

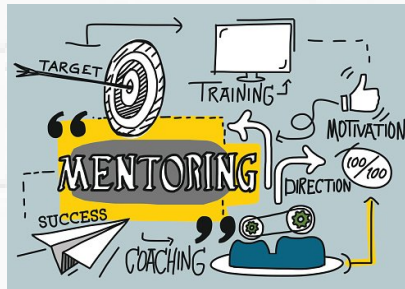
## What is an independent visitor?

The Children's Act 1989 and the Children's and Young Persons Act 2008 require that all Local Authorities offer eligible Children in Care access to an Independent Visitor.

Priority is given to children and young people in care who have little or no contact with their parents or family. The Independent Visitor offers the young person the chance to have their voice heard and receive support outside the professional workers in their lives. All Independent Visitors are volunteers.

## Why does an Independent Visitor do?

- They listen to you and offer positive support
- They meet you usually regularly.
- They support you for a minimum of 1 year
- The relationships can last until you leave care
- Independent Visitor can help you to feedback your worries and fears to professionals, they can also attend meetings that effect you
- Your Independent Visitor helps you to identify goals and then helps you to achieve these goals



## How do independent visitors do this?

The overall purpose of an Independent Visitor is to contribute to your welfare as you are a child in care. They do this by:

- promoting the development of your social, emotional, educational, religious and cultural needs.
- encouraging you to exercise your rights as a child in care and participate in decisions that affect you.
- Independent visitors will help link you with activities, hobbies and local groups that may interest you.
- The support they provide will complement the support provided by your carer and Social Worker

## What if I don't like my independent visitor or my circumstances change?

Project staff go to great lengths to get you the best match possible. You get to meet the Independent Visitor first to see what you think. If you agree to the match you then get 4 sessions to try them out.

If it doesn't work out, that's ok, you can ask for another. You may choose to leave the project at this stage as we understand having an Independent Visitor isn't for everyone.

## What Happens next?

- Speak to your Carer or Social Worker about a referral
- You can also speak to your Independent safeguarding and Reviewing Officer (ISRO)
- Complete a referral form if you are interested
- A project worker will meet you to complete an application form so we are able to match you
- Meet a possible Independent Visitor
- 'Try before you buy', you meet the Independent Visitor for 4 meetings before you commit
- An Independent Visitor will not cost you anything
- You will need to agree to the project rules
- Meet Independent Visitor for a minimum of 1 year or as you feel they are needed

## Who to contact if you have questions:

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# Independent Visitors

