



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Listening to
my ideas
and opinions

Telling
my story

Helping
me get
heard

Someone
who's there
for me

Independent Professional Advocacy

**National standards and
outcomes framework**

A consultation for children and young people



Sometimes children and young people need help or support to get their ideas and opinions listened to. This is called advocacy.



The Welsh Government wants to make sure that all children and young people get the help and support they need, when they need it.

i **An advocate** is someone who can help you to be heard when you feel like your opinions are not being listened to.

i **Advocacy services** give you encouragement and support when you need it. They can also connect you to people who can be your advocate.

By law all local authorities in Wales must have advocacy services for children and young people to use.

Advocacy services can help by

- ✓ Speaking up for you.
- ✓ Making sure that you get your rights and that you are respected.
- ✓ Making sure that you are heard in the decisions that affect your life.

The UNCRC

(United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child) is an international agreement that has 42 articles.

We have put this at the heart of all work we do.

Active offer

Just having advocacy services available isn't enough.

Sometimes we need to meet with children and young people to explain what these services are. We make sure they know what's on offer and how we're able to help them. This is called an active offer.

An active offer must be made to:

- ✓ Children in care.
- ✓ Young people leaving care.
- ✓ Children and young people who need extra support.

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Wales has lots of good advocacy services but we want to make sure that all children and young people get the same high level of advocacy service no matter where they live.

To make sure this happens we have a new framework (steps and standards). This sets out what advocacy services and local authorities should do and shows us the outcomes we want in children and young people's lives.

This booklet tells you about this framework and its 5 sets of Standards and Outcomes.

We want to know what you think.

When we need help we need to be able to find it quick and easy.



Who does what?

Local authorities often get organisations to provide advocacy services in their area.

Advocacy Providers

All organisations that run advocacy services for local authorities must

- ✓ Have up-to-date policies.
- ✓ Know how to collect information and evidence safely.
- ✓ Report on how they are following the new framework.
- ✓ Train all their advocates.

Advocacy Commissioners

choose, monitor and check on the advocacy providers to make sure they are running advocacy services right.








Good quality advocacy that's easy to find and easy to use

Standards – advocacy services should

- ✓ Give help and advice quickly.
- ✓ Be well advertised.
- ✓ Be delivered in places and times that all children and young people can use including those with disabilities.
- ✓ Have an answer phone service available in Welsh and English that explains when someone will get in touch and details of how to get help immediately if it's needed.
- ✓ Set out an action plan that includes appointment times and updates.
- ✓ Have well trained staff that understand their job.
- ✓ Gather information and evidence on how they are working and listen to the views of children and young people so they can improve.



Outcomes – what this should look like for children and young people.

-  We are able to feedback on services and see them improve.
-  We have advocacy services that are easy to find and use.
-  We can see what advocacy services are available.
-  We all can use advocacy services.
-  We can get support at any time.
-  We understand how advocacy services will support us.
-  We get staff that are trained to help us.

The internet and social media are good ways to let us know what is out there.






2 Children and young people are kept safe and have their privacy respected

Standards – advocacy services should

- ✓ Respect privacy and work to keep everything confidential unless they feel children and young people are in danger.
- ✓ Make sure every child is protected and kept safe.
- ✓ Not share information without explaining why and will work to keep the advocacy relationship a good one.
- ✓ Have clear, easy to use ways to complain when there is a problem or issue.
- ✓ Make sure there is help and advice when children and young people feel advocacy services are not dealing with their complaint.



Outcomes - what this should look like for children and young people.

-  We understand advocacy services confidentiality policy so we can choose whether to use them.
-  We are protected and safe.
-  We can make decisions and get support from an advocate we trust.
-  We can complain if there's a problem.
-  If we feel that we have not been listened to, we will get information and advice on how to take it further.

It's really important that advocates keep what we say private.






3 Children and young people are treated with respect and valued for their differences

Standards – advocacy services should

- ✓ Make sure no one is treated badly or faces discrimination against them because of age, gender, race, culture, religion, language, disability, sexual orientation or nationality.
- ✓ Tell children and young people about their rights including their right to be treated equally.
- ✓ Respect children and young people's culture, religious and language needs.
- ✓ Make sure all children and young people know that they can get support including those from hard to reach groups.
- ✓ Make sure they support disabled children and young people who find it hard to communicate.



Outcomes - what this should look like for children and young people.

-  We get advocacy services without discrimination.
-  We know our rights and get support to challenge discrimination.
-  We will be respected and able to get help in the language we choose.
-  Everyone can get support from advocacy services.
-  Disabled children get the support they need.

We need to be able to trust the people who we are talking to.

4 Children and young people get support and have their opinions listened to

Standards – advocacy services should

- ✓ Champion children's rights.
- ✓ Make it clear they are funded and managed independently from commissioners so they can be checked on.
- ✓ Give children and young people all the information they need to help them explore their options and make decisions.
- ✓ Support children and young people to make complaints.
- ✓ Have up-to-date lists of legal advice services.
- ✓ Make sure children and young people know their rights to change their advocate.
- ✓ Support children and young people to speak on their own, with an advocate or have an advocate speak for them.
- ✓ Help children and young people prepare what they want to say directly to the people who make decisions about their lives.
- ✓ Champion children's rights with all professionals and adults.
- ✓ Listen to feedback and keep improving how the service works.

Outcomes - what this should look like for children and young people.

-  We will have our views listened to and our rights respected.
-  We know advocacy services are independent and will be checked on.
-  We have the information we need to make decisions.
-  We know our right to make a complaint when we need to.
-  We are supported to get legal advice when we need it.
-  We can change our advocate if we want to.
-  We know that advocacy services will help us be heard in whatever way we choose.
-  We feel supported, prepared and confident to speak up.
-  We have our rights championed.

It's really important we all get support to say what we need to say and be listened to!




5 Children and young people can take part in the design, planning and rating of advocacy services

Standards – advocacy services should

- ✓ Make it easy for children and young people take part and have a say about how advocacy services work.
- ✓ Support children and young people to have a say in how services are planned, designed, delivered, checked and how they employ and train staff.
- ✓ Ask as many different children and young people as they can about how services should work.



Outcomes - what this should look like for children and young people.

-  We can have a say about advocacy services.
-  We are empowered and are involved in making advocacy services better.
-  We can all get involved and have an opinion.

We use advocacy services, we see things that aren't working just as much as an adult does and our ideas can make them better!

? Questions

Thanks for reading this

Please answer the questions and send your answers to:

takingsocialcareforward@wales.gsi.gov.uk

or
Safeguarding and Advocacy Branch
Social Services and Integration directorate
Welsh Government
Rhodfa Padarn Aberystwyth
Ceredigion, SY23 3UR

by 23 June 2017



1 Will this framework help advocacy providers and advocacy commissioners know what young people want from advocacy services?

Yes

No

Don't Know

2 Will this framework help deliver better outcomes for children and young people who use advocacy services?

Yes

No

Don't Know

3 Will this framework help advocacy commissioners monitor and check advocacy services?

Yes No Don't Know

4 Do you think the active offer of advocacy support will help children and young people?

Yes No Don't Know

5 Do you think this framework will help all children and young people get advocacy services no matter what their background?

Yes No Don't Know

6 The Welsh Government is interested in understanding whether the proposals in this consultation document regarding this guidance will have an impact on groups with protected characteristics.

Protected characteristics are: Age; Disability; Gender reassignment; Marriage and civil partnership; Pregnancy and maternity; Race, religion and belief; Sex, and sexual orientation. Do you think that the proposals in this consultation will have any positive impacts on groups with protected characteristics? If so, which and why/why not?

7 We would like to know your views on the effects that the guidance would have on the Welsh language, specifically on:
i) opportunities for people to use Welsh; and

7 ii) on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English. What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be eased?

8 Do you think we have left anything out?

Yes

No

Don't Know