

## Who we are

- Since 1998, we have provided person-led advocacy across England
- Our services are high quality, confidential and free
- We are a charity that is independent of professional services including Social Services, the NHS and the police
- We help people live the lives they want to live.



# advocacy focus



Independent



Free



Confidential

“ I can talk to my Advocate, he listens to me and cares. He does not judge me or try to control my life. He helped me to see I have choices in life, when I thought I had none. ”

- Chantelle

## HOW TO REFER FOR ADVOCACY

- ✓ Download the relevant referral form from our website: [www.advocacyfocus.org.uk/refer](http://www.advocacyfocus.org.uk/refer)
- ✓ Email the completed form to: [admin@advocacyfocus.org.uk](mailto:admin@advocacyfocus.org.uk)

## Got an urgent question?

A **Duty Advocate** is available during office hours. Chat instantly about any questions you may have at: [www.advocacyfocus.org.uk](http://www.advocacyfocus.org.uk)



## Children's Rights Services in Rochdale

Providing a service which supports life improvement for all children and young people in care or those going through the child protection process

Our Independent Advocates and volunteers champion the rights of young people

We ensure that every young person's voice is heard

We believe in putting young people at the heart of any decisions that affect their lives

We help people live the lives they want to live

Chat to an Advocate online now [www.advocacyfocus.org.uk](http://www.advocacyfocus.org.uk)



[admin@advocacyfocus.org.uk](mailto:admin@advocacyfocus.org.uk)



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0300 323 0965

### Independent Visitor (IV)



An IV is a volunteer who befriends and supports children and young people in care. It is reported that Independent Visitors can encourage them to take more productive paths in life

#### Our Independent Visitors will:

- ✓ Develop long-term friendships, visit regularly and maintain consistent letter, phone or text contact
- ✓ Listen to and ensure the child or young person has someone there for them
- ✓ Encourage the child or young person to express any concerns
- ✓ Guide them through sometimes difficult times in their life
- ✓ Motivate them to develop new interests, skills or hobbies. Take them on outings and encourage educational journeys and development
- ✓ Helping them feel safe and supported

An Independent Visitor can sometimes be the only person who is not paid to be there for them.

### Children's Rights Helpline 0300 303 4170



Safeguards and protects the rights of children and young people in care. Our Children's Rights Helpline provides important information and protects their rights whilst in care

#### Our helpline will ensure children:

- ✓ Are aware of their rights
- ✓ Have their say about things that are affecting them
- ✓ Are provided with information and advice to better inform them
- ✓ Guide them through their concerns
- ✓ Help them plan for their future and leaving care
- ✓ Help find them an Independent Visitor, a volunteer who befriends and supports them during their time in care

Our Advocates will help to promote all the things that are in a child's best interests, such as their education, placements, contact arrangements and their futures.

### Independent Advocacy



Advocacy is a vital safeguard for children going through child protection proceedings, who are in care, or are leaving care. Many are not consulted about matters affecting their lives

#### Our Advocates can:

- ✓ Communicate the wishes and feelings of a child or young person
- ✓ Attend decision making meetings
- ✓ Uphold their legal rights and human rights and ensure that they are fairly treated
- ✓ Explain information, processes or options available, in a way that they understand
- ✓ Assist in making a complaint or in challenging decisions
- ✓ Support with the transition of leaving care
- ✓ Help access relevant services such as financial services or employment services.

### Missing from Care Return Interviews



Supports and safeguards children and young people who run away from care. When a child is found after being missing from care, they must be offered an independent return interview

#### Our Return to Care Coordinator will:

- ✓ Find out why the child has runaway e.g. what the child may be running away from or to (known as push and pull factors)
- ✓ Find out what experiences the child may have encountered whilst they were missing and help them to understand the risks they faced/are facing
- ✓ Help the child feel safe and understand that they have options to prevent future runaways
- ✓ Provide the child with information on how to stay safe should they go missing in the future e.g. helpline numbers

Our Return to Care Coordinators can sometimes be the only person a child trusts.