

Advocacy support for parents attending Child Protection case conferences

Introduction

We understand that child protection case conferences can be difficult meetings for parents and that it is not always easy for you to speak up and have your thoughts and opinions heard. We want all parents taking part in case conferences to be able to express their views and be fully involved in making decisions.

To make sure of this, your social worker will talk to you about whether you would like to have an advocate with you at the initial case conference.

What is an advocate?

An advocate is someone who is independent of Camden who can attend meetings with you to support you and help you to have your say or speak up on your behalf if you prefer this.

Why have an advocate?

Sometimes, you may find it difficult to give speak out and express your views in meetings or you might feel that people aren't listening to you or taking your views into account. You may disagree with decisions, or be unhappy about the services being provided to support you. It's important that you feel able to speak out at meetings and you may find it easier if you have someone such as a relative, friend or professional who can act as an advocate to support you.

Who can be an advocate?

Anyone that you trust to help you can be an advocate. It can be a family member or friend, or a professional who works with you. If you don't know anyone who can be your advocate, you can access an independent coordinator from the Family Group Conference Service. For more information speak to your social worker or contact Tim Fisher, Family Group Co-ordinator, on **020 7974 1051** email: tim.fisher@camden.gov.uk

How can an advocate help?

An advocate can:

- Represent your views and speak up for you at meetings to those who make decisions about your child
- Remind you what was said at the meeting to help you plan what to do next
- Give you information and advice about your rights
- Support you to make a complaint.

If you would like an advocate to support you at a Child protection case conference, please talk to your social worker before the case conference.