

`An IV is:

- A friend.
- Child focused.
- There to provide guidance and support.
- Able to reflect the young person's views where appropriate.
- There to promote the young person's needs.

An IV is not:

- A substitute parent or carer.
- Someone who just provides treats.
- A skilled professional advisor.



Black Country Independent Visitors Service

This project works in partnership with the local authorities of Dudley, Walsall, Wolverhampton, Telford & Wrekin and Sandwell.

What is an Independent Visitor?

An Independent Visitor (IV) befriends a young person who is looked after by the local authority – either in a Residential unit or with foster carers – and who has little or no contact with their own parents.

By becoming one of our volunteers you can offer friendship and support to a young person as someone who is outside of the care system.

What does an IV do?

- An IV is expected to visit the young person on a regular and reliable basis.
- An IV offers friendship and support – this may include encouraging and advising the young person on exercising their rights if and when appropriate.
- An IV can enable a young person to develop their interest, sharing in experiences and offering encouragement.
- An IV must be prepared to offer long term commitment to the young person.

Who can be an IV?

People from all sections of the community are needed. However you should be:

- Aged 18 or over.
- Able to relate well to young people.
- Prepared to undergo training.
- Willing to offer a commitment to a young person.

What do IVs get?

- Training.
- Support from a fully qualified member of the project staff.
- All reasonable out of pocket expenses.
- Valuable practical experience of working with children and young people.
- The chance to make a real difference to the life of a child or a young person.