

“Children need at least one person in their life that thinks the sun rises and sets on them, who delights in their existence, and loves them unconditionally”

This quote by Pamela Leo might make us think ‘of course’, but not all children have this.

There are now over 600 children and young people in care – the highest this number has ever been. Some of these will have had experienced things in their short lives that we cannot imagine. We can’t fix this, but we can help by providing safe adults who show consistency, care and give happy childhood memories.



Route1 Advocacy and Independent Visitors service supports children and young people who are in care or have a social worker. They do this by matching volunteers with young people as either short term Advocates or longer-term Independent Visitors.

Children in care are placed in foster or residential homes across Somerset, and at times out of county. All of these children have a right to the same support.

Independent Visitors

These volunteers make a long-term commitment to one child in care. They visit the child once or twice each month to build a trusting, supportive relationship and friendship that can sometimes last many years. This can bring life-changing experiences and opportunities to a child or young person – and their Independent Visitor!



Advocates

Volunteers work alongside individual children to ensure their voices are heard, and their wishes and feelings are considered when decisions are being made which affect them. Each child’s support is usually short term and there is no expectation of a long-term commitment to a particular child.



A recent trainee volunteer said, “I started out thinking ‘what on earth can require 5 days of training?’ I now know why and think you have it just right.”

Your life experience will be highly valued, and you will be trained and supported in developing key skills. Your volunteering can be arranged to suit your availability.



For more information about Route 1 Advocacy and Independent Visitors, you can contact us by emailing: route1advocacy@somerset.gov.uk, calling 01749 822801 and our website is www.route1advocacy.co.uk



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