

New research

Non-compulsory care for children and young people in Scotland: Learning from experiences of Section 25

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Section 25: Video resource for children and young people

Transcript

When I was younger, I had to live away from home for a while...

It wasn't safe for me to stay with my family, so my social worker organised something called a [Section 25 arrangement](#).

To be honest, I didn't really understand what that meant at first.

I was worried.

I remember feeling like I was the only one going through this, like none of my friends would get it.

Now that I've been through it, I want to help you make sense of it too - because once you do, it's not so scary...

Here's what I learned.

Social workers can use Section 25 arrangements to help families when they need it the most. If your parents can't look after you, even for just a short time, Section 25 arrangements mean you can be cared for somewhere else - maybe by a family member or foster carer.

Here's the thing: it's more common than you might think.

In fact, about 6 in 10 children and young people who are cared for somewhere else experience a Section 25 arrangement. That's a lot of people.

Because parents decide alongside the social worker, and families have choices and rights, some people call it 'voluntary' care, but parents say it

doesn't feel like that. They don't want it to happen, it just might be the best way for their children to get the care and protection they need.

At first, I didn't really understand what was going on, so my social worker went over some important details with me like where I'd stay, who would look after me and for how long, and how often I'd see my parents.

My social worker arranged support for my family to make changes at home to keep me safe.

I was a little bit nervous about my future, so I asked my social worker what was coming next. They made sure I knew what would happen with school and other things I was worried about, like seeing my friends and other members of my family.

Your social worker should explain all of this to you too. But if you're unsure about anything, don't be afraid to ask about the things that are important to you.

You can also ask for an independent advocate at any time. An independent advocate is only there for you, to support you to share what you think, what you want, and to help you understand what is happening.

Everyone involved wants to keep you safe and supported.

Oh, one more thing: there's lots of other places online where you can find help and information.

This film was made because research by [CELCIS](#) found that many children, young people, and their families didn't know about, or understand, Section 25 arrangements. If you want to learn more about what they found out, [you can check it out here](#).

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