

How do I become a parent advocate?

If you are interested in becoming a parent advocate or would like any further information, contact the Family Inclusion Coordinator on **07714 073719** or **parentadvocacy@southwark.gov.uk**

All parent advocates are required to have an enhanced DBS check.

Access to records

Under data protection legislation, you have the right to access any of your personal information which is held by the council. To make a request for your records, please email: **accessinfo@southwark.gov.uk** or alternatively you can write to us. If you require any help in making your request, please speak to your social worker or allocated lead professional. If you are concerned with how the council is processing your data, please contact our Data Protection Officer by email on **dpo@southwark.gov.uk** or telephone on **020 7525 5000**. More information about your rights is available on our website, or via the Information Commissioner **www.ico.org.uk**

What to do if you are unhappy with the service

If, for any reason, you are dissatisfied with the service you have received from us, you can:

- Contact our service on **parentadvocacy@southwark.gov.uk**
- Make a formal complaint by contacting Southwark's complaints officer on **020 7525 3977** or email **sscomplaints@southwark.gov.uk**

Contact us

For more information visit our website at: **www.southwark.gov.uk/parentadvocacy**

Or contact us by:
Telephone: **07714 073719**
Email: **parentadvocacy@southwark.gov.uk**

Southwark Parent to Parent Peer Advocacy

Use your experience of children's services to support other parents by volunteering as a parent advocate



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www.southwark.gov.uk/parentadvocacy

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What is a parent advocate?

Parent advocate is a voluntary role for parents/carers who have had previous experience of children's services. Parent advocates receive training to support and advocate for other parents.

Parent advocates use their own experience of working with children's services to help other parents express their views, understand their rights and work with professionals to receive the right support for them and their family.

What do parent advocates do?

Parent advocates support parents and carers at Child Protection Conferences (CPCs) and other meetings with children's services and help them to:

- Express their views and concerns
- Access information and services
- Understand their rights and responsibilities
- Explore choices and options.

Because parent advocates understand what it is like to have professionals involved with their family, they can:

- Provide emotional support
- Help other parents understand the process and what to expect
- Discuss the professional report and help parents prepare for the CPC/meeting
- Ensure the parent's views are heard at the CPC/meeting.

Who can become a parent advocate?

Anyone who has previous experience of children's services could become a parent advocate. You could have experience of:

Youth Offending
Family Early Help
Child In Need
Child Protection
Care proceedings
Leaving Care
Special Guardianship
Foster Care
All Age Disabilities

Full training is provided to parent advocates, but there are some skills that you will need:

- Good communication skills (written & oral)
- Good listening skills
- Ability to build positive relationships and provide emotional support
- Working with professionals to help another parent
- Flexibility to attend meetings with parents.

What training and support is provided?

We provide thorough training to make sure you are fully prepared to advocate for parents.

Training includes:

- Advocacy skills and the role of the parent advocate
- Child protection framework and parents' rights
- Child Protection Conferences in Southwark
- Understanding professionals' concerns
- Safeguarding
- Data protection.

The advocacy module of our training is accredited by the Open College Network at Level 2, which can be used towards further courses.

We provide one to one supervision to support parent advocates in their role. We also hold regular group supervision for all parent advocates while training and once working with parents.

