

# How a community visitor can help

The Office of the Public Guardian's statewide teams of community visitors (CVs) visit children and young people in care—including children in foster and kinship care, residential care, youth detention, correctional centres and mental health facilities.

## What can a CV help with?

Community visitors undertake individual advocacy and play an important role in supporting children and young people in the child protection system.

The community visitor program aims to ensure that children and young people are safe and well and all their needs are being met in line with the standards of care.

CVs are available whenever a child or young person needs their help, support and advice; this could be about their care arrangements, their rights or simply a matter that is concerning them.

A child community visitor can help a child or young person:

- express their views to their child safety officer
- with issues relating to education, health or counselling needed
- access support services
- make changes to their care arrangements
- with contact with their family
- with legal matters through an OPG child advocate-legal officer.

## How often will a CV visit?

Every child coming into care—or re-entering care—receives a visit from a community visitor. This allows the CV to determine the needs of the child or young person, to find out if they want or need regular visits, and if so, how often depending on their specific needs.

A child or young person who is in long-term care or well settled placement may receive less frequent visits from their CV, or they may request that the CV no longer visits them at all.

All children and young people in the Child Protection system can still request a visit from their community visitor—at any time—by contacting their CV directly or through the Office of the Public Guardian.



## Contact Us

If you want to speak with either a child advocate or a community visitor from the Office of the Public Guardian you can contact us by phone, text message (sms), email or quick message, through the 'Contact Us' page on the Office of the Public Guardian website.

t. 1800 661 533

sms. 0418 740 186

e. [child@publicguardian.qld.gov.au](mailto:child@publicguardian.qld.gov.au)

[www.publicguardian.qld.gov.au](http://www.publicguardian.qld.gov.au)

# Standards of Care

The Standards of Care for young people in the care of Child Safety Services Queensland.

1. The chief executive must take reasonable steps to ensure a child placed in care under section 82(1) is cared for in a way that meets the following standards (the statement of standards):
  - the child’s dignity and rights will be respected at all times
  - the child’s needs for physical care will be met, including adequate food, clothing and shelter
  - the child will receive emotional care that allows him or her to experience being cared about and valued and that contributes to the child’s positive self-regard
  - the child’s needs relating to his or her culture and ethnic grouping will be met
  - the child’s material needs relating to his or her schooling, physical and mental stimulation, recreation and general living will be met
  - the child will receive education, training or employment opportunities relevant to the child’s age and ability
  - the child will receive positive guidance when necessary to help him or her to change inappropriate behaviour;
  - the child will receive dental, medical and therapeutic services necessary to meet his or her needs
  - the child will be given the opportunity to participate in positive social and recreational activities appropriate to his or her developmental level and age
  - the child will be encouraged to maintain family and other significant personal relationships; the child’s carer must act in accordance with the chief executive’s reasonable directions
  - if the child has a disability—the child will receive care and help appropriate to the child’s special needs.
2. For subsection (1)(g), techniques for managing the child’s behaviour must not include corporal punishment or punishment that humiliates, frightens or threatens the child in a way that is likely to cause emotional harm.
3. For subsection (1)(j), if the chief executive has custody or guardianship of the child, the child’s carer must act in accordance with the chief executive’s reasonable directions.
4. The application of the standards to the child’s care must take into account what is reasonable having regard to:
  - (a) the length of time the child is in the care of the carer or care service; and
  - (b) the child’s age and development.