

MY [👑] RIGHTS

WHILE IN CARE



ORANGA TAMARIKI
Ministry for Children



MY ⁱⁿ RIGHTS

WHILE IN CARE

The Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 was not named after Oranga Tamariki but named Oranga Tamariki because it means the well-being of children eg The Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 is a law in New Zealand that helps protect the rights and well-being of children in care. Oranga Tamariki means “the well-being of children”.

This law sets out the rules and guidelines for how young people should be cared for and looked after in New Zealand. It also explains how the government and different organisations should work together to make sure young people are safe and have everything they need to grow up happy and healthy.

One important part of the Oranga Tamariki Act and regulations is the Statement of Rights for children and young people in care. This code is like a special set of rules that tell adults and caregivers how they should treat children and what rights children have. This is Billie and Ty, they will explain to you what the Statement of Rights for children and young people in care means for you while you are staying in a residence.



SOME OF THESE IMPORTANT RIGHTS ARE:

1

The right to be safe and protected: You have the right to be protected from harm, abuse and neglect. Adults should make sure you feel safe and cared for.

2

The right to be cared for and supported: You have the right to be loved, supported and nurtured by your families and caregivers. You should get help and guidance to grow up happy and healthy.

3

The right to be heard: You have the right to express your thoughts, feelings and opinions. Adults should listen to you and take your views into account when making decisions that affect you.

4

The right to be educated: You have the right to go to school and get a good education. Education helps you learn new things, develop your skills and prepare for your future.

5

The right to know your culture and identity: You have the right to be proud of your culture, language and heritage. You should be able to learn about and celebrate your culture.

6

The right to be healthy: You have the right to healthcare, nutritious food, and a clean environment. Adults should support your health and well-being.

7

The right to privacy: You have the right to have your information kept private, and not shared with people who don't need to know. You should be able to know who knows things about you.

If you have any questions or worry that your rights or well-being are not being looked after, it's important to talk to an adult you trust, like a parent, caregiver, teacher, social worker or VOYCE advocate/Kaiwhakamana. They can help you understand your rights and support you in any way you need.



YOUR RIGHT TO SAFETY

NO MATTER WHERE YOU LIVE, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE CARED FOR AND THE RIGHT TO BE SAFE AND SUPPORTED.



YOU DESERVE TO LIVE WITHOUT HARM AND IN A PLACE THAT MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD. THE ADULTS AROUND YOU SHOULD ALWAYS WORK TOWARDS WHAT IS BEST FOR YOU AND PUT YOUR SAFETY AND WELLBEING FIRST.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE SAFE AND PROTECTED NO MATTER WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE, YOUR GENDER, RELIGION, OR ANY DISABILITIES YOU LIVE WITH.



IF SOMEONE TREATS YOU DIFFERENTLY BECAUSE OF ONE OF THESE THINGS, IT IS CALLED DISCRIMINATION AND IS WRONG.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SPEAK UP WHEN YOU THINK THAT YOU'RE NOT SAFE, OR THINGS AREN'T GOING WELL AND PEOPLE SHOULD LISTEN TO YOU AND MAKE A CHANGE.



WHILE YOU'RE IN CARE, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO HAVE YOUR SOCIAL WORKER CHECK EVERYTHING IS GOING OKAY.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE PROTECTED FROM HARM. IF PEOPLE KNOW THAT BAD THINGS ARE HAPPENING TO YOU, THEY SHOULD BE TRYING TO MAKE THINGS BETTER, AND NOT IGNORING THE PROBLEMS.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO FEEL SAFE MAKING A COMPLAINT.



YOUR RIGHT TO BE CARED FOR AND SUPPORTED



YOUR RIGHT TO BE HEARD

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO YOUR OPINION, AND TO BE LISTENED TO. YOU'RE ALLOWED TO THINK DIFFERENTLY TO OTHER PEOPLE, AND IF YOU HAVE AN OPINION ABOUT YOUR CARE, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE LISTENED TO.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO HAVE A SAY ON ALL THINGS THAT HAPPEN TO YOU WHILE YOU'RE IN CARE. IF YOU'RE NOT BEING LISTENED TO, THIS IS NOT OKAY.



BEING LISTENED TO DOES NOT ALWAYS MEAN THAT PEOPLE WILL DO WHAT YOU WANT, BUT IF THEY CAN'T MAKE SOMETHING HAPPEN, YOU SHOULD BE TOLD WHY.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE GIVEN THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO MAKE GOOD DECISIONS.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE SUPPORTED TO BE MORE INDEPENDENT AS YOU GET OLDER.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO HAVE YOUR OPINIONS TAKEN SERIOUSLY



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO EXPRESS YOURSELF AND THINK FOR YOURSELF, AS LONG AS YOU DON'T HURT ANYONE.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO HAVE INFORMATION GIVEN TO YOU IN A WAY THAT YOU CAN READ, ACCESS, RESPOND TO AND UNDERSTAND, NO MATTER WHAT LEVEL OF ABILITY YOU HAVE.



YOUR RIGHT TO AN EDUCATION

EDUCATION HAS A BIG ROLE IN SHAPING YOUR FUTURE, EVEN IF YOU DON'T ENJOY SCHOOL. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO GET A GOOD EDUCATION AND BE TAUGHT IN A WAY THAT YOU CAN UNDERSTAND.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND THE ENCOURAGEMENT TO REACH YOUR POTENTIAL AND GOALS.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO ACCESS EDUCATION IN A WAY THAT SUPPORTS YOU TO LEARN AND ACHIEVE.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO GO TO SCHOOL



WHEN YOU MAKE A MISTAKE OR BREAK A RULE, YOU SHOULD BE TOLD ABOUT THIS IN A WAY THAT IS RESPECTFUL AND PROTECTS YOUR DIGNITY.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT MAKE CHOICES AROUND FURTHER EDUCATION (COURSES, APPRENTICESHIPS, UNIVERSITY), VOLUNTEERING, JOBS, AND HOW TO ACCESS ALL OF THESE.



YOUR RIGHT TO YOUR CULTURE AND IDENTITY

CELEBRATING YOUR CULTURE AND PRACTISING YOUR RELIGION IS IMPORTANT. IT MEANS YOU SHOULDN'T BE TREATED DIFFERENTLY BECAUSE OF WHO YOU ARE OR WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN.



YOU'RE ALLOWED TO FEEL CONNECTED TO YOUR CULTURE, LANGUAGE, BELIEFS AND IDENTITY, INCLUDING YOUR WHAKAPAPA (WHO YOU COME FROM, YOUR FAMILY HISTORY).



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO FOLLOW YOUR RELIGION, WHICH MEANS IF YOU NEED TO EAT A CERTAIN WAY TO FOLLOW THESE BELIEFS, YOU SHOULD BE SUPPORTED TO DO THIS IN THE RESIDENCE.



IF IT'S NOT SAFE FOR YOU TO LIVE WITH YOUR WHĀNAU, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SEE THEM WHEN POSSIBLE. YOU ALSO HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW WHY YOU CAN'T SEE THEM AND WHEN THINGS MIGHT CHANGE.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO STAY IN CONTACT WITH PEOPLE IN YOUR WHĀNAU IF IT'S SAFE FOR YOU.



IF IT'S NOT SAFE, YOUR SOCIAL WORKER SHOULD EXPLAIN WHY IN A WAY THAT YOU UNDERSTAND.



WHEN DECISIONS ARE BEING MADE ABOUT YOU DURING YOUR TIME IN CARE, YOUR WHĀNAU OR FAMILY SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN THESE DECISIONS.



YOUR RIGHT TO BE HEALTHY

TAKING CARE OF YOUR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH IS IMPORTANT. WHEN YOU'RE SICK OR NEED TO SEE A DOCTOR, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO GET QUICK AND GOOD QUALITY HEALTHCARE.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO FEEL GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF AND BE ABLE TO WORK THROUGH THINGS WITH THE RIGHT SUPPORT. THIS INCLUDES THE RIGHT TO RECOVER FROM ANY TRAUMA THAT YOU MAY HAVE BEEN THROUGH.



WHEN YOU COME INTO A RESIDENCE, YOU SHOULD HAVE A WELLBEING CHECK WITHIN THE FIRST 5 DAYS.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REST, PLAY AND BE INCLUDED IN ACTIVITIES LIKE SPORTS, ART, CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, ETC. YOU ALSO HAVE THE RIGHT TO SAY YOU DON'T WANT TO BE INCLUDED.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE TAUGHT WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HEALTHY, AND WHAT YOU NEED TO ACHIEVE THAT.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN PLACES THAT ARE GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH.



YOUR RIGHT TO PRIVACY

PRIVACY IS ALL ABOUT KEEPING YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION SAFE AND NOT SHARING IT WITH PEOPLE WHO DON'T NEED TO KNOW.



YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION INCLUDES THINGS LIKE YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND DETAILS ABOUT YOUR LIFE AND YOUR TIME IN CARE.



IT'S IMPORTANT THAT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION IS NOT SHARED WITH PEOPLE WHO DO NOT NEED TO KNOW IT.



PEOPLE WHO KNOW YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION SHOULD ONLY USE THIS TO HELP KEEP YOU SAFE AND HELP YOU HAVE A GOOD LIFE.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SEE WHAT INFORMATION ORANGA TAMARIKI HAS ABOUT YOU. YOUR SOCIAL WORKER OR CASE LEADER CAN HELP YOU WITH THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION REQUEST NEEDED TO GET YOUR FILES.



IF YOU ARE WORRIED OR IF THINGS ARE NOT RIGHT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO MAKE A GRIEVANCE OR A COMPLAINT.



YOUR COMPLAINT SHOULD BE KEPT PRIVATE, AND STAFF SHOULDN'T SHARE WHAT YOU'VE SAID WITH OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE, OR STAFF WHO DON'T NEED TO KNOW.



WHEN THINGS AREN'T RIGHT...

When bad things happen, or you don't think that your rights are being met, you have options. You have a voice, rights and mana that deserve to be protected. These tips should help you figure out what you can do if something isn't going well.

Tip 1:

GET SUPPORT

Talk to a trusted person – someone who's got your back. Tell them what's going on, and how you're feeling. Sometimes you might just want someone to listen to you.

If you don't think you have someone you can trust, VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai is here to help. We listen to you and can be with you every step of the way. No matter where you're placed, contacting VOYCE is your legal right.

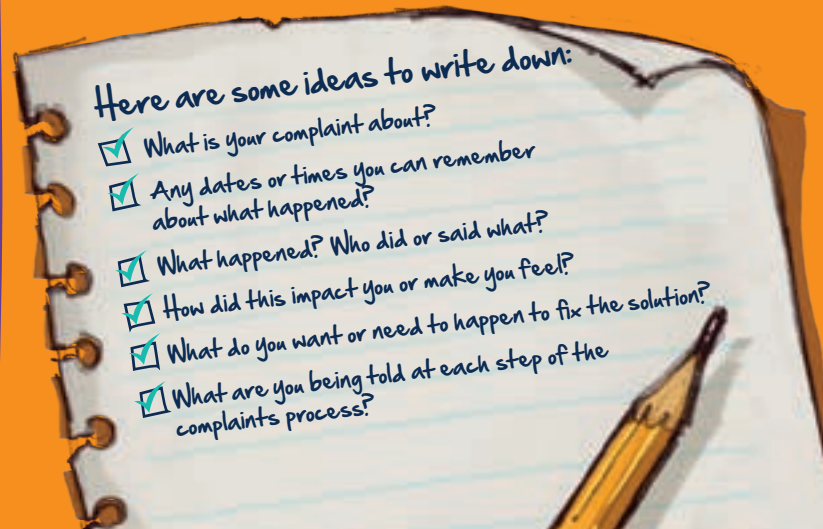
0800 4 VOYCE /
0800 486 923 (Call us for free)

Contactus@voyce.org.nz

Tip 2:

WRITE IT DOWN

Writing it down means you don't have to keep all of your thoughts and feelings in your head and it's easier to share with other people when you're ready.



Tip 3:

GIVE FEEDBACK

Even though it can be hard, try giving feedback straight to the person who the complaint is about. Talk to your support person about if there's a safe way to try this.

Some ideas on how you can do this:

- Have a chat in person or over the phone
- Write a letter or an email
- Ask someone to give feedback for you (this could be someone from VOYCE)



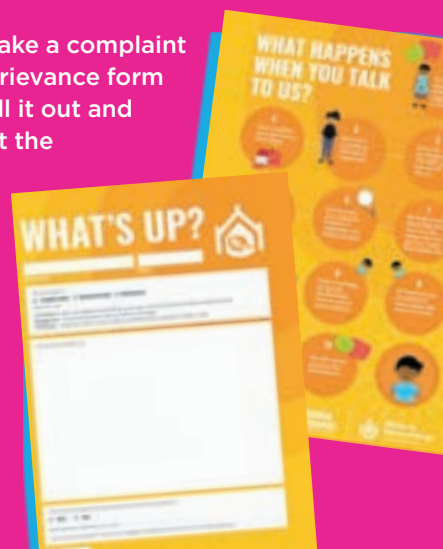
Tip 4:

MAKE A COMPLAINT

If you're unhappy with how your feedback has been answered, or you want to make a formal complaint, you can work with your trusted person to follow the residence's complaints process.

If you feel confident to make a complaint alone, you can ask for a grievance form from any staff member, fill it out and put it in the secure box at the residence.

The Grievance form should look like this and has information about what happens to your complaint on the back.



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