

INDEPENDENT VISITING – REFERRAL GUIDANCE

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.

Important points to note when making a referral:

1. Independent Visitors are not professional care workers. They cannot act as a skilled Advocate* or provide counselling or therapy for a young person.
2. We understand that a young person may require respite care, however, unfortunately this is not a service that Reconstruct provide.
3. In order to be eligible for the service a young person must be looked after and in long-term care.
4. Given the long term nature of Independent Visiting we are unable to accept referrals for young people who will shortly be turning 18. If the young person is approaching the age of 17 please contact us before completing a referral form.
5. Ideally a young person should be settled in a long term placement, to enable us to match them with an IV who can consistently visit them and develop a relationship over time. Where a young person is in a temporary* placement we would advise waiting before making a referral.
6. A young person placed out of area may be eligible, please contact the team to discuss if a referral is possible.

In any situation where you are unsure if a young person should be referred, we would encourage you to contact the coordinator to discuss before making the referral.

readingvisiting@reconstruct.co.uk

* If you require an Advocate Reconstruct may be able to help. Please contact advocacy.reading@reconstruct.co.uk

** This is to avoid a situation where a match may have to end when a young person moves placement and the IV is unable to continue with visits.

What happens once a referral is made?

- One of our Coordinator will contact you about our current service delivery timescales – considering any specific requirements for the young person.
- A Coordinator will visit the young person to tell them about the service, find out more about them and what type of visitor they would like. This helps ensure we are matching them with the right IV who shares similar interests or has experiences which will benefit the young person.
- Once a suitable volunteer has been identified they will be introduced to the young person. With the young person's agreement they will be matched with the IV.
- Once matched the coordinator overseeing the match will notify the Social Worker.

Please get in contact with the coordinator if:

- You have any questions regarding the referral or would like to discuss it before completing the form.
- You require an update on the status of the referral.

- There are any changes in the young person's circumstances. For example, a placement move, changes to the risk assessment or care plan.
- The young person no longer wants an Independent Visitor.