

Preparing for Independence



Your essential guide to leaving care with confidence.

A resource by Bold Leap.



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Bold Leap Founder

Welcome

This booklet is designed to help young people like you prepare for independent life. At Bold Leap, we know that care leavers don't just need a place to live, they need holistic support in all areas of life. This resource covers everything from financial skills and accommodation to looking after your health and wellbeing.

As you work through this booklet with your carer or social worker, remember to ask questions about the parts you don't understand. It is normal to feel anxious about leaving care, and this guide will probably introduce some concepts you haven't thought about before. I hope that this guide boosts your confidence and reassures you that support is always nearby.

Peter Buturo



Accommodation

Your new house is more than accommodation, it is your new home. It is a space to enjoy, respect, and take care of. If you are moving into semi-independent accommodation, remember that there are teams of people who are there to help you, whenever you need support.

There are many things to consider when taking care of your new house. Cooking, cleaning, maintenance, washing, utilities, neighbours and more! Even if you are used to completing chores, living independently will still come with unexpected responsibilities.

Becoming familiar with your new neighbourhood is an opportunity to meet new people and experience new places. Try and immerse yourself by having a picnic at your local park, joining a nearby gym or getting a treat from a café you've never tried before.



ACCOMMODATION CHECKLIST

	Yes	No
1. Do you know where you will be moving when you leave care?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Are you familiar with the neighbourhood you will be moving to?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Do you know what a tenancy agreement is?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Are you comfortable with basic DIY and home maintenance?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Are there any household items you need to buy before moving in?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Do you know about the importance of saving electricity and energy?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Do you know how to keep your home clean and tidy?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Are there any household chores you don't know how to complete?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Are you familiar with the Environmental Health Agency and how they can help you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Do you know your responsibilities as a tenant and neighbour?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

MY SUPPORT TEAM If I am having a problem with my accommodation, I will contact:

If something needs to be fixed, I will contact:

ACTION ITEMS

To complete my accommodation checklist, I will find out or work on:



Education & Employment

Figuring out what type of job to pursue can be confusing, but we encourage you to ask lots of questions and try new things. Remember to always follow your passion and purpose, as these are vital components of career success.

Education or training is often required before working in certain roles. While studying requires intense commitment, it is also extremely rewarding and can launch many opportunities for your future.

If you are ready to work, finding your first job may seem daunting. Your support team can help you to create a CV, prepare an application, and feel confident before your job interview. Good luck!





EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT CHECKLIST

	Yes	No
1. Are you currently studying or working? Will this continue when you leave care?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Do you know what your ideal job is?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Do you know the education or training needed to get you there?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Are you confident about job applications and interviews?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Do you have a CV? If not, do you know how to write one?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Do you know what the minimum wage is?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

MY SUPPORT TEAM If I need career advice, I will contact:

If I am having trouble with work or study, I will contact:

ACTION ITEMS

To complete my education and employment checklist, I will find out or work on:



Financial skills

Managing money is a challenging, but necessary task that all adults must do. Budgeting, paying bills on time, and saving might seem unfamiliar now. After a few months of independent living and expanding your financial knowledge, they will probably become second nature!

One important thing to remember with money management is that when it is gone, it is gone. Small purchases can add up quickly and bad money habits can affect you long-term. Budgeting is a great way to stay on top of your finances- don't forget to use our Weekly Budget Template on Worksheet 2.





FINANCIAL SKILLS CHECKLIST

	Yes	No
1. Do you know how you will receive income when you leave care?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Do you currently have a bank account? Do you know how to set one up?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Are you familiar with budgeting?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Do you know the expenses you will have when you move out?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Do you have any savings?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Do you know how to interpret a bill and pay it on time?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Do you know what happens if you don't pay a bill on time?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Do you know about credit and the problems it can cause?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Do you know which financial details to keep private from others?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Are you entitled to benefits such as the Job Seeker allowance?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

MY SUPPORT TEAM If I am a question about my finances, I will contact:

ACTION ITEMS

To complete my financial skills checklist, I will find out or work on:

Money Management

ACTIVITY: Want vs Need

Understanding the difference between a 'want' and a 'need' is an important part of managing money. Before buying something, ask yourself, **do I want or need this item?** If the item is something you like, but don't need, consider saving up and purchasing it when you are financially ready! Below, list 3 examples of items you need, and 3 that you want.

I need to buy...	I want to buy...

TEMPLATE: Weekly Budget

Income	Budget	Percentage	Actual
Income (after tax)	£	%	£

Expenses	Budget	Percentage	Actual
Rent	£	%	£
Utilities	£	%	£
Food	£	%	£
Phone	£	%	£
Insurance	£	%	£
Savings	£	%	£
Health	£	%	£
Transport	£	%	£
Entertainment	£	%	£
Savings	£	%	£
Other	£	%	£
	£	%	£
	£	%	£



Life skills

With independence comes new responsibilities, many of which become life skills. As an adult, you must learn to navigate the world with confidence by problem-solving, managing your time, and abiding by society's written and unspoken rules.

You have probably attended appointments, gone food shopping, and used public transport in the past, but are you confident doing these tasks by yourself?

When completing this section, think about tasks you will complete in your daily life. Is there anyone who could support you to make them easier? If so, ask for help!





LIFE SKILLS CHECKLIST

	Yes	No
1. Do you know how to plan your time effectively? Do you use a calendar or diary?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Are you punctual to appointments?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Do you feel comfortable using public transport?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Do you know how much public transport costs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Are you confident communicating with others in public?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Do you know how to handle a disagreement?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Do you feel confident problem-solving in a range of situations?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Are you familiar with booking events, scheduling holidays or arranging travel insurance?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Do you have a passport?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Do you carry ID when you leave the house?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Do you know how to do the food shopping?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

MY SUPPORT TEAM If I have a question or concern, I will contact:

ACTION ITEMS

To complete my life skills checklist, I will find out or work on:



Health

Keeping well is all about making healthy choices that benefit your body. To lead a healthy lifestyle, we must stick to good habits like eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly and getting enough sleep.



When you leave care, your independence skyrockets. Suddenly, you get to decide what to eat for dinner, how to spend your day, and how much TV to watch! Making healthy decisions might become harder with the temptations of freedom, but your health should remain at the top of your priority list.

Good health is what gives us the energy to enjoy life. It boosts how we feel and impacts how we interact with others. Don't forget that you are in control of your health and that if you are struggling, help is only a call away.



HEALTH CHECKLIST

	Yes	No
1. Are you registered with a dentist and a doctor?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Do you know how to book a medical appointment?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Have you ever had an eye test? When's the next one needed?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Do you know what an STD is? Do you know how to get tested?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Do you know what the morning after pill is?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Do you know how to access emergency medical care?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Do you know about the risks of excessive alcohol, smoking and taking drugs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Do you have a problem with any substances? Are you getting help?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Do you know about the importance of a healthy diet?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Do you feel comfortable cooking for yourself?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Do you know the importance of staying active?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Do you exercise regularly?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Do you have a health passport?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

MY SUPPORT TEAM

If I have a health concern, I will contact:

My GP can be contacted on:

ACTION ITEMS

To complete my health checklist, I will find out or work on:

WORKSHEET 2

Weekly Food Shopping List

Use this worksheet to plan your meals for the upcoming week.

Monday	Breakfast
	Lunch
	Dinner
Tuesday	Breakfast
	Lunch
	Dinner
Wednesday	Breakfast
	Lunch
	Dinner
Thursday	Breakfast
	Lunch
	Dinner
Friday	Breakfast
	Lunch
	Dinner
Saturday	Breakfast
	Lunch
	Dinner
Sunday	Breakfast
	Lunch
	Dinner



Relationships

Social connection is an important part of our lives. We often become like the people we spend the most time with. Supportive friends can help us to achieve our goals, whereas bad relationships can bring us down.

When you leave care, your independence suddenly grows. You now have the power to organise social activities when you please, invite friends over, and choose who you want to spend time with. Navigating friendships and relationships can be difficult, which is why it is important to ask for support when you need it.



RELATIONSHIPS CHECKLIST

	Yes	No
1. Do you have a supportive group of friends?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Do you see your friends often?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Do you know what to do when you feel lonely?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Are you connected to a religion or a culture?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Are you involved with any youth groups?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Do you know much about your early life? Your history before care?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Do you have a relationship with your family?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Do you have a romantic partner?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Do you know about contraception and safe sex?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. If you were considering becoming a parent, do you know where to get advice?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Do you know what to do if a friend or family member's actions are hurtful or harmful?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

MY SUPPORT TEAM

If I am experiencing relationship concerns, I will contact:

If I have a very personal issue, I can rely on:

ACTION ITEMS

To complete my relationships checklist, I will find out or work on:



Legal

Turning 18 is a major milestone, marking your official status as an adult. With this birthday also comes a number of changes to your legal rights and responsibilities.

When understanding the law, you must consider both sides. The consequences of unlawful acts can be life-changing, with serious crimes demanding harsh penalties.

While it is hoped that you will not experience being arrested, would you know your rights if this occurred? Would you know the legal procedure of what follows next? Use this checklist to better understand the law.



LEGAL CHECKLIST

	Yes	No
1. If you need a solicitor, would you know how to find and contact one?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Do you know at what age it is legal to drive?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Do you know at what age it is legal to have sex?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Do you know at what age it is legal to drink alcohol?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Do you know at what age it is legal to get married?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Do you know at what age it is legal to vote?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Do you know the laws and punishments regarding drug use?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Do you know at what age it is legal to join the army?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Do you know what rights a person has when they get arrested?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Are you familiar with the legal system?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

MY SUPPORT TEAM If I have a question about the law, I will contact:

If I get into legal trouble, I will contact:

ACTION ITEMS

To complete my legal checklist, I will find out or work on:



Well-being

Independence is filled with new choices and freedoms. Things that used to be completed for you or checked by others are now up to you.

While responsibilities rise, this does not mean that you have to handle everything yourself. It is important to seek help, particularly with your mental health, if you are experiencing a challenging time.

Looking after yourself is about more than cleaning your clothes and taking regular showers. It is also about checking in on your state of wellbeing and being honest about how you really feel.





WELL-BEING CHECKLIST

	Yes	No
1. Do you know how to keep your clothes and body clean?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Do you have any problems with your appearance?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Do you know how much sleep you should have each night? Do you get enough?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Do you worry a lot?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Do you get very angry if things go wrong?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Do you know how to reduce stress and relax?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Do you feel in control of your emotions and thoughts?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Are you happy most of the time?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Are you sad most of the time?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

MY SUPPORT TEAM

If I am struggling to control my emotions, I can contact:

If I need urgent help with my mental health, I will contact:

ACTION ITEMS

To complete my wellbeing checklist, I will find out or work on:

Well-being check-in

Complete this wellbeing check-in whether you feel happy or sad. Understanding why we feel down can help us to make sense of worry. Likewise, remembering why we are happy can help us keep focussing on the positives. **Always remember that it is okay to ask for support when you need it.**

What emotions am I feeling right now? Circle your emotions or add a face.



Why do I feel this way? Has something happened?

What are 5 things that have gone well this week?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

What are 5 things I am looking forward to?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Do I need support?

Who will I ask for help?



Technology

Technology has changed the way we live. In the touch of a button, we can contact a friend, order food, find information or learn a new skill! While the benefits of technology are incredible, there is also a dark side that everyone must be aware of.

As well as being careful about what we do online, we must consider how much time we dedicate to technology. Screen time is rising, particularly amongst young people, who often spend more than three hours per day on their phone. When you add television and computer time, the majority of your day may have been spent staring at screens.

As an independent adult, you must be aware of your technology use. Could you reduce the time spent online? What role does technology have in your life?



TECHNOLOGY CHECKLIST

	Yes	No
1. Are you confident about using computers and the internet?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Do you have access to Wi-Fi or the internet at your new house?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Do you have a mobile phone?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Is your phone registered in your name? Do you pay the bill?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Do you have a back-up of your computer and phone in case of accident or theft?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Do you know how to stay safe on the internet?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Do you know how to stay safe on social media?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Do you know what personal details not to share online?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Do you know what to do if a stranger contacts you on social media?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Can you identify online scams?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

MY SUPPORT TEAM If I am having a problem with technology, I will contact:

My phone provider is:

My internet provider is:

ACTION ITEMS

To complete my technology checklist, I will find out or work on:



Being in Supported Accommodation

Supported accommodation is a bridge between care and complete independence. It is designed to help you establish the life you want, by providing housing and support.

As a resident in semi-independent care, you are never truly alone. There is always someone to help you and you are encouraged to grow and thrive before taking the leap to complete independence.

After completing this section, you should know exactly what support is available to you, how to access it and how long it will be there.



BEING IN SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION CHECKLIST

- | | Yes | No |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Do you know how to contact your local authority? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Do you know how to contact your supported accommodation provider? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Do you know how regularly support workers will check-in with you? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Do you know what role your support workers have in your care? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Do you know how long you will be in supported accommodation? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

MY SUPPORT TEAM

If I am having a problem with my support arrangements, I will contact:

My social worker's contact details are:

My supported accommodation workers details are:

ACTION ITEMS

To complete my being in supported accommodation checklist, I will find out or work on:



Rights & Responsibilities

Human rights strive to create fairness and equality. Understanding what your rights are is important, but what do you do if you think your rights have been infringed? Use this section to learn about your rights as a care leaver and a member of society.

With rights come responsibilities, and if you are 18 when you leave care, this coincides with the legal age for several duties including voting.

When learning about your rights and responsibilities, remember to check the reliability of your information source. Online platforms can often spread incorrect information leading to confusion.



RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES CHECKLIST

	Yes	No
1. Are you aware of your human rights?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Do you feel confident speaking up if you have a concern or complaint?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Are you aware of your rights as a care leaver?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Do you know what advocacy is?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Are you confident accessing your file?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Do you know what a care leavers group is? Do you know how to join one?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Do you know how to vote?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Do you know where to seek information about who to vote for?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

MY SUPPORT TEAM If I have a question or concern about my rights and responsibilities, I will contact:

ACTION ITEMS

To complete my rights and responsibilities checklist, I will find out or work on:



Concluding message

We hope that this checklist has helped to answer some of your questions about leaving care. Maybe it has also taught you something new. Don't forget to hold onto this workbook, refer to your support team contacts when you need them, and use the worksheets to help you plan ahead.

Leaving care may seem daunting or scary, but support is always available if you need it. On behalf of the Bold Leap team, I wish you a smooth and positive move from care to supported accommodation.

Remember to trust yourself, think big, and be bold!

Peter Buturo


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