Easy Read

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S Commissioner Scotland

Yearly report 2025 to 2026

How we are making life better for children and young people in Scotland



Easy Read

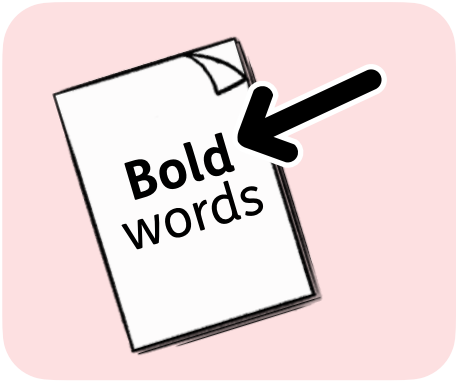


This is an Easy Read version of some information.

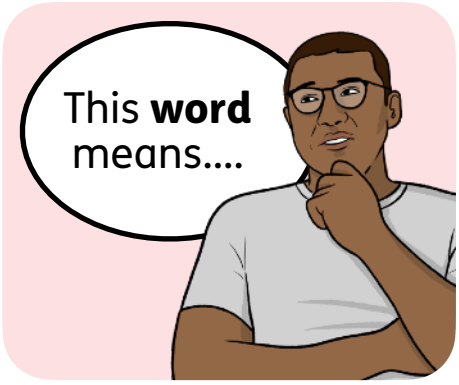
It uses easier words and pictures.



Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are **bold** to show they are important.



We explain bold words if they are hard to understand.

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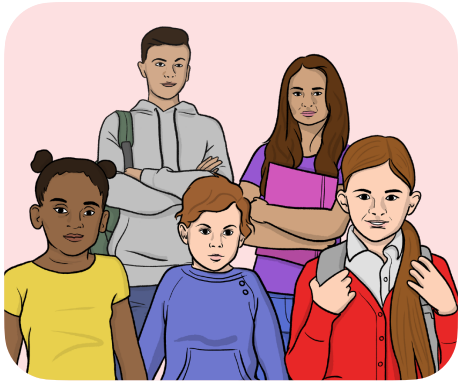
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About this booklet

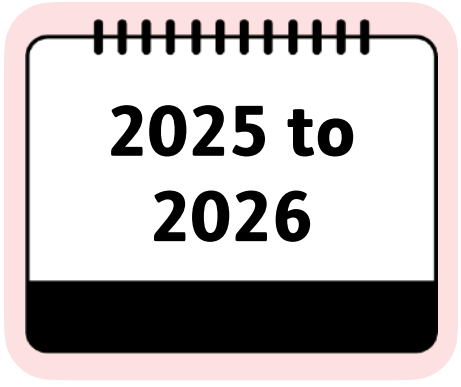
This booklet is from the Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland.



Nicola Killean is the Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland.



We work to make life better for children and young people in Scotland.



This booklet is about what we have done in the last year, from 2025 to 2026.

About us



We help protect the **rights** of children and young people.

Rights are things that every person should have by law, like the right to be safe or respected.



We support the rights of:

- Children and young people under 18 years old.



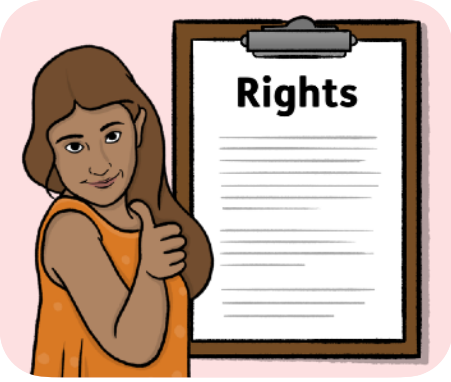
- Young people aged 18 to 21 who have been **in care**.

  In care means you have been looked after by someone other than your parent, like another family member or a foster carer.

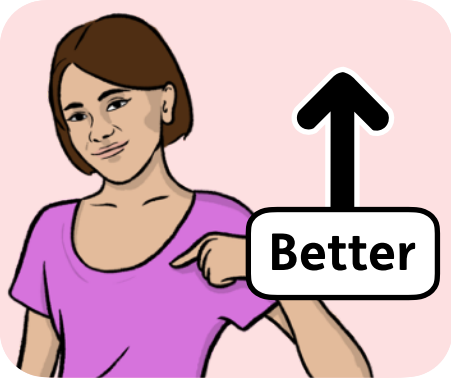
We also:



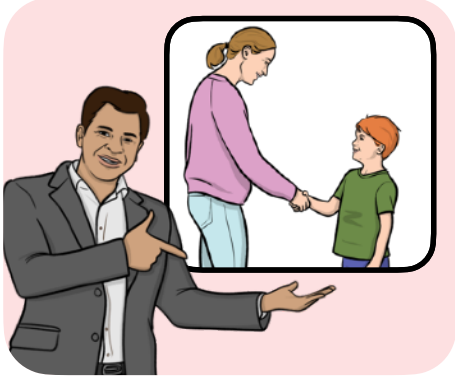
- Make sure that laws and plans are fair for children and young people.



- Help children and young people get and understand their rights.



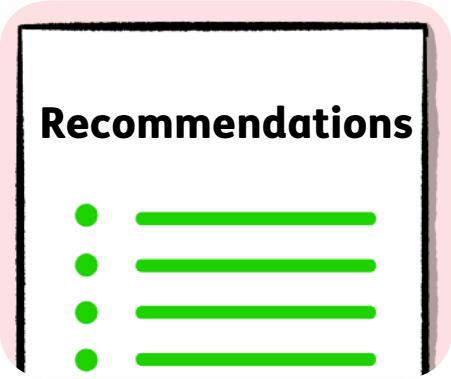
- Look into how to make young people's lives better.



- Share stories about people who support children's rights well.

  This helps other people learn from them.

Our recommendations



Our **recommendations** are things that we want people to do to help children and young people with their rights.



Our recommendations are:

- Organisations must include children and young people when they make changes to schools and learning.



- Organisations and the Scottish Government must be clear about how they help children.

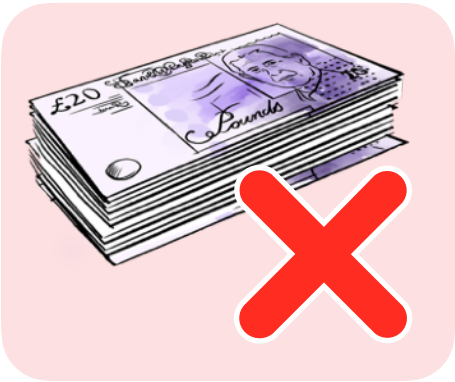
More of our recommendations are:



- The Scottish Government must help people follow the new law about children's rights.



- The Scottish Government must include children who live in **poverty** when they write their new plan on child poverty.



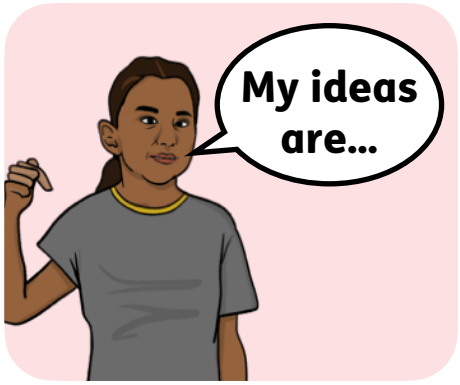
Poverty means not having enough money to pay for the basic things you need to live.

Our young advisors group



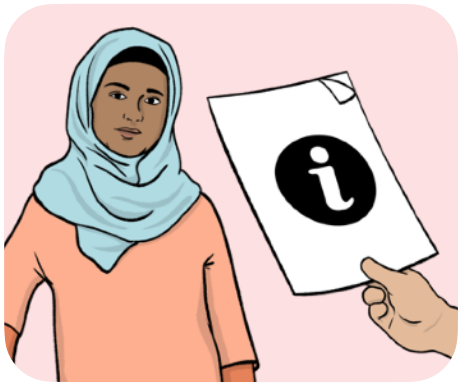
Our young advisors group is a group of young people who help us with our work.

They are aged between 12 and 17 years old.



Our young advisors help us by:

- Talking to us about their lives and their ideas.



- Sharing information about rights with other young people.

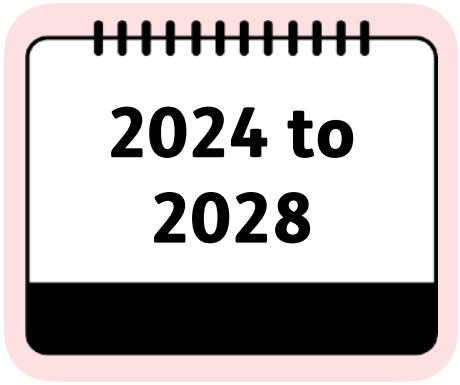
Our plan



Children have told us what they want us to do.



So we wrote a plan about how we will help children and young people in Scotland.

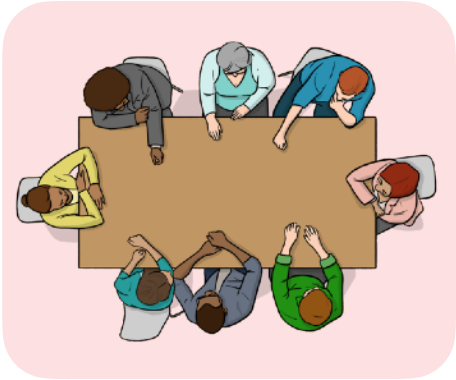


The plan will last from 2024 to 2028.



We have 3 **aims** in our plan.

Aims are what we want to do.



Aim 1: Leadership

Leadership is about planning and making decisions.



Our aim is to get leaders to talk to children and young people when they make plans or decisions.

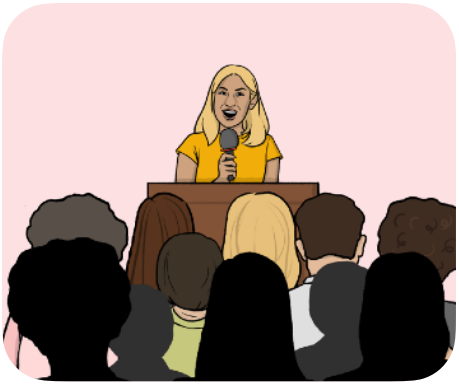


Aim 2: Protect.

Protect means keeping something or someone safe.



Our aim is to make sure that rules and laws protect the rights of children and young people.



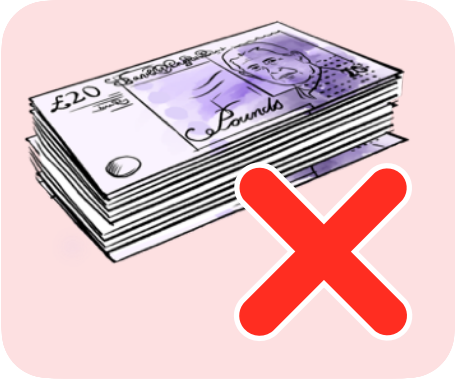
Aim 3: Promote

Promote means telling more people about something.



Our aim is to tell more people about the rights of children and young people and why they are important.

Children and young people told us they also wanted us to focus on these 3 things:



- **Poverty** - remember, **poverty** means not having enough money to pay for the basic things you need to live.



- **Education** - this means learning, like at school, college or university.



- **Mental health** - this is the way you think, feel and behave.

  Having good mental health means being able to cope with your emotions.

Aim 1: Leadership



Remember, aim 1 is about getting leaders to talk to children and young people when they make plans or decisions.

Education



All children have the right to get a good education.



We talked to lots of different children to find out what they think about school and education.



Some children told us they do not always get a good education.

We wrote reports about how to make education better for:



- Children who live in care.



- Children whose parents work in the armed forces, like the Army or Navy.

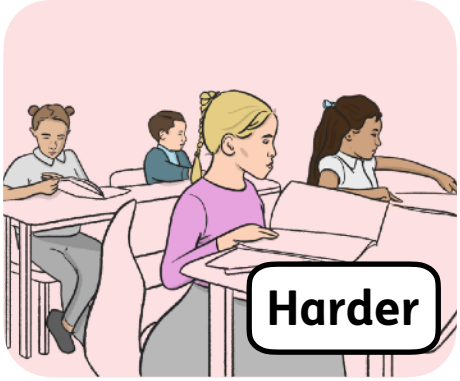


We also shared stories about what school staff have done in the past to make education better.

Child poverty



Poverty can make children feel cold and hungry.



It can also make it harder for children to pay attention at school.

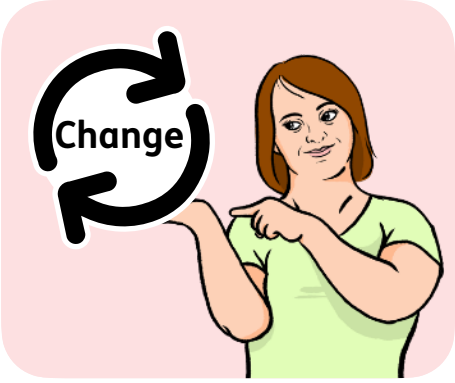


We wrote a report about what children said about living in poverty.



We asked the UK and Scottish Governments to think about children's rights when they do work to stop poverty.

Mental health



In 2019, young people asked the Scottish Government to make some changes to mental health services.



These changes would help young people get mental health support.

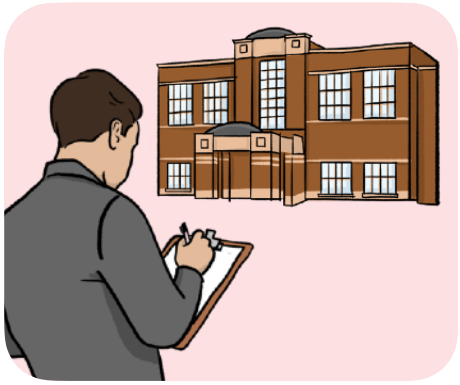


It is not clear if the Scottish Government has made these changes or not.



So we asked the Scottish Government to tell young people about what they have done so far.

Around the world



One of our young advisors did some work on the right to education with other young people from around the world.



He went to the **United Nations** in Switzerland to talk about their work.



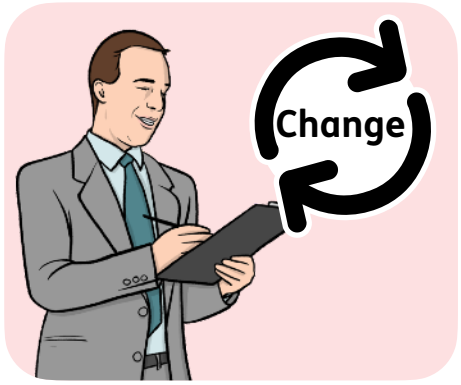
The **United Nations** is an organisation made up of many countries from all over the world.

It works to make the world a safer and better place.

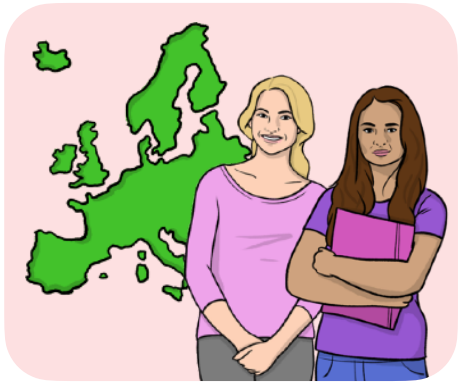
It is called the UN for short.



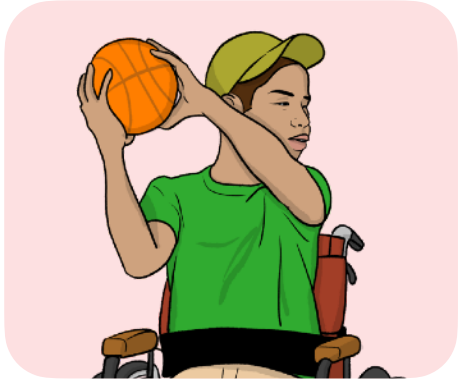
The young advisor told the UN that some families find it hard to get nursery education for young children.



The UN will think about what he said to decide if countries need to make any changes.



2 of our young advisors worked with young people in Europe.



They looked into different sports and activities that children can do in school.

Aim 2: Protect

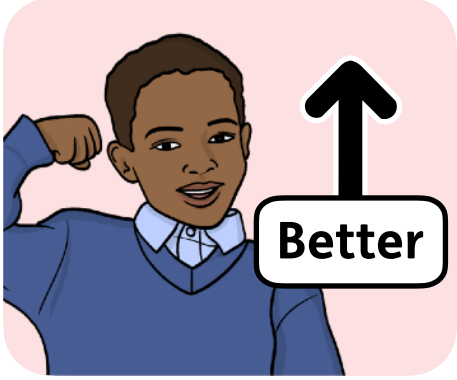


Remember, **Aim 2** is to make sure that rules and laws protect the rights of children and young people.

New laws



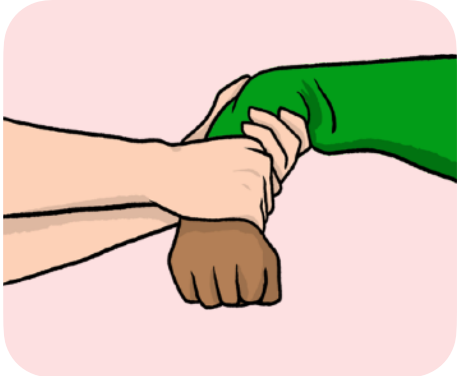
In 2024, the Scottish Government made a new law that protects children's rights.



The new law gave us more power to make things better for children in Scotland.



We can now take people to court if we think they are not giving children their rights.



We also helped make a new law about **restraint**.

Restraint means holding someone down to stop them from moving.



The law says that school staff must follow stricter rules about restraint of children.



We want other places that support children to follow these rules too, like hospitals.

The police



Sometimes, police use **force** against children.

Force means making someone do something, or stopping them from doing something.

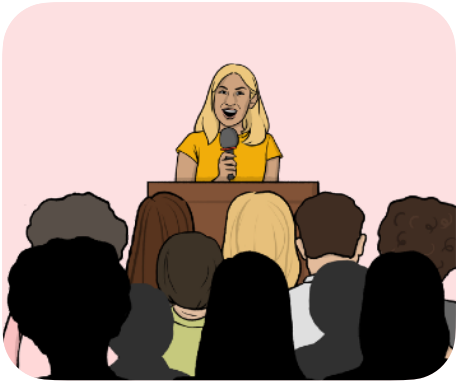


We think that police should treat children fairly and with respect.



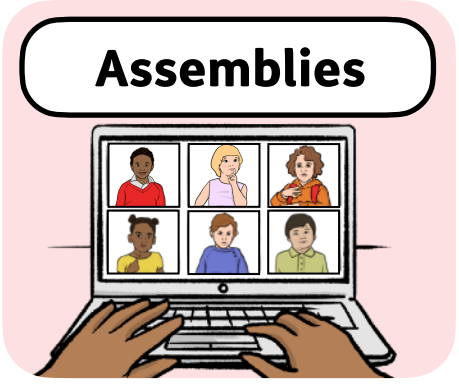
So we are looking into why police are using force against children and how to stop it.

Aim 3: Promote



Remember, aim 3 is to tell more people about the rights of children and young people and why they are important.

Assemblies



We ran 2 big online meetings called **assemblies**.

The assemblies were for younger children to learn about their rights.



Thousands of children from all over Scotland came to the assemblies.



The first assembly was about how children have the right to play.



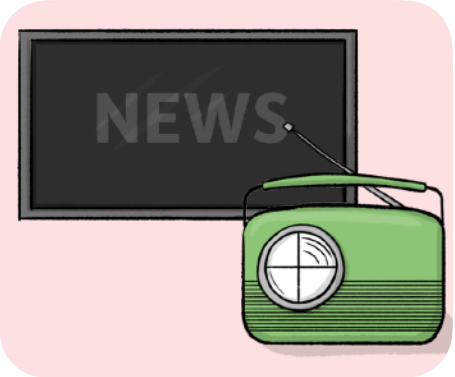
The second assembly was about how children have the right to be listened to.

Telling people about children's rights



We tell people about children's rights and the work we do.

We tell people about children's rights and the work we do by:



- Talking to news channels, radio stations and newspapers.



- Sharing information on our website and social media, like Facebook and Instagram.



We make sure our website is easy to use and suitable for people with different needs.

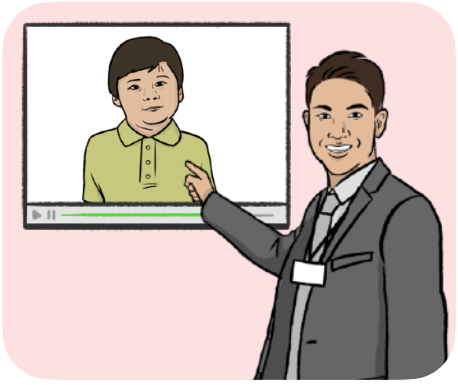
This includes people who speak British Sign Language.



This year, we made some films about children who cannot go to school.



The children told us about how they learn.



We showed the films to people who are in charge of schools.

Involving children



It is important to include children and young people in decisions about education.



So we ran meetings between young people and adults who can make changes in education.

They talked about:

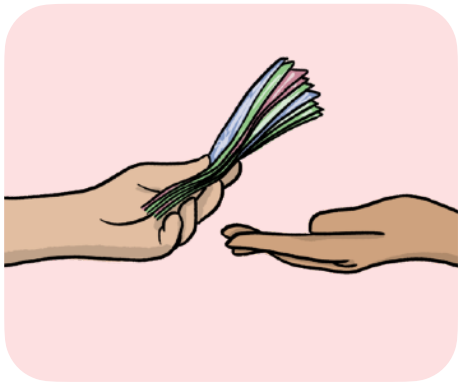


- How adults could include children and young people more.



- What adults need to help them include children and young people more.

Money

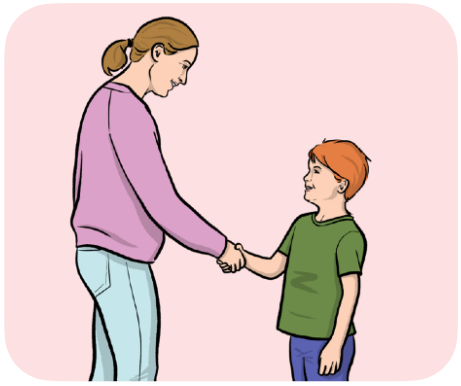


The Scottish Government gives us money to do our work.

This year, we spent the money on:



- Helping people understand that children's rights are important.



- Including children and young people in our work.



- Staff and things that staff need in the office, like the internet and office supplies.

What we will do next year

Next year, we will:



- Keep working with our young advisors to help children in Scotland get their rights.



- Share our report about how police use force against children.



- Keep telling people about children's rights and how to protect them.



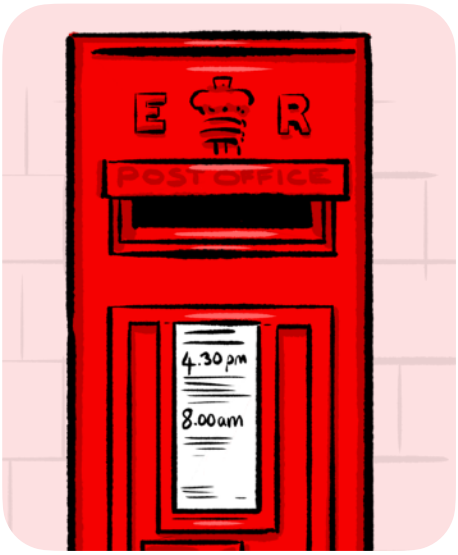
- Keep working on what children and young people want us to work on.

Find out more



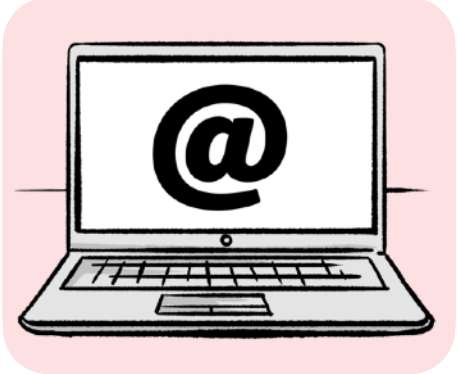
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You can contact us by:



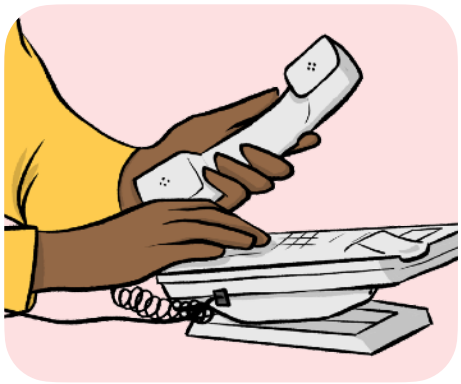
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