

INDEPENDENT VISITING

What is an Independent Visitor?

An Independent Visitor (IV) is an adult volunteer who is independent of Social Services. Their role is to establish a supportive and long term relationship with a young person built on trust. They will guide and listen to a young person, helping to build their self-esteem and develop new interests and skills over time.

What is the role of an Independent Visitor?

- To befriend a young person and take them out on monthly visits.
- To provide them with someone to talk to who is independent of the local authority.
- To be a good role model who builds a positive relationship with a young person.
- To help build trust by being a consistent adult presence in a young person's life.
- To spend one on one time with them away from the placement.
- To help build confidence and introduce a young person to new activities and widen their interests.
- To help build self-esteem and resilience over time by developing skills and hobbies.

When might a Young Person benefit from having an IV?

Any young person who is in long-term care and would benefit from having an IV is eligible* for the service. Research suggests that having an IV to spend 1:1 quality time with might be particularly beneficial:

- Where the young person is in a placement which makes it difficult to maintain sufficient contact with family and friends, or has no contact at all.
- Where the young person's well-being would be promoted by the opportunity to establish a relationship with an Independent Visitor
- Where the young person is unable to go out independently
- Where the young person experiences difficulties in building positive relationships
- Where the young person is likely to engage in behaviour which may put them at risk of forming inappropriate relationships.

*Please see Referral Guidance for further information

What do Young People say about having an IV?

- It's made me a better person, I feel I can trust people more.
- Having her as a visitor makes me happier, its gives me the time out I need.
- He really listens to me and we have a laugh.
- She's like my best friend, I know her really well.
- He is calm and relatable and makes me feel good.
- She's helped me understand about other people and to see things from different perspectives.
- I like everything about him, he's awesome, joyful, and always kind.
- She is literally just like me!
- He makes me feel relaxed and helps me feel less stressed.
- She is wonderful and kind.
- Thank you for making me HAPPY.