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## **One Minute Guide:**

### **Advocacy support for Young People in Child Protection Conferences**

#### **What is it?**

All children **aged 12 and above** who are the subjects of a Child Protection Conference are **entitled** to the support of an Advocate. An Advocate helps the young person to understand the concerns raised by professionals and supports them to express their views to the conference regarding what has happened and what they need to feel safe.

#### **Why are we doing it?**

- To promote, support and increase young people's right to real and substantive participation in child protection conferences.
- Research tells us that listening to young people helps to keep them safe and has a positive impact on child protection planning.
- Young people's views can be promoted more effectively by having an 'independent' adult champion (in the form of an Advocate) who can help them to:-
  - participate confidently at child protection conference and
  - ensure their wishes and views are heard.
- To date 3 young people have made fresh safeguarding disclosures to the Advocate that were not previously known.
- Research and good practice have demonstrated that by having gained young people's views, the Conference is able to achieve more child relevant risk assessments and protection plans.

#### **When is it happening?**

The service has been operational for 12 months.

#### **Where is it happening?**

All children aged 12 and above who are the subjects of a CPC should be offered this service.

## **Who are the key players?**

- The Deputy Children's Rights Advocate provides this service.
- Social Workers should make contact by telephone or e-mail to request the service on behalf of eligible young people (see below).

Social Workers will be asked to complete a bullet point, child friendly summary for the young person (we have produced a pro forma to guide you), outlining the concerns that have led to the Conference. The Advocate will use this to help the young person to understand the concerns and to seek their views on what they need to feel safe.

Social Workers will still be required to produce a comprehensive report for the adults in the Conference.

## **How do I find out more?**

One of the Children's Rights Advocates will be happy to attend team meetings or to respond to inquiries, including concerns, via email or telephone.

E-mail: [Childrens.Rights@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:Childrens.Rights@redbridge.gov.uk)

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