

Complaints Processes

In the Northern Territory

CREATE in the Northern Territory asked 26 young people statewide, aged 12-18 years old and with a care experience about their understanding of the complaints process, their experiences in giving feedback, raising complaints and their thoughts on how to improve the complaints process.

81%

were likely to provide feedback if they were happy with their life in care

46%

said they were unaware of Territory Families' complaints process.

38%

had raised a complaint if they were unhappy. Of these, only half rated their experience as positive

Only **33%**

of young people said they were likely to raise a complaint in the future

“

Wish we knew more about the process.
(Female, 12)

Most times no one was listening to me, even though I told them directly. [Now] most times I just run away from the carer. (Male, 13)

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Key Messages

- Young people wanted to be listened to; they want better care; to keep the same caseworker, and want to know more about how to complain.
- Barriers that stopped young people from raising issues or complaining were: not feeling safe, respected, heard, or believed; a lack of communication about the progress or outcome of their complaint; and feeling worried about what would happen to them if they make a complaint.
- Key factors that helped young people to speak up included:
 - Having a trusted person to talk to
 - Understanding their right to complain and the processes involved
 - Feeling safe, respected and "heard" (i.e. listened and responded to)
 - Responsive and supportive caseworkers
 - Timely communication about their complaint and the outcome



They should listen first, like listen to younger kids as well, not just when they get around 15 and older and then they listen. And also kids need to be safe in care and be respected and not disrespected.
(Female, 18)

Actions

- Increase young people's awareness of the complaints system.
- Create more opportunities for young people to speak up.
- Create a positive complaint handling culture to ensure children and young people feel safe, respected, and are kept up to date about the progress of their complaint.
- Ensure staff are trained to respond to complaints in an appropriate manner.