



reconstruct

# RECONSTRUCT, OFFERS ADVOCACY SERVICES TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Advocacy is helping someone have their say, representing views, feelings and wishes to ensure they are fully considered by decision makers. Advocacy is empowering children and young people to ensure their rights are respected.

Advocacy is about making sure that children and young people are given a voice, that they get the help they need when they need it and making sure that someone is always ready to listen to them and act quickly to support.

## ABOUT OUR SERVICE:

Reconstruct are a separate service, completely independent of a Local Authority. Our role is to support and relay the views and wishes of the child or young person and to ensure their voice is represented.

There are many reasons why children and young people have an advocate; they might request an advocate themselves, or may be referred by a Carer, a Social Worker or another Adult who feels that they should have access to Independent Advocacy Support.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO MAKE A REFERRAL, CONTACT US:



0800 0209 858



ADVOCACY.SURREY@RECONSTRUCT.CO.UK



VISIT [INFO.RECONSTRUCT.CO.UK/SURREYPORTAL](http://INFO.RECONSTRUCT.CO.UK/SURREYPORTAL)



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## RECONSTRUCT, OFFERS ADVOCATES TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Our Advocates work closely with young people to build strong relationships, supporting them to discuss and put forward their views and feelings. Our Advocates help them with attending meetings, understanding processes and procedures, and communicating their thoughts and wishes, no matter what these may be.

### OUR ADVOCATES CAN HELP YOUNG PEOPLE IN YOUR CARE BY:

- ✓ Meeting the child or young person before any Child Protection Conferences or Looked After Review Meetings.
- ✓ Explaining what happens at these meetings, who will be there and what is likely to happen.
- ✓ Helping the child or young person understand and navigate processes, assisting them to better understand why certain processes exist and why others may be worried about them.
- ✓ Listening to what they think and how they feel.
- ✓ Attend meetings on the child or young person's behalf, or with them, and ensuring they have their say.
- ✓ Helping children and young people understand their rights and giving them the support to say what they want to happen.
- ✓ Making any relevant phone calls or writing letters to support children and young people through the process.

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Part of the Antaser Group



Advocacy facilitates the participation of children and young people in decisions that affect their lives. Professionals that understand the value of independent advocacy can build better relationships with the children they work with to achieve better outcomes.

#### ADVOCACY FOR CHILDREN IN CARE:

- ✓ Children, Foster Carers, Social Workers, Birth Family, IROs or other Professionals can refer.
- ✓ No young person requesting a service will be refused a service.
- ✓ Advocates support children around their meetings – child in care reviews, PEPs, etc.
- ✓ Advocates support young people to have their wishes and feelings heard.
- ✓ Advocates support informal problem solving and help prevent concerns turning into complaints.
- ✓ Advocacy is child-led and independent, children can opt out at any time.
- ✓ Advocacy can be empowering for young people and for professionals who can make better decisions by listening and responding to children.
- ✓ Young people can access advocacy as a care leaver until the age of 25.

#### CHILD PROTECTION ADVOCACY:

- ✓ Reconstruct provides advocacy to all children aged 10 or over subject to a child protection conference.
- ✓ Children under 10 can also be offered the service at the Chair's or Social Worker's discretion.
- ✓ Parents usually need to give permission for their children to receive an advocacy service.
- ✓ Children can opt out.
- ✓ Advocates can support children to attend their conferences, to send in their wishes and feelings or to have their advocate attend on their behalf.
- ✓ The advocate will also feedback to them after the conference
- ✓ Referrals to this service are made through the safeguarding admin teams or directly by Social Workers.
- ✓ The note takers receive copies of children's views and a feelings report (with their permission) to include in the child's file.
- ✓ Feedback forms are available electronically and will be sent to children, young people and professionals.

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