



The Really Useful Book of Learning & Earning for care leavers

User guide for staff



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Learning and Work Institute is a new independent policy and research organisation dedicated to lifelong learning, full employment and inclusion. We bring together over 90 years of combined history and heritage from the 'National Institute of Adult Continuing Education' and the 'Centre for Economic & Social Inclusion'.

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Introduction

This guidance is provided as an accompaniment to The Really Useful Book of Learning and Earning for Care Leavers (RUBLE) 2017. The aim is to provide staff who work with care leavers with a resource that will enable them to provide effective information and advice to care leavers about their options in work and learning. It is intended to support staff in encouraging and helping care leavers to use the RUBLE, in addition to being a useful resource for guidance and signposting to further information.

This guidance accompanies The Really Useful Book of Learning and Earning for Care Leavers 2017. We hope you will familiarise yourself with the content of the books and distribute them to the young people you work with. They are designed to help care leavers to develop skills, confidence and action plans. In addition, they provide blank diary pages and information and advice about issues such as managing money, job hunting and housing. The young person you are working with may want to share their copy of the RUBLE with you, in which case this guidance can be used alongside it.

Within this resource we use the term 'care leavers' to refer to people who have spent some of their childhood in care – such as foster care, or children's homes. We recognise that a range of other terms are used by other organisations, such as 'care experienced young people' and 'looked after young people'. In addition, the phrase 'young people living semi-independently' is sometimes used to describe young people who are living alone

but are still supported by their local authority. We use the term 'care leavers' to include all these groups – including those who are in the process of leaving care.

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Key information

Care leavers, like all young people, are different. Each young person is unique, with different interests, talents, goals and aspirations. However, it is well known that many care leavers face serious disadvantage growing up and that this can affect their long-term life chances. Having an awareness of the challenges and barriers that care leavers often face, while not making stereotypical assumptions, should enable you to offer support that is both appropriate and effective.

Who is a care leaver?

A care leaver is someone who has been in care and is over 16. Local authorities have duties and powers to support care leavers as they move into independence. What they must do (duty) and what they can do (power) depends on the young person's leaving care status.

If a young person has been in care for a total of 13 weeks between the ages of 14 and 16, and for at least 1 day after they are 16, they are:

- an 'eligible' child if they are 16 or 17 and still in care
- a 'relevant' child if they are 16 or 17 and have left care
- a 'former relevant' child if they are 18 or over.

Young people who leave care after 16, but who do not meet the above criteria or who have been privately fostered or in special guardianship arrangements can get some support from local authorities as 'qualifying' young people.

These different terms can be quite complicated. If you are unsure about whether a young person is a care leaver, you should speak to your local authority's leaving care services.

Facts and figures

There are around 70,000 children in care at any one time, which is around 0.5% of all children. Every year, around 10,000 16-18 year olds leave foster or residential care in England. Many young people leaving care face serious disadvantages in their lives, compared to their peers. Care leavers are one of the most marginalised and socially excluded groups in society.

- In 2015, only 18% of children in care obtained at least five GCSEs (or equivalent) at A* - C compared with 64% of their peers.
- In 2016, only 7% of 19-21 year old care leavers were in higher education, compared with more than a third of all young people.
- In 2016, 40% of 19-21 year old care leavers were not in education, employment or training, compared with 14% of all 19-21 year olds.

(Figures taken from DfE, *Children looked after in England, including adoption and DfE, Outcomes for children looked after by LAs*).

Issues, challenges and difficulties commonly faced by care leavers

Many care leavers will have experienced significant emotional distress and instability growing up, which will have a huge impact on their transition to adulthood. Issues, challenges and difficulties care leavers commonly face include:

- Low self-esteem and low confidence
- Lack of trust
- Difficulty planning long-term or committing to deferred gratification

- Practical difficulties relating to suitable housing and finance
- Emotional instability.

Some may also have experienced drug or alcohol abuse or issues with offending.

Care leavers' rights

Young people usually stop living in care from the age of 16 onwards, although many continue to be in care until the age of 18. However, they should continue to get support from the local authority Children's Services department, where they were last in care, until they are 21, or for as long as they are in a programme of education or training as agreed with the department. A social worker or personal adviser should work with them to create a 'pathway plan' - to help them plan their future. This should include assistance around education and employment.

In addition, care leavers have the right to a £2000 bursary if they are going onto higher education (see page 25 for more information).

Local authorities also have a duty to make sure that care leavers have appropriate accommodation until they are at least 18. If a young person is fostered then they have the right to stay with their foster family when they reach 18, as long as both they and their foster carers agree with this. This 'Staying Put' arrangement aims to provide care leavers with a more gradual transition into adulthood.

The government has recently announced their plans to extend this offer to children in residential care. 'Staying Close' will give care leavers the right to live independently near their former children's home and continue to receive support from that home until they are 21.

All local authorities are now required to publish the support available to care leavers. Visit your local authority's website for more information about the full range of support available to young people in your area.

How access to learning and work can help

As outlined above, many young people who have grown up in care have been seriously let down. A good learning or working experience at an early age will ideally go some way to helping care leavers to overcome the difficulties and challenges they have experienced and help them on their way to a happy, successful and independent adult life. It can provide opportunities to:

- Earn money
- Learn new skills
- Build confidence
- Get used to a working environment
- Take control of their lives and their futures

All care leavers will benefit from access to high quality support that is tailored to their needs. We hope this guidance will enable you to offer this support.

Rachel

'I want anyone who thinks that the system is limiting to understand this: you can break limits.'

I was 12 years old when I went into care. I was already a miniature adult, with aspirations and a personality. My parents raised me to believe that education was important, and in dying they cemented certain aims in me; I wanted to do well for them, and wanted them to be proud of me.

I didn't really like school at the beginning. Things changed after my dad died, though. Suddenly I had everyone supporting me, wanting to be there for me. It felt better and it gave me a lot more confidence in classes. I suppose care helped me in that respect; it forced me to be stronger and bolder than I had been before.

However, the good I'd found in that school ended when I switched to a different school. It's very common to move schools when you're in care, which is a very bad thing. A disrupted school life is not a productive school life, and you have a whole new set of friends to try and find, new bullies to get around, and new teachers who don't know what to do with you because you're capable of good work but a year behind the other students.

Nevertheless, I got 10 A-C GCSEs (which I got a bursary award for, very nice) and went onto sixth form. I am now in my second year of Law at Bournemouth University. I love my course and am involved with a number of activities, including campaigning for young people in care and for change in the system.

Supporting Care Leavers

Young people have a range of different attitudes and needs in relation to learning and work. Staff who provide support to care leavers have a key role to play in enabling them to consider their options, make informed decisions and progress along a pathway towards employment.

The feeling of being listened to and valued can have a positive effect on a young person's self-esteem and confidence - which many care leavers lack. For many care leavers, working with a personal adviser, or another support worker, is an opportunity to form an attachment based on trust. It creates an important space in which creates a space in which the young person can grow and develop. For some care leavers, such attachments will have been few and far between. But it is these attachments that are so important in empowering a young person to take control of their life, fostering a sense of self-worth and moving forwards in a positive way.

Supporting care leavers will require a specific, tailored and understanding approach:

- **Be on a level with the young person.** A friendly relationship in which you take an interest in the young person, get to know them and empathise with them can be crucial in building a productive and trusting relationship.
- **Give clear directions and instructions and offer appropriate support.** The young people you are working with may initially need you to work with them to show them how to do things - don't just leave them on their own to get on with it. Provide an appropriate level of support, whilst ensuring that they feel

empowered and supported to get things done, make their own decisions and recognise the small steps of achievement that they make.

- **Focus on the strengths and the positive attributes that the young person has.** Many young people will bring energy, enthusiasm, a fresh perspective, a dedication to achieve and technological know-how to their future careers. Help the young person identify their potential and celebrate their strengths. Give them praise and feedback for positive achievements and focus on how they can enhance their skills further.
- **Set goals.** Work with the young person to help them set goals and outcomes for themselves and work out the steps they need to take to achieve them. Don't just live in the here and now - help the young person start to think about their longer term goals and how they might reach them. Use the RUBLE to help with this.
- **Be appropriately challenging.** Part of your role is to enable the young person to develop by taking on new challenges. Don't be afraid to challenge negative or disruptive behaviour, or to guide them in terms of appropriate behaviour. If you need to pass on negative feedback do this in a non-judgemental and non-confrontational way, help the young person work out how to address issues and ask them how you can support them in this.

Using The Really Useful Book of Learning and Earning (RUBLE)

The RUBLE has been written to help care leavers to make plans and get to where they want to be in life. As somebody who provides support to care leavers, you have an opportunity and responsibility to help them to realise these plans as part of their pathway planning process. It is important that you are prepared

to answer questions about how they can go about achieving their goals and what support is available from the local authority, further education colleges and other organisations to assist them in doing so.

The RUBLE includes several resources and activities that are designed to encourage young people to think about what they want to work towards:

1. Positive statements

Pages 11-17 of the RUBLE include some resources and activities which are designed to help care leavers think positively about their interests and to reflect on their own strengths and achievements. They encourage young people to think about what makes them happy or proud, what they enjoy doing and what to tell themselves when things become tough. They also provide a space for recording the young person's hopes and dreams for the future which may form the basis for putting together an action plan.

These activities are designed to be revisited throughout the year to help care leavers to consider their long-term goals and reflect on what they have learned and achieved.

2. Personal skills

Pages 18-20 include activities to encourage young people to reflect on the skills they have and the things they are good at. This includes skills they have developed through their day to day experiences as well as what they have gained through education or training. Examples to think about include:

- work experience
- school events, e.g. drama productions, enterprise events
- groups, teams or clubs, e.g. sports clubs
- voluntary work
- committees or councils, e.g. children in care council

You should encourage the young person to think about the skills and knowledge that they developed as a result of these experiences, e.g. team work, planning, organisation or creativity. This section also aims to help young people to think about the skills they would like to develop or that they think would help them in their work or everyday life. This should help form the basis of an action plan.

Action plans

It's a good idea to encourage care leavers to get into the habit of thinking about where they want to be in the future and making plans to get there. Pages 68-78 of the RUBLE provides a space for them to record their short, medium and long-term goals, with the aim of making this the basis for future planning.

These goals can be big or small and might involve work, learning, volunteering, living arrangements, how they feel about themselves, their health and well-being – whatever it is they want out of life. You might find the activities around skills and positive statements helpful when supporting young people to come up with their goals.

A key part of action planning is recording the steps that young people need to take in order to reach their goals. Part of your role is to assist in setting out what they will need to do, how they can go about doing this and what support is available to help them. This also means thinking about potential barriers for the young person and suggesting ways that they can be overcome. There is an example of a completed action plan on page 72.

These action plans are designed to be revisited throughout the year to help young people think about what they have learned and achieved, record their progress and review their goals to make sure that they still reflect what they want out of life. Make sure that you decide on a time with the young person when you can review their goals together, to look at how far they have come and whether they would like to keep or change the goal.

Samantha

'I've always seen education as a way out of my situation.'

Samantha has known since she was young that she wants to be a barrister when she is older. Because of this she has always tried hard in education. But she went through a difficult time during her GCSEs which meant she 'wasn't able to work as hard as she would have liked to.

But Samantha didn't let that the challenges she faced stop her from continuing to learn. She has just started A Levels in law, chemistry, physics and psychology.

Samantha is really proactive about planning her future. She has spent time doing research on the internet to find out what grades she needs to get to do law at university, and is working towards getting these. She has completed work experience in a law centre and is looking for more work experience opportunities with a law firm or in the courts.

Samantha knows how important it is to make sure you have control over any changes in your life, especially when it comes to living arrangements. She says, 'when you are coming up to your 16th or 18th birthday make sure you find out from your social worker what they are planning - and work with them on developing plans.'

Support systems

Life doesn't always go according to plan and everyone goes through difficult times. Sometimes this can be a short term set back after which everything returns to normal. On other occasions things can go seriously wrong and this can make prioritising a course or job more difficult.

For young people who are going through a difficult time or who feel they have too much on, it can be tempting to give up learning or working. In these situations, it is important that you can help the young person to avoid making rushed decisions. Spend some time thinking and talking through what the best solution might be. It might mean giving something up but equally there might be some support or strategies available to help them to stay in learning or work.

The best things to do are:

- **Make sure the young person is able to access support and advice.** Apart from their personal advisers, it is important that they are aware of friends, family members, social services or teachers that can help talk things through. On page 78 of the RUBLE there is space to record the names and contact details of people that they can go to for support.
- **Work out what support or changes might help the young person to stay in learning or work.** This might mean talking to the learning provider or employer about what they could do to make things easier. There are also some websites and helplines at the end of this guidance which could provide more information or sources of support.

- **Encourage the young person to think about why they took up learning or work, or about their long-term goals.** It may be worth going over what they have written in their action plans or looking at the positive statements they have made on pages 11-17.
- **Encourage the young person to think about what they might like to do instead.** This could mean looking back at the hopes and dreams for the future they have recorded or reviewing their short- or long-term goals and considering how they could be changed or approached in a different way.

Taking up learning

This section is designed to provide information and advice which will help you in supporting care leavers to take up learning or to overcome some common barriers to learning.

What do we mean by 'learning'?

Learning comes in many different forms. It can mean taking up education through schools and universities, undertaking a course through a workplace or college, or self-led learning using a library or the internet. Learning might be part time or full time, spread across weeks or years, or be just for one session.

Supporting a young person to take up learning is likely to involve helping them to investigate and choose a type which suits their needs and abilities. It's important to ensure that each young person you support is aware of the range of different learning experiences available so that they have an opportunity to think about the option that is right for them.

Visit **www.skillssupport.org.uk** for a range of information about learning, including the different options available to care leavers and the financial support they can receive.

What are the benefits of learning?

Learning is good for happiness, health and well-being. Lots of people find they grow in confidence and feel better about themselves after taking up learning. It can:

- help people to get out and about and meet others
- help people to learn new skills, follow their interests and keep their minds active
- lead to a qualification or certificate
- help people to get a job or voluntary work
- be fun and enjoyable

Though some care leavers may not have had very positive experiences in school, it is important not to let this put them off learning as they get older. Most people find it a completely different experience. As they get older, young people often have much more choice and control over their learning and are treated like adults.

If you are encouraging a young person to think about learning, it might be worth asking them to reflect on:

- something they always wanted to know more about
- something they wish they had learned about at school
- what kind of learning they have enjoyed in the past

There is space on page 23 of the RUBLE for young people to write down their ideas for what they would like to learn and what they have enjoyed in the past.

Tim

'Studying has helped me to be a lot more confident around other people'.

Tim is only 17 but already he is in the second year of a Drama BTEC, is doing his Duke of Edinburgh Award, is chair of a Children in Care council and has applied to join the army!

Being expelled during year 11 didn't stop Tim getting most of his GCSEs. He worked with a tutor and studied at home. After this Tim went to college to get his GCSE Maths. He started a Drama BTEC just to fill up his timetable, but soon found he loved it.

'I was dead nervous being on stage at the start but the Drama BTEC helped me to be a lot more confident around other people. I actually really want to do well. And because of the BTEC I've got a massive group of friends I never thought I'd have.'

As he is learning full time, Tim told us he gets around £30 a week from the 16-19 Bursary, which is a huge.

Because he's done so well on the BTEC, Tim should have enough UCAS points to go to university if he wants to.

At the moment Tim is living semi-independently. This is helping him get used to shopping, cooking and managing his money, so he will feel ready to live on his own in a few months.

Tim is really optimistic and keen to give things a go. 'Anything you have the slightest bit of interest in - do it. Give it a try. Even if you try and fail at least you've tried.'

Finding out what is available

You can find out more information about the learning opportunities available to young people by:

- Speaking to local colleges, universities or learning centres. Check their websites, or call and ask them to post out a prospectus.
- Visiting the National Careers Service website at **<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/>** or call their helpline on 0800 100 900.

The National Careers Service website includes a national post-16 course directory which includes all the learning opportunities funded by the Department for Education. It aims to help young people make informed choices about their education and training options, and contains information from 2,200 learning providers, including colleges, training providers and local education authorities. You can search the directory by going to **<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/>** and clicking on 'Find a course'.

It is worth looking for courses in your local area that are specifically targeted at young people in care and care leavers. For example, ASDAN have created a new short course focused on helping looked after children and care leavers make a successful transition from school education to adulthood. It covers lots of different topics, including having a place of your own, practical cooking skills, managing money and preparing for the world of work. For more information, visit **www.asdan.org.uk/courses/programmes/living-independently-short-course**

Financial support

For care leavers who are on a limited income, there are opportunities to access free courses or courses with reduced fees, or to get financial help to take up and stay in learning.

Young people should be able to study for free for GCSEs, A levels, National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) Level 1, 2 or 3, or equivalent qualifications if they do not already have these. When studying for these qualifications full time, learners can apply for income support and housing benefit until they are 21, as long as they began the course before turning 19.

Some other funds available include:

- **16–19 Bursary Fund** – This is for young people aged 16–19 who struggle with the costs of full-time education or training. Care leavers should be entitled to £1,200 a year from their college under this scheme. They will need to speak directly to the school, college, academy or training provider in order to access this.
- **Discretionary Learner Support** – This is available in colleges and sixth form colleges for learners who may need help with the costs of learning.
- **Professional and Career Development Loan** – This is a commercial bank loan that can be used to pay for learning which helps young people to develop better job skills or progress in their career. They will not be charged interest on the loan while they are in learning but the loan does need to be repaid when the course is over and they will be charged interest from this point onwards.
- **Residential Support Scheme** – This can be used to help with the costs of term-time accommodation for courses which are far from home.

- **Dance and Drama Awards Scheme** – This can be used to pay tuition fees at a specialist performing arts school.
- **Bursaries and scholarships** – There may be bursaries or scholarships available to young people who are in higher education. Unlike a loan, these do not have to be paid back. Universities and colleges have different rules about who can apply for bursaries, so they may need to contact the relevant student services department to find out about eligibility.
- **Higher Education Grant for Care Leavers** – Care leavers aged under 25 who go on to Higher Education are entitled to a £2,000 bursary. This is a one-off payment that they don't need to pay back. Local authorities have a duty to pay this, and they cannot put it towards course fees or accommodation.
- **University and college hardship funds** – Universities and colleges will often offer additional money to young people who need help with the costs of higher education. The amount available is decided by the university or college, whose student services department will be able to provide information about eligibility.

All these funds and schemes have different rules about who is entitled to them. You may need to find out more information and check eligibility before encouraging young people to apply.

To find out more, visit www.gov.uk and select 'Education and learning' then 'Apprenticeships, 14 to 19 education and training at work' or 'Student finance'.

You can also visit www.skillssupport.org.uk for a range of information about the different options available to care leavers and the financial support they can receive in education.

Childcare support

There are some sources of funding to help parents stay in learning:

- **Care to Learn** – This is a fund for parents who were aged 19 or under at the start of their course. It pays for parents' childcare while they learn.
- **Discretionary Learner Support** – This can be put towards childcare costs for people aged 19 or older who are on a further education course.
- **Childcare Grant** – This grant can help with childcare costs for those who are in full-time higher education.
- **Parents' Learning Allowance** – For those who are on a full-time undergraduate or Initial Teacher Training course, this grant can be accessed in addition to standard student finance.

All these funds and schemes have different rules about who is entitled to them. You should find out more before you encourage a young person to apply.

To find out more, visit www.gov.uk and select 'Education and learning' then 'Apprenticeships, 14 to 19 education and training for work' or 'Student finance'.

Taking up work

This section is designed to provide information and advice which will help you in supporting care leavers to take up work.

What are the benefits of working?

Just like learning, most people are happier and healthier when they are working. Working can give young people a structure to their days and a sense of purpose. It allows them to use their skills and to develop new skills. Most people have more money when they are working than when they are on benefits.

Common barriers for care leavers

Many care leavers find it hard to achieve their potential in terms of education, training and employment. Younger people are less likely to see their career in terms of a 'ladder' than older people are. Furthermore, care leavers may be even less likely to consider a 'career ladder' because disjointed experiences in their formative years may mean they haven't experienced development and progression in education as a streamlined route. Care leavers often find it difficult to think about their long-term future and consequently focus on the here and now.

It is worth emphasising to the young people you support that having a job is the first and best step they can take towards having a better job. Starting at the bottom and working up can be a good way to get to where they want to be. Though they may not be earning very much at first, they will be gaining valuable experience and confidence in their work which will make them more attractive to future employers. Many people find that job

satisfaction – doing work that is enjoyable and beneficial for themselves and others – is just as important to them as earning money.

For a care leaver, the process of applying for a job may be very different from that of a young person who has not lived in care. While individual lives and circumstances vary, it is important to remember that many care leavers will not have the parental and authoritative advice, support and guidance that many young people take for granted. In formative years, effective parental support can be fundamental in equipping young people with the skills and confidence to submit good job applications, prepare well for interviews and consider issues of travel, punctuality and appropriate and smart appearance.

Dawud**'I was not inspired until uni and it made all the difference to my studies.'**

Being in care in and of itself was a positive thing for me and helped me no end, but the issues that led me into care caused me no end of problems. I was a very self conscious person and always had trouble fitting in and gaining acceptance from people, due to the impact of my struggles on my personality and the way I behave and think.

When I left school I ended up in prison, drugs, all kinds of problems. I wanted nothing to do with the care system. Eventually I had some motivation to move away from my hometown at the age of 19, get some A Levels and go to university and make a decent life for myself. Social services paid my living expenses, rent, college fees etc for 4 years as I performed extremely poorly in A Levels so took 4 years to scrape through college. I got to Uni and was finally independent and social services no longer had to support me other than some money they sent up which totalled around £2000.

At Uni I performed far better than in school and have really enjoyed my studies as an engineer. I have found work very easily, getting a summer job after my first year of study, working on control systems for power generators, and now I have been offered a placement with Rolls Royce subsidiary Aero Engine Controls working on the control systems for jet engines. My grades have been very good so far and I am hoping for a first class degree at the end of my studies.

Transitions into work

Some young people may find it hard to move into full-time paid work. Below are some options for short-term or temporary placements which can provide valuable experience whilst also helping people to discover if they are ready for work.

1. Volunteering

Many people find that volunteering helps them to find paid work in the sort of job they want. Volunteers are not paid for their work but may be paid expenses, such as for food or travel. Volunteering can be a great way to:

- feel good about yourself
- have fun
- meet new people
- be more active and get fit
- get some work experience
- learn and develop new skills
- make a difference.

To find out more:

- Visit **www.gov.uk**, select 'Citizenship and living in the UK', then 'Charities, volunteering and honours' and then 'Volunteer placements, rights and expenses'.
- Visit **www.volunteering.org.uk**
- Visit **www.vinspired.com** – this website is specifically aimed at young people.
- Look in your local phone book under Charitable and Voluntary Organisations.
- Telephone, email or write to organisations where the young person would like to volunteer.

2. Traineeships

Traineeships are a government programme designed to prepare young people for work and improve their chances of getting a job or an apprenticeship. Traineeships are available throughout the country and across a wide range of job roles. They last between six weeks and six months, and the content is tailored to each young person's individual needs.

A traineeship will provide:

- work preparation training, to help young people to develop the confidence to take their first step into a career
- English and maths support, to ensure they have the skills that are needed in the workplace
- a work experience placement, providing young people with valuable insight and real experience of the world of work

Many traineeships offer the opportunity to progress to an apprenticeship or a job, and trainees should be guaranteed an interview and a reference. Traineeships are not paid but study and programme costs will be met by the government and they should not affect any benefits being claimed (although some benefit rules will still need to be complied with).

To find out about applying for a traineeship or to search for local opportunities, visit the National Apprenticeship Service website:

<https://www.getingofar.gov.uk/traineeships>

3. Apprenticeships

If a young person wants to learn a trade while they are working, you might want to suggest they try an apprenticeship. An apprenticeship is a combination of doing training and doing a job.

This helps people to earn while they learn the skills needed for their career.

An apprenticeship can be a great way for a young person to find out whether they enjoy working in a particular sector before they commit to a job.

Unlike a traineeship, a young person will get paid for doing an apprenticeship and it can last for between one and four years, so they will get a lot of experience. Apprenticeships are also fully funded for all 16-18 year olds and for 19-23 year olds who have previously been in care.

More information about apprenticeships can be found on pages 38-41 of this guide.

4. Supported internships

If a young person is aged 16-24 with a statement of Special Education Needs, a Learning Difficulty Assessment or an Education, Health and Care plan, then they could try a supported internship. Supported internships are a study programme based primarily with an employer. They are unpaid and last for a minimum of six months. Wherever possible, they support the young person to move into paid employment at the end of the programme.

Alongside their time with the employer, young people complete a personalised study programme which includes the chance to study for relevant substantial qualifications, if appropriate, and English and maths.

For more information go to: <http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/what-we-do/supported-internships>

3. Permitted work

Permitted work provides an opportunity for those who are claiming Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) for a health condition or impairment to test their capacity for work without it affecting the amount of benefit they receive. ESA payments will not be affected if the claimant:

- Earns up to £20 per week
- Works for less than 16 hours a week and earns up to £115.50 a week, for 52 weeks or less (or for any length of time if they are in the support group)

ESA claimants who start doing permitted work must report this to the Department for Work and Pensions. There are strict rules about permitted work so it is important that young people speak with their ESA adviser to check eligibility before starting work.

Work activity

It may be that the young people you support would like to take up work but aren't sure about what kind of work to look for. On pages 39 of the RUBLE there is an activity which aims to help young people think about the kind of work they would like to do. You could encourage them to think about what they enjoy doing in their day-to-day life and what is most important to them in a job. There is space for them to record their ideas and use these to think about the jobs they might like to do in the future. You can then revisit this with the young person throughout the year as they learn more about what they enjoy or have new ideas about their future career.

There is also space to create an action plan around getting a job in the future on pages 66-70.

Self-employment

Self-employment is an option which would allow a young person to set their own working hours and situation, choosing what kind of work they do and how much work they take on. However, being self-employed comes with its own set of responsibilities. Self-employed young people will need to find their own clients and make sure the work is done on time and to a good standard. They will also need to ensure that they pay the right amount of tax on what they earn. Self-employed people are usually very good at organising their time.

There are many different options for becoming self-employed. Having a qualification in a particular skill, for example hairdressing or IT, could help young people to become self-employed in that line of work. It may also be worth the young person thinking about the skills and the things they like to do for business ideas. For example, people sometimes pay for services like pet sitting or dog walking. If they enjoy crafts such as knitting or painting, they may be able to sell the things they make online, through independent shops or on a market stall.

For more information on becoming self-employed, go to **www.citizensadvice.org.uk** and choose 'work', then 'self-employed or looking for work' and then 'self-employment: checklist'.

Young people who want to work for themselves may be tempted to join a trading scheme. This is where you sell the scheme's goods or services directly to other people, on behalf of the scheme. Trading schemes aren't illegal in themselves. The most well-known example of a trading scheme in the UK is probably Avon. This is a cosmetics company whose representatives buy the products and then sell them on to people in their local area for

a profit. However, illegal trading schemes are often used as way to con people out of money. You should be extremely careful if the young people you support are considering joining a trading scheme – if it looks too good to be true, it probably is – help and support them to investigate it thoroughly before committing.

Miffy

'When you are leaving care, work out what you want to do in life – otherwise you could just drift from day to day'.

After leaving school Miffy did a course in hairdressing and worked in a couple of salons. But things didn't work out for her and after leaving the salons Miffy realised she needed to think about a different future. She had always had a job since leaving care and she wanted to make sure she could support herself financially. So Miffy started up her own business in network marketing and distributing phone contracts.

Having her own business has helped Miffy develop loads of new skills, like planning and running events, training staff and working with the public. She loves working with other people, and being able to manage her own working hours.

Miffy has also done lots of voluntary work with young people. At the moment she is setting up workshops for young people in care to help them prepare for living independently – like helping them learn to cook and manage their money. This way she can use her experiences to help other people.

Miffy's long-term goal is to open up a residential home for young people leaving care and living semi-independently. To do this she needs to do a Youth Work course. Before she can do this she needs to do a New Beginning course - to get the entry qualifications she needs - which she is going to start soon.

Disability and equality

The Equality Act (2010) applies to workplaces and learning providers. It makes it illegal for them to discriminate against young people because of their disability.

If you are supporting a young person who is disabled, it is usually their decision whether or not to tell their workplace or learning provider. This is sometimes called 'disclosing' or 'declaring'. They will need to think about this and decide what is best for them and their employer or learning provider. However, it is important that young people realise they can only receive additional support if their employer or learning provider knows about their impairment or health condition and what issues they might face.

If the young person declares their disability, their employer or learning provider should offer them support and explore how they can make changes - or 'reasonable adjustments' - to meet their needs. This could be something like giving them extra equipment they need to do the learning or the work, letting them work flexible hours, giving them extra time in exams or other things.

It is important to remember that if the young person's impairment or health condition might risk their safety or the safety of other people, they have to tell their employer or learning provider. If their work or learning is in health and social care and it involves

working with children or vulnerable adults, they are required to tell their employer or learning provider.

- Young people **in work** may be able to get support for themselves and their employer through the Access to Work programme. The programme offers advice about how employers can support employees with disabilities in the workplace and money towards the costs of making reasonable adjustments, including equipment. To find out more, visit **www.gov.uk** and select 'disabled people' then 'work and disabled people'.
- Young people **in learning** might be able to get a Disabled Students' Allowance if they are in higher education. This is a grant that provides money on top of any other student finance if young people have extra costs because of a disability. It can help pay for things like specialist equipment or extra travel costs. To claim DSA, the young person will need to provide proof of their disability or health condition, such as a letter from their doctor. To find out more visit **www.gov.uk** and select 'education and learning' then 'student finance'.

For more information on the rights of young people with disabilities visit **www.gov.uk** and select 'disabled people' then 'disability rights'.

Job hunting

The RUBLE includes some tips and tricks for job hunting on pages 47-60, including:

- Where to look for jobs
- Who to ask for help
- Filling out application forms

Learning whilst earning

This section is designed to provide information and advice which will help you in supporting care leavers to learn through their job or progress in their current role.

How to take up learning or training while working

Learning or training whilst working can help young people to build up confidence and learn new skills, as well as helping them to improve in their job or progress on to a better one. There are all sorts of ways in which young people can get help with learning or training whilst in employment:

1. Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a combination of doing training and doing a job which helps people to earn while they learn the skills needed for their career. Apprenticeships take between one and four years to complete, are open to all ages (16+) and cover 1,500 job roles available in all sorts of trades like construction, catering and health care.

Apprenticeships combine on and off-the-job training. Apprentices will learn skills on the work site and often work towards a work-based qualification like a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ). In addition, an apprentice will spend time with a learning centre, often working towards a technical qualification such as a BTEC. They will gain transferable skills, such as working in teams, problem solving, communication and using new technology. At the same time, they study for a certificate which provides further knowledge and understanding of the job. An apprenticeship can

therefore play a vital role in supporting the young person in the first stages of their career path and helping them grow on the job.

When the apprenticeship comes to an end, there may be an opportunity for the young person to continue working with the same employer, although this is not guaranteed. Alternatively, they may wish to move on to a different job or kind of work.

For more information, visit **www.getingofar.gov.uk** or call the Apprenticeships helpline on 08000 150 400. Alternatively you can search for apprenticeship opportunities by visiting **www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk**.

2. Union learning reps

There are opportunities for young people to access training and learning provided by unions and workplace representatives. Some organisations have learning representatives or learning champions who support workplace learning by giving information, advice and guidance to other employees. They can talk to employers about funding or time off as well as helping staff to find the right course for them.

To find out more visit: **www.unionlearn.org.uk**

3. Learning on your own

There are resources and courses available to support people to learn on their own (sometimes called 'distance learning' or 'self-directed learning'). Many of these require access to the internet - if this isn't available to the young people you are supporting it is worth checking the facilities at their local library.

Some useful resources

- **BBC Skillswise** - free online resources for English and Maths
www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise
- **Maths4Us** - free online short courses for learning and improving maths skills www.learningmathsonline.ac.uk
- **Maths Everywhere** - a free app which helps adults solve everyday maths problems and improve their skills
www.mathseverywhere.org.uk
- **Learn Direct** - provides a range of online courses
www.learndirect.com
- **Open University** - A lot of universities have 'distance learning courses'. The Open University was set up especially for people who want to learn at home www.open.ac.uk

For those who are new to using a computer or the internet, or do not have a lot of experience, there are resources available at the sites below which can help to develop and improve IT skills:

- doteveryone.org.uk
- www.learnmyway.com

Supporting young people on apprenticeships

An important part of your role is to help the young person to understand that an apprenticeship is a valuable stage in their career journey. It's important that they do not see their apprenticeship as an isolated activity, but instead as the first rung of the ladder of their career and as part of a greater journey. Help them to think about what they are learning and the skills they are developing so that they can reflect on these and apply them

in other settings. It is also a good idea to help young people in apprenticeships to consider what they might like to do after it comes to an end and what they might need to do to achieve this.

Don't underestimate the support you can get from the employers and apprenticeship providers who are working with the young people you support. Their tutors or assessors should be very happy to link with you to discuss progress, work tasks, strengths and areas for development. Working in partnership with them will enhance the whole apprenticeship experience and will help the apprentice to build their skills, confidence and trust.

Taking up work and managing money

This section provides information to assist you in supporting care leavers before and during their transition into work. It is designed particularly to help you in answering any questions they may have about the financial implications of taking up work. You may find it helpful to talk through the information which is set out in the RUBLE (pages 61-67)

Childcare

Looking after children does not need to be a barrier to taking up work. Many jobs are part-time or have flexible working hours which allow employees to work at times which are best for them. Some jobs also allow employees to work from home at times which are convenient for them.

The following may help with childcare costs for young people that are taking up work:

- All three- and four-year-olds, and some two-year-olds, in England are entitled to 15 hours of free childcare and 38 hours of free early education per week. This can take place in nurseries, playgroups, preschools or at their childminder's.
- **Working Tax Credit** could give young people money towards childcare if they are a working parent.
- **Universal Credit** claimants can claim back up to 85% of their childcare costs
- Some employers help with childcare costs, or offer parental leave for holidays. Some employers have childcare voucher

schemes where they pay employees part of their salary or wage in childcare vouchers.

For most of these schemes, the childcare will need to be registered with Ofsted. All councils have a family information service which will be able to provide you with more information and details about childcare in the local area. You can search for the relevant local service by visiting **<http://findyourfis.familyandchildcaretrust.org/>**

From September 2017, working parents of three- and four-year-old children in England may be entitled to 30 hours a week of free childcare. To find out more, visit www.gov.uk and select 'Births, deaths, marriages and care', then 'Having a child, parenting and adoption'.

Getting paid

Most people find that having a job makes them better off. All employers must pay the **National Minimum Wage** for employees aged 24 and under. This can change every year. From April 2017, employers must pay:

- £7.05 an hour for people aged 21 to 24
- £5.60 an hour people aged 18 to 20
- £4.05 an hour for people aged 16 to 17
- £3.50 for apprentices under 19 and for apprentices who are 19 or over and in the first year of their apprenticeship. Apply for adults aged 25 and over.

Many employers will pay more than the National Minimum Wage. Some employers have signed up to pay the **Living Wage**. The Living Wage is more money per hour and is based on how much people need to earn in order to live.

The current Living Wage amounts are:

- £8.45 (in all parts of the UK except London)
- £9.75 (in London)

Visit **www.livingwage.org.uk** to find out about Living Wage employers.

Young people might be able to claim extra benefits while they are working, such as Working Tax Credit. Some benefits, for example Child Benefit or bereavement benefits, can still be paid even if claimants are working.

It may be helpful to look at an independent benefits calculator (available at **www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators**) which can help in finding out what benefits the young people you support are entitled to (if they are aged 18 or over). They can also help with understanding how their benefits will be affected if they start work or change their working hours.

To find out more visit **www.gov.uk** and select 'Benefits'.

Moving into work

Some people worry that taking up work can mean that they have less money at the beginning. This might be because they don't get paid straight away. Or it might be because they need to pay extra money for travel or new things like work clothes or equipment. There are some benefits designed to make getting back into work easier.

For those already claiming **Housing Benefit** or **Council Tax Benefit**, it may be possible to extend payments for up to four weeks after they return to work.

Income Support can be claimed by those young people who have a low income and are working less than 16 hours a week.

The amount awarded will depend on individual circumstances, but if they qualify and have no income they will get at least £57.90 a week. To claim Income Support an individual must:

- be between 16 and Pension Credit qualifying age
- be pregnant or a carer or a lone parent with a child under 5 or, in some cases, unable to work because you're sick or disabled
- have no income or a low income and no more than £16,000 in savings (their partner's income and savings will be taken into account)
- be working less than 16 hours a week (and their partner working no more than 24 hours a week).

Young people may also qualify for Income Support if they are in full-time education (excluding university) and are aged between 16 and 20. For more information, visit [**www.gov.uk/income-support**](https://www.gov.uk/income-support)

For people already claiming benefits, it may be possible to get a **budgeting loan** to help with the cost of starting work. For more information, visit Jobcentre Plus or visit [**www.gov.uk/budgeting-loans**](https://www.gov.uk/budgeting-loans)

- In some areas of England, the above benefits have been replaced by **Universal Credit**. There is no limit to the number of hours someone can work while claiming Universal Credit, but payments are reduced as a person earns more. To claim Universal Credit an individual must:
- be aged between 18 and the State Pension age
- not be in full time education or training
- not have savings over £16,000

For more information, visit [**www.gov.uk/universal-credit**](https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit)

Ryan

'Don't let the system get you down.'

Ryan has just started a preparation for employment programme at his local council in 'Groundwork and Neighbourhood Support'. He works 4 days a week and goes to training 1 day a week. He says 'I've been really looking forward to my working and training scheme. I know it's not like they will just chuck me into a job that is cheap labour - they will make sure I get something out of it.'

Before he starts the training, Ryan will have his English and maths skills assessed – and if he needs any courses to help him with these he'll get offered them.

At the end of the training programme the council will help him look for other work, or it might lead to an apprenticeship. Ryan also has dreams of going to college to do an Electrical Engineering course.

Ryan has been living on his own for a couple of years and one thing he really struggled with was managing his money. He got into debt and said he used to bury his head in the sand. But Ryan has taken the first steps to sorting this out. He visited his local Citizens Advice Bureau to get advice and they are helping him to manage his money better.

Over the years Ryan got support from his Key Worker, and this has helped him get to where he is today. He says 'any time I needed help he helped me – with little things like helping me get a bus pass, to big things like helping me move house. And he always reassured me I'm doing well.'

Budgeting

Budgeting involves writing down all the money coming in and going out of your household, ensuring that you know in advance what you will need to pay and when. You should encourage the young people you support to make a budget before they start work so that they can plan ahead and avoid running into any unexpected problems. You can find more information about budgeting in pages 49-53 of this guidance. The RUBLE also provides some tips and advice on budgeting for care leavers on pages 103-114.

For those who have regular payments which leave their accounts on set days, coming off benefits and starting work may affect these. For example, if a young person's wages are paid monthly they may need to change the date of a payment so that it falls after each pay day. You may want to encourage the young people you support to discuss this with their bank as they should be able to help put together a plan for their payments. However, budgeting can also help young people to deal with this as it can help them to look at ways to make changes so that they have enough money to cover everything.

Costs

There can be costs associated with starting work which you may need to discuss with the young people you support, most often around travel and uniforms. This is an area where budgeting can help; knowing in advance how much is needed for travelling to work or buying a uniform makes it easier to plan how to meet these costs.

Where a young person has been asked to wear a uniform at a new job, it is a good idea to ask whether this will be supplied by their employer or whether they need to pay for it themselves. Employers usually provide staff with uniforms if they need one, though sometimes they might ask for a security deposit to be paid.

Some employers offer their workers benefits as part of the job. This could be things like meal vouchers or a clothing allowance. Not all jobs come with benefits but it is worth asking about them as they may help young people to save money.

Pension contributions

Many employers offer a pension scheme. Under new rules, employees will be automatically enrolled into a pension scheme by their employer unless they choose to opt out. If they are enrolled, an amount of money will be taken out of an employee's wages and put into their pension. Young people do not have to join any pension scheme but they can be a good way to start saving towards retirement.

To find out more about workplace pensions and automatic enrolment visit **www.gov.uk** and click 'working, jobs and pensions' then 'workplace and personal pensions'.

Managing money

This section contains information to help you in supporting care leavers to manage their money effectively. This should be used in conjunction with pages 103-114 of the RUBLE which provides a guide to budgeting and managing money for young people.

Why is it important to be able to manage money effectively?

Managing money is a crucial life skill and an important part of living independently. Unless they are able to stay on top of their money, young people may find that they build up debt and get into financial difficulty. Being able to budget will help young people to live within their means and start to plan for the future that they want.

Key principles

You may find it useful to discuss the following steps with the young people that you support:

- **Opening a bank account.** This is a good first step for managing money. Wages or benefits can be paid straight into the account and regular bank statements make it easy to see all the payments coming in and going out. Bank accounts can be opened in person or over the phone but ID and proof of address will be required. There are different types of bank account with different features, so it is a good idea for young people to make an appointment with an adviser at the bank to discuss which one is right for them.

- **Keeping financial records.** Keeping monthly bank statements can help with budgeting and managing money. Young people in work should receive a payslip detailing how much money they earn, as well as their tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any additional money earned. You should encourage the young people you support to keep their payslips together in a safe place as they may need them later on to claim certain benefits or to check that they are being paid the right amount. They should also ensure that they keep any forms about the tax they have paid on their earnings, for example a P45 or P60 form.
- **Paying bills.** The most common bills are for utilities (gas, electricity, water, telephone), council tax and a TV licence for those with a television. Organisations may charge monthly, quarterly (every three months) or annually (once a year). It is usually possible to choose the one that suits you best – an annual payment might seem like a big sum of money, but broken down into monthly chunks it becomes more manageable. Bills can be paid by post, in person at designated places or via a regular standing order or direct debit from your bank account.
- **Savings.** Having some savings can help young people avoid getting into debt, as it means they can pay for things as they need them and provide a safety net in case of emergencies. It may feel to some young people that they are not earning enough to put some aside, but even one pound a week is a start. There are various places to keep savings but opening a savings account can be the safest option and means they will earn interest on the money they put into the account. The Share Foundation runs a Junior ISA scheme for looked after children and young people on behalf of the Department for Education. For more information visit <https://sharefound.org>

- **Preparing for Universal Credit.** A new benefit called Universal Credit is being introduced and the plan is for most people of working age who receive benefits to move on to Universal Credit by the end of 2018. It will be paid once a month, into a claimant's bank, building society or Post Office account. As well as checking what Universal Credit will mean for the young person you support, it is a good idea to make sure that they have the IT and money management skills to be able to make a claim online and manage a single monthly income.

For more information about bank accounts, savings accounts, paying bills and managing money, visit www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk.

The Citizens Advice Bureau provides information about benefits, debt and money management. You can access this by visiting www.adviceguide.org.uk

The cost of borrowing

Borrowing money can seem like a great idea for young people when they really want or need something. But it's important that they get all the necessary information before they commit themselves as lenders charge interest on the money they lend, which means they will pay back more than they originally borrowed.

Pages 108-110 of the RUBLE contains information about the options open to young people who have decided to borrow some money. It is important that you encourage those you are supporting to think through whether they really want or need the thing they're borrowing for and, if so, whether they can save up

for it instead. It might be a good idea for you to talk through the process with them to make sure that they have read the terms and conditions and understand what they are signing up to.

Budgeting

Taking control of their money is one of the most positive things a young person can do. It can help them to plan ahead, manage unexpected expenses and avoid getting into debt. By staying informed about their finances, they are more able to make positive decisions and plan effectively for the future.

You should encourage the young people you work with to think their finances through and set a budget. This means helping them to find out exactly how much money they have coming in and going out, then setting an amount that they have available to spend each month.

On page 112 of the RUBLE there is space for the young person to write down their budget. In the 'Income' column, they should write down all the monies they receive each week or month (for example, wages or benefit payments) and write the amount next to each item. In the 'Outgoings' column, they should write down all the payments they make each week or month. These could include rent or mortgage payments, fuel and food bills, childcare costs, clothes, mobile phone payments, TV licence and so on.

If the outgoings column ends up being more than the income column, it may be helpful for young people to look at the payments being made and consider what could be cut back. This might mean encouraging them to prioritise their spending for payments that are essential (for example, rent and council tax) and reducing spending on those that are less urgent (for example, clothes or entertainment).

It might also be worth looking at some costs, such as food or fuel costs, to see if they may be able to get a better deal by shopping around. Pages 113-114 of the RUBLE contains some money saving advice with tips on how to reduce the cost of food shopping or travel.

To find out more about prioritising spending, visit **www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk** and go to 'Budgeting and managing money'

Health, wellbeing and happiness

Encouraging young people to actively look after their health, well-being and happiness is important. Many people don't realise that looking after your body really affects your moods and makes you feel better about yourself. The RUBLE contains some top tips to help care leavers to look after themselves and resources to encourage them to think about and plan how to improve their health, well-being and happiness (pages 115-121).

Social support and social skills

Having friendships and emotional support helps create a happy life. The RUBLE has some suggestions on pages 118-119 for how to meet new people as a young adult, some tips for staying safe whilst meeting people and some information about recognising good social skills.

Dealing with anger

Anger is a normal human emotion but it can become a problem if it happens too often, if people feel very angry or if they become aggressive. It can also become a problem for young people if they don't express their anger or if they bottle it up inside. The RUBLE contains advice for young people on how to identify and understand their feelings of anger, some helpful ways to respond to this feeling, and how to address their anger on a longer-term basis (pages 119-121). You can also find out more information by visiting www.nhs.uk/conditions/anger-management or by calling SupportLine on 01708 765200.

Other useful information

This section provides information about broader issues, e.g. housing and health, which you may find useful in supporting care leavers with their ongoing learning and working lives. Pages 122-130 of the RUBLE provides some similar information on these topics for young people which it may be helpful to refer to when discussing these issues.

Housing and accommodation

Local authorities have a duty to make sure that care leavers have appropriate accommodation until they are at least 18. Finding somewhere to live and making arrangements to move can be complicated, so it is a good idea to make use of the support which is available to care leavers. There is more information about options for moving and accommodation in the RUBLE (pages 120-122).

If a young person is fostered then they have the right to stay with their foster family when they reach 18, as long as both they and their foster carers agree with this. This 'Staying Put' arrangement aims to provide care leavers with a more gradual transition into adulthood.

The government has recently announced their plans to extend this offer to children in residential care. 'Staying Close' will give care leavers the right to live independently near their former children's home and continue to receive support from that home until they are 21.

There may be financial support available to help with the costs of moving home, including the following funds:

- **Setting up Home Grant** - this grant can be put towards buying essential equipment and furniture needed to live independently. These used to be known as Leaving Care Grants. Different local authorities offer different amounts.
- **Community Care Grant** - this is a one off grant aimed at those who are receiving benefits and need support to live independently. It does not need to be paid back.
- **Housing benefit** - this is available to those who are on a low income and need financial help to pay all or part of their rent. It cannot be claimed by those who are studying full time. For those who are single, aged 22 or over and renting privately, Housing Benefit can only be claimed for bed-sit accommodation or one room in shared accommodation.
- **Budgeting loan** - this is a one-off loan that can be put towards costs of furniture, equipment or moving house, as well as for other things like clothing, travel, help starting work or debts. The loan will need to be paid back.
- **Crisis loan** - this loan is for those who need money because of an emergency or a disaster. They don't need to be claiming benefits to get it.

All these grants and loans have different rules about who is entitled to them. You should find out more before you encourage young people to apply. To find out more visit **www.gov.uk**.

For more information about housing for care leavers, you can call Shelter's free helpline on 0808 800 4444, visit **www.shelter.org.uk** or email: info@shelter.org.uk.

Ricky

'I'm not one to sit around doing nothing, I want to be on my feet doing something'.

Ricky has recently enrolled on a year-long basic construction course and is working as a labourer part time as well. 'On the course we do different tasks for six weeks - six weeks of electrics, of painting and decorating, of bricklaying, of plumbing, that sort of thing.' Because he missed a few days of the course he fell behind - but he worked hard to catch up and is doing really well.

The skills Ricky learns on the course help him in his job - and the skills he develops in his job help him in his learning. He knows if he needs to take time off for exams, he can talk to his boss about this and they will help him out.

Ricky has been living semi-independently for a couple of months now. He has had to get used to doing all sorts of new things - like managing his money, getting himself up and out in the mornings, cooking and washing clothes. This was difficult at first, but over time he has got used to it.

Ricky wants to get more used to living semi-independently before moving into a flat of his own. After college he wants to get a decent job in construction or electrics. And when he is older he hopes to join the army.

Healthcare

All care leavers should have had a health assessment conducted by a nurse. Health and wellbeing should also be looked at as part of pathway planning.

- **Getting information or advice about healthcare.** Young people can call the NHS non-emergency number on 111 or visit www.nhs.uk to get more information about healthcare. They can provide medical advice and information, as well as help find your local doctor, dentist and pharmacist.
- **Prescriptions and payments.** Visiting the GP is free but prescriptions must be paid for. Free prescriptions are available for those who are claiming certain benefits. Young people may also be able to get help with the costs of prescriptions through the NHS Low Income Scheme. To do this, they will need to fill out a HC1 'help with health costs' form, available from Jobcentre Plus, hospitals, surgeries, or by calling 0300 330 1343.
- **Dentists.** Young people can find a local dentist by visiting www.nhs.uk. The cost to NHS patients for dental treatment is usually £19.70 or £53.90; the maximum amount a patient can be charged for a complex course of treatment is £233.70. Free treatment is available for those who are: under-18; 18 and in full time education; pregnant or have had a baby in the past year; claiming certain benefits. Users may also be able to get help with the costs of treatment through the NHS Low Income Scheme.
- **Emergency healthcare.** In addition to calling 999 or visiting the local Accident and Emergency Department, confidential advice and treatment for minor injuries and illnesses is available from NHS Walk-In Centres. Young people can also get advice by calling the NHS non-emergency number on 111.

- **Mental health and emotional wellbeing.** GPs will be able to offer advice to young people or put them in contact with a practice therapist, counsellor or mental health support service. The Samaritans offer a 24-hour phone line offering emotional support for anyone who needs to talk on 08457 909090. There are also lots of useful websites and helplines listed in pages 131-139 of the RUBLE.
- **Sexual health.** Advice about contraception, family planning, sexually transmitted infections or other issues to do with sexual health can be accessed through GPs, by visiting www.nhs.uk, or by looking in the phone book under 'family planning'. The morning after pill is available from either a doctor's surgery, a local Family Planning Clinic or a pharmacist. It is also worth knowing that young people don't need to pay prescription charges for contraception, including condoms, if they get them from the NHS.
- **Young parents** who have registered with a GP should then be able to register their children as well by filling in form FP58, which they should get after registering their child's birth. Health visitors will be able to provide advice on feeding and care and child development and local Children's Centres may also be able to offer support. Family Information Services should be able to provide a range of information on services available to parents.

The RUBLE has a space for users to make a note of health services they access and their addresses and phone numbers on pages 143-145.

Websites and helplines

The following pages are full of useful information about organisations that can offer support and information.

Apex Charitable Trust

Apex Charitable Trust helps ex-offenders to find suitable jobs or self-employment.

Web: www.apextrust.com

Tel: 0870 608 4567

Email: jobcheck@apextrust.com or sthelens@apextrust.com

ASDAN Living Independently Short Course

This course is focused on helping looked after children make a successful transition from school education to adulthood.

Web: www.asdan.org.uk/courses/programmes/living-independently-short-course

Barnardo's

A charity working to support children and young people.

Web: www.barnardos.org.uk

Become

Information and support for young people living in care and the professionals supporting them.

Web: www.becomecharity.org.uk

Benefit Enquiry Line

Advice and information about benefits and how to claim them for disabled people and their carers and representatives.

Tel: 0800 88 22 00

Care Advice Line

Advice and information to help with the practical problems that young people might be facing if they are in care or a care leaver. Lines are open between 10:30am and 3pm, Monday to Friday.

Web: <http://www.becomecharity.org.uk/contact>

Tel: 0800 023 2033

Email: advice@becomecharity.org.uk

Care Leavers' Association

The Care Leavers' Association is a national charity and network which offers information and advice, runs projects and campaigns on behalf of care leavers of all ages.

Web: www.careleavers.com

Tel: 0161 637 5040

Email: info@careleavers.com

Catch22

Catch22 is a national charity that works with young people who find themselves in difficult situations.

Web: www.catch-22.org.uk

Child Law Advice

Child Law Advice provides specialist advice and information on child, family and education law.

Web: childlawadvice.org.uk

Tel: 0300 330 5480 (child or family law) or 0300 330 5485 (education law)

Citizens Advice Bureau

Practical, reliable, up-to-date information on a wide range of topics, including benefits, housing, employment and debt, consumer and legal issues. There is not a national Citizens Advice Bureau helpline, but you should be able to find your local Citizens Advice Bureau under 'C' in your local phone book. Or you can find your nearest CAB through the website below.

Web: www.adviceguide.org.uk

Community Legal Advice

This service provides free, confidential and independent legal advice for people in England and Wales.

Web: www.clsdirect.org.uk

Tel: 0845 345 4345

Coram Voice

Advocacy and support for young people in care. If care leavers are unhappy with decisions that have been made about them or their care, they can call to speak to an advocate.

Web: www.coramvoice.org.uk

Tel: 0808 800 5792

DRINKLINE

Advice for people worried about their own drinking, or a friend or family member's drinking.

Tel: 0300 123 1110

Dyslexia

These sites contain material about dyslexia, including information around assessments and learning.

Web: www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk; www.bdadyslexia.org.uk; www.adult-dyslexia.org

FRANK

Information and advice about drugs.

Web: www.talktofrank.com

Tel: 0300 123 6600

Email: frank@talktofrank.com

Textphone service for deaf people: text FRANK to 0300 123 1099

Get in Go far

This is the government's official website on apprenticeships and traineeships. It provides lots of information about these programmes and lets you search for apprenticeships and traineeships online.

Web: www.getingofar.gov.uk

Gingerbread

A wide range of advice, information and support for single parents, including information about work, money and legal matters.

Web: www.gingerbread.org.uk

Tel: 0800 018 5026

GOV.UK

A government website providing information about a range of public services, including education and employment, money, tax and benefits, and health and well-being.

Web: www.gov.uk

Inspire Me!

A free app and online resource where you can read positive stories shared by former care leavers who are now living independently, learning or working.

Web: inspire-me-live.herokuapp.com

Jobcentre Plus

Jobcentre Plus aims to support people to find the right kind of jobs for them. They also provide information and advice about claiming benefits. You can find the details of your local Jobcentre Plus in your local phone book under 'J'.

Web: www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus

Tel: 0800 055 6688

Learndirect

Learndirect offer flexible courses that can be taken at a local centre or over the internet.

Web: www.learndirect.co.uk

Tel: 0800 101 901

Learn My Way

Learn My Way is an online learning website which provides free courses, guides and activities to help people get online or improve their existing digital skills. User have to register on the website but this is easy to do.

Web: www.learnmyway.com

The Money Advice Service

A website which provides free and impartial advice and information to help people manage their money.

Web: www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en

Money for Life

A service which aims to equip 16-25 year olds with the knowledge, life skills and provision needed to manage their money. Young people can get one-to-one support with any money issues by calling their helpline or through their online chat (11am-11pm).

Web: <http://www.moneyforlife.org.uk>

Tel: 0808 801 0666 (freephone)

National Apprenticeship Service

Lots of information about Apprenticeships and Traineeships including frequently asked questions.

Web: www.Apprenticeships.org.uk

Tel: 08000 150 600

National Careers Service

The National Careers Service provides free information, advice and guidance to help in making decisions on learning, training and work opportunities. The service is delivered on the website and on the telephone through trained advisers. The helpline is confidential and advisers are available from 8am - 10pm, seven days a week. Support through the website is available all day, every day.

Web: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/>

Tel: 0800 100 900

National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL)

NNECL works with staff and professionals to support the progression of young people in or leaving care into and through further and higher education.

Web: <http://www.nnecl.org/>

Email: info@nnecl.org

National Youth Advocacy Service

This service provides information, advice, advocacy and legal representation to children and young people up to the age of 25 in England and Wales.

Web: www.nyas.net

Tel: 0808 808 1001 (freephone)

Text: 0777 333 4555

Email: help@nyas.net

NCVO

NCVO promotes volunteering as a powerful force for change, both for those who volunteer and the wider community. This website offers a range of resources for anyone who works with or manages volunteers as well as those who want to volunteer.

Web: www.volunteering.org.uk

NHS 111

You should use the NHS 111 service if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation. The NHS website also provides a wide range of information about health and local services.

Web: <http://www.nhs.uk>

Tel: 111 (freephone)

Prince's Trust

The Prince's Trust runs programmes for young people aged 14-30, including young people in care and care leavers, to help people move into work, education or training.

Web: www.princes-trust.org.uk

Tel: 0800 842 842

Propel

A website which aims to help inspire more care-experienced young people into higher education. Includes information about what each university or college offers to care leavers, details of the support that you can access and tips and stories from care-experienced students.

Web: <http://propel.org.uk/>

Samaritans

A 24-hour phone line offering emotional support.

Web: www.samaritans.org.uk

Tel: 08457 909090

Skills Support for Care Leavers

A website with lots of information on learning and work options for care leavers and the support they should receive in education and employment.

Web: www.skillssupport.org.uk

Shelter

Information and advice about housing and homelessness.

Web: www.shelter.org.uk

Tel: 0808 800 4444

Single Parents UK

Information and advice for single parents (including about 'work choices'), as well as access to support groups and forums.

Web: www.singleparents.org.uk

The Share Foundation

Runs the Junior ISA scheme for children and young people in care (known as 'Looked After') on behalf of the Department for Education.

Web: <https://sharefound.org>

Smokefree

This website contains detailed information about the free NHS support services, and videos from real quitters talking about what worked for them.

Web: www.nhs.uk/smokefree

Tel: 0800 022 4 332

The Telephone Helplines Association

The Telephone Helplines Association holds detailed information on over 1,200 services across the UK and internationally. They have over 400 members including most national helpline services such as the Samaritans, Shelterline and Childline as well as many local and regional services.

Web: www.helplines.org.uk

UK Online

UK Online centres give people free or low-cost access to computers and the Internet. They also give help and advice about how to use computers.

Web: www.ukonlinecentres.com

Tel: 0800 771234

VInspired

A website for people aged 16-25 interested in volunteering.

Web: www.vinspired.com

Tel: 0207 960 7000

Email: info@vinspired.com

Young Minds

Information and advice about mental health and wellbeing for young people.

Web: www.youngminds.org.uk

This guidance is provided as an accompaniment to
The Really Useful Book of Learning and Earning for
Care Leavers (RUBLE) 2017.

The aim is to provide staff who work with care leavers
with a resource that will enable them to provide
effective information and advice to care leavers about
their options in work and learning.

It is intended to support staff in encouraging and
helping care leavers to use the RUBLE, in addition to
being a useful resource for guidance and signposting
to further information.

A PDF copy of this book can be downloaded at
www.learningandwork.org.uk