



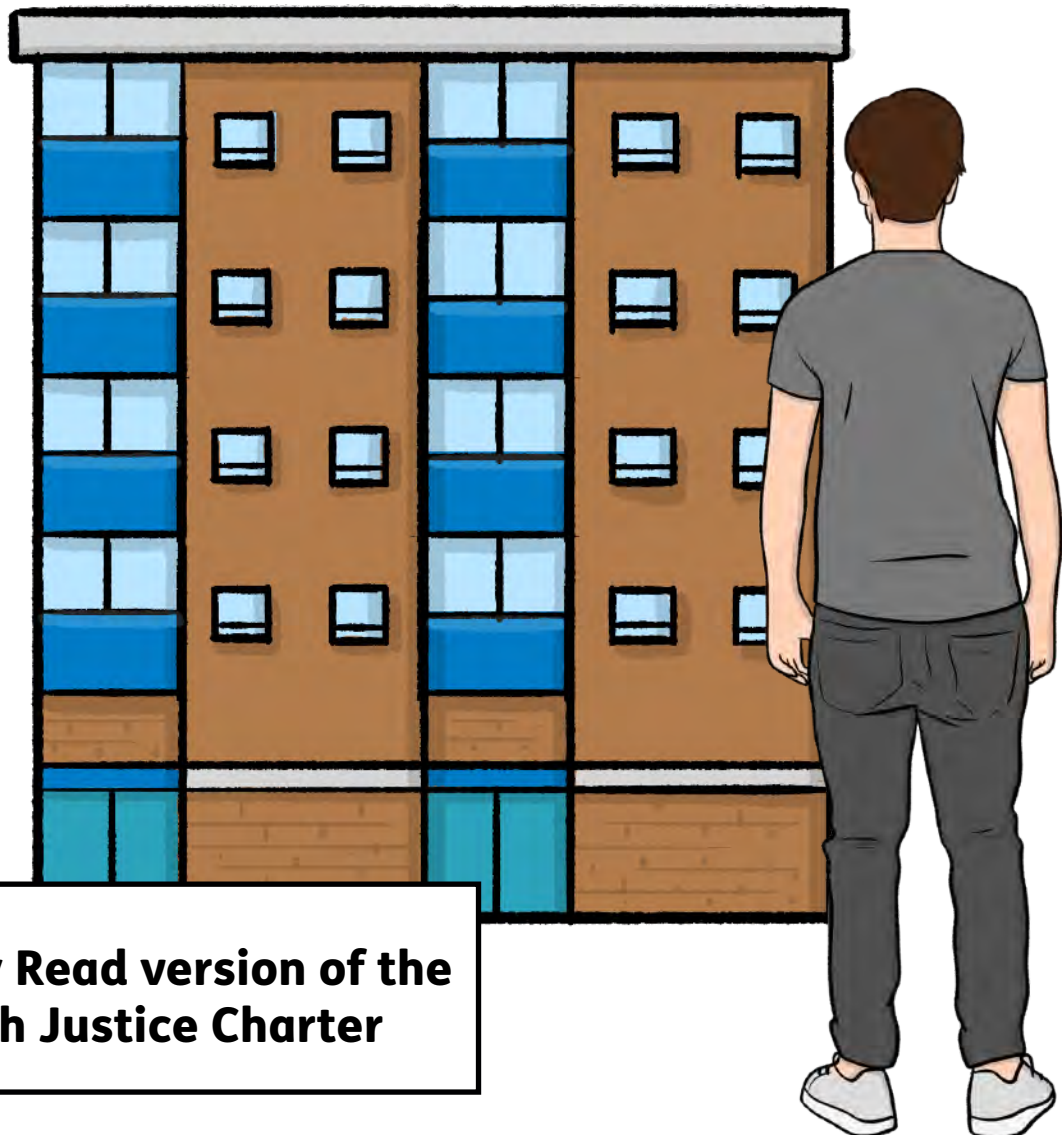
Ministry
of Justice



Easy
Read

The Youth Justice Charter

Part 4: Going into youth custody



An Easy Read version of the
Youth Justice Charter

Easy Read



This is an Easy Read version of some information. It may not include all of the information but it will tell you about the important parts.



This Easy Read booklet uses easier words and pictures. Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are in **bold** - this means the writing is thicker and darker. These are important words in the booklet.



Sometimes if a bold word is hard to understand, we will explain what it means.



[Blue and underlined](#) words show links to websites and email addresses. You can click on these links on a computer.

What is in this booklet

The youth justice system	4
The Youth Justice Charter	5
About youth custody	9
If you want to complain	47
Find out more	48

The youth justice system



If you are a child aged 10 to 17 years old and break the law, you might have contact with the **youth justice system**.

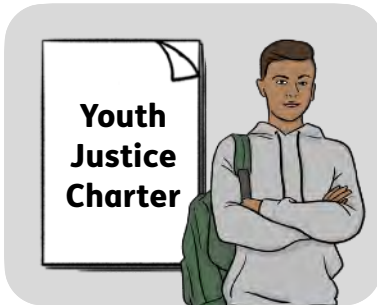


The **youth justice system** is the police, courts, youth justice services and **custody** services.



The law is a set of rules that must be followed to keep people safe and protect people's property. Breaking the law is also called **offending**, or **committing a crime**.

The Youth Justice Charter



The Youth Justice Charter tells you about your rights if you are a child and break the law.



All children have **rights**. You still have these rights, even if you have broken the law.

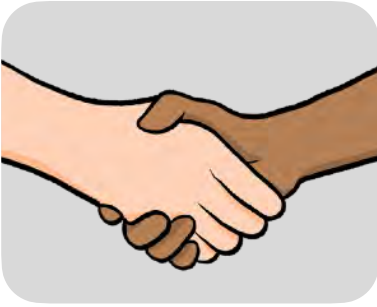
Rights are basic things that every person should have. Like the right to be safe, the right to education, the right to be respected.



The Youth Justice Charter calls them **standards**.

The standards explain how you should be treated by the different people and organisations you have contact with.

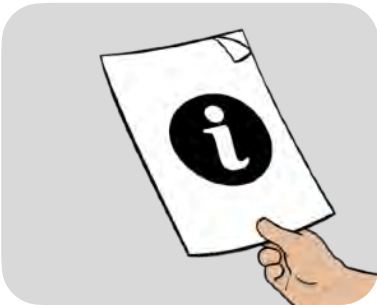
In all parts of the youth justice system you have the right to:



- Be treated fairly.



- Have help with the law, from someone who is on your side.



- Have information to help and support you.



- Be listened to and have what you think taken seriously.



- Be healthy and kept safe.

In all parts of the youth justice system you also have the right to:



- Be able to learn and grow.

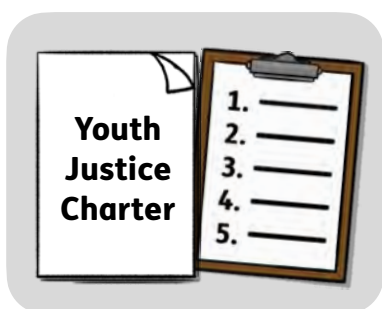


- Be able to make good choices for the future no matter what has happened in the past.



You also have the right to complain if you do not think these standards have been met.

This Charter tells you how to do that.

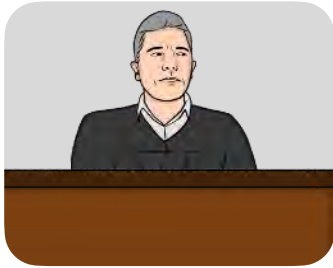


There are five parts of the Charter and each part has a booklet.



The booklets tell you about the standards when you are:

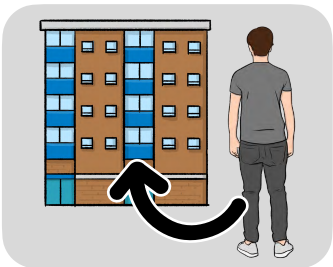
- Stopped by the police.



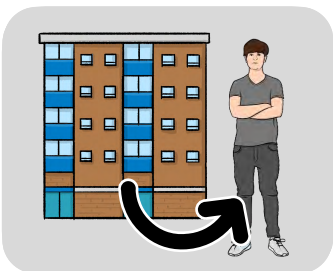
- Going to court.



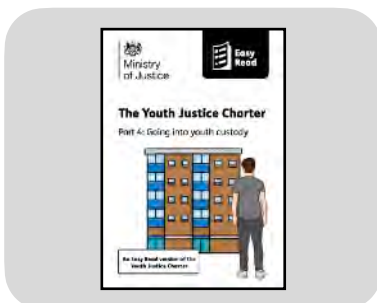
- Being supported by youth justice services.



- Going into youth custody.



- Leaving youth custody.

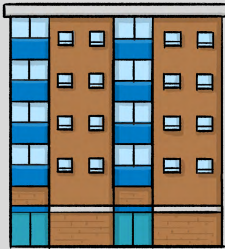


This booklet tells you about going into youth custody.

About youth custody



If the court says you have to stay in custody, you will have to go to the **youth secure estate**.



The **youth secure estate** has different places you can stay, like:

- Young offender institutions.



- Secure schools.



- Secure training centres.



- Secure children's homes.



If you are in custody on **remand**, you will usually remain in custody until you go back to court.

Remand means you have to stay in a certain place while you are waiting to go back to court. This could be:



- For your **trial**.

A **trial** is when a court hears all the evidence in a case and decides if you are guilty or not guilty.

or



- To find out what the court has decided your **sentence** is.

A **sentence** is what you have to do if the court decides you are guilty, and how long you have to do it for.



If you are sentenced to custody, the court will tell you how long you will have to stay there for.



If you were a carer for someone, you should speak to your YJS case manager, custody staff, social worker or personal advisor.



They can help make sure that the people you were caring for keep getting the help or support they need.



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

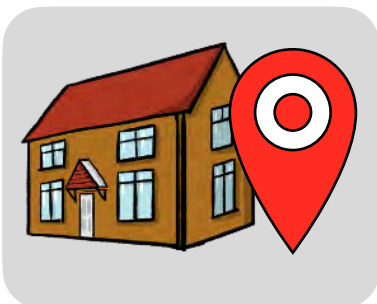
1. Someone will explain why you are being placed in custody, for how long and where you will be staying.



Your Youth Justice Service (YJS) case manager and lawyer will explain what is happening before you leave the court building.



The Youth Custody Service will decide where you will stay.

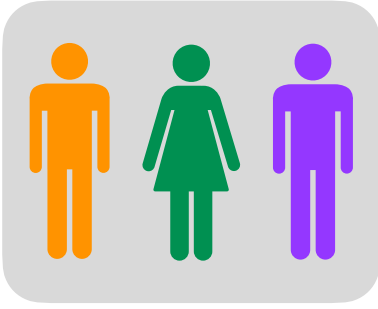


When they decide where you will stay, the Youth Custody Service will think about:

- Where you live.



- How old you are.



They will also think about:

- What sex you are.



- If you have been in custody before.



- Your safety.



- Your health needs.



- Any special education needs you have.

They will also think about:



- Your **wellbeing**.

Wellbeing means feeling happy and healthy in your body and mind.



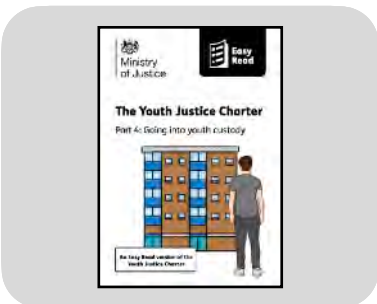
- What spaces are available.



You, your parents/carers, or your lawyer can **appeal** the decision if you do not agree with it.



An **appeal** is when you tell someone they have made a wrong decision. They will think about what you said. A decision might not be changed even if you appeal.

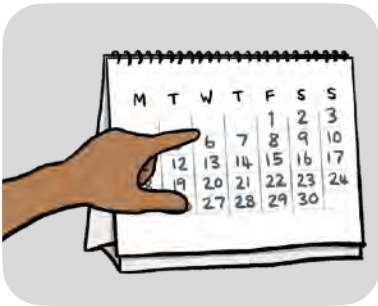


You can find out how to appeal the decision at the end of this booklet.

2. You will know if and when you need to go back to court, and custody staff will organise for you 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.



Your YJS case manager will tell you if you can apply for bail again.



You will be able to talk to your lawyer about what is happening.



Custody staff must get you to court on time.



They will arrange for staff to take you from custody to the court in a van.

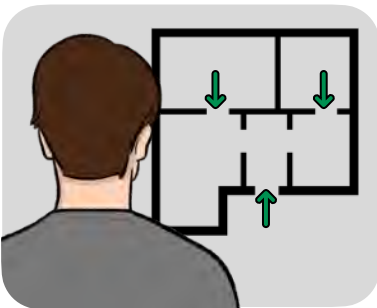


You might be able to have your court hearing on a video call, without leaving custody.

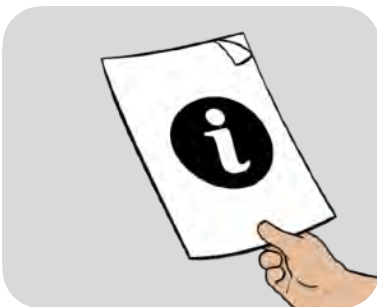
3. You will meet the people who will support you while you are in custody.



They will make plans about your education, and your health and wellbeing. They will ask about your life and what help you need.



It is important that you get to know the place where you are staying.



You will get some information as soon as you arrive.



You will get an **induction** within your first two weeks in custody.

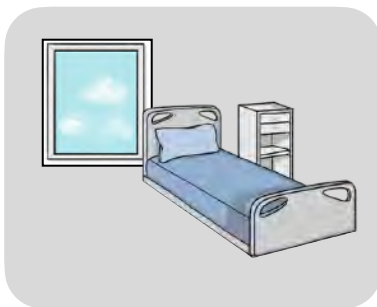
An **induction** is when you are helped to settle in and find out about where you are staying and the people who work there.



There are rules to keep you and others safe.



The staff will explain these rules to you during your induction.



You might stay on an **induction unit** during this time. This is an area where new people can settle in.



You should get additional help with communication if:

- English is not your first language.



- You have a disability.



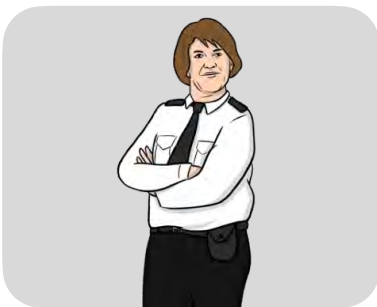
You will have a health assessment.



They will use what you tell them to help make a care plan for you.



You will have a lead staff member who you will meet regularly.



Their job is to support and care for you during your stay.



Your YJS case manager will contact you regularly.



If you have a social worker or personal advisor, they will also contact you.

You will be able to get support from staff from people like:



- Health teams.



- A **chaplain**.

A **chaplain** is a religious leader who can provide support and guidance. They can be of any religion and you do not have to be religious to talk to them.



- **Safeguarding** teams.

Safeguarding is keeping people safe from harm and abuse.



- **Substance misuse** teams.

Substance misuse means taking drugs or drinking too much alcohol.



At the end of your induction, you will be given information about what you will do every day and every week.

4. Planning for what happens when you leave custody will begin at the start of your stay.



Helping you to prepare for leaving custody is very important. It is sometimes called release or **resettlement**.



While you are in custody, you will have a **resettlement worker**.

A **resettlement worker** is someone who will help you plan for leaving custody.



They will meet you within 10 days of your arrival and start planning for what happens when you leave custody.



Your resettlement worker will work with you, your YJS case manager and your social worker or personal advisor if you have one, to make the plan.



The plan will cover all of your needs to support your resettlement, like:

- Health needs.



- Plans for learning or work.

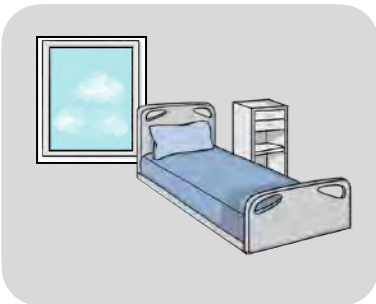


- Where you will live after custody.

5. You will have a comfortable place to sleep, somewhere to wash, and be able to get books from a library.



When you arrive, you will be given a tour to help you get to know the place you are staying.



You will have your own bedroom.



You will be able to use a shower or bath.



You will have a toilet and a sink in your room.



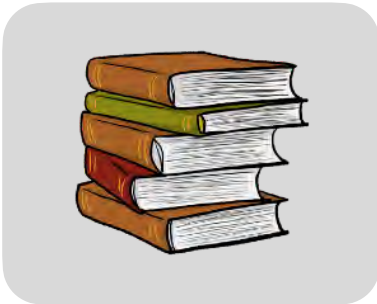
You will be given what you need to keep yourself clean for free.



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 have books.

6. You will be able to spend time out of your room.



You will be able to spend time out of your room with other people.



The amount of time may be different depending on:

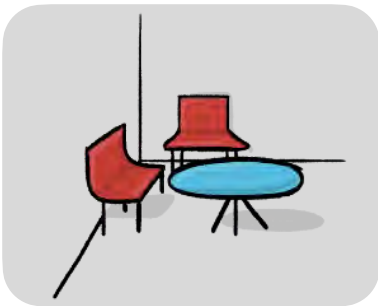
- Where you are staying.



- What you need.



You will usually be able to leave your room to learn and do exercise.



There will also be shared places where you can spend time with others.

7. You will be given personal care items to look after yourself and you will be given some money to buy additional items you need.

On your first night, staff will give you:



- Pens or pencils and paper.



- Toiletries and **sanitary products** if you need them.

Sanitary products are pads or tampons for you to use if you have periods.



- Clean clothes.



- Snacks.



The staff will also give you:

- Phone credit.



- Some money to buy other things you need.



Someone will tell you the rules about what you can wear.



If you run out of any supplies, you can ask for more.

8. You will know how often you can see or speak to family or friends while you are in custody.



It is important that you can stay in touch with family, friends and other important people in your life while you are in custody.



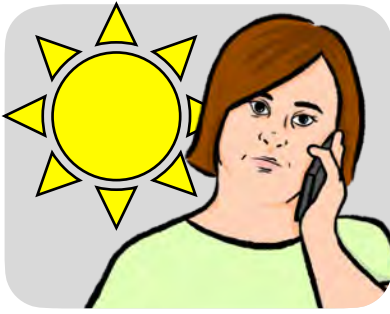
Each place has different rules about staying in touch.



Someone should tell you the rules for the place you are staying.



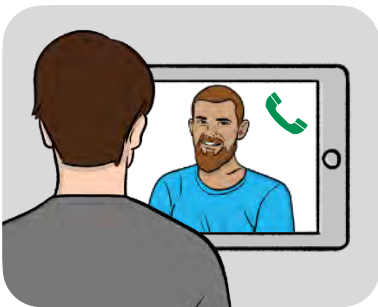
If you could not tell your parents or carers where you were going, you will be allowed to phone someone and tell them where you are in the first 2 hours after you get there.



If you arrive late at night, you may be asked to phone them the next morning.



Some places have a phone in your room.



You can also ask to have a video call in some places.



You will be allowed a visitor within 3 days of your arrival in custody.

If you are in custody after being sentenced, you will be allowed:



- A visit at least once every 2 weeks.



- One weekend visit every 4 weeks.



If you are in custody on remand, there are different rules about how many visits you can have.



Someone will tell you the rules for the place you are staying.



The visits can be from your friends or family.

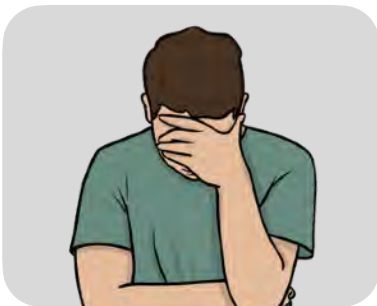


Your family might be able to get money to visit you.

Each visit will last at least 1 hour.



Custody officers or key workers might stay with you during the visit.



The way a visit happens might change if staff are worried about something such as your behaviour or a security problem.



If you feel that this is unfair, you can appeal the decision by speaking to a member of staff or speak to an **advocate**.

An **advocate** can give you advice, support and help you understand your rights. They can also help you if you are unhappy about something.



You will be able to send at least one letter a week.



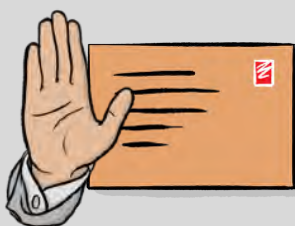
You will be given something to write the letter with and stamps for free.



In some places, custody staff are allowed to read letters you have written before sending them.



They read them to check that you have not written anything you are not allowed to write.



The law says that they can decide not to send the letter. They can only do this if the content is inappropriate.



If you would like help writing a letter, you can ask a member of staff to help you.



They can also help you read any letters you get.



In some places, you will be able to send emails to people.

9. You will be given healthy food and drink while you are in custody.



You will receive food and drink that:

- Is good for you and your health.
- Your religion says is ok for you to have.





In some places, you can buy extra food and drink.

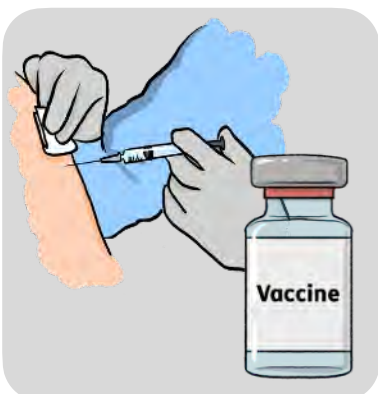
10. You will receive health care so that you can stay fit and healthy.



A health team will care for your health while you are in custody. They will ask if you take any medicine.



If you need extra support this will be arranged for you. This might be because you have a disability, learning difficulties, autism or ADHD.



You can get any **vaccinations** that you have missed.

Vaccinations are injections or jabs that help to stop you from being ill with a certain illness.



You can also get help to look after your eyes, teeth and hearing.



Smoking, vaping, and having tobacco are not allowed while you are in custody.



You can get support to stop smoking when you enter custody.



You are not allowed to have any alcohol whilst you are in custody.

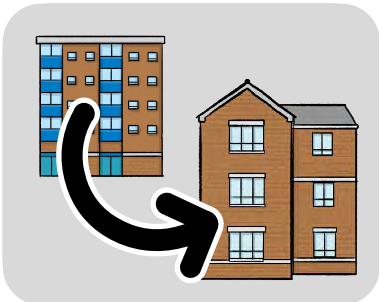


You can get support to stop drinking alcohol when you enter custody.



Keeping you safe is everyone's **priority**.

A **priority** is the most important thing that should be done first.



If staff are worried about your safety or mental health, you might:

- Be moved to stay somewhere different, or



- Have someone watching you closely.

11. You will be able to get independent advice and support while you are in custody.



Independent means not part of the youth justice system.



It is important that you can:

- Talk about things that are worrying you.



- Get the advice and support you need.



You will be able to talk to an **advocate** if you want to.

An **advocate** is someone who does not work for the custody service. They can give you information, advice and support.



You can ask for an advocate whenever you want to.

An advocate can help you tell someone if:



- You think you have been treated unfairly, or



- You want to make a complaint about your experience in custody.



Staff will tell you how to contact an advocate.



You also have the right to free legal advice from a lawyer while you are in custody.



If you have not stayed in contact with a lawyer, an advocate can help you to contact one.

12. You will be able to follow your religion.



In some places, you will have the right to meet with a chaplain if you want to.



They can help you keep to your faith and beliefs.



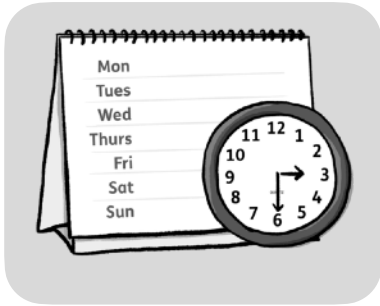
They can also support you if you are feeling sad, even if you are not religious.



You can spend time worshipping or meditating outside your room.



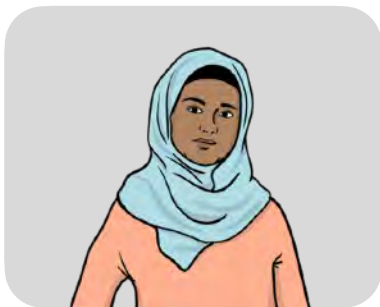
Staff will supervise you while you are doing this.



You can ask to worship or meditate at the times of the day that you need to.



You will be allowed to celebrate religious holidays.



You will get the clothes and other things you need to wear because of your religion.



You can talk to the chaplain before you leave custody if you want to.

13. You will have access to learning to help prepare you for life after custody.



You should have access to at least 15 hours of learning every week while you are in custody.



Your learning will usually include:

- Maths.



- English.



- Information Technology (IT), or computers.



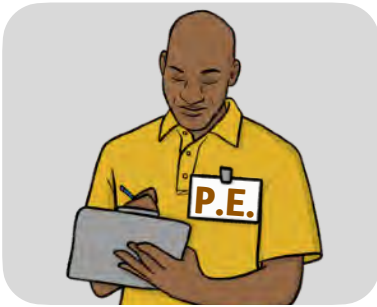
- Life skills.



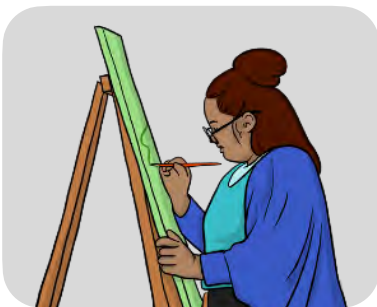
- Lessons to help you grow as a person.



Your learning programme will include exercise and looking after your body.



You will have a Physical Education (PE) class at least once a week.



There will be other activities outside in the evenings or at weekends.



All your learning will meet any additional needs you might have.

14. The priority of all the people looking after you is to keep you and the people around you 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 staff might need to search you to check that you are not hiding anything which could be dangerous to you or others.

They might need to check your clothes and body.



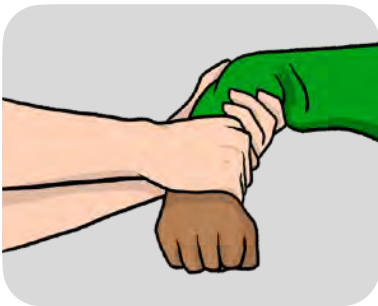
You can ask to see an advocate if you want support after they check your clothes and body.



You might be kept separate from another child to keep you both safe.



You should tell custody officers if you are worried about any other children.



Sometimes staff may need to use force.



Custody officers can only use force:

- To stop you from hurting yourself or others, and
- After they have tried other ways to stop you hurting yourself or others.





If staff do use force, you should have the chance to talk about what happened with someone who was not involved.



Remember, you can ask to speak to an advocate at any time.

15. You will get support if you need to move to an adult prison.



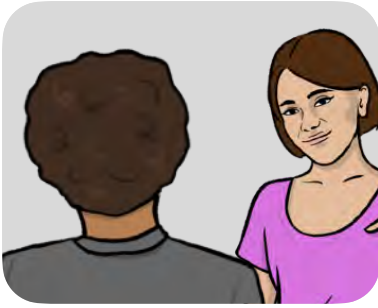
After you turn 18, you might have to move to an adult prison, even if you are on remand. This is sometimes called **transition**.



Your YJS case manager will meet with you at least twice to talk about what will happen.



They will make a plan for you.



Your YJS case manager will tell you about the differences between youth custody and the adult prison.



You will be able to talk to them about:

- What your health and education needs will be in adult prison.



- Any worries you have about the move.



Your parents or carers and social worker or personal advisor will be invited to join these meetings.

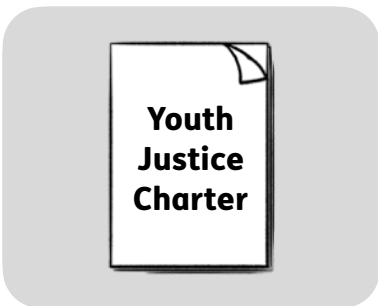
If you want to complain



If you think someone has not followed the standards, you should tell them.



If you do not want to tell them, or are not happy with what they say, you or your parents or carers can make a complaint.



There is information about how to do this in the Youth Justice Charter, in the part called “What to do if these standards have not been met”.



To find out more, search the internet for "youth justice charter".

Find out more



You can look at our website here:
[www.gov.uk/government/
organisations/ministry-of-justice](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice)

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