advocacy focus

Six Reasons to be an Independent Visitor

1. You can make a positive difference to a young person's life at a time when they are easily impressionable and easily led astray. Having a friend and a close mentor can make them less likely to run away from care or to engage in criminal activity.

2. You can make new friends and create unforgettable memories and experiences. Let's not forget that friendship and respect goes two ways!

3. By becoming an Independent Visitor, you join our network of highly trained volunteers. All our volunteers receive regular training and development and support for your professional goals.

4. It is completely flexible. You can fit it in around your own time and work commitments, planning activities and visits at times that suit you and as frequently as frequently as the young person wishes.

5. Your expenses are covered! That's right – we cover all your expenses to visit your young person, leaving one less thing to worry about.

6. You will make a difference in a child's life, whilst having fun! There may be some serious or emotional aspects of being an Independent Visitor, but you both also get to make enjoyable memories!

For more information, email our Volunteer Manager:
admin@advocacyfocus.org.uk

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



Become an Independent Visitor

Could you be someone who makes a difference in a young person's life?

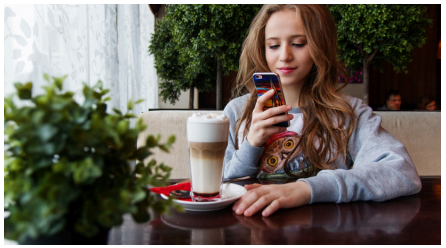


Develop long-term friendships

Be a positive role model

Be there for someone

Motivate and inspire



www.advocacyfocus.org.uk 0300 323 0965

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Independent Visitor Service

Befriending and supporting young people in care

WHAT IS AN INDEPENDENT VISITOR?

An Independent Visitor is a volunteer who befriends a young person in care. It is an increasingly vital and valuable role that can make a positive difference to a child's life. It is reported that Independent Visitors can encourage children to take more productive paths in life.





WHY DO WE NEED INDEPENDENT VISITORS?

An Independent Visitor (IV) is a volunteer who visits and supports a child or young person in care. You are there just for them — to listen, have fun, and make a positive difference to their life.

What You'll Do

- Visit once a month
- Fun activities – such as cinema, shopping and exploring new places or activities together
- Be a positive role model in their life

Young people in care may see professionals on a day-to-day basis but may feel as though they have no one to support and listen to them.

An IV gives young people at least one reliable, trusting relationship that grows over time.

The IV aims to be a steady, constant adult in the young person's life, even when their living situation or social workers change.

"It's extremely rewarding to be an IV looking out for a young person; I think the independent, voluntary nature of the role makes you more approachable."

"One of the best things I did was decide to become an IV."

INDEPENDENT VISITORS SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE BY:

- Developing long-term friendships
- Listening and ensuring they have someone who is there for them
- Encouraging them to express any concerns
- Guiding them through sometimes difficult or confusing times in their life when they need someone to be there the most
- Motivate and inspire them to develop new interests, skills or hobbies
- Take them on outings to places like the cinema or going for a walk
- Encourage educational journeys and development
- Maintain regular contact via phone or email or text
- Looking after their personal safety or welfare

WANT TO BECOME AN INDEPENDENT VISITOR?

What We Offer

- Full training and safeguarding checks
- Reimbursement of travel and activity expenses
- Continuous support from our volunteer coordinator

Requirements

- You must be 18 or over
- Able to commit to at least one visit a month
- Able to commit to at least 18 months of volunteering
- Willing to undergo DBS and reference checks

Each of our volunteers are carefully matched with a young person in care. This can be based on your interests, hobbies and personalities. Contact our Volunteer Co-ordinator for more information – **admin@advocacyfocus.org.uk**