

PREPARE FOR LEAVING CARE

FINAL PUBLICATION

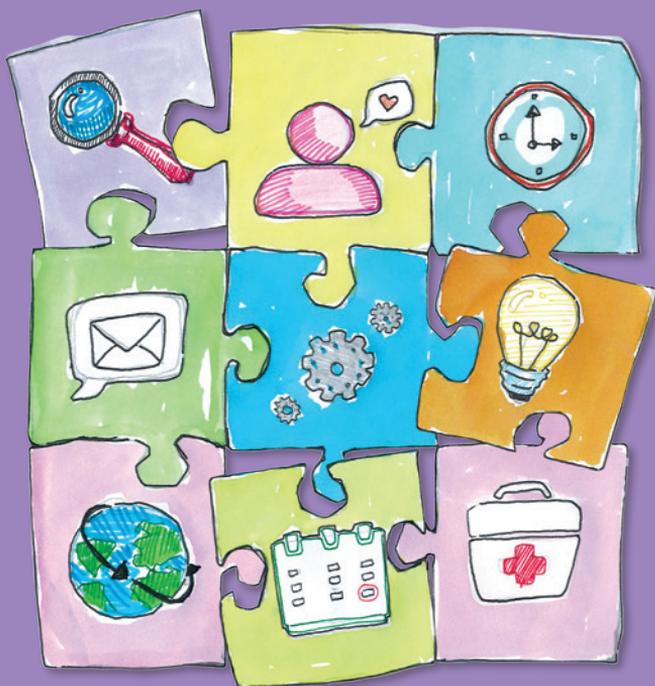


SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES

CELCIS



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IMPRESSUM

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The quotations from care leavers included in this publication have been taken from the five partner countries involved in the project, unless otherwise indicated.

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FOREWORD BY YOUNG PEOPLE WITH CARE EXPERIENCE

Every young person in the world has to face the odyssey that is to become independent, so you can imagine what other challenges the youngsters that have been in the alternative care system have to face. So to all of you who will be reading this publication we say, be curious and read every word carefully because we really hope that you can enjoy this as much as we all enjoyed the whole process.

Leaving alternative care is a long-term process in which every young person should have the main say. That is in essence what this project is about: giving the relevance that youngsters deserve in their own process of becoming independent.

Prepare for Leaving Care is a project that has put strengths at the front, giving youngsters the opportunity to be the owners of their lives and break all this acquired stigma that being in alternative care automatically implies. For that reason, the participation of the young experts from the five countries has been the main theme in this project because there always has been this need for improvement of the care system, but no one ever thought before that we are the ones who live it, the ones who know what parts may be failing and what may be working in our process. We are the ones with answers, but to develop them we need the help of professionals in the field so that we can improve not only our experience but also the way that it would be for the generations that unfortunately will come after us. Hence, the development of the Prepare for Leaving Care Practice Guidance was based on an exchange of knowledge between caregivers and care receivers, which gave another point of view that can bring together both sides of the same process. All of this materialised during the training sessions, where young people were able to speak about their experience, while care professionals could openly share the experiences and difficulties that they face on a daily basis.

This was a unique experience not only for us as youngsters bringing our point of view up but also for the caregivers, who could see how their work affects or is seen by the other side of the process. We believe that this approach demonstrates our expertise and willingness to work together with

experts from now on in order to improve the leaving care process because it is time for us to be seen as partners rather than as protégés.

For being the first to believe in us, we want to thank all the people who made this project possible, especially the master trainers, because they were full of patience, consideration and professionalism, doing everything for us to really feel a part of the team.

As there is no end in sight to this matter, we can only repeat that it is time to be partners, and it is time to be the change.

Zule and Kruno

*On behalf of the 169 young people
with care experience involved in the project*



PART 1

PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE

- ‘I would like it to be cheerful and relaxed – not a
- farewell, just a goodbye where you keep in touch with
- the other side, finding a point of contact and not of
- collision. It should be a gradual process, where you stay
- close to each other, help each other, sharing insights and
- points of view. It should be an informal process, based on
- communication, not on screaming in each other’s face,
- finding an excuse for fighting or looking back at the past
- as a hurdle. It should be a long-lasting path. Something
- that lasts over time, because if you care about a person,
- you want to know how he or she is, even afterwards. And
- that’s not always the case.’

(Young person with care experience)

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

Embed a child rights based culture into child protection systems which improves outcomes for children and young people in particular in the preparation for leaving care.

How we achieve this objective

Capacity building

Awareness raising & advocacy

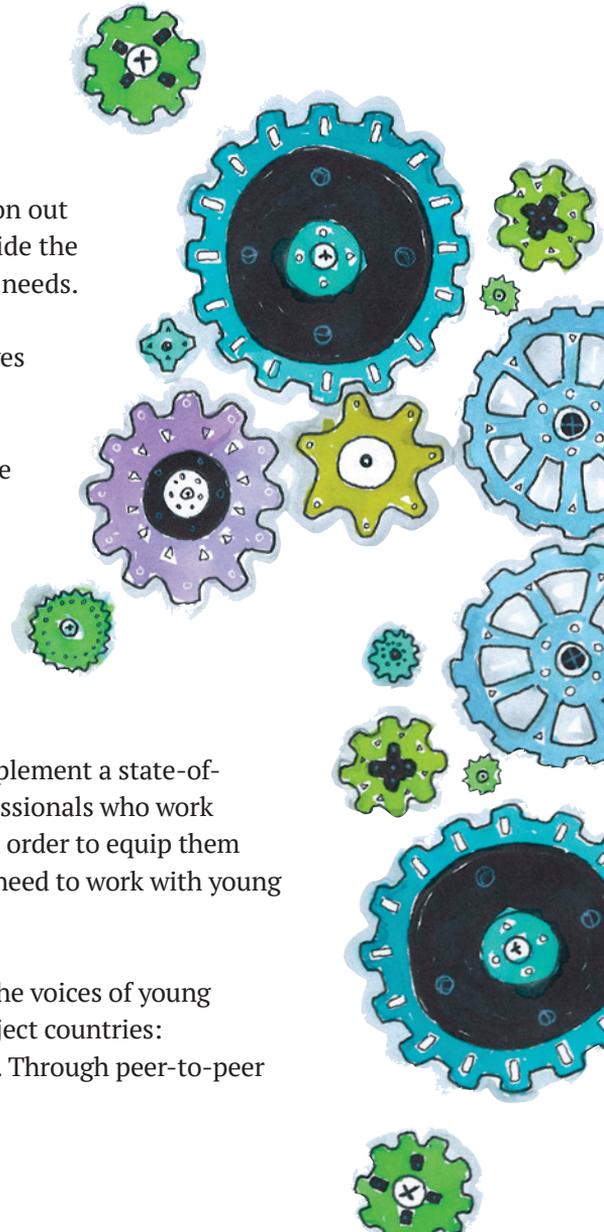
Numerous studies have highlighted that people with care experience in Europe are amongst the most socially excluded groups and are at greater risk of poor outcomes in education, health, employment, criminality, mental health and social functioning in general as compared to the wider population.

Leaving the formal alternative care system is an important phase for both young people and the service providers responsible for their care and development. All the efforts and investments made throughout the child's alternative care path risk being rendered futile if the preparation for leaving care, the transition out of care and aftercare services fail to provide the individualised support the young person needs.

In its Strategy 2030, SOS Children's Villages has committed to modernising youth care with young people's participation and deepening the integration of young people into their communities. SOS Children's Villages actions are also focused on strengthening care and coaching in order to enable young people to better succeed in life.

This project was set up to develop and implement a state-of-the-art training programme for care professionals who work directly with young people leaving care in order to equip them with the skills, knowledge and tools they need to work with young people in transition.

To achieve this goal, we have listened to the voices of young people with care experience from five project countries: Croatia, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania and Spain. Through peer-to-peer



interviews, these young people have shared what worked for them during the leaving care process, what should remain the same and what should change, as well as what skills, knowledge and experience people who work with care leavers need to have.

The research undertaken during the project has shown how young people experience leaving care:

The findings tell us that care leavers experience a range of emotions when leaving their place of care: a mix of happiness and expectations of freedom and independence along with feelings of loneliness, anxiety and, sometimes, fear. Care leavers have concerns about their protection, inadequate levels of support, the unsatisfactory manner in which support is offered, lack of access to services, and insufficient participation in decision-making. They feel their needs and wishes are not being fully met by those responsible for supporting them through the care leaving process.¹

¹ Nigel Cantwell, Chrissie Gale, Kenny McGhee, and Kate Skinner, Prepare for Leaving Care Practice Guidance, (Innsbruck: SOS Children's Villages International, 2017), p. 26.

SCOPING FINDINGS

BEING CARED FOR

an inter-sectoral approach

participation

preparation & support for transition and after care

individuality

independent living

age of leaving care

Leaving Care

TRUST

a transition period

maintaining relationship

an enabling environment

consistency of the leaving care process

active listening

capacity building

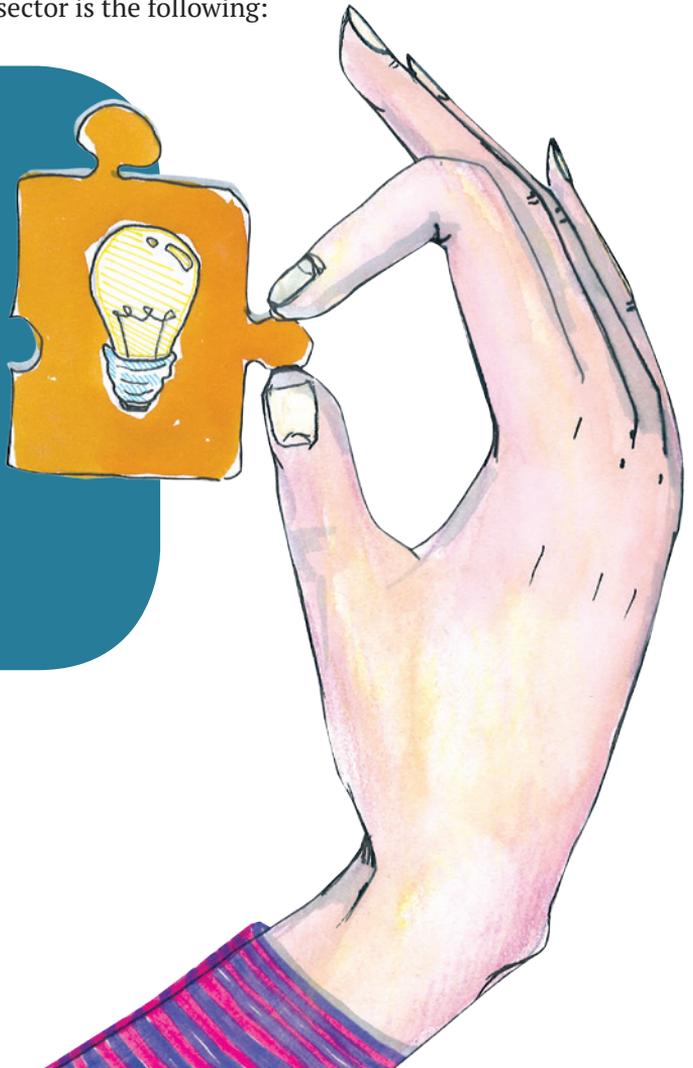
promoting positive change

The project builds on the experience of the project partners to develop and deliver a training programme that enables care professionals to learn how to integrate a child rights based approach into their work and how to best prepare children and young people for leaving care.

To date, 433 care professionals across the five participating countries have completed the Prepare for Leaving Care training. The impact of the participation of young people with care experience as co-trainers is clear from the training evaluation: **the majority of the trainees stated that they had gained a better understanding of the situation of care leavers and that they now know how to support them better.**

A key idea that was a highlight throughout the project and should come as a well-known fact to many practitioners and decision makers working in the child protection sector is the following:

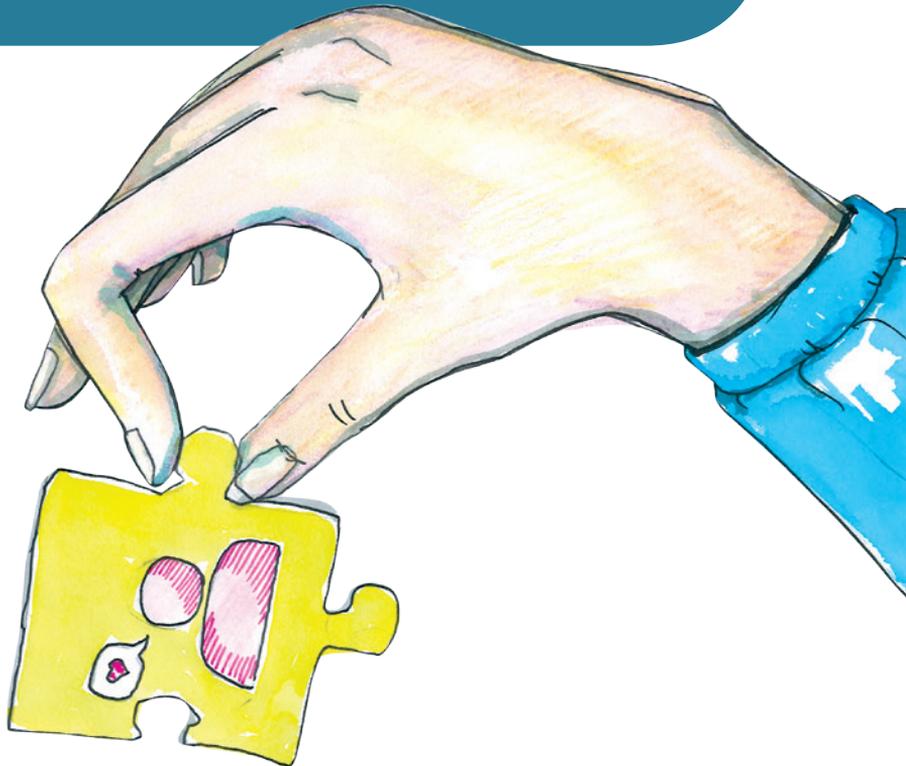
Young people with care experience are the experts of their own lives! They need to be given the space to be heard if we are to truly improve policy and practice to achieve better outcomes for children and young people who grew up in alternative care.



Another precondition we are all aware of BUT that is often lacking in reality is proper resourcing:

The needed changes in the services provided and, most importantly, in the way the support is delivered to each individual will not happen without allocating proper resources and seriously investing money and effort into:

- 1. strengthening the capacity of care professionals to support and empower young people transitioning out of care**
- 2. designing and implementing services that support and empower young people transitioning out of care (such as semi-independent living programmes) with young people's participation**
- 3. enabling care leavers to easily access services and support in a non-discriminatory, non-labelling and non-bureaucratic way.**



TRAINING MATERIAL

THE PRACTICE GUIDANCE SEEKS TO:

- promote improvement in practice
- stimulate reflection
- provide material



THE TRAINING MANUAL SEEKS TO:

- raise awareness of the content of the Practice Guidance
- build knowledge and skills to support young people through the process of leaving care
- help trainees to understand and develop some of the tools which are helpful in the leaving care process



The Prepare for Leaving Care training fills a gap that exists in most child protection systems by giving care professionals access to comprehensive training materials. It has the added benefit of being **co-delivered by young people with care experience**, which gives care professionals the opportunity to hear first hand how young people experience current leaving care practices and to reflect together with them on how to improve this experience in the future with the overall aim of ensuring better outcomes for care leavers.

Four guiding principles emerged out of the scoping undertaken at the start of the project. They should be mainstreamed in child protection systems and realised at all stages of a child's path in alternative care. Therefore, they form the backbone of the *Prepare for Leaving Care Practice Guidance* and the Prepare for Leaving Care training.

These cross-cutting principles are:

- building sustained relationships of care and respect
- aiming for high levels of participation
- promoting and protecting all human rights of children and young people
- the need for an inter-sectoral approach

THE PARTNERS



CEL CIS

CEL CIS, the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland, is an organisation with a wealth of academic expertise in the area of children's rights, child protection and leaving care. CELCIS designed and led the scoping research at the start of the project. Based on the key findings of the scoping, CELCIS experts developed the Prepare for Leaving Care methodology and materials and authored the *Prepare for Leaving Care Practice Guidance* and the *Prepare for Leaving Care Training Manual*. They also delivered the Training of Trainers, provided expert guidance on full and meaningful youth participation and carried out the training evaluation.



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES

SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES

SOS Children's Villages is a non-governmental and non-denominational child-focused organization that provides direct services in the areas of care, education and health for children at risk of losing, or who have already lost, parental care. The organisation builds the capacity of the

children’s caregivers, their families, and communities to provide quality care. Finally, SOS Children’s Villages advocates for the rights of children without parental care.

Founded in 1949, SOS Children’s Villages operates in the spirit of the UN Convention on the Right of the Child and the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children in over 130 countries.

The *Prepare for Leaving Care* project was implemented with the direct participation of five SOS Children’s Villages national associations that coordinated all activities in:

- Croatia
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Spain

SOS Children’s Villages International was the project applicant, it designed the project and was in charge of overall project management.

PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH CARE EXPERIENCE

Youth participation was at the heart of all project activities. National Young Expert Groups (YEGs) were set up in each of the five implementing countries. Members of the YEGs were young people aged 16–27 who have experienced alternative care, transitioning from care, and aftercare.

The YEGs contributed significantly to national scoping studies, the development of the *Prepare for Leaving Care Practice Guidance* and the *Prepare for Leaving Care Training Manual*, the development of the Training of Trainers programme, and national policy recommendations.



The young people were involved in co-delivering the leaving care training in part or in full in each of the five project partner countries. They were very active in the various events organised to raise awareness and get their key messages across when it comes to what needs to be changed in policy and practice in order to improve outcomes for care leavers.

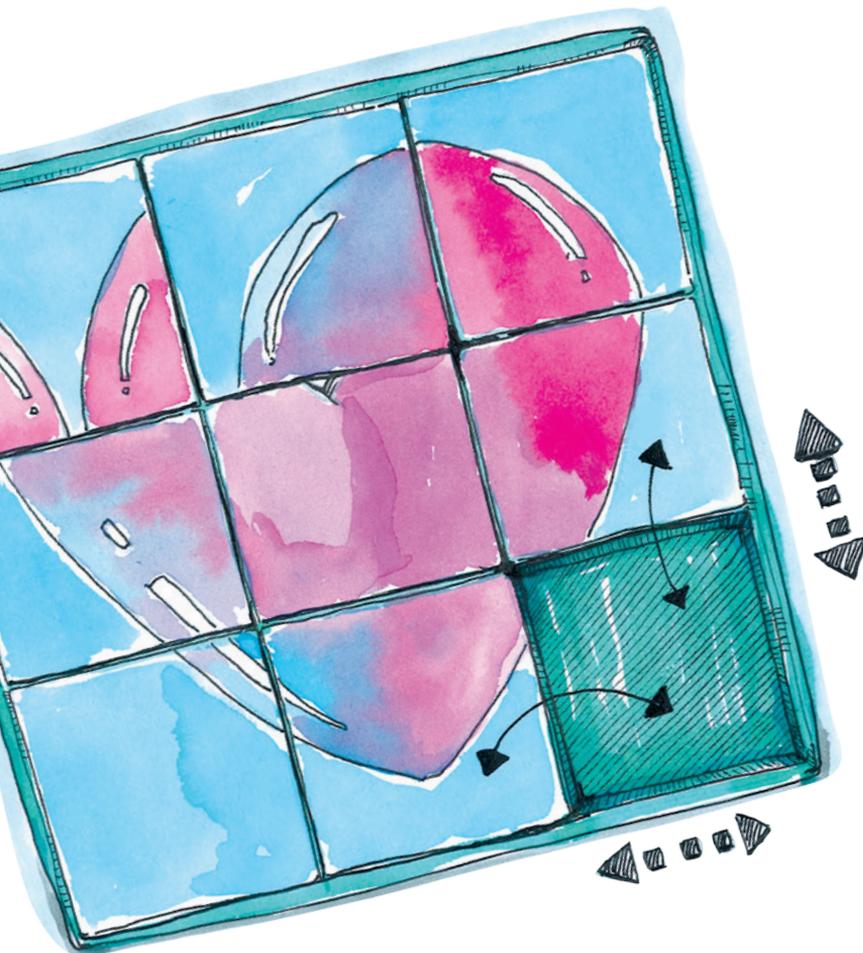
Two young people from each national Young Expert Group were members of the International Young Expert Group, which held three face-to-face meetings during project implementation.

In addition, two young people were part of the project steering group. In total, 169 young people participated in project activities.

MAIN PROJECT OUTPUTS

- A scoping exercise was carried out in each of the five partner countries to gather information on child protection, child care and welfare systems and services as they relate to leaving care and on the associated workforce development and training needs.
- The *Prepare for Leaving Care Practice Guidance*, a training methodology and a manual were developed.
- Ten master trainers from the five project countries were trained.

- 433 care professionals from the five project countries were trained.
- The project and its outputs were presented in workshops and posters at the European Social Services Conference in Seville (April 2018), the ISPCAN International Congress on Child Abuse and Neglect in Prague (September 2018) and the Eurochild Conference in Opatija, Croatia (October 2018).
- National policy recommendations for an improved leaving care framework in the five project countries were developed.
- Sustainability road maps were developed in the five project countries in collaboration with key national stakeholders.



PART 2

THE TRAINING

The Training of Trainers and national training events

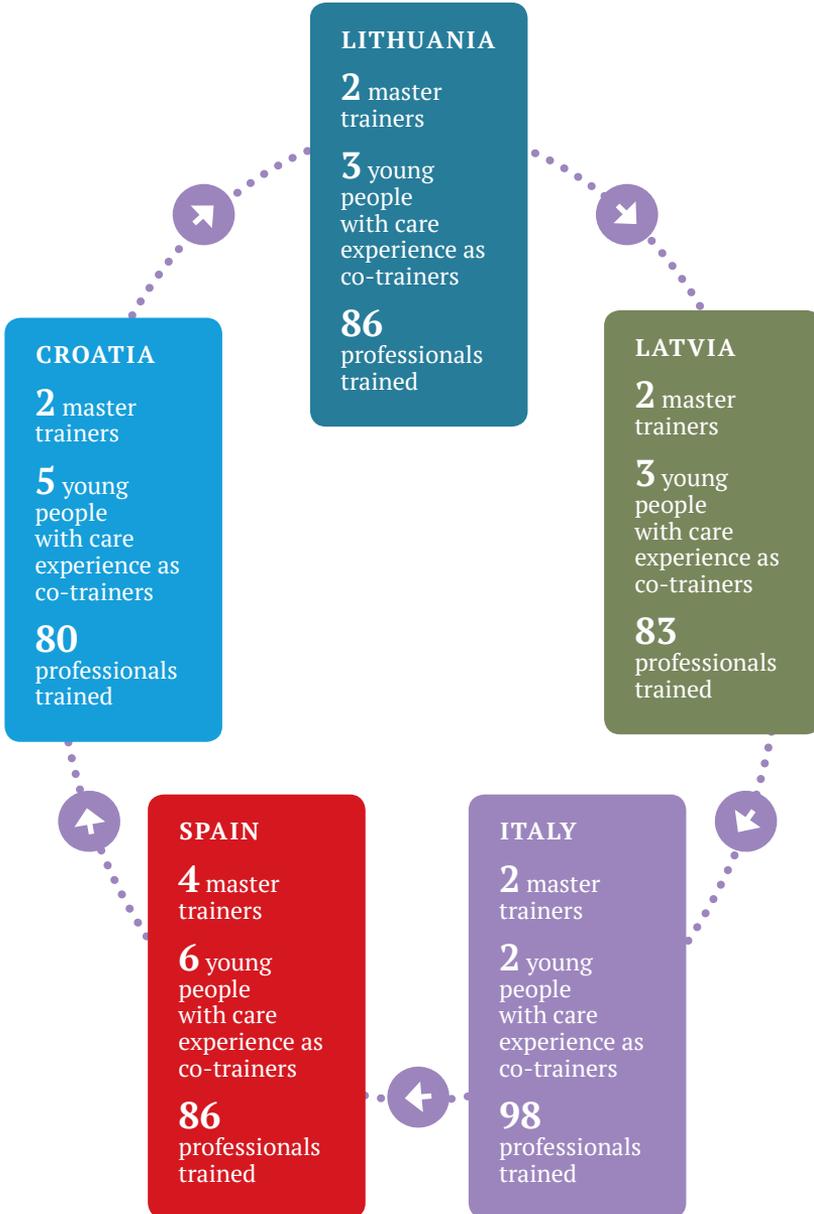


METHODOLOGY

The Prepare for Leaving Care training is based on two key principles: adult learning and deliberate practice, and participation of people with care experience.

Master trainers were required to undergo a Training of Trainers before delivering the national training sessions so that they could ensure the quality of training and appropriately manage the inclusion of young people with care experience as co-trainers.

It was required that at least one person with care experience should be involved in, and remunerated for, part of the delivery of the national training sessions. This component is of utmost importance in bringing the experiences of children and young people in care to life for participants.



TRAINING EVALUATION: SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The care professionals who attended the Prepare for Leaving Care training in the five project countries completed pre- and post-course evaluation forms. This body of data, together with the findings from focus group discussions that took place in each country, was compiled and analysed. The analysis also included feedback from the master trainers with regard to the Training of Trainers (ToT) they underwent in order to get ready to deliver the national training sessions. Here is a summary of evaluation results quoted directly from pp. 79–81 of the training evaluation report²:

Evaluation of the ToT for 16 master trainers and national training delivered to 433 trainees in Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Italy and Spain was gathered through the application of different tools. This included the return of 332 fully completed pre- and post-course evaluation forms, a quiz and focus group discussions. The analysis of information provided through these evaluation methods illustrate the overall success of the training programme component of the Prepare for Leaving Care project. Through a process of self-rating, the information gathered from master trainers show a definite increase in skills and knowledge, most especially in the areas of being able to deliver training on topics defined in the Prepare for Leaving Care Practice Guidance. These include issues relating to rights and legislation, development and review of care plans, inter-sectoral working practices, understanding of trauma and loss and how to support care leavers in a caring and supportive manner. Master trainers highly rated the Training Manual and all other training materials they were provided with, and many commented on how detailed, organised, attractive and clear they were.

² Irene Stevens and Chrissie Gale, Evaluation of the “Prepare for Leaving Care” Training Programme, (UK: Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland, 2018).

All the master trainers also rated the training methodology utilised during the ToT very positively. They found the course to be stimulating, challenging and diverse in the manner it was delivered by the lead trainers. They especially appreciated the role of the care-experienced co-trainer. A number of master trainers found the course to be intense and challenging at times although the same respondents appreciated how the full time of 6 days was actually needed to be able to cover all the subjects in the depth necessary. The master trainers reported how the ToT had prepared them well to deliver the training in their own countries and how it had helped them to critically reflect on their own strengths and developmental needs. The results of the pre- and post-training self-assessment tool clearly indicate a positive shift in the knowledge and skills of all the master trainers. This increase in knowledge and skills is reflected in the positive feedback received from the national trainees. As can be seen in a copy of Table 9 below, overwhelmingly national course participants rated the training they received as ‘very good’.

Course Rating Provided by National Trainees

COUNTRY	POOR	ADEQUATE	GOOD	VERY GOOD	NO RESPONSE
Croatia	0	0	4	64	0
Lithuania	0	0	5	55	0
Latvia	0	0	10	69	8
Italy	0	1	13	65	2
Spain	0	0	26	43	0
Overall percentages	0%	0.3%	16%	81%	2.7%

Additional evaluation of the national training included positive acknowledgment of such aspects as:

- excellent, supportive, dynamic and effective nature of training methodology
- interesting, practical and useful content with applicability to the workplace
- use of group work and opportunities for sharing and listening to others
- useful and easy-to-use tools and *Practice Guidance*
- well-planned and clear structure
- homework that was necessary and understandable
- informative, interactive, interesting and motivational course
- easy transfer of knowledge that stimulates critical thinking
- well-structured with an emphasis on truly important and also new topics

‘Now I have new tools for working with young people, and I will use them.’

Acknowledged challenges included the time required to complete the course and competing work commitments although course participants acknowledged the importance and richness of learning acquired through a 6-day course with homework in between the two blocks of training.

National trainees provided overall excellent feedback regarding the competence of the master trainers. This is indicated by the reports on how supportive and approachable they were and positive comments relating to the proficient, experienced and knowledgeable manner in which they had delivered the training. For example, one respondent particularly noted how the lecturers paid attention to each individual participant, whilst another commented on the way their trainer had been able to answer all the questions

‘Thank you young people for attending, it was interesting to hear your opinion’

they were asked throughout the training. Respondents also commented on the dynamic nature of the training delivery and the excellent presentation skills. *‘Wonderful,’* wrote one respondent. *‘All seminars should be like this one.’* Another respondent wrote:

‘I’m so glad I participated in education. I would particularly like to congratulate trainers who are highly motivated and willing to share with us many years of experience, and I would like to praise the young people who participated. Generally a very useful, instructive and interesting experience.’

There was particularly positive feedback in relation to the inclusion of care experienced young people in the training delivery. Respondents noted how this provided a special additional element to the training content and helped bring alive the topics under discussion. They reported how it had helped them gain additional understanding of the reality for young people and their concerns and how this will inform the way they can improve support for care leavers in the future. For example, one respondent wrote, *‘It has helped me to put myself in the place of young people and forget the position of “caregiver”’.*

Other comments from course participants included:

‘Super, special praise for inclusion of young people, their comments and suggestions.’

‘All seminars should be like this one’

‘Very useful and good for further work with young people, I will use it.’

‘Thank you very much for involving young people.’

‘Now I have new tools for working with young people, and I will use them.’

‘I can understand young people better, their needs and support they need. It was exciting training...’

‘Thank you young people for attending, it was interesting to hear your opinion.’

And finally, an exceedingly interesting comment that encapsulates the opportunity such training can provide. A respondent in Spain wrote, *‘This kind of training has made me reflect out of the bubble.’*

‘Super, special praise for inclusion of young people, their comments and suggestions.’

DEMANDING

expert

education

excellent

familiar

FLUID

FOCUSED

FULFILLED

good

help

ideas

important

IMPROVEMENTS

information

institution

interesting

knowledge

logical

MATERIALS

methods

motivating

NEEDS

network

new

open

organization

perfect

person

place

PLAN

positive

practical

PRAISE

process

professional

STRUCTURED

SUPPORTIVE

tools

TOPICS

trainers

TRANSFERABLE

useful

work

WELL

PART 3

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A COMPREHENSIVE LEAVING CARE FRAMEWORK

The **UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children** (the Guidelines) gained the approval of the international community at the UN General Assembly in 2009. Their 10th anniversary is around the corner, and it is high time to recall the standards they set in terms of preparing children and young people for leaving care as well as the aftercare support that should be available to them.

Those standards have been further detailed and explained in *Moving Forward: Implementing the 'Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children'*³ (*Moving Forward*), which also highlights the implications they have in terms of policy-making with the corresponding allocation of budget and resources.

The evidence and experience collected throughout the implementation of the Prepare for Leaving Care project stress how valid those policy-making implications still are and, unfortunately, also the fact that they have not yet been fully realised.

Extract from *Moving Forward*, pp. 100-101:

- **Implications for policy-making**
- **Guidelines: § 131-136**
- Children who leave care require support through planning,
- preparation and information in order to prepare them positively for
- moving on from care. They should have the opportunity to develop
- skills as preparation for independent or semi-independent living as
- young adults. Support should be available for young people after they
- have left care and into young adulthood.

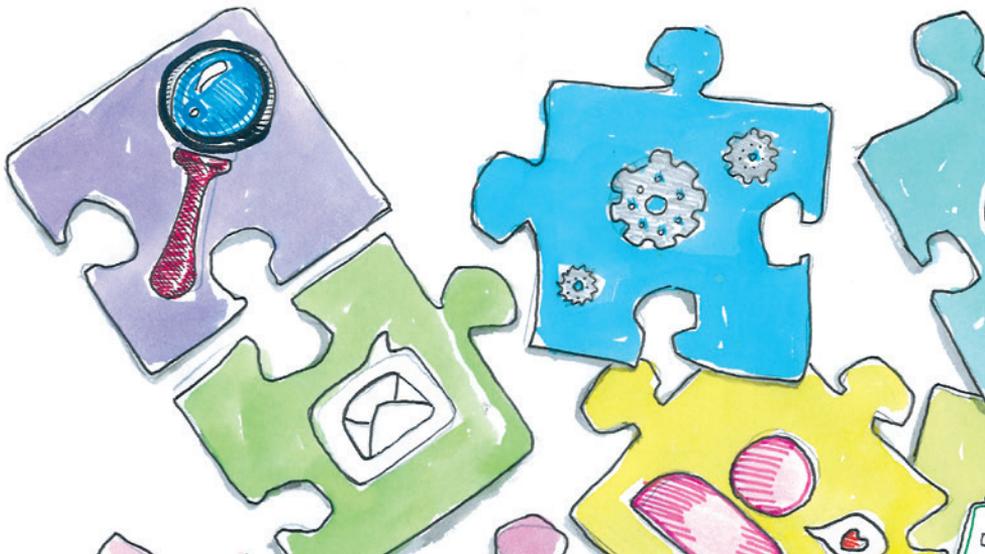
³ Nigel Cantwell, Jennifer Davidson, Susan Elsley, Ian Milligan, and Neil Quinn, *Moving Forward: Implementing the 'Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children'* (UK: Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland, 2012).

**National policy should:****Ensure planning is in place for children leaving care**

- Develop and implement legislation and guidance which outlines measures to support children who are leaving care and provides for aftercare support
- Assign a specialised support worker to provide guidance, advice, facilitate and empower each child throughout the process of preparing to leave care and during aftercare support
- Provide consistent assessment, individualised planning and appropriate support for all children leaving care and as early as possible in their placement
- Ensure that children are not leaving care too young by supporting them to remain in their long-term care as they move into young adulthood
- Support foster carers and children so as to encourage the foster family to continue to be there for the child when they move into adult life
- Put in place mechanisms so that children can fully participate in planning for leaving care and can contribute to how this will be organised
- Ensure that different agencies with, for example, responsibility for housing, welfare, health and education are involved in planning and ongoing support to children leaving care
- Require the monitoring and review of aftercare plans regularly after a child moves on from care until s/he is able to live independently without systematic support

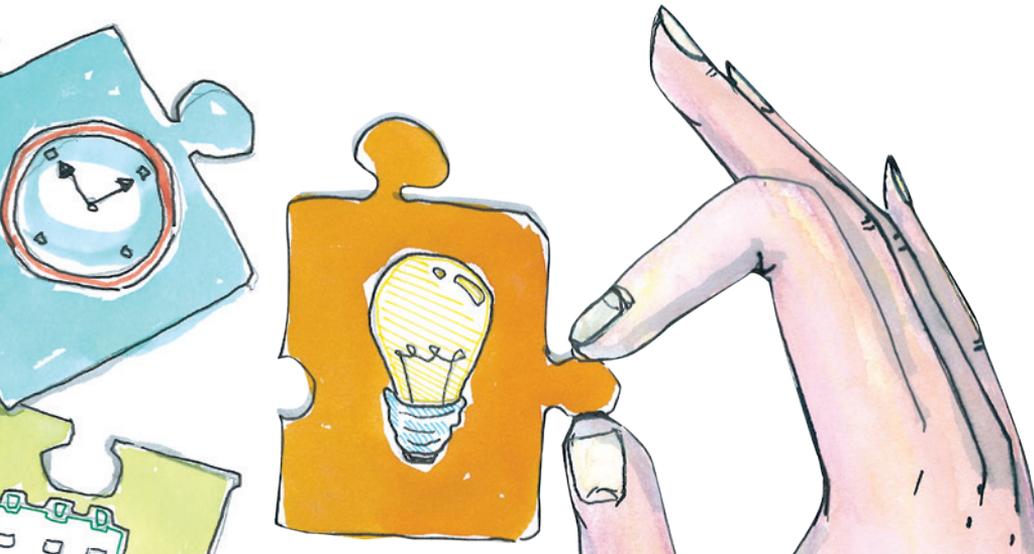
Provide support to children leaving care

- Provide opportunities for children to develop the necessary life skills and to have access to information when they are preparing to leave care
- Require systems to be in place that ensure support for young people after they leave care with a named person available as ongoing contact
- Provide services for children who are leaving care including access to health, social welfare, educational, vocational and employment opportunities. This should include specialist support for children with disabilities and other special needs
- Consult with children leaving care to identify where they would like to live. If this is not close to the community where they were living during or prior to entering alternative care, discuss the implications and respond accordingly
- Ensure that children who are currently in education and wish to continue their studies are supported in the transition to leaving care
- Ensure that a range of different living and housing arrangements are available to children leaving care and that this is of appropriate quality



Provide aftercare support to young people

- Support opportunities for young people to maintain contact with their previous care service, carers and friends, in recognition of the importance of ongoing relationships
- Ensure that contact can be maintained with siblings who remain in care and other family members as appropriate
- Ensure that children leaving care have access to high quality vocational and tertiary education, where appropriate, so that they have the same opportunities as their peers in parental care
- Provide support with accessing education and vocational training, including financial support. Consideration should be given to the provision of scholarships or fee elimination to offset the disadvantage experienced by children raised in alternative care
- Collect data on the progress of young people who have left care in order to contribute to greater knowledge and understanding on the outcomes of children in care
- Encourage the extended family, community and civil society to provide support to young people who have left care. This should include support and encouragement for former foster carers and staff in formal care to stay in touch where a child wishes
- Counter stigma and discrimination of young people who have been in care and promote children and young people's contributions as citizens



PART 4

NATIONAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A COMPREHENSIVE LEAVING CARE FRAMEWORK IN CROATIA, ITALY, LATVIA, LITHUANIA AND SPAIN

One key output of the project is the compilation of **national policy recommendations**, which were developed in each of the partner countries with the involvement of young people with care experience as well as other key national stakeholders. It is striking to see how aligned those recommendations are to the ones listed in the previous section. Below are the key points listed by country. The more detailed versions of the national recommendations are available upon request at train4childrights@sos-kd.org, in the national language or in English.

CROATIA

1. Amendments to the Social Welfare Act

● a. Leaving care plans:

- • Legally stipulate the obligation to draft and regularly review each young person's plan for leaving care
- • Stipulate that the implementation of the leaving care plan should start at least a year before the young person's expected exit from care

● b. Organised housing:

- • Extend the age limit until which a young person can be a beneficiary of organised housing to the age of 21

- Enable young people to use organised housing in situations when they have previously refused it and subsequently allow them to apply for this service
 - Enable young people from the care system to pay up to 50% of the total cost of an organised housing service
 - Enable young people to use care services and organised housing irrespective of whether they have completed their schooling
- c. Introduce a personal mentor ('key worker') service**

2. Education of experts

- Provide continuous education for experts working with children and young people in alternative care on the topic of preparing children for leaving care

3. Proposal for pilot implementation of personal mentor ('key worker') services for young people leaving the care system



ITALY

THE FUTURE IS BUILT DAY BY DAY

- **Ten commandments for adults supporting young people in leaving care**
- I. Do not expect from care leavers more than we would expect from our children or their peers
- II. Prepare in sufficient time the transition to adulthood and plan a project that includes a gradual and personalised pathway
- III. Plan the pathway and the project together with the care leaver

- IV. Recognise the importance of emotions and the central role of meaningful relationships in this process
- V. Train care leavers for interdependence so that they can identify and bravely manage timelines, needs and opportunities in the new experience of daily life
- VI. Promote cross-sectoral work and cooperation between professionals
- VII. Designate adults able to listen, guide and create opportunities in the transition to adulthood
- VIII. Provide specialised training courses for the adults involved in leaving care projects and pathway planning
- IX. Commit to establishing and urging for dedicated local resources in support of transition pathways and projects
- X. Reform legislation and commit to establishing an appropriate national fund and specific regional funds for the innovation and support of transition pathways and projects

LATVIA

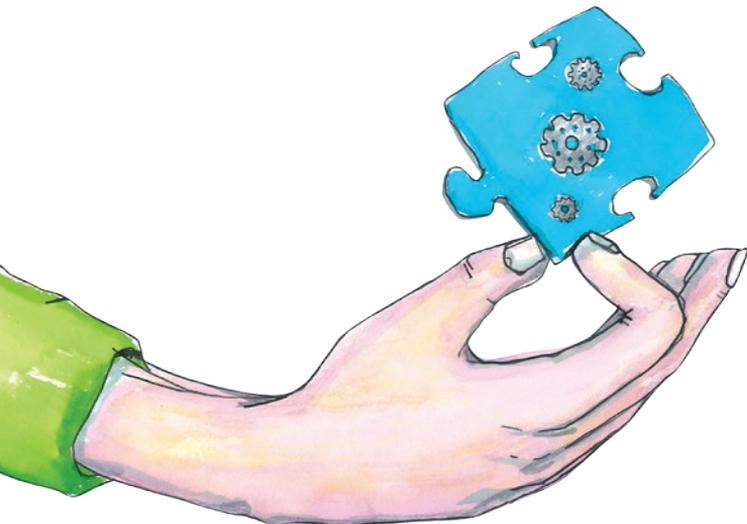
1. Government guidelines on preparing for leaving care should be determined and implemented in all the geographical administrative units across the country. Guidelines and minimal requirements for leaving care plans, aftercare plans and the preparation process should be developed.
2. The issue of training for professionals working in child care institutions and the quality and content of such training should be reviewed at national level. Special attention should be paid to training on preparing young people for leaving care, and this training should be determined as mandatory for all professionals working with youth.



3. A legal mandate is necessary to ensure that youth participation is promoted in the development of leaving care plans. It should be obligatory that young people participate in the development, implementation and review of their leaving care plan.
4. Young people leaving care should have legal rights and receive the following services: suitable accommodation, education, free health care, financial support, employment services, legal advice, etc.
5. During the transition period – 12 months before and 24 months after leaving care – municipalities should ensure the possibility of engaging a trained mentor or support person.
6. Foster families and guardians should participate in preparation for the transition to independent life (for example, they should be involved in the development of leaving care plans). It should be stipulated that foster families and guardians who are taking care of young people over the age of 15 receive appropriate training and support for preparing young people for leaving care.
7. It should be determined if young people who are studying can be offered the option of staying in the care of their foster family or guardian until the age of 24. This should involve ensuring support for foster families which continue taking care of young people after the age of 18, and preparing young people for leaving care (by determining a specific aftercare period, e.g. 24 months).
8. Qualitative research on young people leaving alternative care should be conducted at national level.

LITHUANIA

1. Divide the leaving care process into three interconnected stages: preparation for leaving care, transition out of care, and leaving care support services. Each of these stages has its own clear tasks and objectives and requires a slightly different approach.
2. Legally recognise the concept of leaving care and incorporate it into national legislation
3. Implement introductory (mandatory) and continuous training for providers of leaving care services employed in the system
4. Make plans for transition to independent living a requirement for those participating in leaving care programmes
5. Offer young people from families at risk the opportunity to benefit from the leaving care system
6. Establish a body responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the leaving care system
7. Provide opportunities to complain about the availability and quality of leaving care services
8. Make sure that the development of independent living skills starts as soon as the child enters the care system



SPAIN

1. Monitoring of youth emancipation (leaving care) support programmes

- a. Develop participatory training programmes for professionals
- b. Supervise emancipation support programmes

2. Attention to individuality

- a. Make the upper age limit of care more flexible
- b. Prepare pathway plans

3. Institutional support

- a. Create a commission to equalise the supports offered to care leavers
- b. Increase support for care leavers
- c. Simplify administrative processes

4. Participation

- a. Promote joint, participatory processes at the regional and national level that include young people, organisations and authorities
- b. Regional youth councils: in every autonomous region, create a representative council of young people in care and care leavers



PROJECT WEBPAGE

Prepare for Leaving Care

<https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/prepare-for-leaving-care>

READ MORE

- **SOS Care Promise**
https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/getmedia/2ccd4a43-00d9-489a-8eb1-b57089f08289/SOS_CARE_PROMISE_EN_Web.pdf
- **Decent Work and Social Protection for Young People Leaving Care**
https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/getmedia/842a5811-fdb7-41c4-a0b2-45b0e5e79090/SOS_LeavingCare_web.pdf
- **Leaving Care and Employment in Five European Countries: An Undocumented Problem?**
https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/getmedia/908bc3ed-244d-48d0-b8e1-d44d8cdd8e8a/SOS-CVI_Leaving-Care-and-employment-report_Final.pdf
- **Preparation for Independent Living (I matter)**
<https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/getmedia/db45016e-a5df-4995-819e-af02d6634347/Preparation-for-Independent-Living,-Briefing-paper-3-web.pdf>
- **United Nations Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children**
https://www.unicef.org/protection/alternative_care_Guidelines-English.pdf
- **Moving Forward**
<https://www.celcis.org/files/4514/5450/2144/Moving-Forward-implementing-the-guidelines-for-alternative-care-for-children.pdf>

NEWS!

The *Leaving Care* project (2018-2020), co-financed by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union, builds on the findings from the *Prepare for Leaving Care* project. It is being implemented in partnership with SOS Children's Villages' national associations in Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Italy and Romania as well as the child-focused organisations **FICE Austria** and **FONPC**. The European Leaving Care conference, which will reach out to 200 key stakeholders, will be held in June 2019 in Bucharest with the aim of sharing project results as well as advocating for the capacity building of professionals working with care leavers. We hope you will join us there!

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**PREPARE
FOR LEAVING
CARE**