

National Independent Visitor Standards



NATIONAL
INDEPENDENT
VISITOR
NETWORK



"I would like to thank my IV for all the support and happiness she has given me."

What is an Independent Visitor or IV?

"An Independent Visitor is a volunteer who is someone who is there for you if you need them. They are there to listen, advise and support you."

Definition by a young person who had a IV

Why have we made National Independent Visitor Standards?

The Children Act 1989 is part of our law, to keep children healthy, safe and prepared for adulthood. Independent Visitor Services are part of this.

We want all children and young people to understand their rights around Independent Visitors.

Read on to find out what you can expect from a good Independent Visitor Service and how you can help to make your local service even better!

Barnardo's Registered Charity Nos. 216250 and SC037605 18836SO17

We appreciate the excellent input from the young people at Doncaster Children's Services Trust and NYAS IV Services in North and South Wales in helping us to re-word the original National Independent Visitor Standards.

We would also like to acknowledge the Tudor Trust who are funding the National Independent Visitor Development Project and the hosting organisation, Barnardo's.

Thank you to all the children who contributed their quotes.



the
Tudortrust

1

Children and young people

- Your social worker should help you understand your right to an Independent Visitor.
- Social Services should spread the word about their Independent Visitor Service.

"I am able to talk to my Independent Visitor about different problems. We also have a laugh together."



2

Children and young people

- Your Independent Visitor Service should listen to your opinions.
- You can choose if you want an Independent Visitor, decide on things to do together and if the relationship ends you can say how you would like to say goodbye.



Short Independent Visitor Film coming soon!



3

Children and young people

- Your Independent Visitor will not tell anyone the things you tell them unless it is to keep you or someone else safe.

"My Independent Visitor is someone to talk to, not involved with anyone else...it's private."



4

Children and young people

- You should have the chance to help your Independent Visitor Service and say what you want things to be like for you.
- Your talents and ideas could improve how your Independent Visitor Service is run.



"I think an adult should volunteer to be an IV because it could help a young child or young adult like me to be more confident."

5

Volunteer Independent Visitors

- Your Independent Visitor will go through checks and be carefully selected to make sure they are the right person for the role.
- They will commit to being your Independent Visitor for at least one year.



"Remember your volunteer is doing this because they want to not 'cos they have to!"

6

Volunteer Independent Visitors

- Your Independent Visitor should get support and training before and during the time they volunteer so they can be a good Independent Visitor.



You could be involved in training or interviewing volunteers for your local service.



7

The relationship

- The Independent Visitor Service should be explained to you, including how you'll meet and how you'll say goodbye.

"Having an IV is great because they are an extra person to talk to and someone who you can be around comfortably."



8

The relationship

- Your Independent Visitor will be a friend and build a trusting relationship by visiting you regularly.

"Having a volunteer means a lot to me. I've had a volunteer for 7 years this December and we still see each other and plan to go out."



9

The relationship

- You should be given opportunities to say what you think about your Independent Visitor to make sure you are safe and happy with your relationship.

"To make sure you have a good match you need to let your social worker or IV coordinator know what you want."



10 Management

- Your Independent Visitor is a volunteer, this means they are not paid for the time they spend with you.
- Your Independent Visitor will be separate from your social services department so that they can stay independent.



Click here for the original National Independent Visitor Standards and Best Practice Toolkit.



11 Management

- There are rules and guidelines in place to keep you, your Independent Visitor and your Independent Visitor Coordinator safe when working together.

"The best thing about my IV is that she is very understanding and very confidential."



12 Management

- Your Independent Visitor Service should have enough funding, management and staff to support more children and young people to have an Independent Visitor.
- These should be provided by the local authority.

"I go swimming, bowling, eat out and play football with my Independent Visitor."



13 Management

- The Independent Visitor Service should follow Equality and Diversity guidelines and not treat anyone unfairly.

"She made me forget about being in care and brought me up on my down days."



14 Management

- You and your Independent Visitor have a right to complain about your Independent Visitor Service and it should be easy to do.
- Your complaints should be dealt with seriously and quickly.



Ask for an Independent Visitor in your LAC review or talk to your social worker.



