CHILDREN'S VISITORS

COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN

TASMANIA

COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN

TASMANIA

The Commissioner for Children is an independent, statutory office responsible to the Parliament of Tasmania. The Commissioner's functions include promoting the rights and well-being of children and young people along with examining and advising Government on policies, practices and services provided for children and laws affecting their health, welfare, care, protection and development

www.childcomm.tas.gov.au

CV Pilot at a Glance

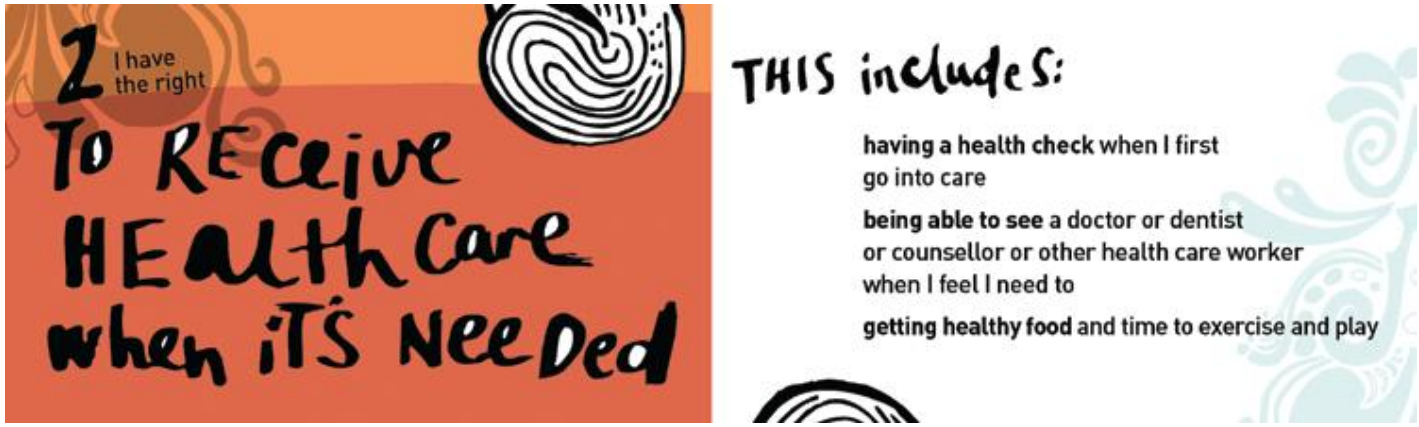
- CVs will provide **support and consistent opportunities** for children in care to speak with an **independent person**.

- There are 12 volunteer CV's and 18 children involved in the Pilot. A CV visits up to 2 children.
- The Pilot is funded by DCYFS
- CV Visits commenced on March 25th 2010 and will continue on a monthly basis for the twelve months of the Pilot. All children have now had their first five visits. Each visit is one hour long.
- During each visit the CV completes the "CV Tool" with the child – a series of questions based on the rights contained in the Charter of Rights for Children in Out of Home Care. This takes about 15 minutes of the one hour visit; the rest of the visit is flexible and is mainly directed by the child.
- There is a system (developed with the help of DCYFS Southern Service Centre management) in place for when a child raises an issue which the CFC feels should be brought to the attention of DCYFS. These issues can either be dealt with as Clarifications or Notifications.
- The CV Pilot is being externally evaluated and the six month evaluation should be completed in the next two months.
- The CV Pilot is supported by a Reference Group: CFC AAC members, FCAT, CREATE, DCYFS and an Independent Sector Consultant

Charter of Rights **for Tasmanian children and young people** in out of home care

- Have there been times in the past month that you have felt really happy?

- Have you seen any health professionals (dentist, psychologist or counsellor, etc) If yes, did you understand what they said?

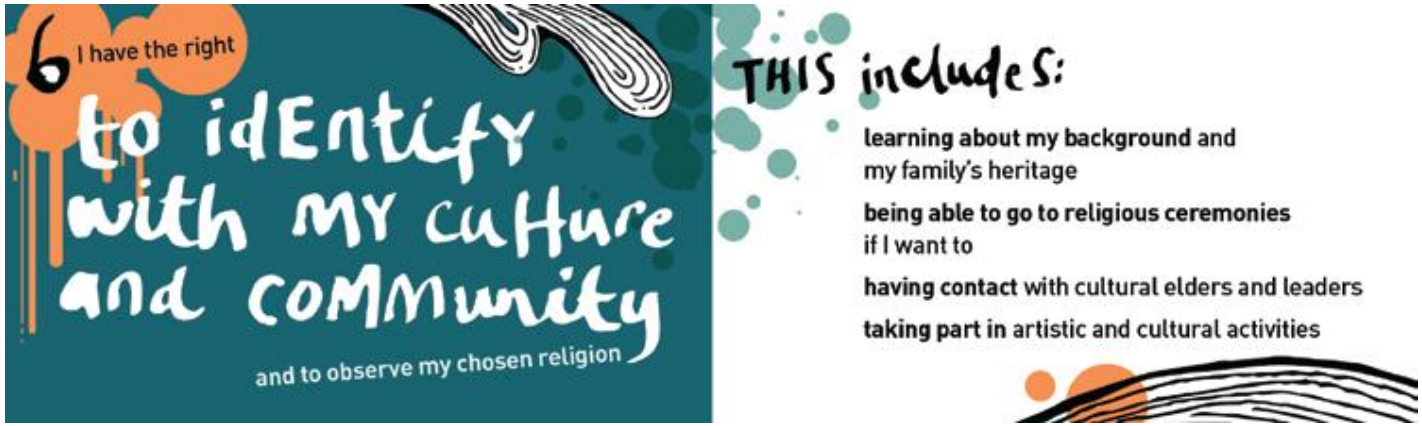


- Do you know if you have a Care Plan?

- Who is your case worker?
- Have you met with your case worker since I saw you?

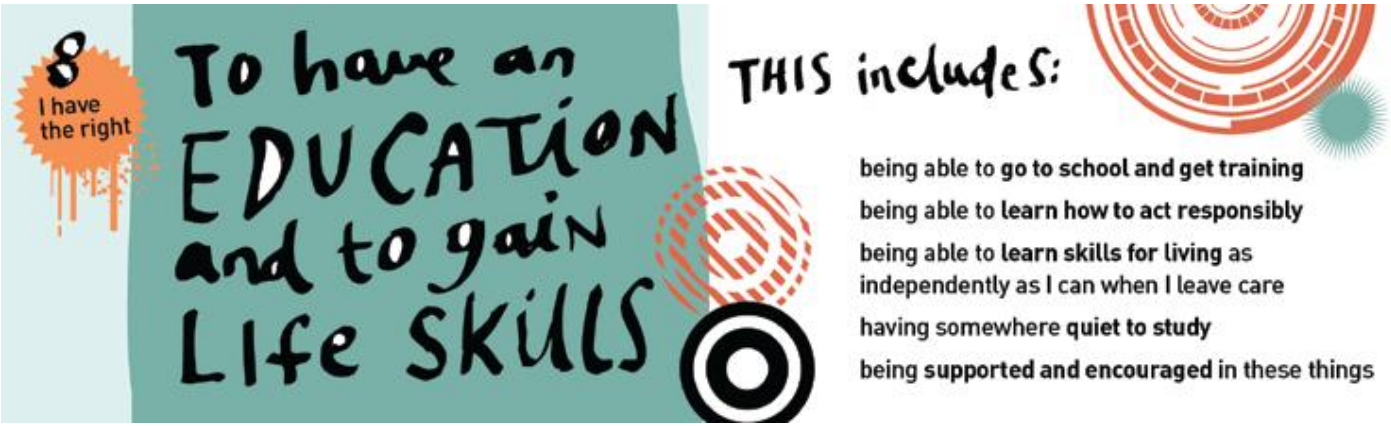
- Do you feel you are treated fairly here at home?
- At school? Sport? Elsewhere?

- Do you go to Church? If yes, do you want to?
- If no, do you want to go?
- Where/what would you want to go/do?



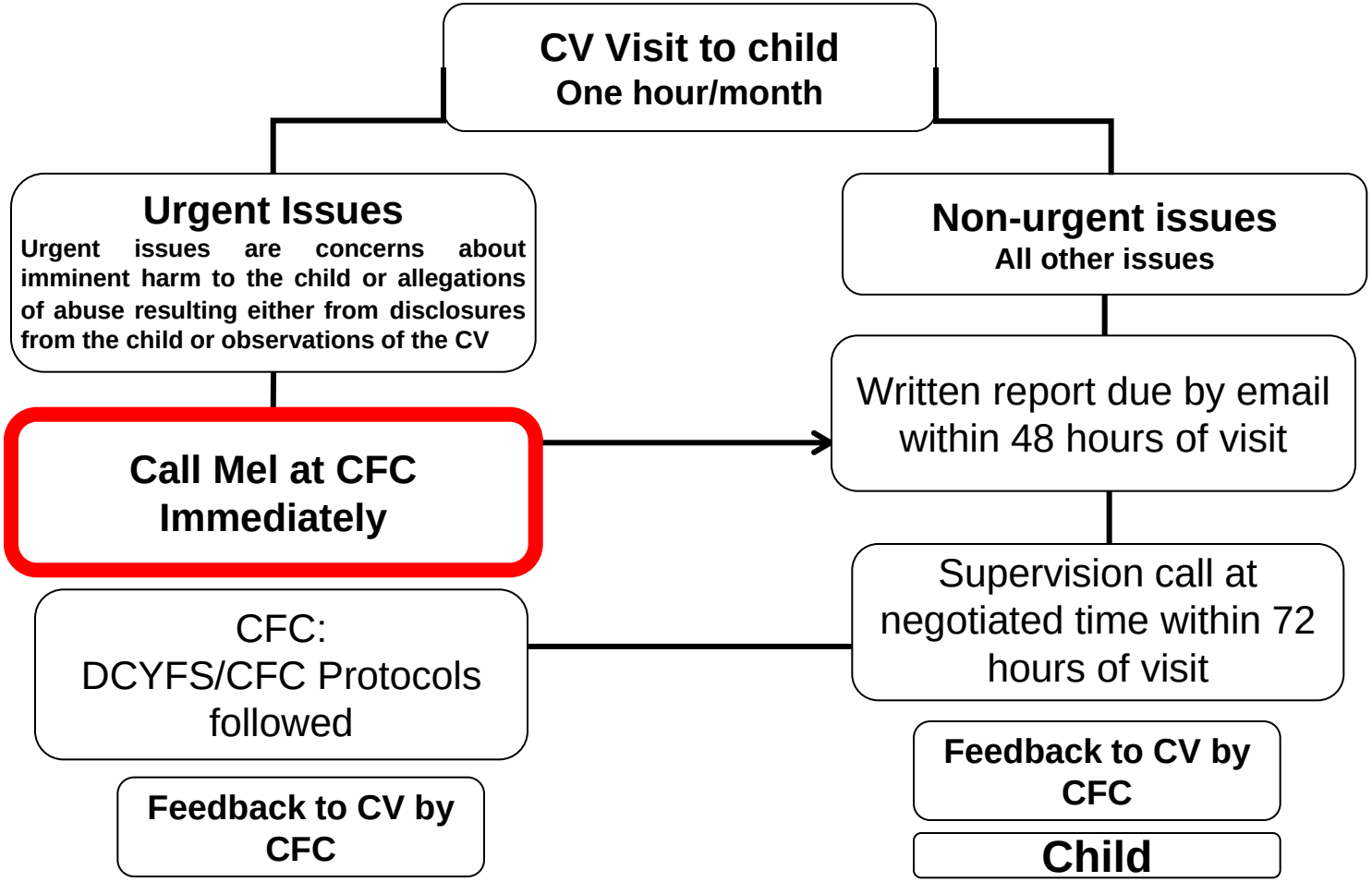
- Is there anyone you would like to see sometimes who you don’t get to see?

- What jobs do you do around home?
- What’s your most/least favourite thing about school?



- Do you have your own private space where you can keep your own things?

Communicating Issues



Comments from Children

Some issues raised during visits

- most children in the Pilot indicated that they did not know what a care plan was or if they have one.
- several wanted to know more and asked to see theirs
- some children do not know the name of their current worker with several saying this is because “they have had a lot of workers and they aren’t sure who it is now” or they are confused about which worker is theirs as they have several professionals in their lives.
- many children have identified that they would like to commence contact with relatives that they currently have little or no contact with while others have asked for increased contact with people they already have contact with.
- most children have positive comments about their carers and their placements with the majority reporting that they feel comfortable and relaxed in their current placement and nearly all saying that they have been happy in the past month.

Comments from Children

- A child told his CV that he wanted to speak to his worker to talk about “why his father does these things”. This was passed on to his worker and at the next visit the child was very happy about his worker coming to see him and said he “feels a lot better now”

- The CV asked the child how he liked having her come to visit him. He replied “I would like you to visit me every week not just every four. You can visit me every Monday and Wednesday, that would be good”

- The CV was talking to the child about going to work. The child asked “why do you have to do that job when you get paid to come see me”. The CV explained that she was a volunteer and did not get paid to see him, she saw him because she wanted to and wanted to get to know him. The child replied “you really come and see me and get no money”

- The CV asked the Child “ are you Aboriginal?”, to which the Child replied “my mum is”. On being asked “does that mean you are too?”, the Child responded “No. She doesn’t eat meat. But I do”. He was presumably referring to his mother being vegetarian

Contact Details

- 1st Floor, Stone Building
  ABC Centre, 1 Brooker Avenue
  Hobart TASMANIA 7000
- childcomm@childcomm.tas.gov.au
- P- (03) 6233 4520
- F- (03) 6233 4515
- Local call- 1300 362 065