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4. Day-to-day care

Introductory remarks

As indicated in the CRC, children need special safeguards and care, due to their physical and mental immaturity, and the family is the natural environment for their growth and wellbeing. As a result, day-to-day care and special activities should be accessible to unaccompanied children living in reception facilities without family members present and this should be an essential part of reception, in order to ensure a standard of living adequate for physical, mental and social development. Day-to-day care, as referred to in this guidance, includes the everyday support of the unaccompanied child, the organisation of awareness raising and training activities for the child, as well as leisure and recreational activities. Some standards and indicators are related to those present in the sections on information provision, assessment and response to special needs and safety risks, healthcare, schooling and housing. They have been included in this chapter assuming that additional information and support are needed for unaccompanied children.

Subsequently this chapter addresses the importance of preparing unaccompanied children to be autonomous, to strengthen resilience and to develop a method of special care in reception facilities focusing on the future perspectives and skills of unaccompanied children. Age, maturity and special needs should be taken into account. Day-to-day care may differ between unaccompanied children living in accommodation centres and those staying in individual housing, given the differences in age, autonomy and self-sufficiency. Furthermore, a distinction is made between the presence of reception staff with general training and child reception staff, who had sufficient additional training on unaccompanied children (cf. Chapter 5. Staff). The presence of child reception staff is specifically necessary as a minimum when unaccompanied children is present in the accommodation centre and not at school, but not necessarily during the night.

Legal references – Day-to-day care

- Article 23(1) RCD: Minor’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development; minor’s wellbeing and social development taking account minor’s background
- Article 23(3) RCD: Leisure activities
- Article 24(1) RCD: Unaccompanied minors

