
Overview

What is this unit about?

The role of an independent advocate is not the same as that of someone advocating on behalf of someone they work with. An independent advocate must reflect the wishes of the child or young person for whom they are an advocate, even where there may be a conflict with the 'best interests' of the child or young person. Independent advocates are most likely to work with children who are looked after, but may also represent children or young people in other circumstances. This unit also appears in the Health and Social Care and Children's Care Learning and Development national occupational Standards

Who is this unit for?

This unit is for you if you work as an independent advocate for children and young people

The elements are:

1. Develop effective relationships
2. Plan and prepare for advocacy
3. Provide advocacy services

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Performance criteria

Develop effective relationships

You must be able to:

- P1 clearly explain the scope and boundaries of your role
- P2 clearly explain the limits of confidentiality and ensure the confidentiality of any information you are given within any legal or organisational requirements
- P3 use effective communication skills to promote the confidence and trust of the child or young person for whom you are advocating
- P4 show empathy and understanding to the child or young person for whom you are advocating
- P5 respect and promote the rights of the child or young person for whom you are advocating
- P6 develop effective working relationships with other relevant professionals

Plan and prepare for advocacy

You must be able to:

- P7 work with the child or young person for whom you are advocating to prepare a detailed plan for the advocacy
- P8 listen carefully to the views and wishes of the child or adult
- P9 explore options and potential consequences of any courses of action
- P10 obtain clear instructions from the child or young person concerned about what views you are to represent and the outcomes they are seeking from the advocacy
- P11 clearly consider the possible responses and the next steps that will follow
- P12 explore the extent to which negotiation and compromise is acceptable
- P13 obtain agreement before obtaining any additional information from other sources and store it safely
- P14 ensure that all other parties and other professionals are aware of your role and its boundaries

Provide advocacy services

You must be able to:

- P15 check that the child or young person for whom you are advocating is still content with the plan
- P16 represent the agreed views, feelings and position accurately
- P17 explain the desired outcome clearly
- P18 negotiate any compromises within the limits agreed in the plan
- P19 ensure that the child or young person understands the outcome that has been achieved and the consequences
- P20 review the outcome/s with the child or young person and consider any further steps
- P21 record the process and outcomes of the advocacy in the required legal and organisational format
- P22 review your own performance throughout the advocacy and identify any

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areas that need further development

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 legal and organisational requirements on equality, diversity, discrimination, rights, confidentiality and sharing of information when undertaking advocacy
- K2 how to ensure that children and adults are able to identify the outcomes they want from an advocacy service
- K3 how to ensure that you and others for whom you are responsible protect the rights and the interests of individuals during advocacy
- K4 how to manage the ethical dilemmas and conflicts that may arise
- K5 how to set boundaries when working as an advocate and the importance of maintaining
- K6 the limits and boundaries of confidentiality
- K7 how to safeguard children and vulnerable adults from harm
- K8 policies, procedures, guidance and protocols with the other organisations and professions with whom you work with that are relevant to advocacy
- K9 the UK legislative framework relevant to the country and role and setting in which you work, and how to work safely and effectively within it when providing advocacy
- K10 the way Acts of Parliament and regulations have an impact upon current national and local good practice guidance, codes of practice and organisational policy and procedures for advocacy
- K11 how to recognise issues which are contrary to the 'spirit' or intention of the legislative framework and where to go to seek advice on any areas of concern
- K12 the different models of advocacy and how and where different models are used
- K13 the nature and effects of social exclusion
- K14 the reasons that children or adults want the services of an advocate
- K15 who is eligible for the services of an independent advocate
- K16 the nature of organisations and systems and how to use them effectively
- K17 the limits of your role and how and when to make a referral to another professional
- K18 how to use complaints systems

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