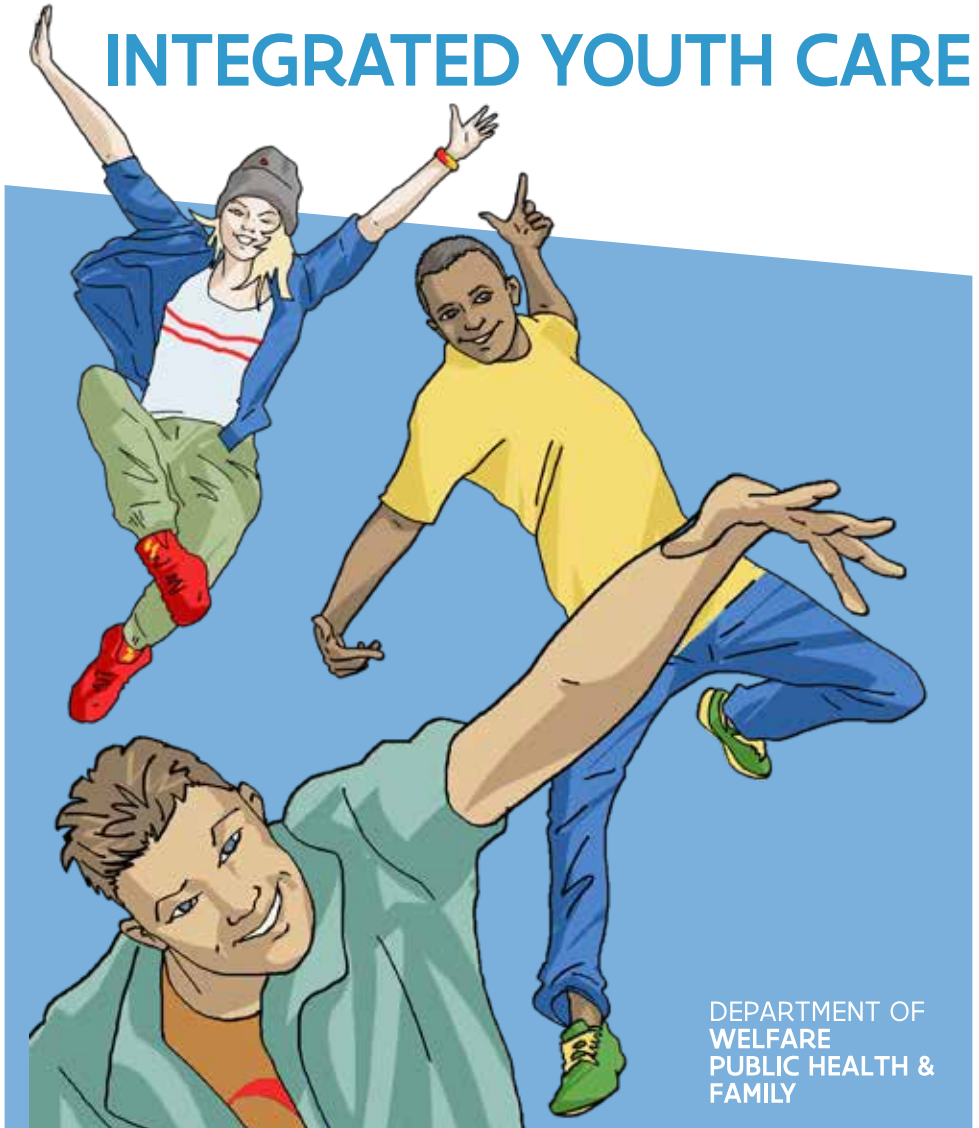




Vlaanderen  
is welzijn

# HOW IT IS IN INTEGRATED YOUTH CARE



DEPARTMENT OF  
WELFARE  
PUBLIC HEALTH &  
FAMILY



## FOR STARTERS

This brochure is intended for all young people who want to know more about their rights within 'integrated youth care'. The first part will explain a bit more about 'integrated youth care': What is it? When do you get involved in it as a young person?

In the second chapter you learn what you can and should as a young person during the counselling process. This part also covers the rights of your parents and care providers.

You will come across coloured boxes throughout the brochure. They will help you to better understand the text.

Handy tips will be in an orange box

A green box contains examples

Text in a blue box provides more explanation

An explanation for some of the difficult words that you may come across can be found under 'Say what?' at the end of this booklet.



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# 1 FIND OUT MORE



## 1. WHAT IS INTEGRATED YOUTH CARE?

Everyone has problems now and then, big or small. You too, may have questions or need some help.

For instance:

- you're home alone at night because your parents have to work
- you're playing truant because you're being bullied
- you're in a wheelchair
- your parents are having a hard time and can't deal with your upbringing for a while
- your big sister is using drugs
- you've lost someone you love and now you're depressed because you can't cope with it on your own
- you're pregnant and don't know what to do

Many problems can be solved by talking about them and trying to find a solution. What it boils down to is that you can rely on someone you trust and who listens to you, someone to talk to and who gives you good advice and help.

Maybe you can turn to your parents, your grandparents or other family members. You can also ask your friends or someone from the youth movement for advice. Or maybe you have a teacher you trust and who you get along with very well.

Unfortunately, some problems can't be solved by 'simply' having a good chat. Sometimes more help or even specialist help is needed. In that case, young people as well as parents can contact one of the organisations of integrated youth care in Flanders for help. A juvenile court might order youth care too.

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**'Integrated youth care'  
is the name for all the help  
available for young people  
in Flanders.**

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Integrated youth care is regulated by two decrees:

- **THE DECREE ON INTEGRATED YOUTH CARE**

This decree describes what integrated youth care is, which organisations must comply with the rules of 'integrated youth care' and the best ways to arrange help for young people.

'Integrated youth care' aims at a better collaboration between organisations that young people like you can turn to, in order to provide quicker and better help for young people.

You may have heard of JAC (Youth Advice Centre) and of CLB (Pupil Guidance Centre). Also the organisations for special youth care (Opgroeien) and foster care, those that collaborate with the Vlaams Agentschap voor Personen met een Handicap (Flemish Agency for Persons with Disabilities), the Vertrouwenscentra voor Kindermishandeling (Child Abuse Centres), the Centra voor Geestelijke Gezondheidszorg (Centres for Mental Health Care), the Centra voor Kinderzorg en Gezinsondersteuning (Centres for Child Care and Family Support) and the Centra voor Integrale Gezinsondersteuning (Centres for Integrated Family Support) fall under integrated youth care.

You can't just call upon any help. For highly specialist help, your care provider, together with you and your parents, must submit an application to the access portal. This access portal will then examine what help is the best solution for you. In other words, you or your parents can't generally turn to a specialist organisation for help directly.



- **THE DECREE ON THE LEGAL POSITION**

The 'decree on the legal position of minors in integrated youth care and in the context of the decree on youth delinquency law' (DRM for short) sums up all your rights in integrated youth care, until you reach the age of 25. The decree describes what exactly you can do and are allowed to do when getting help or counselling.

Chapter 2 of this brochure will explain all these rights in more detail.

Of course, your parents will also play an important role in your counselling. They have parental authority over you until you are 18 and are therefore allowed to take all important decisions that have to do with your upbringing, where you live, your education, your free time, etc.

Also when there are problems, your parents normally retain responsibility for you and therefore have to be involved in your upbringing as well as in your counselling.

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**If you or your parents ask for help from one of the organisations of integrated youth care, or if the judge orders help, the rules for integrated youth care apply.**

**If you are getting help, you or your parents will not be excluded from decisions. You and your parents have rights during the counselling period. You can find all your rights in the DRM.**

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## 2. THREE GENERAL RULES FOR 'INTEGRATED YOUTH CARE'

### 1) EVERYONE ALWAYS HAS TO DO WHAT IS IN YOUR BEST INTERESTS

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**Your best interests are at the heart when decisions are taken that concern you.**

**That means that what is best for you must always be considered, no matter what proposals or decisions are made.**

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If your parents can't take care of your upbringing for a while because your mother is very ill, it may be in your best interests that you and your father get some help at home.

In other situations, it could be in your best interests that you live somewhere else for a while.

What 'your best interests' exactly are, is not written down anywhere. It depends on the situation. What 'your best interests' are, i.e. what is best for you, must be a joint decision between you, your parents and the care providers.

Respect for what is best for you doesn't stop with your care providers or your parents. You too, may only exercise your rights when it is in your best interests!

## 2) TO BE ABLE TO USE YOUR RIGHTS, YOU HAVE TO BE COMPETENT

You are not competent until you know what is best for you. Since that usually is not the case until you are a bit older, the law says that you are competent when you come of age (18 years old). Fortunately, the law also has a few exceptions to this rule. These are things that young people like you can decide and do for themselves.

For instance, from the age of 12, you can decide whether someone may adopt you, from 16 you can take a summer job, etc.

The decree on the legal position of minors in integrated youth care also makes an exception: under normal circumstances, all young people are considered competent to exercise their rights in 'integrated youth care' themselves, without support from their parents.

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**'Being competent' means that you can do and decide certain things yourself. So when you're competent, you may exercise your rights yourself!**

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### 3) ALL RIGHTS ARE EQUAL FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE

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**All young people are given equal rights  
in integrated youth care.**

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Young people may not be treated differently because they are a boy or a girl, because they speak a different language, have a different cultural or religious background, or because they are disabled, etc.

## 2 WHAT ARE YOUR RIGHTS AS A YOUNG PERSON IN INTEGRATED YOUTH CARE?



## 1. GETTING HELP

A first and important rule within integrated youth care is that young people in need of help must be offered that help. This means that organisations or care providers that you turn to for help are obliged to help whenever and wherever they can.

You can turn to tZitemzo, for example, to find out which organisation can give you the help you need.

They must offer help themselves if they can. If for some reason that is not possible, they must send you to another organisation that will be able to help you. That can happen, for instance, when another organisation can offer the help you need better, or when they are overloaded with work already, etc.

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**If you seek help from an organisation in integrated youth care or a care provider, they must either help you or refer you to someone else.**

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## 2. CLEAR INFORMATION

When you turn to an organisation for help, the care provider must tell you how they intend to help you from the start. They must give you honest answers to your questions. They must also tell you what is going to happen if you don't want help any more.

You have been causing trouble in class lately. A care provider from the CLB (Pupil's Guidance Centre) wants to know why. You tell her that you are having problems at home. This is making you feel bad.

The care provider suggests having a talk with your parents. She wants to find a solution together with you, to make sure you start to feel better again. She also says that she won't talk with your parents if you don't want it. And that you can always call in if you need to talk.

Your care provider must make everything clear and understandable.

And, of course, they must use a language that you understand. If they can't, an interpreter must be called in to help.

For instance, if you are deaf, someone who knows sign language will have to be called in.

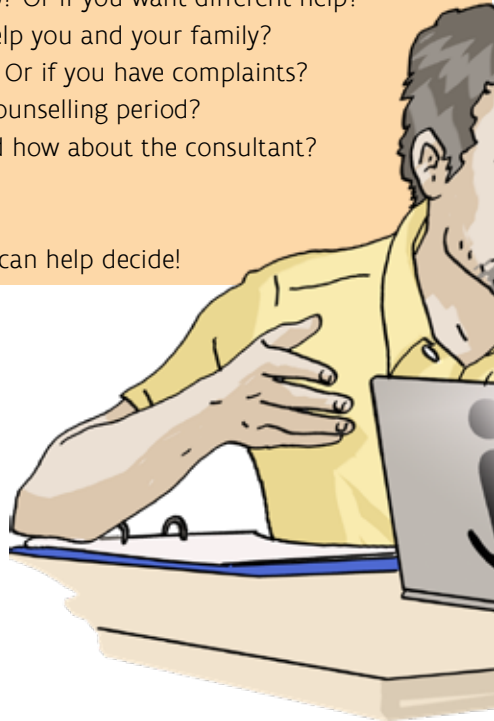
Your care provider must also take into account what you have been through, how much you understand about it, etc.

If you have questions about the help you are getting, you should write them down immediately. That way, you won't forget to ask them when you talk to your care provider.

Ask as many questions as you can when you are discussing your situation with a care provider, for example:

- What happens if you don't want any help? Or if you want different help?
- How long is the care provider going to help you and your family?
- Where can you go if you have questions? Or if you have complaints?
- What are you allowed to do during the counselling period?
- What are your parents allowed to do, and how about the consultant?

The more you know about your situation, the more say you'll have, and the more you can help decide!





### **Are your parents entitled to get information about the help you're getting?**

Care providers are bound by professional confidentiality. That means that they can't just pass on information about you to others. They can only do so for a very good reason. For example, because a judge asks for it, or because you are in danger.

### **Are your care providers also bound by professional confidentiality towards your parents?**

Yes, in principle they are also bound by professional confidentiality towards your parents. Your care providers may only break that professional confidentiality and tell your parents what is happening to you, in your best interests, if you are not competent or if your parents need to have a say in the decisions about your youth care.

### **But aren't my parents responsible for my upbringing, so shouldn't they be involved in my counselling as much as possible?**

Yes, and therefore you can give your care providers permission to inform your parents about what is happening. Your care providers can also inform your parents if you are in danger.



Each time an important decision is being made about you, your care provider must tell you. Of course, he must also let you know if things change that were agreed earlier.

Your care provider may only withhold information from you until you come of age, if this information could hurt you and if you do not necessarily need to know about it.

Your father served a prison sentence for theft before you were born. He has become a better person in the meantime and is now trying hard to be a good dad for you.

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**Your care providers have to explain clearly what is important for you and for the help you are getting.**

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### 3. DECIDING FOR YOURSELF WHETHER OR NOT TO GET HELP?

If you are competent, you have to agree with the youth care you're being offered. You can also decide to refuse it.

If you're a minor, but still competent, your parents will always have a say in deciding about (drastic) youth care with a high impact, such as care that involves you living somewhere else, or care where the access portal has to intervene.

If you are not competent, your parents will decide for you.

In principle, you are competent to decide about this, once you are over the age of 12. If a care provider or your parents feel that you are still not competent by then, they will have to prove it.

If you are under 12 years old, you are only competent if you can show that you know what is best for you.

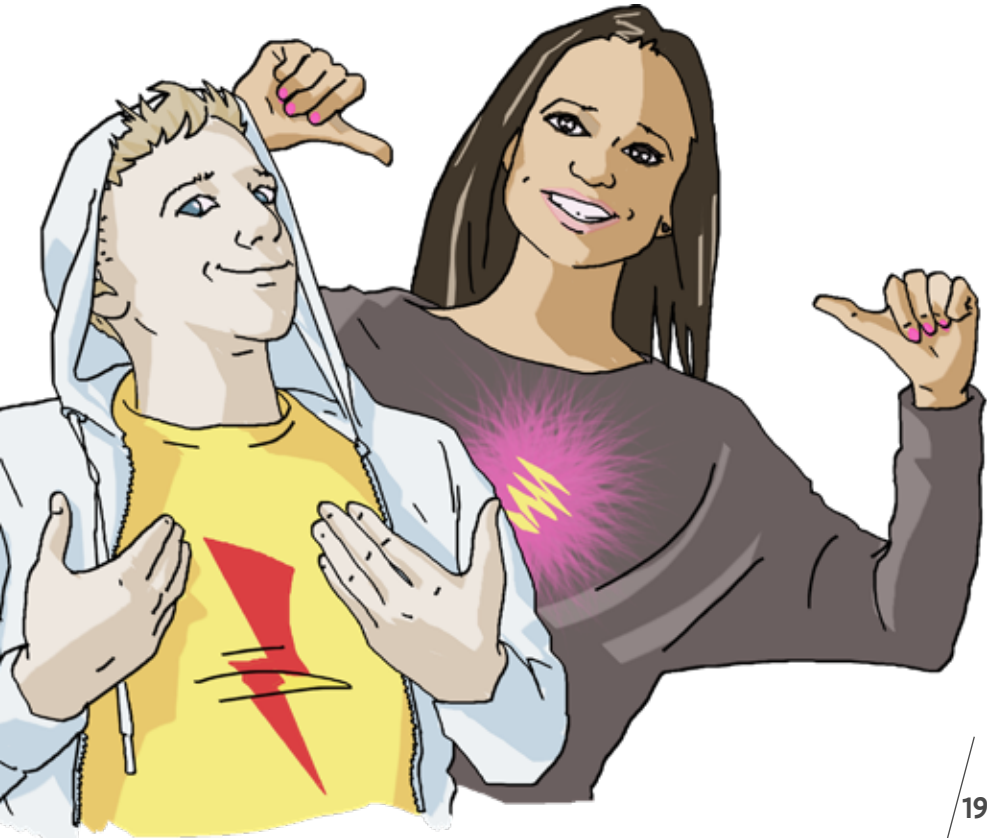


If you are competent, your care providers can never force you to accept help if you or your parents don't want it. Only the juvenile court can force you or your parents to get (certain) help!

It might be the case that you're okay with receiving help, but that you disagree with certain suggestions from your care provider. You are entitled to refuse those suggestions.

Your parents may refuse certain propositions as well.

It is possible that you or your parents do not consent to the help, but that your situation is not safe. Care providers can report this to an Authorised Service. That service will investigate the situation. If they are worried about your safety, they can refer your case to the public prosecutor. The public prosecutor can then ask the juvenile court to impose help. Only the juvenile court can force you or your parents to get help!



## **AND WHO CHOOSES YOUR CARE PROVIDER?**

You can choose which care provider you want to receive help from. But of course, only if there are several care providers to choose from.

If there is only one care provider who can help you, or if there is only one specific organisation in your area, you will have to take that into account.

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**If you are competent, you may decide for yourself whether you want help or not. You also have the right to choose your care provider if that is possible.**

**You are not bound to your choice of a care provider forever! If necessary, you may switch to another care provider during your counselling period.**

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## **4. RESPECT FOR YOUR FAMILY**

Your family is important to you. Everyone agrees on that! It is in your interest to live with your parents and to grow up with your family. For that reason, your parents have parental authority over you and are responsible for your upbringing.

If there are problems in your family, your parents are entitled to receive help in order to give you the best possible upbringing. It might be the case that you can't live with your parents for a while.

For instance, if your parents have been in an accident and can't look after you for a while. Or if your parents are neglecting you or abusing you...

If you are competent, this can only happen if you agree. So unless you want it, your parents or your care providers cannot arrange for you to live somewhere else.

In principle, you are competent to decide about this once you are over the age of 12. If a care provider or your parents feel that you are still not competent by then, they will have to prove it. If you are under 12 years old, you are competent if you can prove that you know what is best for you.

If you are not living with your parents, they are still allowed to visit you regularly. Your care providers can only forbid these visits if they are not good for you. The juvenile court can refuse the right to visit for the same reason.

Only the juvenile court can place you somewhere else against your or your parents' wish. Of course, it will only decide to do that if it really is in your best interests.

If, for example, you have been placed somewhere because your parents are mistreating you, they may not be allowed to see you for a while.



If you live separately from your parents, you are entitled to receive information about them. Your care providers or foster parents must tell you where your parents are and how they are doing. If they don't know, they must find out for you.

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**If you and your parents want to stay together,  
only a juvenile court can still separate you.**

**If you are living separately from your parents, you are entitled  
to have contact with them (unless this is not good for you).  
You are also entitled to information about them.**

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## **5. HAVING YOUR SAY**

You can say something about the help you're getting too. You can even do this if you're not competent, as you're entitled to have your say.

Each organisation must make sure that you can have your say during their guidance. And of course, you also need to be informed about the rules in the organisation.



You are not the only one with a say: all propositions are always discussed between your care providers, your parents, possibly foster parents, and yourself. Your opinion and what you want must be taken into account wherever possible. If that is not possible, they have to explain you why.

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**You may give your opinion about the help that is being suggested or that you are getting.**

**You may have your say about it and you may take part in the decision.**

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Collect all possible information about your situation and about the help you are getting. The better you know your situation, the more you can have your say and take part in the decisions!

Your counselling process must be evaluated on a regular basis.

Is everything still going alright? Are there any problems? You are allowed to give your opinion in this discussion too. And if you're getting help in a family group, you are allowed to meet with the other children to discuss life at the residential facility. This can be done in the residents' council, for example.

## 6. YOUR CASE FILE

- **A CASE FILE MUST BE KEPT ON THE HELP YOU ARE GETTING, UNLESS YOU CALL ON AN ANONYMOUS SERVICE**

A case file is opened when you or your parents seek help from an organisation. Everything your care providers consider of importance about you, your family and your situation will be written in that file. Your case file could be a folder that contains all the information, or a document on the computer, etc.

For the access portal, an electronic case file will be created (on the computer) with all the useful information about you, your parents and everyone important to you.

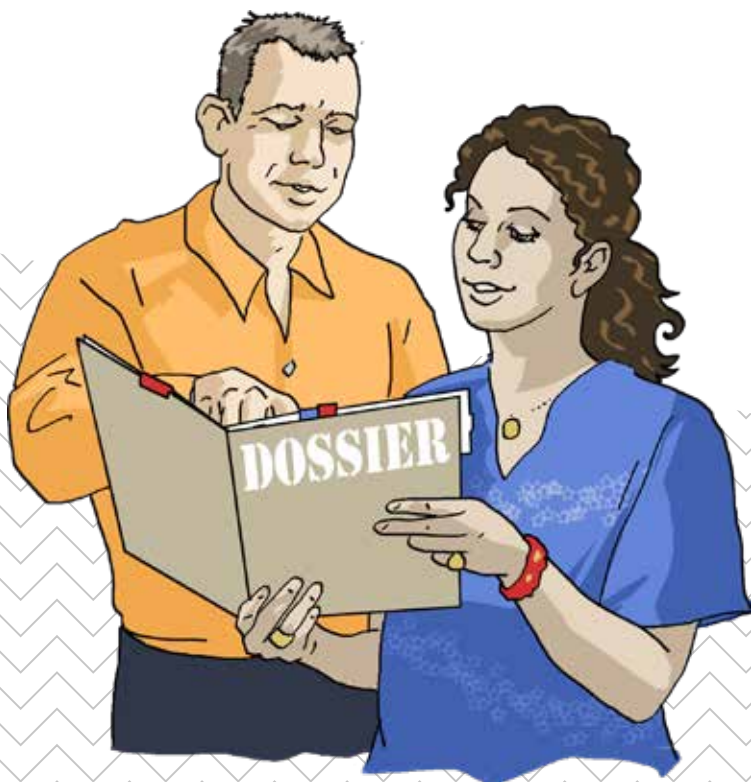
Each time something important is decided or happens to you or your family, it will be added to your file. That way, all the care providers will always know how you and your family are doing.

The information that a doctor, psychiatrist, physiotherapist etc. says or writes about your health may not be kept together with the other information in your case file. It has to be kept separate. In a different folder, for example, or marked with a coloured sticker.

The Patients Rights Act applies to this kind of health information. Under normal circumstances, health information may only be read by your parents.

You may only read it yourself if you are considered competent by the doctor, dentist or other health worker.

Neither you nor your parents may read the health worker's personal notes. However, you may ask a different doctor or health worker to read these personal notes instead.





- **YOU ARE ALLOWED TO KNOW WHAT IS IN YOUR CASE FILE**

Only very few people are allowed to read your case file.

If you are **not competent, your parents** may read your case file because they have parental authority over you and are responsible for your upbringing. But if you and your parents have different interests, your person of trust (see page 28: 'Your person of trust') can read your file instead of your parents.

**Your care providers** may read the file because it allows them to find out the things that are important to give you the help you need.

**The juvenile court** may read the file prepared by its consultant in order to make the right decisions.

Of course, **you** can find out what is in your file too if you are competent! (If you are not competent, your parents will read it for you.)

Besides that, everyone mentioned in the case file is entitled to know what has been written about them.

In principle, you are competent to have access to your file from the age of 12.

If a care provider or your parents think that you are still not competent by that age, they will have to explain why.

If you are under 12 years old, you can only be competent if you can prove that you know what is best for you.

If you have asked to view your case file, it must be shown to you within 15 days. As regards the access portal, the Authorised Service or the juvenile court, this must be done when the decision is made at the latest. Under normal circumstances, you are allowed to know everything that is in your case file.

There are two exceptions to this rule:

1. If someone tells something to one of your care providers, he can ask that it would not be shared with others. This information is confidential and therefore nobody, including you, is supposed to know about it.
2. There may be some information in your file that is better for you not to know. If it is not important for the help you are getting, you are not allowed to know about it while you are still a minor. Your person of trust may know about it.

For instance, that your father served a prison sentence for theft before you were born. He has become a better person in the meantime and is now trying hard to be a good dad for you.

### • HOW DO YOU FIND OUT WHAT IS IN YOUR CASE FILE?

In principle, you are allowed to read your own case file (except for the documents that contain information you are not supposed to know). That

If something is not clear to you, you must be given more explanation so that you can fully understand it!

means you may also read documents about you and your parents or other people you are living with. You are only not allowed to read documents in your file that are about you and about other people that you don't share a house with. This would be a breach of their privacy. But you can find out what is in those documents by talking to your care providers.

### • YOU ARE ALLOWED TO ADD THINGS TO YOUR CASE FILE

If you ever read something about you or your situation that is not correct, you may ask to set it straight. What's more, you can ask for things to be noted in your file or for documents to be added to it.

For example, the things your best friend wrote about your situation.

- **YOU ARE ENTITLED TO A COPY OF YOUR CASE FILE**

You may have a copy of the documents in your file that you are allowed to know and read about. Sometimes you are allowed to know what is in some documents, but you can't read them yourself because they also contain information about other people. In that case, you will get a summary of what they say.

What is written in your case file is always confidential and may only be used within the counselling services!

The copy or the summary you receive are confidential as well.

This copy or summary may not be read by just anyone and may not be used in legal proceedings, for instance, or if your parents are getting a divorce.

- **YOU MAY ASK THAT SOME THINGS YOU SAY ARE NOT SHOWN TO PEOPLE**

You, too, can share certain things with your care providers in confidence. You may ask that your parents or other people you are living with are not allowed to read those documents in your case file.

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**A case file must be kept about the help you are getting.**

**You are allowed to know what is in that file.**

**You are allowed to add things to your case file.**

**You may ask for a copy of your case file.**

**You can ask that some things you say and are put in your file are not shown to certain people.**

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## 7. YOUR PERSON OF TRUST

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**Whenever you talk to your care providers, you may bring someone along whom you trust and feel comfortable with.**

**This person then acts as your 'person of trust' and will support you wherever possible.**

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You choose your person of trust yourself. This person can't be just anyone.

This person must be over 18 and be able to present a criminal record certificate (model 2). This is an official document that is required when one works with minors. Your person of trust needs to apply for this document to his city council. Also, your person of trust may not be involved in the help you are already getting. This means that your mother or one of your counsellors cannot be your person of trust.



Sometimes, your parents' interests are different from yours. In that case, it is important that you receive support from your person of trust, who will defend your interests along with you. If you can't find someone yourself, the organisation that helps you will appoint someone for you.

If your parents are mistreating you, they probably don't want any help because they are afraid of being punished. For you, of course, it is better that help is provided.

Make sure that you know your person of trust's name, telephone number and, if possible, his/her e-mail address so that you can reach him/her if you want to.

If you have a person of trust, this person can be informed of all decisions concerning the help you are receiving. If your parents wish, they are also entitled to have their own person of trust.

## 8. PRIVACY

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**You may have your own ideas about the world, about people and about religion.**

**You are also entitled to space to be yourself.**

**That must be respected by care providers, but also by your parents!**

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Nobody has the right to interfere with your life for no good reason. That means that, in principle, nobody is allowed to read your diary, your text messages or e-mails without your permission.

Your parents have parental authority over you and are therefore responsible for your upbringing. That is why they sometimes interfere with your life, even if you don't want them to.

That may only happen for good reasons, for example when they suspect that you are using drugs, or are hanging out with the wrong people...

Care providers or foster parents can also invade your privacy, for instance if they think that you have stolen something or that you are using drugs.

If you are receiving help out of home (for example, at a residential facility or in a living group), you may choose whether you want to have visitors or not and who can visit. Your care provider can only refuse this right to have visitors in highly exceptional circumstances. That can only be done for good reasons and if it is in your best interests.

Denial or limitation of the right to visit may also be decided by the juvenile court.

Privacy also means that information about you and your family may not be shared with just anybody, and must be protected as far as possible.

This could be your names, addresses or telephone numbers, or a photo of you all.

It could also be about how your family lives, what problems you have, who is helping you, etc.



## 9. POCKET MONEY

**If you live in a residential facility instead of at home, you are entitled to pocket money.**

Rates from 1 February 2020

<b>Age</b>	<b>Amount per month</b>
6-8 years	6,30 euros
8-12 years	12,50 euros
12-14 years	25,00 euros
14-16 years	37,55 euros
16-18 years	50,05 euros
18-20 years	62,60 euros



## 10. A PROPER TREATMENT

If you are being punished, your punishment must be in proportion with your misbehaviour and it has to be beneficial to your upbringing.

The punishment you get for stealing a CD has to be more severe than the punishment you get for not cleaning up your room when your counsellor asked you to.

Which punishments are not allowed?

- Physical punishments such as beating, kicking, pinching, etc.
- Psychological violence such as verbal aggression, threats, etc.
- Depriving you of meals
- Forbidding you to have visitors (unless the juvenile court has made this decision)



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**Your care providers or foster parents may never treat or punish you in a cruel or humiliating way.**

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If your behaviour is dangerous for yourself or for people around you, or if you destroy things, you might have to spend some time separated from the group. You will have to be told explicitly when this can occur, for how long and where you will spend your time separated.



## 11. COMPLAINTS?

You may always complain to your care provider:

- if you are unhappy about the help you're receiving
- if you are unhappy about the way you have to live in the living group or in the residential facility
- if your care providers, foster parents or parents don't respect your rights in integrated youth care.

If you don't think anything is changing, you can also make your complaint to:

- JO-lijn: tel. 0800 900 33 or [jo-lijn@opgroeien.be](mailto:jo-lijn@opgroeien.be)
- Kinderrechtencommissariaat (the Office of the Children's Rights Commissioner): tel. 0800 20 808 or [klachtenlijn@kinderrechten.be](mailto:klachtenlijn@kinderrechten.be)

# 3 ANY QUESTIONS?



If you have any questions or problems, you can naturally turn to the care providers who are helping you. But you can also contact:

**CLB (Pupil Guidance Centre)**

- [onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/clb](http://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/clb)

**JAC (Youth Advice Centre)**

- [www.jac.be](http://www.jac.be)

**AWEL**

- [www.awel.be](http://www.awel.be)
- tel. 102

**Het Kinderrechtencommissariaat (The Office of the Children's Rights Commissioner)**

- [www.kinderrechten.be](http://www.kinderrechten.be)
- tel. 0800 20 808

**1712 - Hulplijn geweld, misbruik en kindermishandeling (Helpline for questions about violence, abuse and child abuse)**

- [www.1712.be](http://www.1712.be)
- tel. 1712

These organisations will try to help you and if they can't, they will tell you where you can go for help.

If, after reading this brochure, you still have questions about integrated youth care and about your rights within the counselling process, you can turn to tZitemzo for more details.

**tZitemzo**

- tel. 09 233 65 65
- [info@tzitemzo.be](mailto:info@tzitemzo.be)
- [www.tzitemzo.be](http://www.tzitemzo.be)
- [www.rechtenindejeugdhulp.be](http://www.rechtenindejeugdhulp.be)

# 4 SAY WHAT?



## **AWEL**

AWEL is the nickname for the Children's and Young People's Telephone Service, which children can turn to if they want to talk about their experiences or give their opinion.

## **Counsellor**

A counsellor is someone who actively helps and advises you for a while to make your life better and more pleasant. When you live in a residential facility, for instance, or when you have to get help at home.

## **Competence**

'Being competent' means that you can do and decide certain things yourself. So when you're competent, you may exercise your rights yourself. You are not competent until you know what is best for you.

## **Best interests**

'Your best interests' are what is best for you. Exactly what 'your best interests' are, is not written down anywhere. It varies per situation.

## **Professional confidentiality**

A person bound by professional confidentiality is not allowed to simply share things they have heard or been told because they have a certain job. After all, they are subject to a duty of secrecy.

## **Assistance**

Assistance means help or support.

## **Special youth care**

When children or young people are living in a difficult situation and their family really needs help, it is said they are in a 'disturbing situation'. Special youth care organisations are among those that young people or their parents can then turn to for help.

**CGG, Centrum voor geestelijke gezondheidszorg  
(Centre for Mental Health Care)**

A Centre for Mental Health Care is where you can go when you're feeling down, for instance because you are feeling scared or when you're very sad about someone's death.

**CIG, Centrum voor integrale gezinszorg  
(Centre for Integrated Family Care)**

Families can ask the CIG for help when they are having a difficult time for a while, for instance with the upbringing of their children. The CIG can then take in the entire family for a while, so that parents and children can work on their problems together.

**CKG, Centrum voor kindzorg en gezinsondersteuning  
(Centre for Child Care and Family Support)**

Parents can also ask help from a CKG when they're having a problem raising their children. The CKG counsellor can call round to their home, or children can be admitted to a CKG family group for a while.

**CLB, Centrum voor leerlingenbegeleiding (Pupil Guidance Centre)**

The CLB can help when pupils, parents or teachers have questions about learning and studying, or about a variety of problems that pupils are faced with.

**Consultant**

The member of staff at the Youth Court social service or at the OCJ, Ondersteuningscentrum Jeugdzorg (Youth Care Support Centre).

**Decree**

A decree is a law from the Flemish government, in other words a law that applies only in Flanders, not in the whole of Belgium.

## **Case file**

Your case file contains information about you, your family, your situation and the help you are getting. Your case file may be in the form of a booklet, or a folder, or a document on the computer, etc.

## **Authorised service**

In each region, there is a Child Abuse Centre (Vertrouwenscentrum Kinder mishandeling) along with Youth Care Support Centres (Ondersteuningscentrum Jeugdzorg), which investigate whether any help is needed in certain situations, even if the parents and/or young people don't want that help themselves. If necessary, the authorised service will inform the public prosecutor in these situations.

## **Care provider**

A care provider is someone who helps people when they have questions or problems. A care provider could be someone from the JAC (Youth Advice Centre) or the CLB (Pupil Guidance Centre), a counsellor in the residential facility or living group or your consultant at the juvenile court, etc.

## **Counselling**

Counselling is the help you get when you have questions or problems.

## **Having your say**

Having your say means that you are allowed to give your opinion about something. It means that you may share your ideas about a certain subject.

## **Integrated youth care**

'Integrated youth care' is the name for all the help available for young people in Flanders. 'Integrated youth care' aims for better collaboration between organisations that young people like you can turn to, in order to provide quicker and better help for young people.

### **JAC, Jongeren Advies Centrum (Youth Advice Centre)**

The JAC is open to young people aged 12 to 25 for questions about relationships, school, free time, youth rights, problems at home, sexuality, living independently, drugs, etc.

The JAC will help young people who simply ask for information, but it will also try to help the ones who have more serious problems.

### **Kinderrechtencommissariaat (Office of the Children's Rights Commissioner)**

The Office of the Children's Rights Commissioner watches over compliance with the rights of children and young people across all possible areas of life in Flanders.

In addition, it defends your rights in the Flemish Parliament.

### **Complaint**

If you are not happy about someone's actions, you can let them know. This is called a complaint.

### **tZitemzo (formerly known as the Children's Rights Centre)**

tZitemzo gives information and advice on both children's rights in general and Belgian youth law in particular, both to young people and to adults close to them (family, friends, teachers, etc.).

### **Living group**

When young people and a few counsellors live together in a facility, this is called a living group. They eat and watch television together, do their homework together and go on trips as a group. Residential facilities usually contain several living groups.



## **Minors**

People under the age of 18.

## **Participation**

Participation means that you may join a discussion or decision about a certain subject and that your opinion and what you want is taken into consideration.

## **Privacy**

You may have your own ideas about the world, about people and about religion. You are also entitled to a place where you can be yourself. Others will have to respect that.

## **The public prosecutor**

The public prosecutor can ask the juvenile court to rule that help must be provided for minors living in a disturbing situation. In addition, the public prosecutor can also sue someone suspected of a crime on behalf of society, so the judge can sentence them to punishment.

## **Toegangspoort (Access portal)**

This is a service you need to get specialist help (the kind you can't get directly).

## **VAPH, Vlaams Agentschap voor Personen met een Handicap (Flemish Agency for Persons with Disabilities)**

The VAPH helps disabled children and adults.

## **Confidential**

Confidential literally means 'in confidence'. Confidential information is information you share with someone in confidence and which is not intended for anyone else.

### **Vertrouwenscentrum Kindermishandeling (Child Abuse Centre)**

The Child Abuse Centre is an organisation anyone can phone or write to when they want to report their suspicion that a child might be being mistreated, neglected or abused. Of course, you can also contact the Trust Centre if you are being abused yourself.

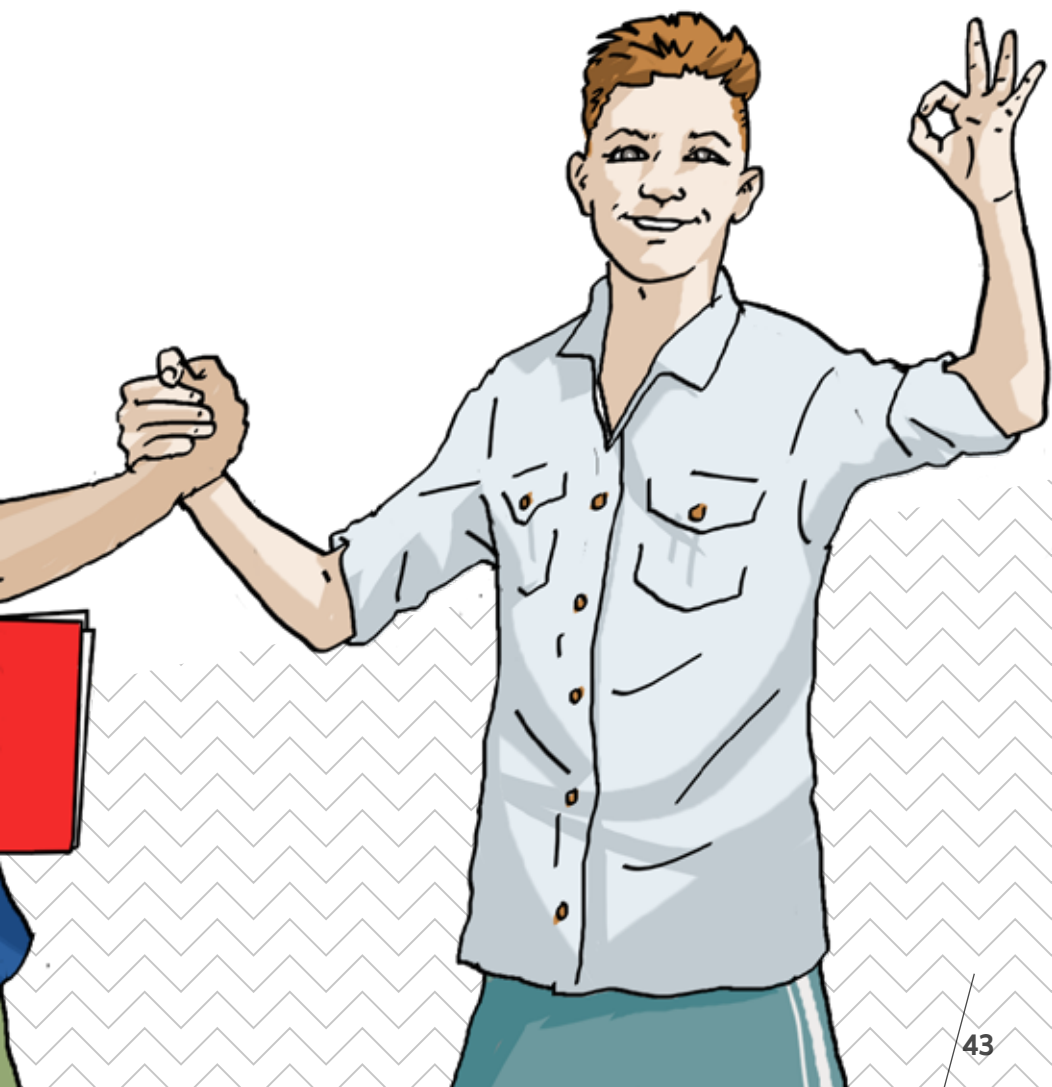
### **Person of trust**

A person of trust is someone you trust and that you choose to help you with your counselling. Your person of trust cannot be a minor and may not be involved in the help you are already getting. Your person of trust must also be able to present a certificate revealing any potential convictions.

### **Children's residential facility**

A children's residential facility is a place for children who can't live at home.





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