

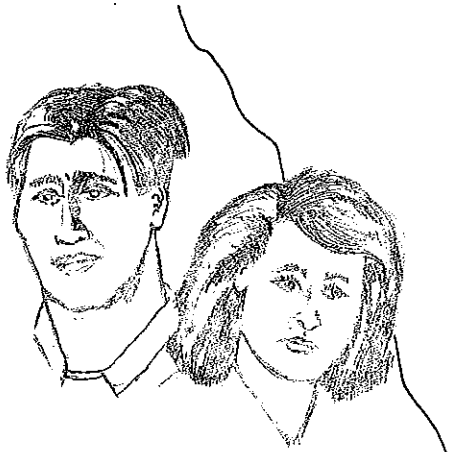
Jan
1994

the other *child* welfare manual

A Teenager's Guide to Child Welfare in Alberta

THIS BOOK; VIDEO; CASSETTE; MATERIAL IS AND
REMAINS THE PROPERTY OF THE ROGER
SODERSTROM RESOURCE LIBRARY

Edmonton Social Planning Council



- what to expect
- your rights
- your responsibilities
- where to get help

Edmonton Social Planning Council
January 1994

Copyright © 1994 by the ESPC
First Edition January 1994



Project funding by Children's Advocate
and The Wildrose Foundation:



Children's Advocate 

Printed and bound in Canada
All rights reserved

Edmonton Social Planning Council
Suite 41, 9912-106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 1C5 403.423.2031

A member of the



Places to Call for Help

- **Child Abuse Hotline**

Child welfare workers can help you if you need protection from emotional or physical injury or sexual abuse. You can call them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call 1-800-387-KIDS (5437). It's free.

- **Children's Advocate**

Advocates at this office can help you if you are involved with Child Welfare. They can help you be heard when decisions are being made about you. They can give you information on:

- services
- choices
- rights to information
- rights to be involved in decision-making, and
- rights to appeal decisions.

In Edmonton call 422-6056; in Calgary call 297-8435; outside Edmonton or Calgary call collect. It's free.

- **Kids Help Phone**

Operators on this phone line can help if you're facing a crisis. They give information to help you to deal with things like:

- abuse,
- pregnancy,
- health concerns, and
- drug problems.

You can call them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It's confidential and doesn't show up on your phone bill.

Call 1-800-668-6868. It's free.

- **Police**

Your local police station can help you if you have an emergency.

- **RITE Number (Regional Information Telephone Enquiry)**

RITE operators give information about the provincial government.

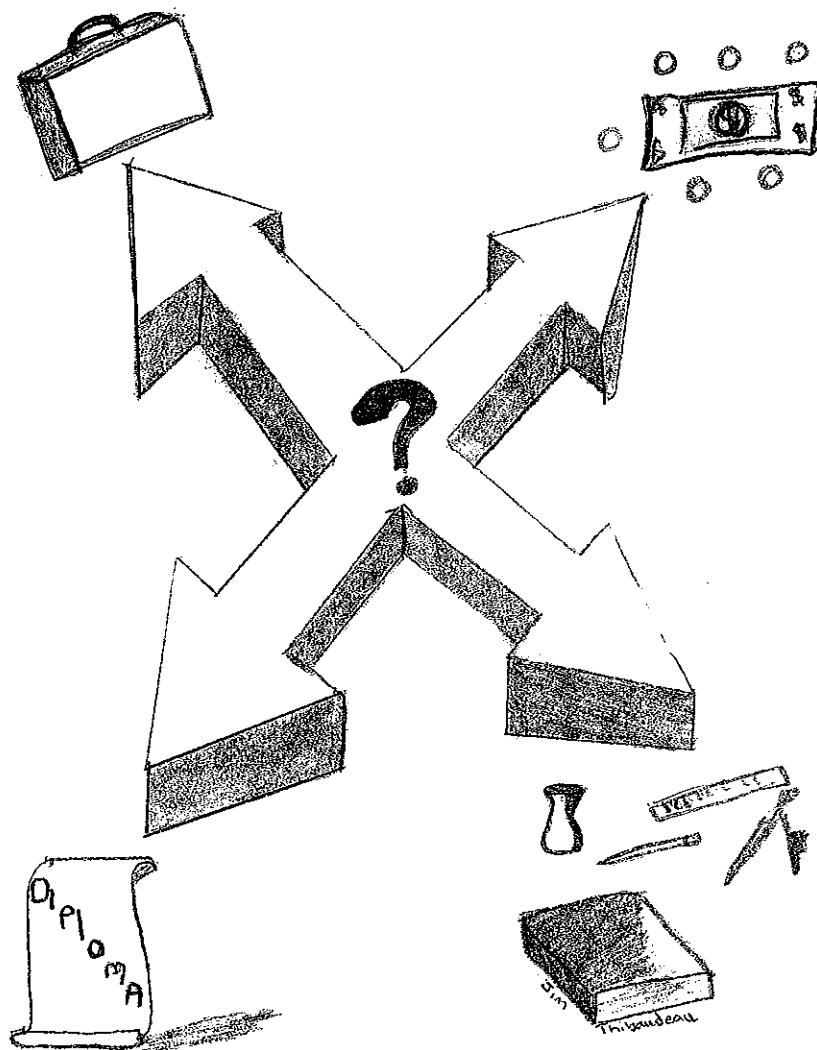
They can also help you make calls to provincial government offices.

For example, they can give you the number of the nearest Child Welfare office.

Edmonton 427-2711

Calgary 297-6161

If you live somewhere else, your community might have its own RITE number. The RITE number is listed in the Government of Alberta section. If you don't have a RITE number, call 1-800-565-7483. It's free.



Introduction

What's this guide about?

This is a guide to help teenagers understand and deal with Child Welfare. It explains your rights and responsibilities as they are written in the official *Child Welfare Handbook*. It also tells you where you can get help.

What's Child Welfare?

Child Welfare is part of the provincial government's Alberta Family and Social Services (AFSS*). Child Welfare has services for children and youth who need *protection* from abuse or whose parent's can't or won't take care of them. They also give services to help their parents correct problems.

What's in this guide and how do I find it?

You'll find a detailed list of what's in this guide in the Contents on pages 7-10. The Definitions on pages 95-97 explain words that are marked with an * throughout the guide. For example, guardian*.

Certain words and terms are used to describe things in Child Welfare. It will help you to know these terms. These words are *italicized*. You can find the meaning of some of these words by looking them up in the Contents and finding the section and page number where they are covered.

⚡ You'll notice small lightning bolts in the margins occasionally. These are used as markers to draw your attention to something that is important.

All through the guide you'll find names and phone numbers of places you can contact for help. You'll also find more places to call in the *Where to find help* section on pages 91-94.

This guide is based on Child Welfare policy as of December 1, 1993. To find out if there have been changes after that date, talk with an Alberta Family and Social Services child welfare worker*.

Nothing in this guide should be taken as legal advice. While we tried to make sure all the information was correct at the time of printing, the Edmonton Social Planning Council, or anyone involved in making this guide can't be held liable for any errors or omissions.

How can I help make this guide better?

At the end of this guide you'll find the "Evaluation" page. Please fill out this page and return it to the Edmonton Social Planning Council.

Contents

1 Child Welfare	11
Who will Child Welfare help?	12
• physical abuse	13
• sexual abuse	13
• emotional injury	13
• neglect	14
2 If you need Child Welfare's help	15
If you're in immediate danger	16
What happens if I'm apprehended?	16
If you aren't in immediate danger	18
What if Child Welfare won't help me?	19
3 If Child Welfare decides you need protection	21
What can I expect from my child welfare worker?	21
What's a service plan?	22
4 How can Child Welfare help: Agreements	25
When is an agreement used?	25
What are my rights during an agreement?	25
Support agreement	26
Custody agreement	28
Permanent guardianship agreement	29
Care and maintenance agreement	30
After you're 18	30
5 How can Child Welfare help: Orders	33
When are orders used?	33
What happens in court?	35

Supervision order	37
Temporary guardianship order (TGO)	38
Permanent guardianship order (PGO)	39
Joint guardianship order	39
Private guardianship	40
6 Services	43
Children's Advocate	43
Mediation services	45
In-home support services	45
Other support services	45
Out-of-home care	46
Extended family	46
Foster homes	46
Group homes	48
Emergency shelters	49
Supported independent living program	49
Room and board	49
Independent living	49
Secure treatment	50
What are my rights in out-of-home care?	51
7 If you're Native	53
8 Financial Help	55
Child Welfare	55
Supports For Independence* - 'Welfare'	56
9 Information Child Welfare keeps about you	59
How long does Child Welfare keep files?	60
Can information be removed?	60

Can I see my file?	60
Who can get information from the file?	61
10 If you don't agree with a decision	63
If you don't agree with a Child Welfare decision	63
• Talk to your worker's supervisor	63
• Ask for an administrative review	63
• Appeal the decision to the Appeal Panel	64
What if I don't agree with a judge decision?	68
Who else can help?	68
11 Education and Training	71
How can I get education or training services?	73
Where can I get financial help?	73
12 Young Offenders	77
Young Offenders Act	77
What if I'm stopped by a police officer?	77
What if I'm charged with an offence?	77
What if I'm arrested?	78
Alternative Measures Program	79
Youth Court	80
Transfer or waiver to adult court	80
What if I want to appeal a conviction?	81
Records	81
13 Legal Aid	83
How do I apply for Legal Aid?	83
When will Legal Aid help me?	83

14	Your Rights Under the Child Welfare Act - A Summary ..	87
15	Where to Find Help	91
	Definitions	95
	Evaluation	98
	Thanks	100



chapter 1 Child Welfare

Your guardians should make sure you're safe and well. They can do this with help from community members such as churches, youth groups, schools, or helping agencies. Guardians are the people who have the legal power and the duty to care for you. Usually a child's guardians are also their parents but they can be another adult or the government (Child Welfare).

If your guardian can't or won't take care of you, and your safety, growth or life is in danger, Child Welfare may get involved.

What's Child Welfare

Child Welfare is part of Alberta Family and Social Services (AFSS). AFSS is a large government department with two main programs:

- 1) Supports For Independence*—which is usually called 'welfare'.
- 2) Social Support—which includes **Child Welfare**.

The Child Welfare Act is the law that gives Child Welfare the power to make sure your guardian takes care of you and the duty to provide *protection* services if they don't. If you need protection Child Welfare must:

- help you as quickly as possible;
- try to help you while you're living at home;
- interfere as little as possible in your and your family's life, while making sure you're safe;
- try not to take you from your community;
- respect your cultural and religious practices.

Child welfare workers will work with you and your family. If you can't be cared for or protected at home, your worker will get you another place to live. You could be placed: with your extended family, in a group home, in foster care, or in independent living. You could also get a *private guardian*. In the mean time, they'll work with your family to make whatever changes are needed for you to return home safely.

If you can't return home safely, Child Welfare should find a permanent relationship and home for you as quickly as possible. You could be placed: with your extended family, in a group home, in long term foster care, or in independent living. You could also be adopted or get a private guardian.

Child Welfare services end when Child Welfare decides you no longer need protection. You or your family might still have problems, but you can be cared for and protected with your community's help.

Who will Child Welfare help?

Child Welfare will help you if you're less than 18 years old and need **protection**. If Child Welfare helps you before you're 18 years old, you might be able to get services when you are 18 and 19. (See care and maintenance agreement on page 30.)

In need of protection

You would need protection if your safety, growth or life is in danger **because of** physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional injury, neglect, or if you have no guardian.

- **physical abuse**

Physical abuse is when someone hurts you on purpose. Hitting, hair-pulling, biting, kicking, pushing, choking, burning, or shaking are ways someone can hurt you. Abuse can cause serious harm to any part of your body. It might cause cuts, bruises, a sprain, broken bones, or unconsciousness.

- **sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse includes being touched sexually, touching or looking at someone's private parts, being forced to look at sexual pictures or videos, or have sex. These actions are sexual abuse whether they're done by your parent, guardian*, relative, friend, someone looking after you, or anyone else who has a position of power over you.

- **emotional injury**

Emotional injury is when your mental or emotional state is seriously harmed. You can be emotionally injured if you're: rejected, lacking mental stimulation, exposed to violence or severe conflict at home, threatened, accused, put down or ignored all the time.

Emotional injury can also happen when someone in your home is abusing drugs or alcohol, or if they are emotionally or mentally troubled.

- **neglect**

Neglect is when your parents don't give you what you need to live, things such as food, shelter, clothing, medical care, protection from harm, or attention.



chapter 2 If you need Child Welfare's help

You, or your friend, neighbor, school, doctor, or parent can tell Child Welfare that you need help.

To contact Child Welfare:

- During office hours (8:15 am to 4:30 pm week days), walk-in or phone the nearest Child Welfare office. You can get phone numbers and addresses for the nearest office by calling the information number for "Family and Social Services" under Government of Alberta in the telephone book;
- After hours, holidays or if you don't have the phone number for the office, call the Child Abuse Hotline. Dial 1-800-387-KIDS (5437).

Anyone who thinks you need protection must make a report to Child Welfare. If they don't, they can be fined up to \$2,000 or be sent to prison for up to six months. Only a lawyer doesn't need to report information they got from a client.

The law protects anyone who makes a report. Their name can't be given out. The person who makes the report is usually told if there's an investigation. Only someone directly involved will be told more.

What happens when a report is made?

The law says child welfare workers* must look into all reports and take whatever action is needed.

1) If you're in immediate danger

Child Welfare will take immediate action. A child welfare worker* can:

- do a *custody agreement*; or
- do a *support agreement*; or
- apprehend* you, that is Child Welfare could pick you up.

Child Welfare will apprehend you if:

- there's a serious and immediate threat to your safety, growth or life. For example, if you're in danger because you're being abused; and
- nothing else has helped or looks like it can help you. A child welfare worker gets the power to apprehend you from an *apprehension order*. An apprehension order is a form signed by a judge.

What happens if I'm apprehended?

The apprehension order takes custody* of you from your guardians*, and gives it to Child Welfare. This means your guardians temporarily lose the right to have you live with them and to make decisions about you. Child Welfare removes you from where you're living. If needed, the judge can give your worker the right to enter where you are by force and move you to a safe place. The child welfare worker may call the police to help them do this.

Child Welfare will make plans for you, with you and your guardians. Child Welfare will find you a place to live. This could be a foster home or

a group home. A child welfare worker will tell your guardians what their rights are and what Child Welfare's plans are for you.

What are my rights if I'm apprehended?

You have the right to:

- be told why you've been apprehended;
- be told what will happen to you;
- help plan what will happen to you;
- get legal help;
- visit with your parent and others if it doesn't put you in danger.

What will a child welfare worker do after I'm apprehended?

A child welfare worker might do none, some, or all of the following:

- return you home if you'll be safe there. The worker may give your family help to keep you safe;
- get a court order* to control your guardians' visits with you;
- apply to court for an order to allow needed medical, surgical, dental or other treatment if your guardian can't or doesn't allow it; or
- put you in a secure treatment facility if the child welfare worker thinks you could be a danger to yourself or others.

How long does apprehension last?

Child Welfare custody* can last up to 10 days. After 10 days the child welfare worker must return you to your guardian unless:

- your guardian signs an agreement* giving Child Welfare custody; or

- a judge makes another order giving Child Welfare custody and guardianship* of you.

What if I don't agree with being apprehended?

- first tell your worker or the person who is taking care of you
- contact your worker's supervisor at their office and explain your situation
- call the Children's Advocate*. In Edmonton call 422-6056. In Calgary call 297-8435. Outside Edmonton or Calgary call collect.

2) If you aren't in immediate danger

Screening

The child welfare worker* has **three working days*** to decide if Child Welfare will become involved with you or you and your family. To make this decision, the worker may get information from:

- the person who made the report;
- others who might know about your well-being, such as a doctor, school, or health clinic.

Screening results

The child welfare worker can decide one of the following:

- 1) You need protection. Child Welfare will investigate and give you services at the same time.
- 2) You could need protection. Child Welfare will investigate.
- 3) There is some concern for your well-being but not enough for Child Welfare to be involved. Child Welfare will connect your family to services in the community if you, or you and your family and the

worker think it could help. Some examples of community services are: School Liaison Workers, and Family and Community Support Services. Child Welfare will then end its involvement.

- 4) You don't need protection. The report doesn't describes anything that shows you need protection. Child Welfare will end its involvement.

What if Child Welfare won't help me?

You have a right to know why Child Welfare won't help you. You can also ask the worker to tell you who can help you. If Child Welfare decides you don't need protection but you think you do, you can appeal. (See page 63.)

What if Child Welfare thinks I could need protection?

Investigation

An *investigator*, who is a child welfare worker*, will look into your situation. The investigator will talk to your guardians*, and anyone else such as, doctors, nurses, or teachers who might know about your situation. Sometimes, they'll ask a psychologist or doctor for their opinion. The investigator will also talk to you. They'll then decide if you need protection.

Interview with you

The investigator should talk to you alone and in a place where you feel comfortable and safe. If you want privacy, ask for it.

If Child Welfare thinks you've been physically abused, the investigator might look at your body to see if you have cuts, bruises or other signs of being hurt. The investigator will ask your guardians if they'll agree to have a doctor look at you. If your guardians don't agree, the worker may apprehend* you so a doctor can do a physical examination.

Child welfare workers must tell the police if they think you've been sexually or physically abused. When possible, the police and the child welfare worker will both interview you at the same time. Police will investigate and decide if they'll lay criminal charges against the person suspected of abuse.

Investigation Results

The investigation must be done within 13 working days* from when the report was made. The investigator will decide whether to:

- 1) end Child Welfare involvement because you don't need protection; or
- 2) do an assessment. Your worker will get more information about you and your family. In 28 working days your worker will decide whether to:
 - end Child Welfare involvement; or
 - give you services under an agreement*; or
 - give you services under a court order*; or
- 3) continue Child Welfare involvement because you need protection.

You have a right to be told what the investigator decides.

If Child Welfare decides you need protection

Child Welfare will open a file for you and give you a child welfare worker.

What can I expect from my child welfare worker?

Your worker's main job is to see that you're protected. Your worker will set goals to help meet your needs. With your help, your worker makes a service plan* to meet these goals and watches for progress or problems.

You can ask your worker for any help you need or information about the Child Welfare system. You can ask them to explain any decision they make about you and to write down the reasons. It's a good idea to write down what's said in telephone calls and meetings with your worker. It could help you make plans for your future or argue against a decision you don't agree with.

Your worker must contact you at least once a month by phone and meet you at least once every three months. You can contact your worker as often as you need during office hours. If they can't talk with you, leave a message. Your worker has many other young people and families to help as well.

If your worker doesn't return your calls after you have left a few messages, you can talk to their supervisor. You can make a formal complaint by writing a letter to the supervisor. Send a copy to your worker.

⚡ If you have an emergency and your worker can't take your call, you can ask to talk to the backup worker or your worker's supervisor. If you have an emergency after office hours, call the Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-387-KIDS (5437).

If you don't get along with your worker, their supervisor might help you work things out.

What's a service plan?

This is a written plan that says what Child Welfare will do to protect you. It also says what you and your family will do.

In the *service plan* your child welfare worker* includes:

- the problems you and your family are having;
- the causes of the problems;
- what you, your family and your worker will do to try to solve these problems;
- what will happen if you don't do what you've agreed to in the service plan;
- how often you, your worker, and your family will meet;
- the services you and your family will get;
- who pays for the services. Your guardians are expected to pay for as much as they can;
- when your file will be reviewed. Usually this is done every six months. Your worker will see if your service plan is being followed. It will then be decided whether to keep your file open, change your service plan or end Child Welfare's involvement with you.

Examples of what might be in your service plan are:

- you and your family will go to counselling;
- you'll go to school;
- you and your worker will meet twice a month;
- you're to follow the rules where you're living.

⚡ Your worker must involve you and your family in making your service plan. You can ask your worker to explain any part of it. Your worker will ask you to sign the service plan if it includes things you must do. Only sign the service plan if you completely understand and agree with what it says. If you don't agree, explain your reasons to your worker. You can suggest other ways to meet the goal. If you and your worker don't agree, you can go to your worker's supervisor or contact the Children's Advocate. Your worker will tell the Children's Advocate about the disagreement.

Everyone who signs the service plan is expected to do what they have agreed to. They're also expected to:

- Make future plans with your worker;
 - Tell your worker about any concerns or changes in your life.
- Each person who signs it gets a copy.

To give you protective services Child Welfare must have an agreement or an order.

Agreement - Child Welfare will ask you, or your guardian* to sign an agreement to have Child Welfare provide services. There are different agreements for different needs.

Order - Child Welfare will apply to court for an order. The judge will make an order when you need protection and an agreement isn't reached with your guardian or custodian*. An order gives Child Welfare the power and duty to protect you. Judges can make different kinds of orders.

✈ If you don't know whether you have an agreement or an order and what kind, ask your worker or your guardian. This will help you know what your rights are and what to expect. The type of agreement or order you have is sometimes called your status.



chapter 4 Agreements

When is an agreement used?

An agreement is used when you, or you and your guardian* and Child Welfare agree that you need *protection*. It's a contract. Child Welfare will ask you or you and your guardian to help make, sign and follow a service plan*. You won't go to court.

If you don't sign the service plan your worker can decide not to provide services and end Child Welfare's involvement. If they still think you need protection they'll apply to court for an order* to provide services.

What are my rights during an agreement? You have the right to:

- live in a safe place;
- be protected from more harm;
- be involved in making your service plan;
- be in school or a skill-development program;
- visit with your family if you aren't living at home;
- have your cultural, social or religious needs respected; and
- telephone contact at least once a month and a face-to-face meeting at least every three months with your child welfare worker.

What's expected of me during an agreement?

You're expected to follow the service plan*.

What are the different kinds of agreements?

There are different agreements for different situations.

- 1) *support agreement*
 - a) with a guardian*
 - b) with a 16 or 17 year old
- 2) *custody agreement*
 - a) with a guardian
 - b) with a 16 or 17 year old
- 4) *permanent guardianship agreement*
- 5) *care and maintenance agreement* with an 18 or 19 year old.

1) Support agreement

a) with a guardian

This agreement is made when you need protection but it's safe for you to stay in your guardian's home. The child welfare worker will work with you and your guardian until it's safe for you to live with your guardian without Child Welfare's help.

b) with a 16 or 17 year old

This agreement is made when you need protection but it's safe for you to live on your own. If you sign a support agreement, your worker makes plans with you instead of your guardian. You can sign a support agreement if you:

- are 16 or 17 years old;
- need protective services;
- don't live with your guardian;

- aren't living with someone who puts you at risk;
- can understand and make an agreement;
- can take care of yourself, and make decisions; and
- can follow the service plan.

A support agreement doesn't always include money for rent, food or other costs. If you need financial help to live on your own, ask your child welfare worker to include it in the service plan. If your worker won't, ask for other ways you can get financial help. If you don't agree with your worker's decision, you can have the decision reviewed (see page 63).

Can a support agreement be changed?

Yes.

- It can be extended as often as needed until you're 18 if you, or you and your guardian and your worker agree;
- If it's not safe for you to be at home, your worker can ask your guardian or you, if you're 16 and living on your own, to sign a *custody agreement*. Your worker could also try to get an order*;
- If you don't sign or follow the service plan*, your worker can apply for an order;
- If you are 16 or 17 and you don't sign or follow the service plan, your worker can end the agreement and their involvement unless doing so would cause you harm;
- The service plan for the agreement can be changed if you, or you and your guardian and your worker agree;

- The agreement can be ended by anyone who signed it. Child Welfare will end the agreement two weeks after they get a written notice from anyone who signed it. Child Welfare can give you and your guardian two weeks notice and then end the agreement.

2) Custody agreement

This agreement is made when:

- your guardian* agrees that you need to live away from home to be safe; and
- your guardian and your worker think you can return home soon; and
- your guardian and your worker agree on a plan for you to live away from home while they make it safe for you to go back. Child Welfare must find you a place to live and make sure your needs are met. Custody agreements can last up to six months at a time and can be renewed for up to two years.

a) with a guardian

The child welfare worker must talk with you before signing a custody agreement with your guardian. Your guardian will still make long-term decisions for you. For example, deciding whether you'll get a certain type of surgery. Your guardian must follow the service plan*.

b) with a 16 or 17 year old

You can sign a custody agreement if:

- you're 16 or 17 years old;
- you don't live with your guardian;

- your guardian won't or can't protect you;
- you can't get help anywhere else;
- you can understand and make an agreement*; or
- you're not safe where you're living.

Child Welfare likes to involve your parents when making an agreement. If you and your worker decide it's not in your best interest, your parents won't be involved.

Can a custody agreement be changed?

Yes. A custody agreement can be extended (for up to two years) or the terms changed if you or your parent and your worker agree.

Anyone who signed the agreement can end it. Child Welfare will end the agreement two weeks after they get a written notice from you or your guardian. Child Welfare can give you or you and your guardian two weeks notice and then end the agreement.

If you or your guardians don't follow the service plan, your worker can end the agreement. Your worker can then try to get an order from court to provide services to you. If you don't need protection Child Welfare could end its involvement.

3) Permanent guardianship agreement

This is usually for children under six months old. If you're a parent and you can't care for your child, you can ask for a permanent guardianship agreement with Child Welfare. All your child's guardians* must be willing to sign the permanent guardianship agreement.

Permanent guardianship is a legal form that gives all guardianship* rights to Child Welfare. This includes the right to place the child for adoption. Child Welfare will be responsible for the day to day care of the child and long-term decisions. Child Welfare doesn't have to consult the former guardian about decisions.

Can a permanent guardianship agreement be ended?

Yes, if within 10 working days* of it being signed:

- Child Welfare asks for an order from court to end it, or if
- any of the child's guardians ask to end the agreement. Child Welfare can refuse to end the permanent guardianship agreement if the request to end it is made more than 10 working days after it was signed.

⚡ 4) Care and maintenance agreement - After you're 18

A care and maintenance agreement is an agreement between an 18 or 19 year old and Child Welfare. Under a care and maintenance agreement you can get help for basic living costs. For example: room and board, and health benefits. You could also get services to build skills and supports to help you become independent. Care and maintenance agreements are usually signed to help you complete a school program.

When can I sign a care and maintenance agreement?

You can sign a care and maintenance agreement if you are 18 or 19 and:

- you were under a *support agreement, custody agreement, temporary guardianship order or permanent guardianship order* when you turned 18; and

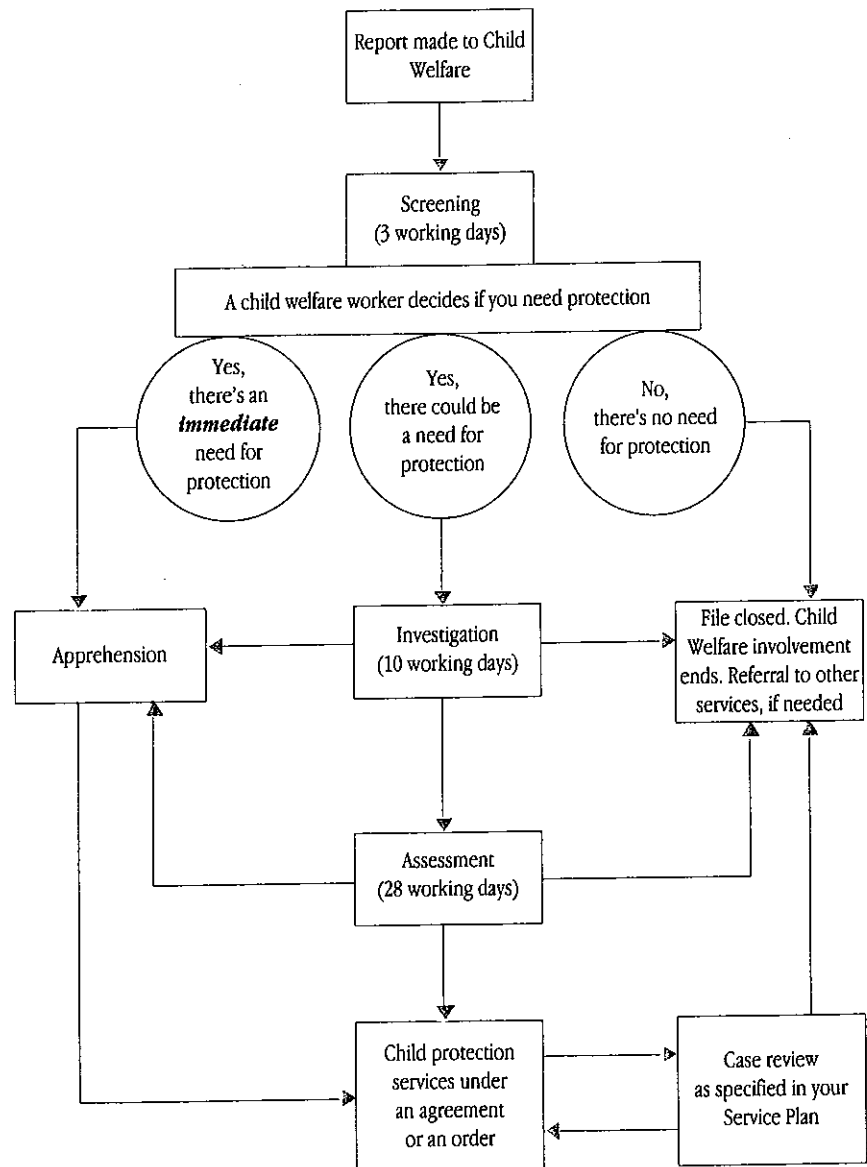
- no other program will help you; and
- you don't have money, job skills or supportive relationships; and
- you're willing to work with your child welfare worker to develop strengths, skills, and relationships with helping people and agencies.

You can't get a care and maintenance agreement if your guardian signed your *support* or *custody agreement*. If you think you need a care and maintenance agreement but your child welfare worker won't sign one, you have a right to appeal this decision (see page 63).

You have a right to at least one month's written notice if Child Welfare ends your care and maintenance agreement.



How Child Welfare Helps



chapter 5 Orders

An order is a form signed by a judge. It gives Child Welfare the power and duty to provide protective services to you.

When are orders used?

Your worker will apply to court for an order when:

- your worker decides the only way to protect you is to supervise your living situation or to remove you from your home; and
- you or your guardian* won't sign an *agreement* for this care; or
- you or your guardian have signed an agreement but aren't following the service plan*; or
- your worker doesn't think an agreement is enough to protect you.

What are my rights when Child Welfare applies for an order?

You and your guardians have the right to:

- be told why the order is being applied for;
- be told what will happen if the order is made;
- get copies of the documents Child Welfare has filed with the court; or
- sign an agreement* if it will protect you well enough. Then Child Welfare won't apply for an order; or
- sign a consent form, if you and your guardian agree that getting services by court order is in your best interest. The court process will then take less time.
- get a lawyer to argue the case in court, if you or your guardians

- don't agree with the application or part of it. If you or your family get a lawyer, your child welfare worker will probably get one too;
- be involved in making the service plan. The service plan states what help you and your family will get with the order;
 - be heard at all stages;
 - have the child welfare worker's decisions reviewed;
 - appeal the judge's decision.
- If your child welfare worker hasn't given you this information, ask for it!

You don't have all these rights when a child welfare worker asks a judge for an *apprehension order*.

Your child welfare worker must:

- If you're a status Indian and a member of a band, talk about their plans for you with your band.
- At least five days before the court hearing, let the following people know the date, time and place of the hearing:
 - you;
 - your guardians,
 - a foster parent who has cared for you for at least the past six months;
 - anyone who has cared for you for at least the past six months (if Child Welfare took you from their care).

All of these people have the right to go to the hearing.

What happens in court?

At the hearing the judge asks everyone involved what they think about the application. If your guardian agrees with the order and has signed a consent form, the judge makes a decision without a trial. If your guardian disagrees, the judge will set a date for a trial. The judge will decide if you'll live in Child Welfare's care or your guardians' and who can visit you until the trial. This is called *interim custody*.

At the trial, you, your family and Child Welfare have the right to tell your side of the story. To get an order your worker must prove you need protection and that an order is the only way to keep you safe. They'll give evidence and call witnesses to try to prove this.

You can have witnesses and give evidence. You can also question the witnesses and evidence given by Child Welfare. If you or your guardians don't think you need protection, it's important that you or your lawyer say this to the judge while you are at the hearing.

At the end of the hearing, the judge can decide to:

- give the order the child welfare worker asked for; or
- change the service plan; or
- make a different kind of order; or
- order you to be returned to your guardian. The judge will do this when the problem has been solved or there are other ways to deal with it. The case is over.

Can an order be changed?

You, your guardian, or your child welfare worker can appeal the judge's decision within 30 working days*. Appeals can be made with or without a lawyer to the Court of Queen's Bench. It's probably better to have a lawyer help you. Also, you, your guardian or the worker can apply to the court for a review of the order. After a review of the order, the judge can:

- change it – make new or different terms;
- renew or extend it; or
- end it.

What's expected of me if an order has been made?

You and your guardian are expected to:

- do any tasks agreed to in the service plan*;
- talk with your child welfare worker about your plans; and
- tell your worker about any changes in your life that could affect the service plan. For example, you're no longer in school, or your contact with your parents has changed.

What are my child welfare worker's duties with an order?

Your worker must:

- contact you at least once a month and meet you once every three months;
- respect your cultural, social or religious needs;
- do what they agreed to in the service plan;
- make future plans with you, or you and your family;
- tell you, or you and your guardian about any changes in the service plan;

- develop and carry out a plan for your long term care (*permanency plan*);
- make sure that you're protected from harm;
- make sure that you have the things you need to live, such as shelter and food;
- consult your band, if you're a status Indian and a member of a band.

There are different orders to fit different situations

- 1) *apprehension order*
- 2) *supervision order*
- 3) *temporary guardianship order (TGO)*
- 4) *permanent guardianship order (PGO)*
- 5) *joint guardianship order*
- 6) *private guardianship order*
- 7) *secure treatment order*

1) *Apprehension order*

See page 16.

2) *Supervision order*

Your child welfare worker will ask for this order if they think your parents, or others where you live, need help to take care of you.

What happens under a supervision order ?

Your parents are still your guardians* and you remain at home. You and your family can get services such as a parent aide, youth worker, family

therapist, or psychologist, to improve things at home. During the supervision order, your child welfare worker stays in regular contact with you and your family to make sure your needs are met.

How long does it last?

A supervision order can last up to six months, and it can be renewed as often as needed.

3) Temporary guardianship order

A judge makes this order when a child welfare worker can prove in court that:

- you're in danger because of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect;
- anything less than Child Welfare custody* and guardianship* can't protect you well enough; or
- it's expected that you'll return home or live on your own within two years.

What happens under a temporary guardianship order (TGO)?

You're temporarily removed from your guardian's care. Your worker will make decisions about what happens to you. Your worker should talk to you and your guardian about these decisions and ask if you agree. You can't be placed for adoption while you're under a temporary guardianship order.

How long does it last?

An order for temporary guardianship can last up to one year at a time. It

can be renewed for another year. In very special cases, such as you and your guardians are making many changes, a judge can renew it one more year.

4) Permanent guardianship order (PGO)

A worker applies for a permanent guardianship order if you need protection, you won't be able to return home, and you'll continue to need protection. A guardian* who wants to give up responsibility for their child may also apply to court for a permanent guardianship order.

What happens under a permanent guardianship order?

Child Welfare permanently takes you from your guardian's care. Child Welfare is responsible for you. Anyone who is interested in you can give advice, but your child welfare worker makes the final decisions. Your worker must talk to you about these decisions.

Some children are later adopted. If someone adopts you, they become your legal guardian and Child Welfare won't be responsible for you.

5) Joint guardianship order

If you have a *permanent guardianship order*, an adult can apply to share your guardianship* with Child Welfare. The adult must get your written consent. Any district office of Alberta Family and Social Services will have consent forms and an application for joint guardianship. Child Welfare staff will help complete it.

When will a judge make a *joint guardianship order*?

When the adult who is applying can prove:

- they can and will be responsible for your *joint guardianship*;
- they have a positive and stable relationship with you;
- they have your consent; and
- joint guardianship will help you.

If this adult's application is accepted, a judge gives them the right to share responsibility and decision making for you with Child Welfare. You might live in their home, or they'll be able to visit you.

How long will it last?

A joint guardianship agreement will end if:

- an adoptive home is found;
- there's evidence that the adult is putting you in danger;
- you ask for it to end and your worker agrees; or
- Child Welfare's guardianship ends.

6) *Private guardianship*

If you're not under *temporary guardianship* with Child Welfare, an adult can apply to court to be your private guardian. The adult must have continuously cared for you for six months or more.

When will a judge grant private guardianship?

A judge will grant private guardianship when:

- the adult has completed an application. They can get the application from any Family Court. Family court workers will help fill it out;

- you give written consent. All Alberta Family and Social Services district offices have the consent form;
- the adult is able and willing to be your guardian;
- you'll be safe with this guardian; and
- if you have a permanent guardianship agreement, Child Welfare gives consent. The permanent guardianship agreement is then ended.

If the application is accepted your private guardian, along with any other guardian, will have full responsibility for you. Your birth registration, name and right to inheritance won't change.





chapter 6 Services

Once you have an agreement* with, or order* under Child Welfare, Child Welfare will provide services to you and your family. The services you get depend on what you need in order to be protected.

What services can Child Welfare provide?

Child Welfare services can be divided into five main areas:

- (1) *Children's Advocate*
- (2) *mediation services*
- (3) *in-home support services;*
- (4) *other support services;*
- (5) *out-of-home care;*

1) Children's Advocate

⚡ The Children's Advocate Office is part of AFSS* but the advocates aren't child welfare workers. If you have an open file under the Child Welfare Act, they'll look into any complaint about the services you get.

They can't help you if:

- a report has been made about you to Child Welfare but they haven't yet decided if they'll help you;
- you have a *handicapped children's services agreement*; or
- you have a *care and maintenance agreement*.

An advocate can visit you, look at your file, and help you speak for

yourself. The advocates don't decide what happens to you, but they make sure that:

- you're listened to;
- your rights are respected;
- your views and interests are considered when a decision is being made; and
- you find out what you want to know. The Children's Advocate provides information on services, choices, rights to information, rights to participation, rights to appeal decisions, and how to appeal decisions.

Examples of what the Children's Advocate can help you with are: concerns about where you'll live, extending or ending an order or an agreement.

Your child welfare worker must tell the Children's Advocate if:

- you don't agree with something in your service plan;
- there's a concern that you have been emotionally, physically or sexually abused while in Child Welfare's care;
- you're suicidal;
- your child welfare worker, guardian, and service providers don't agree on what should be done to help you;
- you're going to the appeal panel; or
- you're going for a court hearing with Child Welfare and you're already being helped by the Children's Advocate.

How can I contact the Children's Advocate?

You can call the Children's Advocate or you can get someone else to call for you. In Calgary call 297-8435. In Edmonton call 422-6056. If you're anywhere else, call collect. It's free.

2) Mediation services

These services are used for 16 and 17 year olds who have serious problems living at home with their parents. A trained mediator will listen to you and your parents to help solve the problem. Ask your child welfare worker specifically for *mediation services*. In rural Alberta Child Welfare might not have these services.

3) In-home support services

These services are provided in your family home, some examples are:

- a youth worker to help you and your family develop supports in the community;
- a parent aide to teach your parents how to take care of you;
- a homemaker to help your parents;

4) Other support services

These might include:

- a counsellor to help you and your parents learn better ways to deal with problems;
- a family therapist to help your family work together better;
- a psychologist to assess your, or your and your family's behavior and do therapy.

5) Out-of-home care

If Child Welfare takes you from your home, they'll find you another place to live. Depending on your needs and available space, you'll be moved to one of the following:

- a) extended family;
- b) foster home;
- c) group home;
- d) emergency shelter;
- e) supported independent living;
- f) room and board with an adult;
- g) independent living;
- h) secure treatment.

a) Extended family

If you have to be taken out of your home, usually Child Welfare will first try to have your extended family care for you. Extended family includes: grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, stepfamily.

If needed, Child Welfare can refer them to Supports for Independence for Guardianship Social Allowance. If Child Welfare stays involved to make sure you are safe, they can help pay for your care if it's needed.

b) Foster homes

Foster parents provide temporary and permanent homes. They're the most often used out-of-home care in Alberta. Your foster parents will be responsible for your day-to-day care. They must treat you with respect and dignity.

If you're living somewhere safe, you can meet the foster parents before you move in. If you don't want to live with them and your child welfare worker says you must, you can call their supervisor the district office manager, or the Children's Advocate. Your worker must contact the Children's Advocate if no agreement can be reached. You can also have this decision reviewed (see page 63).

You can stay in the foster home until you can return to your home or until you are placed permanently in a new foster home. You may also be permanently placed in the foster home you are in. This means that you might be in foster care for a short time or for many years.

How much money do foster parents get?

Foster Parents get money from Child Welfare to take care of you. As of December 1993, foster parents get paid as follows (these amounts may change):

- if you're 12 to 15 years old they get \$17.68 a day
- if you're 16 or 17 years old they get \$20.20 a day

They also get paid a *skill fee* for the type of care they can provide:

- Approved \$ 4.00 a day, or
- Qualified \$ 9.00 a day, or
- Advanced \$23.00 a day.

If you want to know exactly how much money your foster parents get, you can ask them or your worker.

The money they get is to give you:

- balanced, nutritious meals;
- a reasonable place to live;
- personal care items;
- clothing;
- transportation for up to 100 kilometres per month so you can go to medical or other appointments, visit your parents, or take part in cultural activities or sports;
- your spending allowance. As of December 1, 1993, if you are 12 to 15 years old this is \$8.00 a week. If you are 16 or 17 years old this is \$11.00 a week.

Foster Parents are also expected to:

- help you meet your emotional needs;
- help you deal with special problems such as learning or behavior problems;
- give you a family living situation.

c) Group homes

If there's no foster home available or if you can't be protected in a foster home, you might be moved to a group home. There are different kinds of group homes. Group homes have staff 24 hours a day. They give teenagers a supervised place to live. Usually, you will stay in a group home for only a short time. You'll then return home or go to a foster home or to supported independent living.

d) Emergency shelters

Emergency shelters can give you food, shelter or clothing for a short

time. They might also do some counselling and direct you to community or government agencies for help.

Some shelters only help children of a certain age or with certain needs. For example, inner city youth or juvenile prostitutes. You must contact them yourself.

e) Supported independent living program

Supported independent living programs help you get ready to live on your own. If you're 16 or 17 and your worker approves, you can be in a supported independent living program. If you have signed a *care and maintenance agreement* after you're 18, you might still be able to be in supported independent living. Usually you must be going to school or working. You'll have a worker from a community agency who will teach you living skills. You'll live on your own or share a place that the agency worker has approved.

f) Room and board

Child Welfare will pay for your food and a place for you to live with an adult. This is called room and board. Child Welfare must approve of the adult you live with.

g) Independent living

Independent living is only possible if you're 16 or over, and your worker thinks you can live on your own. This usually happens only if you were in a supported independent living program and learned how to live on your own. For example, how to cook, and budget.

h) Secure treatment

Secure treatment is meant to settle you so you aren't a danger to yourself or others. Your activities will be very limited. Staff will talk with you to see what difficulties you're having, and how you can be helped. They'll do this *assessment* in the first three days. A treatment plan will be done in the first eight days. A progress review conference will happen every 30 days. There'll be a school program and counselling.

You can be placed in a secure treatment facility if:

1. You have a mental or behavioural disorder which makes you a danger to yourself or others, and
2. Secure treatment is the only choice your child welfare worker has to lower the danger. For example, if there's no adult who can care for you properly or you aren't going for treatment.

Your worker gets the power to put you in secure treatment from a *Secure Treatment Certificate*. It's good for ten days. During these ten days, your worker must appear in court to explain why you were kept in secure treatment. After the 10 days your child welfare worker might apply for a *secure treatment order*.

What's a secure treatment order?

If you're under an *apprehension order*, a *temporary guardianship order* or a *permanent guardianship order*, a Secure Treatment Order can be made if a judge thinks there's no other way to help you.

The first secure treatment order can't be over 30 days. The first

renewal can be up to 60 days. After that it can be renewed for up to 90 days at a time.

What are my rights in a secure treatment facility?

You have the right to:

- be told why you're in secure treatment;
- get a notice of an application for a *secure treatment order*;
- get a copy of the certificate or order;
- have a lawyer for court;
- an assessment by a qualified person;
- a plan which is made to meet your needs (*individualized treatment plan*);
- go to progress review conferences;
- be told about future plans;
- appeal your child welfare worker's decisions.
- the Children's Advocate*.

What are my rights in any out-of-home care situation?

You have the right to:

- know where you'll be moved to. Your worker should talk to you before you're moved.
- help make decisions that affect you;
- all basic needs, such as food, shelter, clothing, medical, eye or dental care including ambulance service, medication, special devices;
- freedom from abuse (emotional, sexual or physical);
- an education or chances for skill development, for example, learning cooking and budgeting;
- a normal, home-like place to live;

- structure and guidance;
- face-to-face meetings with your child welfare worker once every three months and at least once a month contact by telephone;
- the Children's Advocate;
- have your clothing brought "to standard" when you come into care. If you need extra clothing because of any condition causing more wear, Child Welfare might pay for it;
- money for school supplies (the amount changes each year);
- money for some other things. For example, \$134 a year if you're going to a camp or on a holiday with your foster parents.

If you're not getting any of the above, immediately tell your child welfare worker. If your concerns aren't dealt with, then contact their supervisor, the district office manager or the Children's Advocate*.

What's expected of me in out-of-home care?

In out-of-home care you must:

- follow reasonable rules regarding curfew, chores, and behavior. You could be grounded just as you could be by your parents;
- attend school or a skill development program;
- tell your child welfare worker what your needs are and if they're being met.

If you're Native

In Canada, there are four main Aboriginal groups:

1. Métis
2. Non-Status Indians
3. Status (registered) Indians
4. Inuit.

There are some Aboriginal governments in Alberta that provide all their own child welfare services. There are several more which provide some services. The Child Welfare Act* applies to every child in Alberta, even if you're living on an Indian reserve.

Are there any special rights and entitlements of Aboriginal children and youth?

If you belong to one of the four Aboriginal groups, you have special rights and entitlements:

If you're a status Indian and a band member or a registered Inuit:

- your band will be consulted on any decision about a court application or your long term care plan or adoption;
- you can get financial help to finish your education to any level;
- you'll get health, dental and optical benefits from the Medical Services Branch of National Health and Welfare;
- you can take part in federal or provincial employment opportunities for Aboriginal people;
- your cultural, religious and social heritage must be taken into account when services are provided under the Child Welfare Act.

If you're a Métis:

- you can get help from the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) or the Métis Settlements Association;
- some special education grants are available through the MNA.

If you're a Non-Status Indian:

- you can get help through the Native Council of Canada.

Where can I get help?

If you are an Aboriginal youth, you can get help from different places.

Here are some of them:

- Alberta Family and Social Services;
- Band Councils;
- Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada;
- Friendship Centres;
- Indian Association of Alberta;
- Métis Children's Services;
- Métis Nation of Alberta;
- Métis Settlements Association;
- National Health and Welfare;
- Native Council of Canada;
- Native Counselling Services of Alberta;
- Tribal Councils.

The telephone numbers for these agencies are listed in your telephone book or you can get them through directory assistance. Dial 411. Many other organizations help teenagers no matter what their culture, heritage or race. As an Aboriginal person, you have a right to use any service available to Canadians.

Financial Help

The following amounts could change. Contact your child welfare worker for any changes.

If you have an agreement or order with Child Welfare and you're:

1) living on your own, you'll get:

- \$136.00 a month for food and household items ;
- \$165.00 a month for rent;
- \$44.00 a month for spending money;
- \$21.00 a month for personal care items;
- \$55.13 a month for clothing;
- a damage deposit, if needed.

2) 16 or 17 years old and living in *supported independent living, room and board, out-of-home care*, or on your own, your child welfare worker can approve extra money or a voucher for:

- up to \$225.00 a year for recreation equipment, memberships, lessons;
- a clothing allowance 16 to 18 year olds get \$55.13 every month; 12 to 15 year olds get \$53.87 every month;
- money for necessary summer courses depending on the cost;
- a driver's training course approved by the Motor Vehicle Branch;
- \$134 a year to travel or to go to camp.

3) in *independent living*, living on your own or in *out-of-home care* and you have a child:

Child Welfare will give you maintenance for your child if you hand in a Child Maintenance Account form before the beginning of each month. Money or vouchers for food, clothing, personal and household items will be given according to the Supports For Independence rate. You can also apply for the Child Tax Benefit to Revenue Canada. You will find the phone number for Revenue Taxation Canada in the Government of Canada blue pages of your phone book.

What if I don't have an agreement or order with Child Welfare?

If a report that you need protection is made, Child Welfare will investigate. Child Welfare will put you in contact with Supports For Independence:

- you're 16 or 17; and
- it's not safe for you to live at home; and
- you just need some financial help to live on your own.

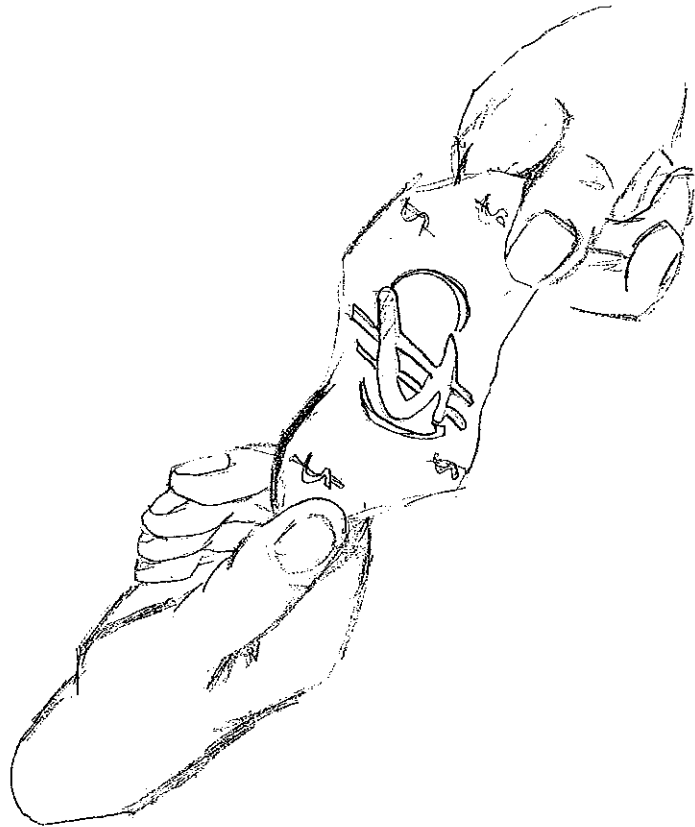
Supports For Independence* - 'Welfare'

Supports for Independence is a Government of Alberta program. It's meant to give people money or vouchers for goods if they've no other way to support themselves. The rules for teenagers in this program are changing. Contact your child welfare worker for any changes.

Supports For Independence will investigate your situation. If they decide to help you, they'll give financial help to the adult you'll be living with. This is called Guardian Social Allowance. They must approve of the adult you are living with.

- 1) If you live with someone related to you by blood or marriage, they'll get \$171.00 a month; or
- 2) If you live with an adult who isn't your relative, they'll get \$235.00.

⚡ For more information about Supports For Independence ask your child welfare worker. You can also ask your worker for a copy of *The Other Welfare Manual* or call the Edmonton Social Planning Council at 423-2031.





Information Child Welfare keeps about you

Why does Child Welfare keep a file on me?

There are many reasons Child Welfare keeps a file on you. What's happened to you is very serious. Your worker keeps a record to make plans for you and to make sure you're getting the help you need. Your worker's supervisor needs to be able to read about what your worker has been doing. If a temporary or a new worker takes over, they need to know what's happened and what was planned. If your case goes to court, your worker needs to give the judge information. When you're older, you might want information about the services you received. Government planners use statistics from all the files to see what services are needed most.

What's in the file?

The following information is kept in Child Welfare files:

- Forms such as the investigation form, service plan*, and your social and family history;
- authority documents (court orders*, agreements*);
- Birth Certificate (if you're in Child Welfare's custody*);
- a current photograph of you (if you're in Child Welfare's custody);
- reports from other sources (for example, doctor's or psychologist's reports);
- contact notes by child welfare workers.

How long does Child Welfare keep files?

Child Welfare will keep information about the time you were involved with them for:

- **Ninety days** if an investigator decides that a face-to-face *investigation* isn't needed or no protective services are needed.
- **Three years** if your file was closed but the investigator decides you might need protective services in the future.
- **Twenty-five years** if Child Welfare gives you services. Child Welfare can then check the file if you, or your sister or brother need more services before you become adults.
- **One hundred years** if you have a *permanent guardianship order* or are adopted.

Can information be removed from the Child Welfare Information System?

Yes. You (if you're over 16), or your guardian* must ask the casework supervisor, in writing, to have the information removed. The assistant deputy minister will decide if the information will be removed.

Can I see my file?

Your child welfare worker will only let you or your guardians see what they decide is in your best interests. You can appeal this decision (see page 63).

Who else can see the file?

Usually, the only people who can see the file are Child Welfare staff who need to read the file to help you. Other people who may see your file are the Children's Advocate*, the provincial Ombudsman, or a judge.

All child welfare workers have taken an Oath of Confidentiality. They can't share any information on your file, except as stated below.

Who can get information from the file?

- if another professional, such as a psychologist, teacher or probation officer is working with you, your child welfare worker can give them the information they need to provide services;
- you or your guardian can consent to let another person get information from your file, for example your lawyer or a private psychologist.

What information can't be given out?

- the name of the person who reported that you needed protective services;
- information that could be harmful to someone;
- a report from a professional outside AFSS*. This report belongs to the writer. For example a psychologist's report;
- information from the Justice Department. This information belongs to them.





chapter 10 If you don't agree with a decision

If you don't agree with a decision made by Child Welfare

When deciding things, your worker must follow the law and Child Welfare rules. Your worker must also involve you and your guardian* when plans for you are made. You might not agree with the child welfare worker's decisions and they might not always be right. If you don't agree with a decision, make sure you understand why it was made. Tell your worker what you think should happen. You can ask to have your worker's decision reviewed.

There are three ways to have a decision reviewed. You don't have to do all three things but you can if you want to. First talk to your worker's supervisor, second ask for an administrative review and third appeal the decision. These steps are explained below. You can also go straight to the Appeal Panel without having an administrative review.

1) Talk to your worker's supervisor

First, phone your worker's supervisor and tell them your complaint. It might help you to write down your complaint and what your worker did about it. The supervisor will look into it. If you're still not satisfied with the answer, you can ask for an administrative review or appeal to the Appeal Panel.

2) Ask for an administrative review

Any child welfare worker's decision can be reviewed by an administrative review committee. The committee can change a decision but it still has to follow the law and Child Welfare policies.

You can ask for the review up to 30 days after the decision you want changed was made. If you're asking for an administrative review, make sure you still have enough time after you get their decision to appeal to the Appeal Panel. If you ask the Children's Advocate* Office, an advocate will help you get ready for the review.

Tell your child welfare worker* you want an administrative review. They must give you the form SSA1625 (*Administrative Review of a Child Welfare Decision*). You can ask your worker to help you fill it out. Fill out the form and give it to your worker or staff at the district office. They'll then tell you if there is enough time to hold the administrative review before the 30 day deadline for the Appeal Panel. The Administrative Review Committee has five working days* to hold the review. The review is very informal. The committee members are usually the district office manger and someone from outside the office. You can take anyone you want to help you explain your point of view. Your worker will also give their point of view. They will give you their decision in five working days*—call your worker or the district manager, if they haven't. If you don't agree with the administrative review committee's decision, you can appeal to the Appeal Panel.

3) Appeal the decision to the Appeal Panel

These panels must follow the law but they can make exceptions to Child Welfare policies.

What can be appealed to the Appeal Panel?

You can appeal a Child Welfare decision to:

- remove you from a foster, or adoptive home or any other placement if you have a *temporary or permanent guardianship agreement* or a *permanent guardianship order*;
- move you to a foster, or adoptive home or any other placement if you have *temporary or permanent guardianship agreement* or a *permanent guardianship order*;
- allow certain people to visit you if you have a *permanent guardianship agreement*;
- not let certain people visit you if you have a *permanent guardianship agreement*;
- share personal information on your file;
- not give you information from your file;
- give you services if you are 16 or 17;
- not give you services if you are 16 or 17;
- not make an agreement or apply for a court order to help you.

There are some decisions that can be appealed by someone other than the child involved. For instance the Child Welfare decision to:

- not make a services agreement for a handicapped child;
- turn down an application to become a foster parent or adopt a child;
- withdraw foster parent approval.

Decisions made by a court or the Minister of Alberta Family and Social Services* can't be appealed to the Appeal Panel.

You only have 30 days from the time you hear about a decision to appeal to the Appeal Panel. An Appeal Panel has three to seven people appointed by the Minister. They are community people who don't work for AFSS*.

How can I appeal? Your child welfare worker must make sure that you have help, if you want it, to fill out and hand in the forms for the appeal. Ask your worker or staff at the district office to give you a *Notice of Appeal* (form SSA 1622). Fill out this form, date it and give it to staff at the district office. **Ask for a signed and dated receipt.** You can send your appeal directly to the Child Welfare Appeal Panel at the following address:

Appeal and Advisory Secretariat
Alberta Family and Social Services
Centre West Building
6th Floor, 10035 - 108 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 3E1

You can also call them at 427-2709 in Edmonton. In Calgary call the Citizen's Appeal Panel and Advisory Committee at 297-5636.

What happens once I send in the Notice of Appeal?

You'll be contacted by the Appeal and Advisory Secretariat of Social Services. The secretariat will set the appeal hearing for a time and place that is good for you and your witnesses.

What happens at an Appeal Panel hearing?

You must go to the hearing. If you can't go to the hearing, call the

Appeal Panel right away. If it's possible, they'll set up another time.

The hearing is quite informal. You can speak for yourself or you can have someone help you. This helper can be anyone you want. It can be a lawyer, the Children's Advocate*, your parent, your foster parent, brother or sister, a worker from an agency, or someone from your community. You can also bring witnesses. Only people directly involved in the appeal can attend the hearing. What happens at the hearing is confidential*.

At the beginning of the hearing you and Child Welfare will be asked to briefly explain your point of view. Child Welfare will then present its case. Appeal Panel members will question Child Welfare's witnesses and evidence. You can ask them questions too.

You'll then be asked to give evidence and call witnesses. Child Welfare and members of the Appeal Panel will be able to question your evidence and witnesses. You'll then be asked to summarize why you think the Appeal Panel should decide in your favor. Child Welfare will summarize and you'll have a chance to comment on what they say. After this, the chairman of the Appeal Panel will end the hearing.

You can get a record of what happens at the appeal hearing. No record is kept unless you ask that it be recorded. It's a good idea to ask for this. If you don't agree with the Appeal Panel's decision, or you want to complain about something that happened at the hearing, you'll need a record of what was said and done. The record is called a transcript of the proceedings. Let the Appeal and Advisory Secretariat know before the hearing that you want it

recorded. You can call them at 427-2709 in Edmonton. In Calgary call 297-5636.

When do I find out what the Appeal Panel has decided?

The Appeal Panel will send you a written decision within two weeks of the hearing. Decisions are usually made in two or three days. You can ask them to tell you the decision.

Can I appeal the Appeal Panel's decision?

Yes. If you still disagree with the decision, you might be able to get a lawyer to appeal to the Court of Queen's Bench. You'll need to talk to a lawyer to see if this is possible. You can also complain to the Alberta Ombudsman about the Appeal Panel's decision. (See page 69.)

What if I don't agree with a decision made by a judge in Family Court?

1) You, your guardian or your worker can apply to the court for a review of a judge's decision. After a review, the judge can:

- change it – make new or different terms;
- renew or extend it;
- end it.

2) You, your guardian*, or your child welfare worker can also appeal a judge's decision within 30 days. The appeals can be made with or without a lawyer to the Court of Queen's Bench. It's probably better to have a lawyer help you.

Who can help?

- the Children's Advocate* in Calgary, call 297-8435. In Edmonton, call 422-6056. If you're anywhere else, call Calgary or Edmonton collect. It's free.
- your Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA). Call the RITE line, 1-800-565-7483, for their name and number;
- office of the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman won't investigate until the Appeal Panel or court has made its decision. The Ombudsman can investigate actions, procedures and policies of government departments. If they find Child Welfare has been unfair or wrong, they can recommend the decision or action be changed. The Ombudsman can't force Child Welfare to change what they've done. They can raise the matter with the minister, the provincial cabinet and Legislative Assembly in Alberta for you.

You can write to the Ombudsman at:

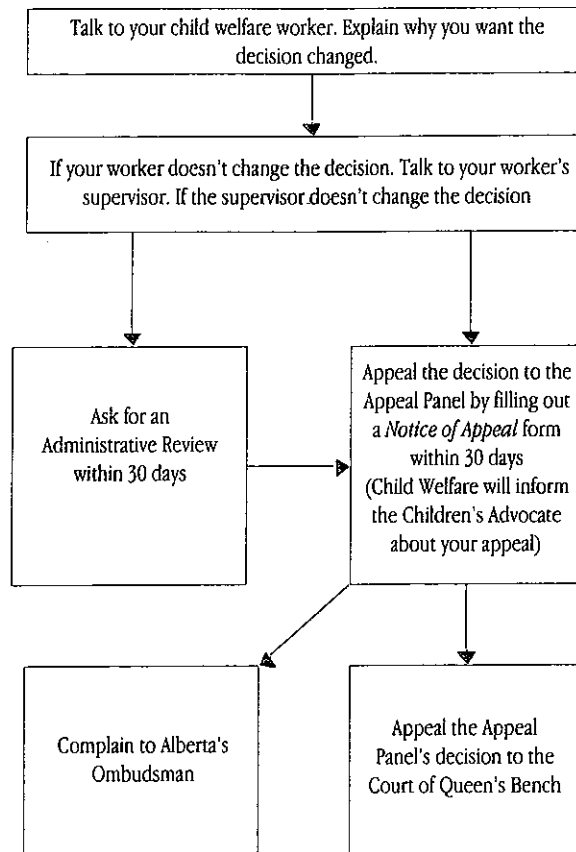
1630 Phipps, McKinnon Building
10020, 101A Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 3G2

In Edmonton phone 427-2756. In Calgary phone 297-6185.

If you live outside Edmonton or Calgary, call 1-800-565-7483.

It's free.

When You Don't Agree With a Child Welfare Decision



Education and Training

School Act

The School Act is the law that says every child in Alberta who is six or older and under 16 on September 1 of the current year must go to school.

Under the School Act you have the right to:

- free education from six until 19 years old;
- transportation to and from school;
- be taught in English;
- ask for programs with particular language, culture, religious or subject-matter;
- be taught by a certified professional;
- a grievance procedure if you're suspended or expelled from school.

If you're in the care of Child Welfare and you're under 16, you're expected to go to school or take other training. Your child welfare worker might look into other learning programs with you. If you're expelled from school your worker will try to get correspondence courses for you.

What if I'm in the care of Child Welfare and need a tutor?

Contact your child welfare worker. Explain why you need a tutor. You might be able to get tutoring if that's the only way you can pass, or avoid dropping out of school and if there are special circumstances. For

example, a move to another school where more material has been covered. If you don't agree with your worker's decision, you can ask to have it reviewed.

What if I'm in an independent living program and don't attend school?

Before you're 18 years old, you must be in school or another training service or vocational program. Taking part in a school or work program shows that you're responsible enough to live on your own.

Benefits of going to school:

- 60% of all jobs created in the future will require at least a high school diploma;
- a person without a high-school diploma is twice as likely to be unemployed as a person with a diploma;
- high school drop-outs earn less than graduates;
- without a high-school diploma it's very hard to get into a vocational or technical training program.

Where else can I get my high school education?

You might be able to finish your high school diploma at a high school.

If not, possible, other choices include:

- correspondence; or
- upgrading through Alberta Vocational College.

How can I get education or training services?

1. See your school guidance counsellor.
2. You can also contact community organizations, youth group leaders, or coaches for help.
3. Talk to your child welfare worker.
4. Look in your phone book under:
 - Government of Canada, Employment and Immigration Canada. Visit your local Canada Employment Centre for information on jobs and training.
 - Government of Alberta, Advanced Education and Career Development: Career Development Centre or call toll-free at 1-800-661-3753. The Career Development Centre is a Government of Alberta program that helps people look for jobs. They can give you:
 - career counselling;
 - apprenticeship services;
 - career planning, job search and other specialized workshops and information sessions.

Some offices also have Youth Employment Service Centres.

Where can I get financial help while I'm going to school?

If you have been under a *permanent guardianship order* or *temporary guardianship order*, a *support* or a *custody agreement* signed between you and Child Welfare, you might be able to sign a *care and maintenance agreement** (see page 30). Contact the Students Finance Board if you don't want to or can't sign this agreement, or if you have no other way to support yourself and want education.

Students Finance Board (SFB)

The Students Finance board gives financial help for education and training. This includes academic upgrading, life management and pre-career training. There are many conditions that must be met before the SFB will lend or give you money. You must fill out an application. Fill out your application at least 3 or 4 months before your school program starts. Fill in all sections.

If you're not satisfied with the SFB's decision, make an appeal to them right away.

If you have any questions call the SFB. In Edmonton call 427-2740. In Calgary call 297-6344. If you're anywhere else in Alberta, look for SFB in your phone book under Government of Alberta: Advanced Education and Career Development. You can write to them at:

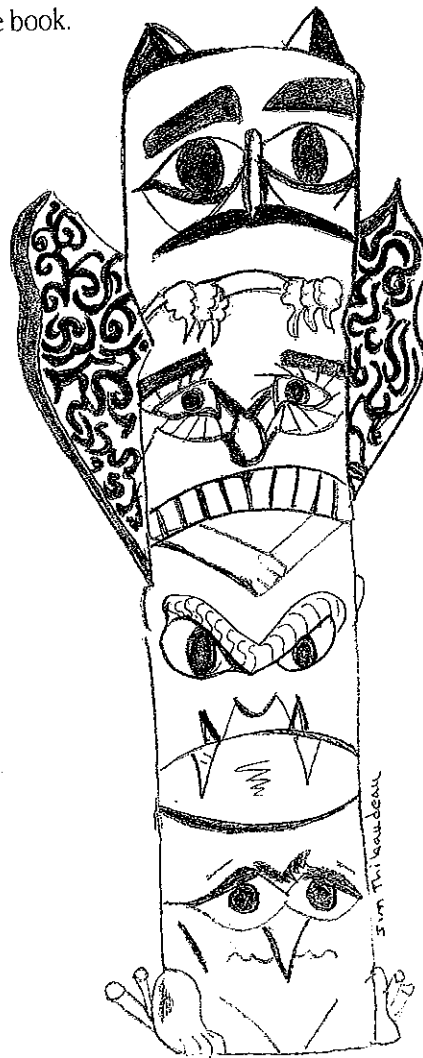
Students Finance Board
10th Floor, Baker Centre
10025-106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 4P9

or

Students Finance Board
Room 401
855-8th Avenue S.W.
Calgary, Alberta
T2P 3P1

Financial help for status Indian or Inuit students

If you're a status Indian or Inuit, you can get grants to pay for your education up to the university level. Contact your Band Council for more information, or call the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada if you're living off-reserve. See the listing under Government of Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs in the blue pages of your phone book.





chapter 12 Young Offenders

Young Offenders Act

The Young Offenders Act says that from your 12th birthday until your 18th birthday you:

- will be held responsible when you break the law;
 - can't be treated the same way as an adult if you break the law.
- Your need for special treatment must be considered when sentencing.

What if I'm stopped by a police officer?

You usually have the right not to say anything. There are times when you must give the officer your name, address, driver's license, registration and proof of insurance. If you don't, you can be charged with an offence.

What if a police officer decides to charge me with an offence?

The police can only arrest you if they saw you commit an offence, have a warrant for your arrest, or have "reasonable and probable grounds" to believe you've committed an offence.

If you're accused by a police officer of committing an offence, they might not arrest you. They can give you an "Appearance Notice" or a Summons. These are orders for you to go for fingerprinting and to court to answer to the charge. If you don't, you can be charged with "Failure to Appear".

What if I'm arrested?

If you're arrested you have the right to:

1. be told why you're being arrested;
2. call a lawyer;
3. not say anything until your lawyer or another adult is present;
Whatever you say can be used in court. If you say you want to be silent until you see a lawyer, the questioning must stop until then;
4. be kept separate from adult offenders;
5. consideration of your circumstances and need for treatment; and
6. have your guardians* informed.

After you're arrested the police have the right to physically search you and your surroundings. Police can also get a warrant to search the place where you live. The police can take anything illegal. This includes liquor, drugs, weapons, or anything else that might help in the investigation. If you're under 16 years of age, they can take tobacco and tobacco products.

The police can decide to release you without charging you. If you're charged and not released, you must appear in front of a justice within 24 hours. (There are some exceptions to this.) This is called a bail hearing. The justice will decide whether to release you. If the justice decides you must be kept in custody and there's an adult who can and wants to take care of you, he must release you into their custody. If not, you'll be kept in custody until there's a final decision about the offence you're charged with.

⚡ When you're in court you have the right to a lawyer. If you go to court without a lawyer, the judge must tell you that you have the right to get one. The court won't automatically give you a lawyer. You have to ask for one. If you ask for a lawyer, they must give you the chance to contact one and talk about your situation.

If you can't pay for a lawyer, the court must refer you to Legal Aid. If there's no Legal Aid office in your area and you need and ask for a lawyer, the court will have the Attorney General's Department get you one.

Alternative Measures Program

The first time you commit a crime you might get to choose the Alternative Measures Program. This program tries to teach responsibility by having young people do community service.

The Alternative Measures Program can be used when:

- the Crown Counsel (lawyer for the government) agrees. This depends on your age and the seriousness of the crime; and
- you take responsibility for your actions; and
- you were told that you have the right to have a lawyer; and
- you agreed to take part in the program.

You won't have to go to court. There's no legal record kept of young persons who have gone through the Alternative Measures Program.

Youth Court

A young person is usually dealt with in youth court. Normally the name of a young person being tried in youth court can't be printed or broadcasted. If you're tried in youth court your guardian* must be told and asked to come to the hearing.

What sentences can a youth court judge give?

If you're found guilty of an offence, a youth court judge may ask for a pre-disposition report (PDR) from a probation officer. This is a history of the important events in your life. In the PDR the probation officer recommends a sentence.

Judges can give an absolute discharge. This is rare. You won't get any penalty but you'll have a record. More often the judge will order you to pay a fine, pay back the victim, do community service, or go to treatment if you agree. The judge can also order probation with conditions to follow for up to two years. For serious offences or if you're a repeat young offender the judge can order custody. You could be sent to live in open or secure custody for a certain time. Open custody can be a place like a group home, or a wilderness camp. Secure custody is like a prison. Your freedom will be very limited.

Transfer or waiver to adult court

In the Criminal Code of Canada there are two types of crimes: summary and indictable.

- Summary conviction offences are considered less serious and usually carry a maximum penalty of six months in prison. For example, shoplifting, or possession of tobacco products.

- Indictable offences are more serious and can carry up to a five year sentence. For example, residential breaking and entering, or serious assaults. If you're charged with an indictable offence you can be tried in an adult court. You can then get the same sentence as an adult. The sentence can be up to life. You can be tried in an adult court if:
 1. You're 14 or older.
 2. It has been decided that adult correctional facilities are best suited to deal with you, or
 3. It will protect the public and meet your needs.

What if I want to appeal a conviction?

If you're convicted of an offence you can make an appeal to a higher court. Summary offences must be appealed within 20 days, indictable offences within 30 days. If you want to appeal a conviction, speak to a lawyer as soon as possible.

Records

If you have a record, it remains active while you're serving your sentence and can be seen by:

1. Your lawyer or parent.
2. The provincial director of Young Offenders.
3. A judge who hears an appeal of the proceedings.
4. The Attorney General or probation officer.

After you have served the sentence, only the Attorney General or a delegate and provincial or federal corrections staff can get the record.

Can an employer see my record?

Not if you've completed your sentence before your 18th birthday or you became 18 while you were serving the sentence. If you were convicted in adult court, your record will show on a criminal record search.

What if I'm under a Child Welfare agreement* or order* and I'm arrested?

If you have an agreement with Child Welfare you might lose your status once you're in the Solicitor General's custody. You can have this decision reviewed (see page 63). Once you're out of custody you must reapply to Child Welfare, if you want to have an agreement with them.

If you have an order with Child Welfare it will continue even if you're in custody of the Solicitor General. Your worker may apply to court to have it ended. If the order continues, you have the same rights and responsibilities with Child Welfare as before.

What if I'm under a permanent guardianship order and get sent to a young offenders' centre?

A child welfare worker will be told within 24 hours of your arrest. If you're going to be released, you'll be released in the custody of your child welfare worker or a delegate. If you're released on your own, contact your child welfare worker. They should immediately look for a place for you to live or give you other help.

chapter 13 Legal Aid

Legal Aid has lawyers' services for people who need legal help and can't pay for it.

How do I apply for Legal Aid?

Call the Legal Aid Society of Alberta listed in the white pages of your local telephone book. Tell them your name, age and why you need a lawyer. You'll have to go to the Legal Aid office to fill out an application. If you're in a foster home or group home and need help getting to the Legal Aid office, ask your foster parent or staff for help. If they can't help you, your child welfare worker must arrange for you to get to the Legal Aid office. If you're in Secure Treatment, a Legal Aid clerk will go and get your application.

Legal Aid will want to know what your guardians' financial situation is. They can refuse to help you if they think your parents can pay for a lawyer.

After you apply to Legal Aid, you'll be asked to call back the next day. They'll give you the name and phone number of your lawyer. You can then call your lawyer and explain your situation.

When will Legal Aid help me?

1. If you're charged with a criminal offence under the Young Offenders Act, or
2. If you're put in secure treatment by Child Welfare, or

3. If you don't agree with the type of order Child Welfare has or is applying for.

You might also be able to get a lawyer to:

1. Appeal a decision in a higher court, or
2. Represent you at the Child Welfare Appeal Panel.

Legal Aid usually won't provide lawyers for appeals of Supports For Independence* decisions.

What can I do if I'm turned down by Legal Aid?

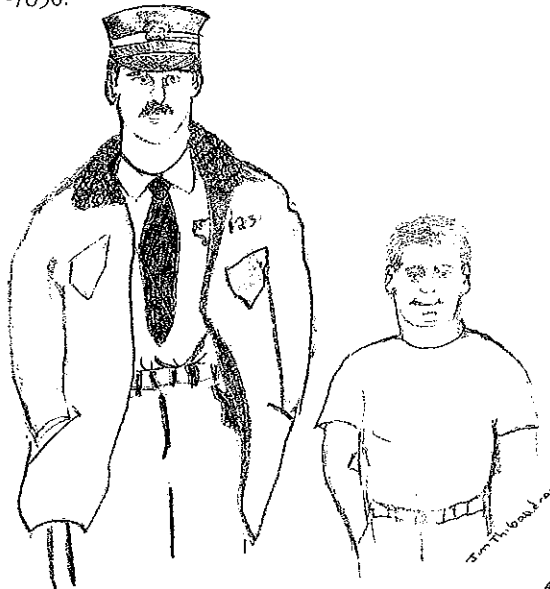
You have the right to appeal the decision to the Regional Legal Aid Committee in your area. Ask the Legal Aid officer to write down the reasons why your application was turned down. Write a letter to the committee saying you want to appeal and explain why you should get Legal Aid. You have the right to talk to the committee in person. If you want to do this, say so in your letter.

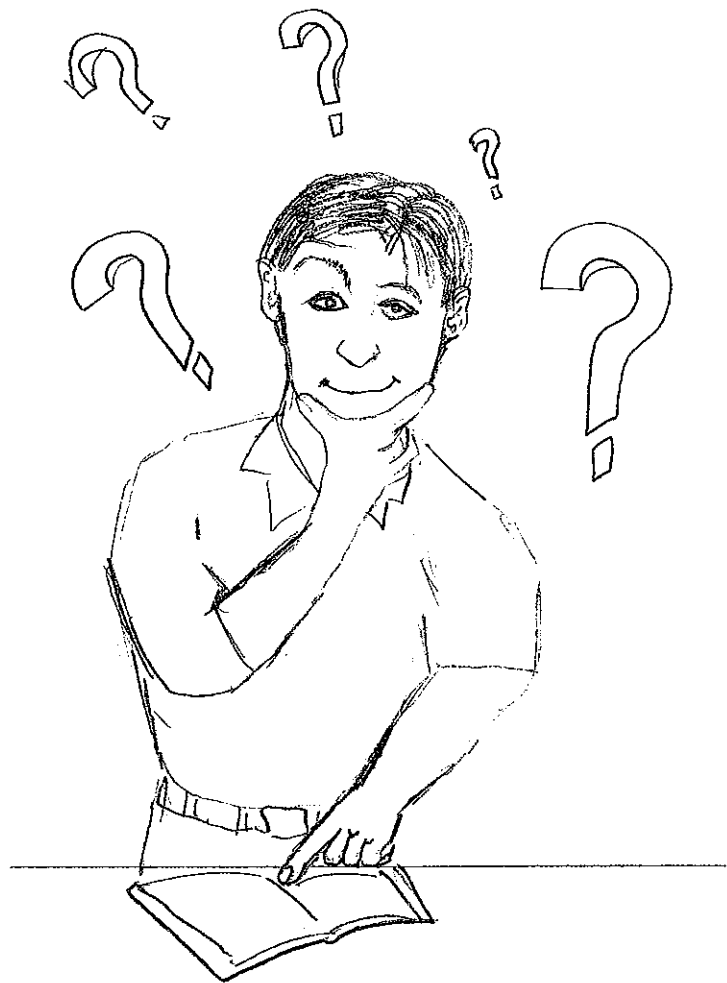
If this committee turns you down, you have the right to appeal to the Appeals Committee of the Board of Directors. Follow the same steps as you did to appeal to the Regional Legal Aid Committee.

Where can I go if Legal Aid turns me down?

- **DIAL-A-LAW** gives recorded information. It isn't meant to be used instead of advice from a lawyer. Call 234-9022 in Calgary, 1-800-332-1091 in the rest Alberta. It's free.
- **Student Legal Services of Edmonton** might give you legal help and information if you live in Edmonton. Call 492-8244.

- **Calgary Legal Guidance** gives free legal advice for people who can't pay a lawyer and who don't qualify for Legal Aid. Call 234-9266.
- **University of Calgary Student Legal Assistance** law students give free legal help to people in Calgary who can't pay for it. Phone 220-6637.
- **The Lawyer Referral Service** will give you the names and phone numbers of three lawyers in your area. You can talk to one or all three lawyers. You aren't charged for the first half hour. You can then choose a lawyer and pay the regular fee. Call 1-800-661-1095.
- **Native Counselling Services of Alberta** is for Native people who need help with legal matters. They give family support, and counselling. They can also explain the court process and help you deal with the Child Welfare system. Check your phone book for the office in your area. In Edmonton call 423-2141. In Calgary call 237-7850.





chapter 14 Your Rights Under the Child Welfare Act - A Summary

**You have the right to:
information**

- look at your court records;
- be told when someone (your guardian* or a child welfare worker) applies for a review of a child welfare decision;
- be told when a hearing will take place;
- be given notice of a secure treatment application; and

be heard

- have your ideas and point of view considered;
- take part in planning for your future;
- be involved in legal actions about you;
- use the Children's Advocate*;
- decide who can have contact with you (except your parents) if you're in Child Welfare's custody*;
- apply to exclude people from a court hearing;
- consent to *joint guardianship*;
- be given notice about and consent to *private guardianship*;
- consent to end *private guardianship*;
- appeal any decision made by Child Welfare;
- appeal a Family Court judge's decision (for example, an order) to the Queen's Bench;
- get a lawyer; and

quality care

- be safe from emotional or physical injury or sexual abuse;
- permanent, unbroken, affectionate relationships in a family-like setting;

- healthy growth and development;
- individualized, appropriate, adequate services;
- a long-term plan;
- telephone contact at least once a month and a face-to-face meeting at least once every three months with your child welfare worker;
- consideration for your religious, social, cultural, and family practices;
- take part in an educational or job-related activity;
- the least intrusion in your life; and
- confidentiality*

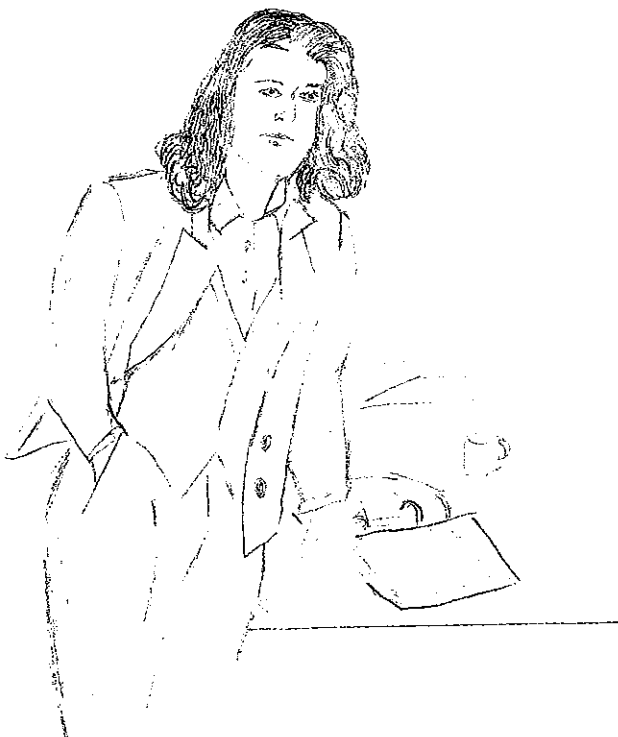
If you're 16 or over, you also have the right to:

- sign a *support or custody agreement* for yourself if you aren't living at home; or
- apply to have services through a *care and maintenance agreement* when you are 18 or 19 years old.

Families have the right to:

- confidentiality*;
- stay together;
- decide how to raise their child as long as the child is not harmed;
- be investigated by a trained professional if accused of child abuse;
- be heard;
- remain involved in planning for their child even when there is a *custody agreement* or a *temporary guardianship order* as long as it's in the child's best interest;

- get a copy of the service plan*;
- be told of Child Welfare decisions in a reasonable time;
- appeal if they disagree with the decisions of Child Welfare staff; and
- have regular contact with the child welfare worker.





chapter 15 **Where to Find Help**

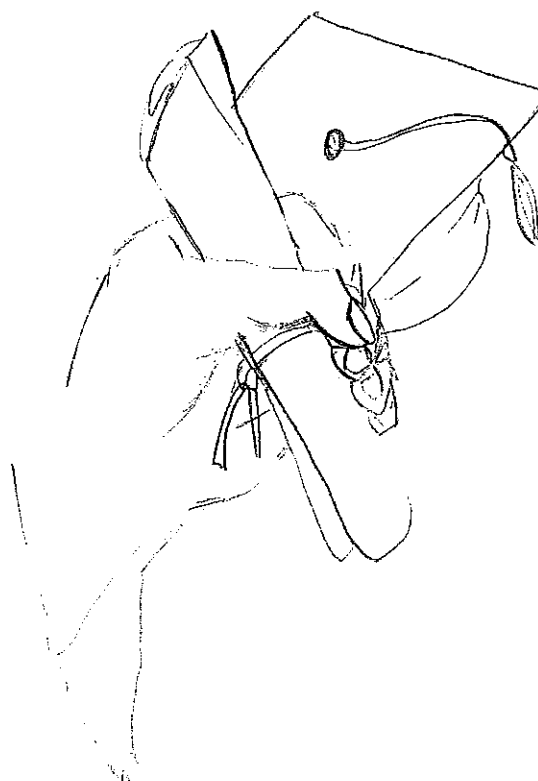
If you don't need protection but have family or personal problems, there are places that can help. Following are Family and Community Support Services Offices (unless otherwise noted):

Airdrie	948-8800	Bruderheim	796-3731
Alexander Band	939-5887	Buffalo Lake	689-2170
Alexis Indian Band	967-2591	Calgary	268-5110
Athabasca	875-2774	Camrose	672-0141
Banff	762-1251	Canmore	678-5597
Barons-Eureka-Warner ..	327-6507	Cardston	653-3734
Barons-Eureka-Warner ..	327-6507	Caroline	722-3781
Barrhead	674-3341	Carstairs	337-3341
Beaumont	929-8782	City of Grande Prairie ...	538-0409
Beaverlodge	354-2204	City of Leduc	986-2261
Berwyn	338-3801	City of Wetaskiwin	352-6023
Black Diamond	933-4348	Claresholm	625-4417
Blackie	684-3688	Clearwater, M.D.	845-4444
Blood Tribal Admin.	737-2888	Cochrane	932-2075
Bon Accord	921-3550	Cold Lake	594-1471
Bonnyville & District	826-2120	County Grande Prairie ..	532-8722
Bow Island	545-2656	County of Lacombe	782-6601
Brazeau, M.D.	542-7777	County of Leduc	955-3555
Breton	696-3636	County of St. Paul	645-3301
Brooks/Bassano	362-3333	County of Wetaskiwin ...	352-3486

Cremona	637-3762	Frog Lake Band	943-2211
Crossfield	946-5565	Gibbons	923-3331
Crowsnest Pass	562-8833	Glendon	635-3807
Crowsnest Pass	562-8833	Grande Cache	827-2296
CTY-Grande Prairie	532-9722	Grande Prairie Volunteer Services Bureau	538-2727
Cypress, M.D	526-2888	Granum	687-3822
Dene Tha' Ehts-Ande	926-2422	Hanna	854-4700
Didsbury	335-9255	Heart Lake Band	623-2130
Drumheller	823-6300	High Level	926-2267
Eckville	746-3177	High River	652-2110
Edmonton	496-5801	Hinton	865-2217
Edm. Support Network	482-4636	I.D. #14	723-8223
Edson	723-4401	Innisfail	227-3376
Elizabeth Metis Sett.	594-5452	Irricana	935-4672
Elk Point	724-3800	Jasper	852-2100
Enoch Tribal Admin.	470-5666	Kneehil, M.D	443-5541
Fairview	835-5461	Lac La Biche	623-4463
Fishing Lake Metis	943-2202	Lacombe and District	782-6837
Flagstaff	385-3976	Lake Lands	849-5325
Flagstaff	385-3976	Lakelands	849-5325
Foremost	867-3733	Lakewood	639-3626
Fort Assiniboine	584-3922	Leduc	886-2261
Fort Chipewyan	697-3674	Lesser Slave Lake	523-4441
Fort Macleod	553-4491	Lesser Slave Lake	523-4441
Fort McMurray	743-7967	Lesser Slave Lake Reg. ...	523-4401
Fort Saskatchewan	992-6200	Lethbridge	320-3005
Fox Creek	622-3896		

Lethbridge Info Line	328-7355	Sexsmith	568-4345
Little Red River Creek ...	759-3912	Siksika Nation	734-5163
Long Lake Cree Nation .	826-3333	Smoky Lake	656-2255
Ma-Me-O Beach	586-2251	Smoky River	837-8311
Mannville	763-3005	Spruce Grove	962-2611
Medicine Hat	529-8311	St. Albert	459-1505
Medley	594-6006	St. Paul	645-5311
Millet	387-5111	Stavely	549-3761
Morinville	939-3450	Stettler	742-2337
Mountain View	335-3311	Stoney Tribal Admin.	881-3871
Nampa	322-3954	Stony Plain	963-9770
Nanton	646-2436	Strathcona	464-4044
O'Chiese Band	989-3969	Sturgeon, M.D	939-4321
Okotoks	938-4404	Sunchild Band	989-3740
Olds	556-6981	Sundre	638-3220
Onoway	967-5338	Swan Hills	333-4303
Paintearth	882-4155	Sylvan Lake	887-3433
Peace River	624-1000	Tall Cree Band	927-3727
Peigan Band	965-3940	Thorhild	398-3688
Pincher Creek	627-2232	Three Hills	443-5822
Ponoka	783-4462	Tilley	377-2203
Provost	753-2288	Tofield	662-3269
Red Deer	342-8101	Turner Valley	933-4944
Redcliff	548-7415	Two Hills	657-3540
Rimbey	843-2030	Vegreville	632-3966
Rocky Mountain House	845-3720	Vermillion River Area	875-9127
Saddle Lake Band	726-3829	Viking	336-4024

Village of Hythe	356-3888
Vulcan	485-2192
Wainwright	842-2555
Westlock	349-5900
Wetaskiwin	352-3321
Wheatland	644-3839
Wheatland	844-3839
Whitecourt	778-6300
Whitefish Lake	636-3622
Wildwood	325-3782



Definitions

Agreements - If you and your guardian and Child Welfare agree that you need protection and services they can sign an agreement with a plan of action. There are different types of agreements to fit different kinds of situations.

Alberta Family and Social Services (AFSS) - AFSS is a large provincial government department. AFSS provides a wide range of services to individuals, families and communities. AFSS has two major services:

- Supports For Independence—which is usually called welfare.
- Social Supports—which includes Child Welfare

Apprehension - Apprehension is when Child Welfare takes custody of a child from their guardian.

Child welfare worker - The child welfare worker is given the day-to-day responsibility for Child Welfare by the Child Welfare director. Child welfare workers work directly with families and children.

Children's Advocate - The Children's Advocate office is part of AFSS but the people who work in this office aren't child welfare workers. Their job is to make sure that you find out what you want to know and that you're listened to. They also give information on services, options, rights to information, rights to participation, rights to appeal decisions.

Child Welfare - This is a service of Alberta Family and Social Services. It's meant to help children in need of protection by giving support and services. Child Welfare also helps families make changes so they can care for their children.

Child Welfare Act - This is the main law that protects children in Alberta. It says that every child has the right to be cared for and protected from harm.

Confidentiality - Child welfare workers must protect your privacy. The only people they can share information with are other professionals who need the information to help you.

Custody - Custody is day-to-day care of a child. When another person takes care of a child for the guardian, that person only has temporary custody. The person with custody can't make any permanent decisions for the child. The person legally responsible for making decisions for the child is the guardian.

Guardian - A guardian is usually the child's parent. Sometimes another adult or Child Welfare through a legal process becomes the guardian. The guardian has the legal power and responsibility to care for the child. They make important decisions for the child.

Legal Aid - Legal Aid has lawyers' services for people who need legal help and can't pay for it.

Orders - An order is a form signed by a judge. A judge can make an order giving Child Welfare the power and duty to provide protective services to you and your family.

Service plan - It's a plan, developed by child welfare workers with your help, to deal with the problem that has resulted in your involvement in the Child Welfare.

Status - Status is the type of agreement or order you have with Child Welfare.

Supports For Independence (SFI) - SFI is a part Alberta Family and Social Services. It's often called Welfare. It's meant to provide temporary financial help until you can work.

Working days - To count the number of working days don't count the day the event happened, or Saturdays, Sundays or holidays.

Evaluation

This guide was written to let you know what services are available and what to expect with Child Welfare. Please fill out this form and mail it to us. Your comments will help us make this guide better.

1. Is the guide helpful?
2. Is there any topic you want more information on?
3. Is the information easy to understand? If not, what do you suggest?
4. What parts of the guide are most useful?
5. Are there any parts of the guide that aren't useful?

6. What changes would you like to see?

Other comments:

Thank you.

Please mail this page to:

The Edmonton Social Planning Council

#41 , 9912 - 106 Street

Edmonton, Alberta

T5K 1C5

Thanks

We thank the Wild Rose Foundation and the Children's Advocate of Alberta who paid for this guide to be made.

Many people helped make this guide. We thank the Child Welfare users who took the time to complete the questionnaire and participate in focus groups. Special thanks go to professionals, and volunteers throughout Alberta who offered their advice and encouragement.

We especially thank the advisory committee members who gave their time and experience. These people are: Clyde Belrose, Daryl Bertsch, Joan Collins, Frieda Cressman, Linda Golding, Bobbi Gray, Sharon Heron, Alyson Lavers, Alison MacDonald, Dallas Nikolai and Jim White.

Artist: James Thibaudeau

James was the first place winner of a province-wide contest restricted to 12-18 year old youths hosted by the Edmonton Social Planning Council. James provided artwork for the cover as well as for different sections of the *The Other Child Welfare Manual: A Teenager's Guide to Child Welfare in Alberta*.

Project staff included: Ivone Martins—research and writing; Lesli Thompson—design and layout; Sheila Kushniruk—editor; Jonathan Murphy and Alison MacDonald—project supervision.