



TALKING TO CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT THE TRANSITION

If you have older children in your care (statutory care) then you may want to talk to them about moving to a new agency and involve them in the decision making, depending on the child's age and level of interest.

It's important to reassure children and young people that the move to a new agency is not about disrupting their life. For example, they won't have to stop having contact with their birth parents or friends.

In most cases, children and young people will not need to change schools. If for some reason they do need to change schools, the new caseworker will make sure they feel comfortable with the change and have a "voice" in the process.

Changes are about moving case management and support from Community Services across to non-government agencies – the transfer of children and carer happens together.

This change is happening for lots of children in care and their carers who will now have caseworkers from an agency instead of from Community Services.

Joining a new agency will mean regular contact with a new caseworker who should be able to see them more often. Some children and young people have not had regular contact with a caseworker for a while - so it might be an adjustment.

Consider ways to prepare the child for meeting the new caseworker - such as doing a drawing or 'me page' about their favourite activities, likes and dislikes.

For older children, you may want to explain that children and young people in care have the right to a caseworker who can support them. Agencies are accredited with the NSW Children's Guardian, which means they must meet a range of standards in order to deliver good quality services to kids and carers.

TIPS

- Reassure children and young people that moving to a new agency is about moving the case management and support from Community Services to a new Agency, not about turning their lives upside down..
- If appropriate, talk about the agency or agencies you are considering. .
- Consider involving older children in discussions with the Community Services caseworker about the transfer or pass on any questions they may have.
- Encourage children and young people to meet the new caseworker and ask any questions they have e.g about education, health, support.
- Consider helping the child prepare for the new caseworker's visit by doing a drawing or making up a page all about themselves which could have their photo or a drawing, what they are good at, likes and dislikes. This can help children feel in control and assist them in participating in the change that is happening.
- Ask about programs, activities, mentors or camps the Agency might offer.

Contact your Community Services caseworker or the local CSC for more information about transferring. You can also contact, Connecting Carers NSW on 1300 794 653 or the AbSec Carer Support Team on 1800 888 698 for more information.