnardo's on **0808 168 2694**.

If you're in an a secure training centre (STC)

- ✍ You can complain to the **Prisons and Probation Ombudsman** or the **Independent Prisoner Complaint Investigations**. You can ask an independent **advocate** to help you.
- ✍ Barnardo's can provide an advocate to support you. You can call Barnardo's on **0808 168 2694**.



If you're in an a secure children's home (SCH)

- ✍ You can complain to the manager of the home. You can ask for someone independent (this means someone who doesn't work for the home) to look at your complaint.
- ✍ You can also make a complaint to your **local authority**.
- ✍ Barnardo's can provide an **advocate** to support you. The phone number is different to the number for YOIs and STCs. A member of staff will give you the number if you ask.

If you're in the secure school (SS)

- ✍ You can complain to any member of staff. You can ask an independent advocate to help you.
- ✍ If you are unhappy with the outcome of your complaint, you can appeal to either the manager or the principal director.
- ✍ If you are still unhappy with the outcome, staff will support you with the next steps.



What happens after I leave youth custody?



Whether you stay in **custody** as part of your **sentence** or on **remand**, there should be a plan in place for your release to support you for life after custody. This is called **resettlement** or **transitioning**.

Resettlement planning should begin as soon as you enter custody and will involve lots of people, including you, your family, your Youth Justice Service (YJS) **case manager**, your **social worker**, your **personal advisor** and a **resettlement worker** based in custody (although they may be called something different).

If you have been sentenced to custody, you will usually spend some of your sentence on **supervision** or **licence** in the community. This means you will have to follow certain rules like living at a certain address and staying in contact with your YJS case manager. You could go back to custody if you break the rules of your supervision or licence.

The resettlement standards below explain how you should be treated when you leave custody.

Resettlement
standard

1

**Planning for my life after custody
will begin straightaway and continue
throughout my time in custody.**

- You will have an initial **resettlement planning** meeting in the first 10 days of entering **custody**.
- You should then have regular follow-up meetings to discuss what happens when you are released. Your **resettlement worker** should make sure you know when your next meeting will be.
- Your YJS **case manager**, your resettlement worker, your **social worker** and your **personal advisor** (if you have one) should be at these meetings. Your parents or carers should also be invited to join, as well as other people like health workers.
- In these meetings, you will agree a plan for when you are released. The plan should include any support you may need to move on with your life, including your education or career goals, your healthcare needs and where you will live. This may be called a resettlement plan or a **sentence plan**.
- You will also discuss whether you will be able to leave custody to go on a short outing or take part in an activity in the community to help you prepare for your release. This might be called **release on temporary licence** or **mobility**. It is only available if you are in custody on a sentence, not if you are in custody on **remand**. Decisions will always consider any risks.

Resettlement
standard

2

I will be involved in decisions about my release and my views will be listened to and taken seriously.

- In your **resettlement planning** meetings, your goals and hopes for the future will be listened to and should help shape plans for your time in **custody** and release.
- Your YJS **case manager** and **resettlement worker** will tell you about any decisions for your release. They will make sure that others supporting you (like your family, **social worker** or **personal advisor**) are involved.

Resettlement
standard

3

The people who support me will understand my story and work together to help me.

- There may be lots of people involved in supporting you, but you should work directly with just a few people who you know and trust.
- The people supporting you should find out about your life, any problems you face and the help you may need.
- The people supporting you will regularly speak with each other to share information to help make plans for your life after release. You should not have to keep telling your story to new people or be forced to go to lots of different meetings.

Resettlement
standard

4

There will be a plan in place for my learning after I am released.

- Planning for your learning while you are in **custody** should include what will happen after you are released.
- The professionals in custody who are responsible for your learning should consider your interests and ambitions and any support you may need to achieve them.
- If you are eligible for **release on temporary licence or mobility**, you may be able to go on a short visit to **open days** at schools or colleges, go on a course, or go to a job interview.



Resettlement
standard

5

I should know where I will be living in good time before I am released, and this should be a safe and suitable place.

- Planning for where you will live when you leave **custody** should begin straightaway. Your YJS **case manager** should aim to confirm where you are living at least six weeks before your release.
- If it is not possible to go back to where you lived before, you will be helped to find somewhere which is safe, comfortable and meets your needs.
- Your views will be listened to and everyone should do their best to find you somewhere you are happy to live.
- Your YJS case manager (and **social worker** or **personal advisor** if you have one) should visit your accommodation before you move in to make sure it is safe and suitable.
- If you are eligible for **release on temporary licence or mobility**, you might also be able to visit your accommodation before you are released.

Resettlement
standard

6

I will be helped to access ongoing health care when I leave custody, for as long as I need it.

- Planning for your release will include making sure you continue to receive any health or medical care you need when you leave **custody**.
- The health team in custody should organise this for you and make sure you know where to go for medical treatment and support.
- They should also help you register with a doctor and pass on information about your health needs to anyone who needs to know (with your permission).
- You should be given any medications you need before you leave custody so you don't run out.

Resettlement
standard

7

Any rules I must follow on release
will be fair and achievable.

- Your YJS **case manager** will keep in touch with you after release and will explain where, when and how often you will be expected to meet.
- They will explain any things you need to do as part of your **licence** or any **supervision** conditions you must follow until your **sentence** ends.
- You should have a chance to talk about any challenges or worries you may have, and what support you might need to follow the conditions.

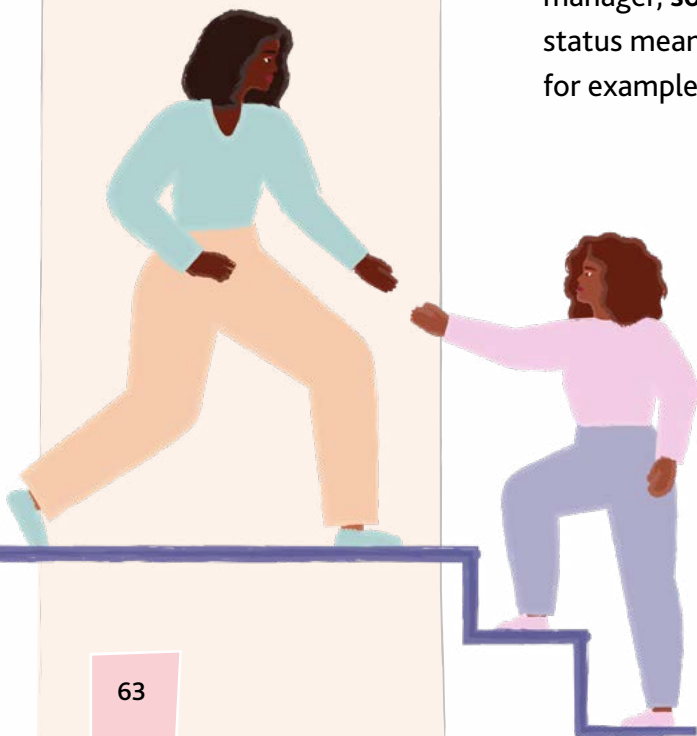


Resettlement
standard

8

I will have high-quality support in the community to help me readjust and to rebuild my life.

- On the day of your release, you will be met by your YJS **case manager** or someone else you know and trust who is familiar with your **resettlement plan**. They should take you to where you will be living.
- Your YJS case manager should keep working closely with other people after your release to give you the support you need to lead a stable and crime-free life.
- They will also explain what having a criminal record means for you and when you might need to tell potential employers or **education providers** about it.
- They will regularly check in on how things are going and help you with any issues you might have.
- If you are at least 16 years old and have been on **remand** for 13 weeks or more since you were 14 years old, you will have care leaver status at the end of your remand. When leaving **custody**, your YJS case manager, **social worker** or **personal advisor** will tell you what this status means and what additional support will be available to you – for example, the services you can access.



Resettlement
standard

9

I will be supported to stay safe
after I leave custody.

- Your YJS **case manager** has a responsibility to help keep you safe. They will listen to any concerns you have about your safety and will handle them in the right way.
- If your living arrangements become unsafe at any time, your YJS case manager should help you find somewhere else to stay.
- If there is a big threat to your safety, you may be moved for protection. If this happens, your YJS case manager will make sure you have the right support in place in your new home and help manage this move.
- If you have been released from **custody** following your **remand** without being found guilty, your YJS case manager will not be responsible for you. Your **local authority** will make sure you have somewhere safe to go.



Resettlement
standard
10

I will be supported through any change in my supervision. This will be carefully planned with my best interests in mind.

- If you turn 18 before or shortly after leaving custody, your YJS **case manager** will help you with the move to **adult probation services**. There should be a plan in place to make this transition as smooth as possible, so you continue to have the support you need.
- You might be able to keep getting help from your YJS team even after you turn 18. This will be decided based on your individual needs and circumstances.



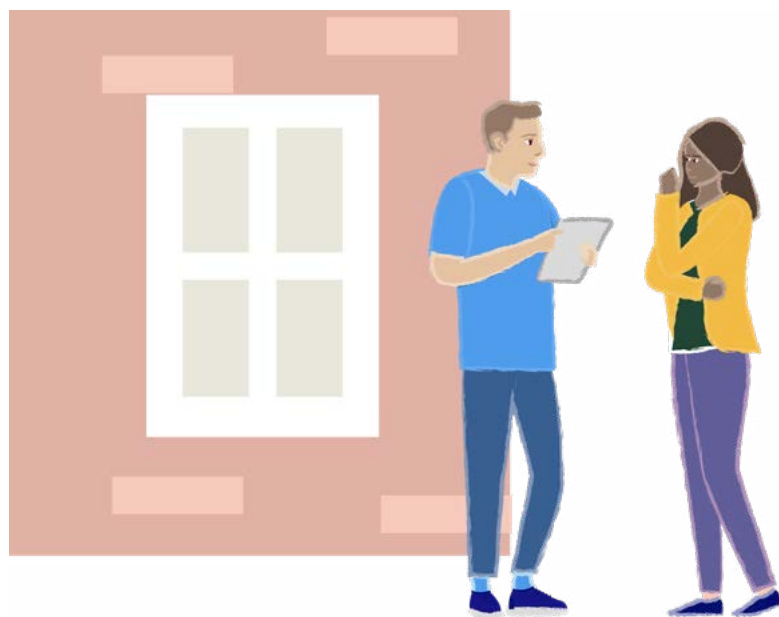


What can I do if these standards are not met?

If you think these standards have not been met, you should tell the person named in the standard, or any adult who supports you can tell them for you. If you do not want to do this or are unhappy with the response you get, you can make a complaint.

There are different ways to complain and you can choose which way you prefer.

- Speak to your YJS **case manager**.
- Ask to speak to the manager of your YJS.
- Speak to your **social worker, personal advisor or independent reviewing officer** if you have one.
- Contact your **local authority** complaints department.
- Call the **Children's Commissioner's** advice line. If you are in England, the number is **0800 528 0731**, or you can [contact them on their website](#). If you are in Wales, the number is **0808 801 1000**, or you can [contact them on their website](#).
- You can [complain about your lawyer to the Solicitors Regulation Authority](#).



Helpful links

Appropriate adult:

[About appropriate adults – National Appropriate Adult Network](#)

Care leaver support:

[Sorted and supported: A guide to care leavers rights and entitlements – Coram Voice](#)

Childline:

[Get help and advice about a wide range of issues on the Childline website](#)

Criminal records:

[Disclosing your criminal record: Guidance for those with offences – GOV.UK](#)

Licence and recall:

[Know your rights: An animation on licence and recall – The Howard League](#)

Making a complaint about the police:

[A young person's guide to the police complaints system – Independent Office for Police Conduct](#)

Stop and search:

[Stop and search – Metropolitan Police](#)

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:

[A summary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

Healthcare standards in secure settings:

[Healthcare standards for children and young people in secure settings – Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health](#)

Difficult words





We've used some words in this charter that you might not understand. We've listed them below and explained what they mean. These explanations are to help you understand this charter. They are not legal definitions.

Absolute discharge: This is where the court decides not to take any further action, even though you have been found guilty.

Adult probation service: People who work for the probation service are responsible for supervising anyone aged 18 and over who has been released from custody or who has been given a community sentence. They are called probation workers.

Advocate: This is someone who can give you information, advice and support and help you understand your rights. They can also help you to raise concerns if you are unhappy about something.

Appeal: This is a formal request to reconsider a decision. This might be if you think a wrong decision has been made. One example would be if you are unhappy with where the Youth Custody Service has placed you and want to appeal their placement decision. A decision might not be changed even if you appeal.

Appropriate adult: This is a responsible person aged 18 or older who supports you at the police station and when you are interviewed by the police. An appropriate adult can be a parent, carer or other relative. If the person who normally looks after you cannot be your appropriate adult, the police will request a social worker or a trained appropriate adult from your local scheme.

Arrest: This is when a police officer uses their legal powers to take you to the police station. This could be to interview you.

Bail: This is your temporary release if you are being investigated about your involvement in a crime. When you are on bail you must return to the police station or go to court at a particular time and on a particular day. It is a criminal offence not to do this. Conditional bail is where you have to follow certain rules while you are on bail. If you don't do this, you might be arrested.

Bail application: This is when your lawyer asks the judge or magistrates to release you on bail. Your lawyer will include information from the Youth Justice Service. You and your family should be helped to understand the reasons for this. If you don't get released on bail, you can make more bail applications.

Bail decision: This is when the judge or magistrates decide whether to release you on bail or remand you (decide that you should stay in custody).

Body-worn cameras: These are recording devices worn by police officers. They can record video and sound when the police are around members of the public.

Carer: Someone who looks after and gives support to another person. This can be practical support (like cooking meals) and emotional support (like listening to the person if they are upset). Carers can be adults or children.

Case manager: The Youth Justice Service case manager is your main point of contact from your local Youth Justice Service. Your case manager will work with you, your family and other professionals to understand your situation and give you the support you need. They will make a plan to support you and help prevent you from committing a crime in the future.

Court or police cell: This is where you stay at a police station or in a court building waiting to go inside the court room. The door is locked to keep you and others safe.

Chaplain: A chaplain is a religious leader who can give you support and guidance. They can be of any faith and you don't have to be religious to talk to them.

Charge: If the police believe you have committed a crime, they will charge you. This usually means you have to go to court. You will either be given bail and a date to attend court, or kept in custody at the police station and taken to court the next day.

Children's Commissioner: There is a Children's Commissioner for England and a Children's Commissioner for Wales. They protect the rights of children and stand up for your views and interests. They can give you support and advice.

Citizens Advice: This organisation can give you confidential advice about lots of different issues. They do this online, over the phone and in person.

Community sentence: This is a type of sentence where you are free to go home but you must follow certain rules and do certain things for a set amount of time. There are two types of community sentence, a Referral Order and a Youth Rehabilitation Order. If you receive a Referral Order, you will meet with a community panel who will help oversee your order.

Court order: This is when a judge or magistrate says that you must do something.

Crown Court: A type of court which deals with the most serious crimes, like murder. There is usually a jury in Crown Court trials.

Custody: Custody can mean a locked room in a police station, a locked room in court, or at the place where you stay if you are sentenced to custody (for adults this place is called a prison).

Custody staff: These are people who work in young offender institutions, secure training centres and secure children's homes.

De-arrest: This means that you are no longer under arrest. The police will release you because the reasons why they arrested you have changed.

Dock: This is a separate area in a court room where the person who is accused of committing a crime sits. Sometimes the dock is secure, which means it is behind glass with court security staff.

Duty lawyer: This is a lawyer who gives legal advice, support and representation to someone who doesn't have a lawyer of their own. You do not have to pay for the duty lawyer.

Education providers: This could be a school, college or university.

Guardian: This is the adult who is responsible for looking after you and making decisions about your education, health and upbringing.

Hearing: A formal meeting in the court where decisions are made about a criminal case.

Independent Monitoring Board: This is a group of volunteers who visit young offender institutions and report on whether they are safe and the young people there are being treated fairly. They are separate from the people who run the young offender institution. You can ask to talk to them privately about any problems you might have, and they will help where they can or get someone to help you.

Independent Office for Police Conduct: This is an organisation that investigates the most serious complaints involving the police. They are separate from the police.

Independent Prisoner Complaint Investigations: This is an organisation that investigates complaints made by anyone in secure training centres or young offender institutions.

Independent reviewing officer: This is someone who leads reviews for 'looked after children'. Their main job is to make sure that your care plan meets your needs. They are separate from your social worker.

Induction: This is when you are helped to settle in and find out about the secure accommodation and the people who work there. You will learn what you can and cannot do.

Intermediary: This is someone who can help you communicate with the police or the people in court. Their job is to help you and the adults understand what each other say. They can help you understand the questions you are asked and also help you give your answers clearly.

Judge: This is the person in charge of the court room. In the Crown Court, the judge will tell the jury about the law. The judge makes the decision about what should happen if you are found guilty of a crime.

Jury: A jury is a group of 12 people who listen to all the evidence in the trial and decide if you are guilty or not guilty.

Lawyer: This is someone who is trained to understand the law. They will make sure you know your rights, explain to you what is happening, and give you legal advice. The lawyer works for you (not the police or the court).

Licence: If you are 'on licence' or 'released on licence', it means you will complete the rest of your sentence in the community after you have spent time in custody. When you are on licence, you must stick to certain rules and you will be supervised by your Youth Justice Service case manager. If you don't stick to the rules, you might have to go back into custody. Sometimes a licence is called a 'notice of supervision'.

Local authority: This is another name for the local council or local government. They run services like schools, sports centres, social services and Youth Justice Services.

Local authority accommodation: This is a place to live that is provided by the local council (also called the local authority). If you are remanded to local authority accommodation, you will be told where you must live while you wait for your trial. This could be at your family home, a temporary foster home or in a children's home.

Looked after child: This means that your local authority has responsibility for your care and wellbeing. You will have a social worker whose job is to look after your best interests.

Magistrate: This is someone who does a similar job to a judge. There are usually two or three magistrates who work together in a youth court. They listen to all the evidence and make decisions, including about what should happen if you are found guilty.

Mobility: This means you are allowed to leave custody for a short time. It might also be called release on temporary licence.

Offence: Committing an offence means doing something that is against the law.

Open day: This is when you can visit a school or college to see what it is like and find out what courses it teaches.

Out of court disposal: This is something the police might give you if they think you have broken the law. It means that you do not have to go to court. There are different types of out of court disposals with different rules and things you will need to do.

Personal advisor: This is someone who offers advice, support and information to young people leaving care. They will work alongside your social worker to help you prepare for adulthood and will continue to support you once you've turned 18.

Placement: This is the type of secure accommodation you are going to or staying in.

Police custody: Staying in police custody means you stay in the police station. Sometimes you might stay in police custody until your first court hearing. This might happen if you have been remanded by the police and there is no space for you to stay in appropriate local authority accommodation.

Prisons and Probation Ombudsman: This is an organisation that investigates complaints from adult prisoners, children in young offender institutions or secure training centres, and people on probation. They are not part of the government.

Reasonable grounds: This means that a police officer must genuinely suspect or believe that they will find an item before they stop and search you.

Release on temporary licence: This means you are able to leave custody for a short time. It might also be called mobility.

Remand: If you are charged with an offence and refused bail, you will be remanded. This means the judge or magistrate decides that you should stay in local authority accommodation or youth secure accommodation. The decision is made at a remand hearing.

Remand to local authority accommodation: This can be living at home, with a relative, in foster care or in a children's home. A remand to local authority accommodation usually has rules (called 'conditions') such as places you can't go or people you can't talk to. You must follow the conditions of your remand. If you don't, you may have to stay in youth secure accommodation until your next court appearance.

Resettlement plan: This is a plan for when you are released from custody. It should include any support you may need to move on with your life. This might also be called a sentence plan.

Resettlement worker: This is someone who will work with you, your Youth Justice Service case manager, your social worker and your personal advisor (if you have one) to help you plan for leaving custody. This could include your health needs, your education or employment, and where you will live.

Secure accommodation: This is somewhere you have to stay if you are given a custodial sentence or you are remanded to custody. A judge or a magistrate decides how long you have to stay there. There are different types of secure accommodation, including young offender institutions, secure training centres, secure children's homes and secure schools. These all make up the youth secure estate.

Secure children's home (SCH): This is a type of youth secure accommodation. SCHs are smaller than young offender institutions, with 5 to 20 children and young people staying in each home.

Secure school: This is a new type of youth secure accommodation. It is a smaller site with several living units. There will be up to 6 children and young people staying in each unit.

Secure training centre (STC): This is a type of youth secure accommodation. STCs have several living units. There can be 4 to 8 children and young people staying in each unit.

Sentence: A judge or magistrate can give you a sentence if you are guilty of committing an offence. A sentence is an order from the court that you must follow. There are different types of sentences. All sentences have certain requirements you must follow but some involve going to custody (custodial sentences) whereas others (community sentences) mean you can stay at home. A 'sentencing hearing' is when the court decides what your sentence will be.

Social worker: This is someone from your local authority who is trained to support children and their families who may be having difficulties.

Stop and search: This is when police use their legal powers to stop and search you. There are different types of searches and each have different rules that the police must follow.

- Outer clothing search: Removal of 'outer clothing' – for example, a jacket, coat or gloves.
- More thorough search: Removal of more than outer clothing – for example, a t-shirt, but does not expose intimate body parts.
- Search exposing intimate parts: Removal of clothing that exposes intimate body parts.

Substance misuse team or worker: These people will help you if you have a problem with drugs or alcohol.

Supervision: This is when you meet with your Youth Justice Service case manager. This might be as part of your bail conditions or as part of your sentence. You must go to these meetings.

Transition: This is when you move from the youth custody estate to the adult custody estate when you are 18.

Trial: This is when a court hears all the evidence in a case and decides if you are guilty or not guilty. In the Crown Court this decision is made by a jury. In the youth court this decision is made by a judge or several magistrates.

Youth caution and youth conditional caution: A caution is a warning the police can offer you if you admit to committing a minor (non-serious) offence. This is instead of going to court. A conditional caution means that there are certain things you must do.

Youth court: A special type of criminal court for 10 to 17 year olds who have been charged with a criminal offence. All cases start in the youth court but if the crime you are accused of is very serious, the case will then go to the Crown Court.

Youth Custody Service: The Youth Custody Service is responsible for running the youth secure estate for children and young people in England and Wales.

Youth Justice Service (YJS) or Youth Offending Team (YOT): A team of professionals (including police, social workers and substance misuse workers) who work with you if you have committed, or are suspected of committing, a crime. The work they do with you might be voluntary or compulsory and will depend on your circumstances and the crime you have been involved in.

Young offender institution (YOI): A YOI is a type of youth secure accommodation. It's a site with several living units. Between 30 to 60 children and young people can stay in each unit.

Youth secure estate: This is made up of the different types of accommodation you can be placed in if you are sentenced or remanded to custody. The types of accommodation are young offender institutions, secure training centres, secure children's homes or a secure school.

