

Your rights when your child is taken away



For parents with a learning disability

This booklet tells you what the law says are your rights



How to use this document



This is an easy read version. The words are easy to read and understand.



You may need support to read and understand this booklet. Ask someone you know to help you.

Some words may be difficult to understand. These words are in **bold blue writing**. They are explained in a box underneath the words.

If any of the words are used later in the booklet they are shown in **normal blue writing**. If you see words in **normal blue writing**, you can look up what they mean in **Hard words** on page 14.



This booklet was made into easy read for the Working Together with Parents Network by Learning Disability Wales using Photosymbols.

This booklet is part of a set of 4 booklets about your rights as a parent:



Booklet 1 — Your rights when you are pregnant



Booklet 2 — Your rights when your baby is born



Booklet 3 — Your rights with social services



Booklet 4 — Your rights when your child is taken away

To get more copies of any of these 4 booklets please contact Samantha Williams, Policy and Network Co-ordinator:



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Contents

Page

How to use this document	2
Social Services.....	5
Your rights when your child is with foster parents	6
Your rights when your child is with a special guardian	7
Your rights when your child is adopted	9
Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act	11
What to do when your rights are not kept	12
Hard words	14

Social Services



Social services may worry that you cannot keep your child safe and well.



They may decide it is better for your child to live with someone else.



You may find it very hard to understand everything at meetings about your child.



Social services must try to help you understand these meetings.

Your rights when your child is with foster parents



A **foster parent** is someone who looks after someone else's children for a while. It could be for a few days or a lot longer.



If your child is living with **foster parents**, you have the right to have a say in when and where you see your child.

Social services must talk about this with you and listen to you.



But they do **not** have to do what you want.

They must do their best to make it easy for you to see your child.



They can also plan for other family or friends to see your child.



But they can stop the visits if they think it is not good for your child.



They must tell you why they have stopped the visits.

They must tell you what you can do to see your child again.

Your rights when your child is with a special guardian



A **special guardian** is a person who:

- your child can live with until they are 18
- can make decisions about your child's life such as which school they go to
- can have a stronger say about your child than you.



The court decides if they think a **special guardian** is good for your child.

You still have the right to see your child.



You can still have a say in how they are cared for.

An **advocate** or social worker can help you to have your say.



An **advocate** is a person who speaks up for you or helps you to speak up for yourself.

But they can stop the visits if they think it is not good for your child.



They must tell you why they have stopped the visits.

They must tell you what you can do to see your child again.



Your rights when your child is adopted



Sometimes a child is put into a **foster for adoption** place.

A **foster for adoption** place means that the **foster parents** will **adopt** your child in future.

When they **adopt** your child they become the child's new parents forever.



The **foster parents** look after your child while the court decides if **adoption** is the right thing for your child.



You still have the right to see your child while they are being **fostered**.



You can still have a say in what happens.



But the court can stop the visits if they think it is not good for your child.



When your child is being **adopted** you have the right to support. This is to help you understand what will happen.

After your child has been **adopted**, you will **not** have any rights to:



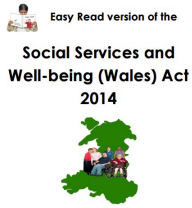
- see your child



- have a say in your child's life.

You can ask to be told how your child is. But no one can promise that you will be told.

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014



This law is only in Wales. It says that social services must:

- help children to grow up in their own family when possible
- listen to what you want as long as it is safe
- listen to people who know your child
- make it easy for you to stay in touch with your child
- tell you where your child is living as long as it is safe.



This law also says that children should live:

- near their home as long as it is safe
- with their brothers or sisters
- where they can carry on with their school.



What to do when your rights are not kept

You may feel your rights have not been kept.



An **advocate** can help you to talk with social services about this.

Your social worker or **solicitor** can help you to get your rights.



A **solicitor** is someone who is trained to understand the law.

Or they can explain why what has been done is right in law.



You have the right to go to meetings about your child.



You can also ask someone else to go and speak up for you.



If this does **not** happen you can complain to social services.



You may think the way decisions have been made is not fair.



You have the right to ask for decisions to be changed.

But this does **not** mean that the decisions will be changed.

Hard words

Advocate

An advocate is a person who speaks up for you or helps you to speak up for yourself.

Foster parent

A foster parent is someone who looks after someone else's children for a while. It could be for a few days or a lot longer.

Foster for adoption

A foster for adoption place means that the foster parents will adopt your child in future.

When they adopt your child they become the child's new parents forever.

Solicitor

A solicitor is someone who is trained to understand the law.

Special guardian

A special guardian is a person who:

- your child can live with until they are 18
- can make decisions about your child's life such as which school they go to
- can have a stronger say about your child than you.