

How can I use this fact sheet?

Someone from Families SA will come and talk to you about the basic facts. After this, if you have more questions or some worries about your foster carer or relative becoming your guardian you can talk to someone like:

- your Families SA social worker
- your foster carer or relative carer
- your school teacher, school counsellor or Aboriginal community education officer
- your religious or spiritual leader.

If you talk to everyone and you still feel like you are not being listened to, call the Office of the Guardian for Children and Young People. They can be contacted by phoning:

1800 ASK OOG

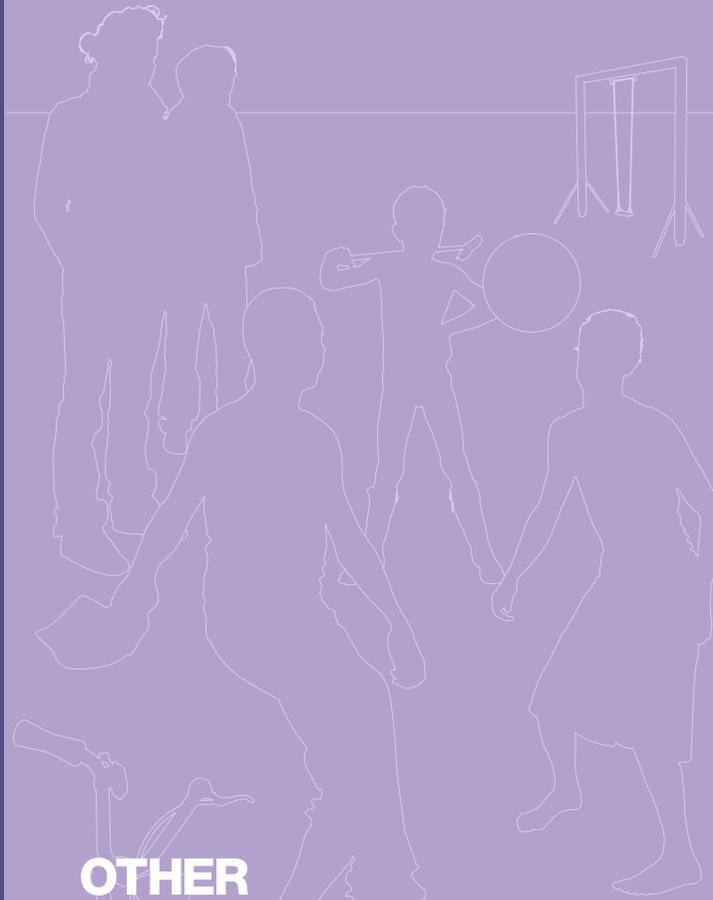
or you can send them an email at:

gcyp@gcyp.sa.gov.au

Your Families SA social worker

Name:

Phone:



OTHER PERSON GUARDIANSHIP

Fact sheet for
young people

Families SA



Government of South Australia
Department for Education and
Child Development

OTHER PERSON GUARDIANSHIP

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8 important things you need to know about Other Person Guardianship (OPG)

1

What is 'other person guardianship' (OPG)?

If you are living with a foster family or with another member of your extended family and you are happy and safe there, and want to stay, your worker can ask the judge from the Youth Court to make your foster carer or a relative your guardian instead of the Minister. This is called 'other person guardianship', or for short, OPG.

2

What is a guardian?

A guardian is the person who makes decisions with you to make sure you are well looked after, happy and safe. These are regular decisions like who you can stay over with and whether you can go on a camp or holidays, etc. They also sign consent forms eg, medical and school.

3

What if my carers want this and I am not sure or don't want it?

You can say no. If you say no, you will still be part of your foster or relative family and they will still care for you. If you are not sure, you can have time to think about it. Families SA will talk to you on more than one occasion to make sure we are clear about what you want.

4

What will be different?

Your guardian will be able to make decisions about how to look after you, instead of your Families SA social worker. Your relationship with your guardian will be mostly the same. You probably won't have a social worker from Families SA anymore.

If you don't like your guardian's decision there will be a different way to fix it in the future eg, you might talk to your school counsellor or Aboriginal community education officer.

However, if you, your relatives or your guardian need some help to talk about what you need or to make arrangements about things like visiting your birth family, then Families SA can still help with this.

5

Can I still see my birth family?

Yes, if you have been seeing your birth family this will continue as long as you want it and feel safe. Your contact with your birth family is important and an agreement will be made before your foster or relative carer becomes your guardian about how this will continue.

You will be asked and consulted about your thoughts on this and the judge will take this into account. The judge will want to know whether or not you are happy with the agreement and that you will be safe.

6

What happens if I change my mind?

It is okay for you to change your mind. Families SA need to be sure that you are happy for your foster or relative carer to become your guardian and that you are happy with all the arrangements.

7

What if I am from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander family?

Your family, relatives and community are important. Your guardian will need to show that they understand that these things are important too and will need to show how they will include these things in your life. Families SA needs to be happy with this before your foster or kinship carer can become your guardian.

8

What if I am from a different cultural background?

Your social worker will make sure you will stay in touch with your community and that you can understand everything that will be different if your foster or relative carer becomes your guardian. They will organise an interpreter if needed or someone else to make sure you understand how these arrangements will affect you.