

For more information about our policies please visit our website.

If you would like the support of an advocate, please show this booklet to your child's social worker. The social worker can contact us and request a copy of our information booklet for professionals.

If you would like advice about your situation, or you want to speak to us about our service, please call our **free phone confidential help line:**

0808 801 0366

Opening hours
9.30am to 3.00pm
Monday to Friday

www.frg.org.uk

Professional Parental Advocacy Services in Child Welfare

Spot Purchasing Guide for Parents

Since 2003 Family Rights Group has offered an independent professional advocacy service for families involved with child protection services. This has included advocating for families who were attending child protection conferences in four London Boroughs.

Children's Services Departments in London can now 'buy us in' or 'spot purchase' us to advocate for you at meetings such as at a child protection conference, family support planning meeting, looked after child review, or we can provide advocacy support for you through a complaints process. Your child's social worker would need to agree with a manager exactly how much advocacy time they are willing to buy in.

What is an advocate?

Family Rights Group advocates have expert knowledge of child welfare law and social work practice. They can discuss the social worker's concerns about your child and explain the process or steps that social workers may be taking and any written documents. The advocate can advise you about your rights and options. The advocate can help you speak up so that your views are heard during the meeting.

What parents say about us

Most parents who have used our service find us helpful:

Yes I could [trust the advocate] because they train for many years and have years of experience

Parent

It built my confidence because she spoke on my behalf when I was unable to. I was so emotional at the meetings and she fought my corner

Parent

Having an advocate made me feel more confident as a person and as a parent

Parent

How will you help me?

We will accompany you to your meeting, explain procedures and support you to express your views.

Our advocates will:

- **advise you** about your legal rights, Children's Services processes and explain them to you.
- **go to important meetings with you** help you to express your views, and they will treat you fairly and with respect.

Our policies

- We will ask you to sign a written agreement with us that will explain how long we will work as your advocate.
- To avoid any conflict of interests, Family Rights Group will not represent you if another family member is already a client of our service in connection with the same problem/issue.
- We have developed a code for professional advocates working with families, and a set of standards for professional advocates. We can give you copies of these.
- We have a confidentiality and protection of children policy.