



# LIVING INDEPENDENTLY

## Leaving Home

There are lots of things to think about before leaving home, like where you will live, who you will live with, and how you will financially support yourself. Be careful not to get into credit card or consumer debt and remember that if you are having money troubles you can speak to a financial counsellor for free by calling the National Debt Helpline on 1800 007 007.

### When can I move out of home?

There is no law about what age you can leave home, but your parents generally have to look after you until you're 18. The most important thing is you have a safe place to live. If you are under 18 and there are Family Court orders about you or you are under guardianship, then the law may be different for you. Call the Legal Help Line on 1300 366 424.

### What if my parents don't want me to go?

If your parents do not want you to go and you leave without telling them where you are, they may file a missing person's report. If there is abuse in your home, it is unlikely that police will force you back. If you leave home and are in danger then police or the Department for Child Protection may get involved. They are unlikely to become involved if you are in a safe place, there is nothing illegal happening and you can support yourself financially.

## Centrelink

If you are between 15 and 24 years old you may be eligible for payments and services from Centrelink to support you while you are studying or looking for work. This will depend on your situation. You can call Centrelink on 132 490 or go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au).

## Finding Accommodation

### What if I need emergency accommodation?

Sometimes a young person has to leave home in a hurry and staying with friends or family is not an option. There are services that you can contact to help you find accommodation, especially if you are at risk of experiencing homelessness.

Trace-A-Place is a service hub for young people experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of experiencing homelessness. This includes young parents with children. They can help you find accommodation options and housing, as well as support and guidance. You can visit them at The Foundry shopfront at 46 Carrington Street, Adelaide. You can also contact them through Homeless Connect SA on 1800 003 308.



## How old do I need to be to rent a house

There is no law that says how old you must be to rent a flat or house. Generally you can sign a lease agreement before you're 18. The lease agreement will be binding (that means you have to follow what it says) if it is shown that it benefits you and that you knew it was legally binding when you agreed to it.

You may be able to get help from Housing SA to pay bond and rent in advance, or rent that you owe already. Search for 'help paying bond and rent' at [www.sa.gov.au](http://www.sa.gov.au).

If you do rent a house, remember to only sign an ingoing inspection report if you agree with what it says. If you don't agree, then mention it on the ingoing inspection report and take photos. If you don't complete the ingoing inspection report at the start of the tenancy, you may be blamed for damage that you didn't do. You may have to pay the landlord compensation or have money withheld from your bond.

Getting approved to rent a house can be difficult. There are services that may be able to help you.

RentRight SA has a specialist service set up to help young people find and apply for

rental properties. They can provide you with information and advice on your tenancy agreement.

You can call RentRight SA on 1800 060 462.



## Looking for work

People have rights at work. It is important that you know if you're getting paid properly, what your employer is allowed or not allowed to ask you to do, and that you are treated fairly. The Fair Work Ombudsman website has useful information: [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au).

You can technically work at any age. However, it is against the law for an employer to have you work in a job that interferes with your school work.



## Contact us!

Would you like more information, resources, or a free visit to your school, organisation or group?

Email: [cle@lsc.sa.gov.au](mailto:cle@lsc.sa.gov.au)

To apply for legal aid online, visit: [www.lsc.sa.gov.au](http://www.lsc.sa.gov.au)

## Acknowledgments:

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Call our free Legal Help Line:

# 1300 366 424



*Disclaimer: The material in this factsheet is a general guide only. It is not legal advice. For legal advice about your own particular situation we encourage you to call the Free Legal Helpline on 1300 366 424. The legal information was correct at the time of publishing, however may change without notice.*