What is an advocate?

Whether you are requiring support to be heard or are thinking about making a complaint, an Advocate will know all about your rights and can make sure your views, wishes and feelings are being heard. This can be with your home/placement, school/college or child protection conference.

What do advocates do?

- They meet you to gain your views
- They listen to you and offer positive support
- They make sure your voice is heard, and can speak on your behalf if you do not feel able to.
- Advise you of your rights and complaints processes
- Help you to contribute to plans that involve you
- Help you identify who is important to you
- Represent you at professional meetings, including reviews and child protection
- Assist you in filling out forms if required

How can they help me?

- Increased self confidence
- A feeling of having a voice
- Input on decisions that affect you
- Empowering you to make positive choices
- Helping ensure that your thoughts and feelings are listened to

Is advocacy confidential?

Yes, advocates cannot share information you give unless you give them permission to share, what you discuss with your advocate is confidential.

Advocates do have to raise concerns about you hurting yourself or if someone is threatening or hurting you. They also must pass on information that might stop somebody else from getting hurt, including if you tell them that you are going to hurt somebody. Finally, they have to share any information that might help to prevent a crime from happening, or that would help catch somebody who has committed a crime.

In these situations, the co-ordinator might have to tell other people, for example the Police or Social Services. They will always try to tell you first if they tell people outside Junction 21 unless it is an emergency and there isn't time.

How do I get an advocate?

- Speak to your parent, carer, social worker, ISRO or an appropriate adult about a referral. Child needs to be 8+
- Contact the Junction 21 Project
- Complete an application form if you are interested
- Meet an Advocate somewhere you are comfortable, dependant on COVID safety this can be face to face or via MS Teams
- Support is tailored to your needs

Who to contact if you have questions

Steve Coggins & Katie Warren

Junction 21
Central Chambers
24-26 Walliscote Road
Weston-super-Mare
BS23 1UP
Tel. 01275 888360/0777617002

Junction21@n-somerset.gov.uk

Junction 21 Advocacy