



Your Guide to Overnight Stays*

_____ 's Guide to Overnight Stays

*What you need to know if you are looked after away from home

This booklet is for young people over 12 who are looked after in foster care or residential care. It has been produced to help you understand what rules and arrangements need to be followed when you go for a sleepover.

Your carer or residential worker will encourage you to make friends and join in activities in a way that is right for you. They will listen to you and help you keep in touch with people and friends who are important to you. Above all, they need to help keep you safe. This means that for every child or young person there will be some rules and arrangements about sleepovers that need to be followed.

Care planning

Your carer or residential worker will ask you what you think and feel about sleepovers and this should be written down in your individual plan and taken into account.

Feeling included

It is up to the people who care for you to help you feel included and involved. This means that you should be able to join clubs, take part in sports, make friends and stay in touch with the people who are important to you. You should not be made to feel any different from any of your peers because you are looked after away from home. Above all, like parents, the people who care for you need to help keep you safe.

Finding out a bit more

Your carer or residential worker will normally have the authority to agree to an overnight stay and will let you know when you can expect to hear if the sleepover has been agreed.

You may have heard it said that if you stay with a friend then their parents will need to be 'police checked'. This is not normally the case. If your carer has any concerns then they will discuss this with your social worker. It is then up to your social worker to decide if there is a need for further checks. Guidance has been produced to explain what they need to take into account when making this decision. Your local authority may have produced its own guidance on overnight stays.

If not here is a link to the Scottish Government guidance:

www.scotland.gov.uk/guidanceonovernightstays

Your carer or residential worker will normally have authority to agree an overnight stay

Your carers have a responsibility to make sure that they know your friends and their families well enough to let you stay overnight. If the people you want to stay with don't already know you well, there may be a few things your carer may need to tell them to keep you safe in the short time you are with them.

It makes sense for your carers to find out more about the family you want to stay

with. This might just mean getting to know who your friends are, where they live and who they live with. It will usually mean talking with them or the adults they live with about practical things like sleeping arrangements or where and when you will be picked up or dropped off.

The family will need to know what to do if you are unwell or what to do if something happens that worries them or you. This might include things about your health, (for example if you need to use an inhaler) or about things that might upset you. Information about you would usually only be shared with your agreement, and talked through with you first.

Taking a mobile phone

Whenever possible, you should take a mobile phone with you. Make sure it is fully charged, has plenty of credit and that you have the telephone number of your carers or residential unit.

You should phone your carers immediately if you are upset, worried, or don't know how to deal with a problem while you are away.

**Peer pressure –
Don't go on a sleepover if you don't want to.**

If any problems or concerns have arisen during your stay these should be discussed with your carer or residential worker, recorded and acted upon.

Everyone else is -why can't I?

"It's not fair, all my friends get to stay overnight, so why can't I?"

There might be times when the carer or residential worker will say "no" or "not just now". There will be good reasons not to let you stay overnight and this should be explained to you. Those looking after you will write down these reasons and your views will be written down too.

Having your friends back for a sleepover

Usually, you should be able to have your friends back for a sleepover although this might not always be possible.

If you are in foster care or residential care then your carer may have to share information with the family or carers of the friend who is coming to stay. If you are in a residential unit it is important that your friend's family understands what a residential unit is and what arrangements apply to make the sleepover as normal as possible.

Challenging refusal of an overnight stay

If there are rules or arrangements you do not understand or feel unhappy about, you should talk it through with your carers, key worker or social worker. However, if you want to talk to someone independent, you can contact your children's rights worker, Who Cares? Scotland worker (or local advocacy services).

Useful telephone numbers

- 1) Tel:.....
- 2) Tel:.....
- 3) Tel:.....

If you don't know where to find these telephone numbers ask your carer.

Useful telephone numbers

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**The Scottish
Government**

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