

who's looking out for me?

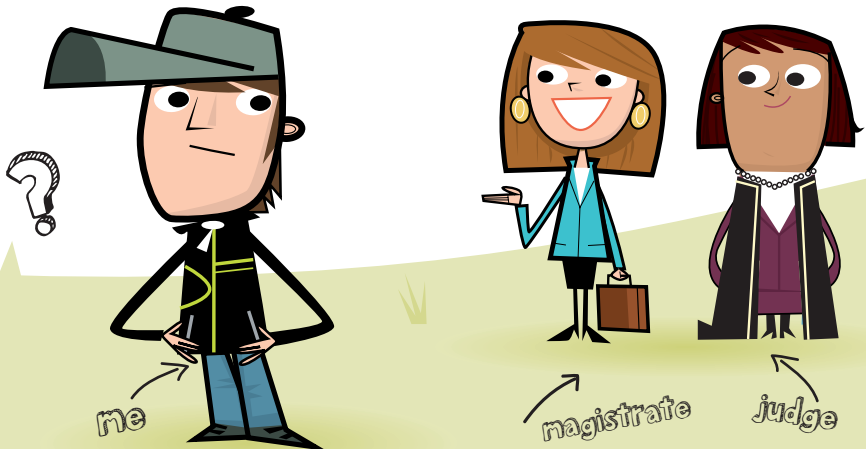


Finding what's right for you

At Cafcass we understand how complicated things can get, especially when parents split up or do not live in the same place. They may find it hard to agree on things that matter most to them – like plans for you. It's important to remember that what's happening is *not* your fault.

Sometimes a family court can help with big decisions, like who you should live with and who you should see. A family court is very different to a criminal court where people go when they might have done something wrong.

The aim is for everyone to agree on a solution. But if that is not possible, the judge (or magistrate) in the family court will look at all the facts and make the best possible decision for you.



Here to help you

Sometimes, the judge may ask a Cafcass worker to meet with you to talk about what you would like to happen and to make sure the family court hears what you have to say. The Cafcass worker can also explain the whole court process and will answer any questions you have.

You may also meet a family support worker who can help you talk about your needs, wishes and feelings and will try to help your parents sort things out.

Cafcass workers don't meet all the young people they write to because sometimes families can agree on what is best for their children by themselves. This leaflet will be most useful to you if the judge has asked a Cafcass worker to help you and your family but there is also some helpful information for other young people as well.



My *cafcass*
worker →

Looking out for you

If you meet a Cafcass worker they will talk to you and listen to what you have to say.

They can help by:

- talking with you and listening to how you feel and what you want to happen.
- speaking to other people who care about you – like your parents, family or teachers.
- helping your parents sort things out.
- working with other organisations who can help and support you and your parents.
- telling the judge what your needs, wishes and feelings are and what they think will be best for you.
- writing a report for the judge who will decide what is best for you.

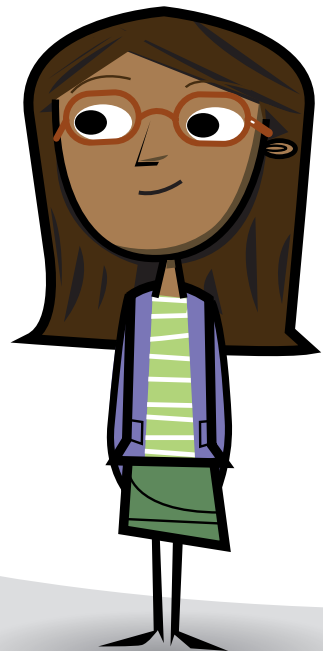


ContactPoint – Keeping you safe

From Winter 2009, Cafcass will include some information about you on a computer system called ContactPoint.

ContactPoint will help to keep children and young people, up to the age of 18, safe by allowing the professionals who work with them to share information.

Ask your Cafcass worker if you have any questions about this.



Telling your story

Your Cafcass worker may write a report to explain what you, and the people who care about you, have said.

It will include everything about you – like your age, your race, your language, your beliefs and any other needs you may have.

Anything you talk about with the Cafcass worker can go into the report and your parents are likely to read it. If you are worried about this, make sure you tell your Cafcass worker so they can help.



Coming to a decision

The judge will listen carefully to what everyone has to say (including your views) and then try to help everyone agree. If this still isn't possible, the judge will make a decision on what's best for you.

Since April 2009, journalists have been allowed to attend court but they are not allowed to identify you or your family. Talk to your Cafcass worker if you are worried about this or if you would like to go to court.

Your parents or family will usually be the ones to tell you what the decision is. Your Cafcass worker will help to explain how the decision affects you.

Through it all you can choose to have your say but no one should put pressure on you.

If you need help and support, your Cafcass worker will make sure you get this.

the judge will listen carefully to what everyone has to say, including the cafcass worker's report



Are you happy with Cafcass?

Tell us what you think about your Cafcass worker or Cafcass – what we did well and what we can do better. You can also make a complaint if there is something you are not happy about.

You can do this by:

- speaking to your Cafcass worker
- calling 01823 340 205
- emailing feedback@cafcass.gov.uk
- using the **FREEPOST** form attached to this leaflet
- logging onto <https://my.cafcass.gov.uk> and completing our HearNow questionnaire. You can find out more about MyCafcass on the backpage of this leaflet.



Do you want some advice from other young people?

Sometimes it helps to hear from other young people who have been through the same thing as you. You can write to one of our specially trained young mentors and ask them a question or just talk about how you're feeling. Log on at <https://my.cafcass.gov.uk> and go to the Hear4U section.



Tell us what you think

Please tell us what you think about your Cafcass worker and Cafcass. Your comments are important because they will help us to improve the way we work with other young people like you.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Cafcass worker: _____

Tick the ones that are most true for you.

1) Do you think that your Cafcass worker:

- definitely knows what you think and how you feel
- sort of knows what you think and how you feel
- has no idea what you think and how you feel
- not sure

2) Do you think your Cafcass worker:

- made things better for you
- didn't do anything
- made things worse for you
- not sure

3) Do you think that Cafcass workers are:

- great
- OK
- not much good
- not sure

4) Has this leaflet helped you to understand more about Cafcass and the family courts?

- yes
- no
- not sure

Anything else you want to tell us?

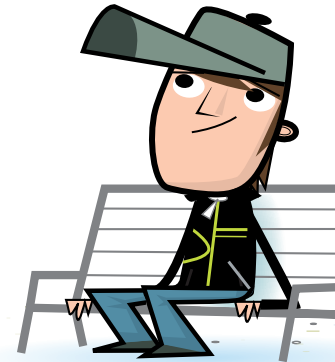
Are you happy for us to get in touch with you?

- yes no

If yes, what's the best way to contact you?

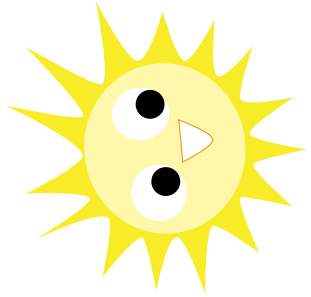
- phone email letter

Now just fold the form, seal it and put it in a postbox. It's FREEPOST so you don't need a stamp.



Tear here

moisten here



Freepost RRYR-ULKC-GYRS
Feedback@Cafcass
6 Mendip House
High Street
TAUNTON
TA1 3SX



We respect your rights

Cafcass supports the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**, which means that we respect your rights. Here are some of your rights if there is a case about you at court:

- you have the right to say if you want to visit the court or meet the judge or magistrate. Some young people want to do this and some young people don't. Talk to the Cafcass worker about what you want.
- you have the right to know what has been written about you. Speak to the Cafcass worker about this.
- you have the right to be told what is happening by the Cafcass worker.
- you have the right to know the decision made about you by the judge or magistrate.
- you have the right to make a complaint if you are not happy about anything we have said or done. Find out more on pages 8 and 9 of this leaflet.

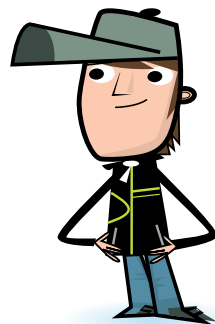
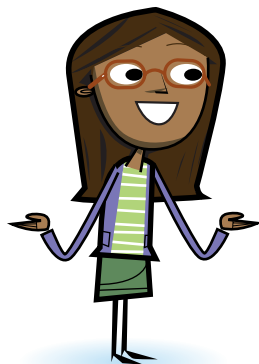
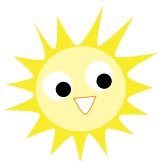
mycafcass is your own fun web space full of all the things you need to know about families changing. Log on by typing **<https://my.cafcass.gov.uk>** and then enter your username and password. You can ask your Cafcass worker for your username and password.

Username:

.....

Password:

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Cafcass

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