



**Volunteer and  
make a difference to  
a young person's life**



**Your time is one of the most precious gifts you can give**

**NYAS** (National Youth Advocacy Service) is a leading rights based charity ensuring we listen to what children and young people want, care about what they say and do everything we can to empower them to have a voice.

We ensure their wishes and feelings are expressed and acted upon to improve their situation and help them build a better future.

NYAS is the largest national provider of Independent Visitor Services across England and Wales so we have lots of experience of supporting volunteers in this rewarding role.

We would like to expand our national network of Independent Visitors and hope this leaflet gives you the information to help you decide if you want to join our team.

Becoming an Independent Visitor can be very rewarding for you and life changing for a young person in care, being a consistent and supportive person in their life, helping them learn to trust, have fun and grow.

**Helpline 0808 808 1001**

## What does an Independent Visitor do?

An Independent Visitor is a volunteer who befriends and develops a long-term friendship with a young person in care.

This can involve helping young people develop new interests, skills and hobbies or going on outings such as to the cinema, bowling or just a walk in the park.

The volunteers are called 'Independent Visitors' because they are a truly 'independent' person outside the care system giving the young person continuity, which is something not always possible with changing carers and social workers.



**Volunteering with NYAS has been an amazing experience for me and my young person. I have seen a massive change in their life from starting school and entering the care system to finishing school with good GCSE's**

## Who can be an Independent Visitor?

We are looking for adults of all ages and from all walks of life who would like to make a significant and positive difference to the life of a young person.

## Do I need any special experience?

No specific formal qualifications are required. All we ask is that you are open minded, patient, responsible and have a good sense of humour with the ability to relate well to young people and have a genuine interest in their well-being.

Every young person in care has different needs but is carefully matched so that they have some common interests with the Independent Visitor.



## What time and commitment do I need to give?

We ask that you are willing to commit to a few hours once a month for a minimum of two years and be a consistent and trusted friend in a young person's life.

Many young people in the care system have experienced repeated changes and often you will be the only person in their life that is not paid to be with them.

## What support will I receive?

Young people who want an Independent Visitor may be facing difficulties and situations you may not be familiar with which is why you will receive regular one to one support from your local NYAS Co-ordinator.

You will also be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses. This includes activities undertaken with your young person and an allowance for travel expenses.

Any necessary training will be provided.



## How do you check volunteers?

To make sure all of the volunteers we recruit are suitable for the role, you must undergo a clear and comprehensive selection process involving interviews, reference checks and training. We will carry out an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring) check to ensure the safeguarding of young people and volunteers.

## How do I register my interest?

Please contact us with your details (including a phone number)  
Email [volunteering@nyas.net](mailto:volunteering@nyas.net) or telephone **0808 808 1001**

Alternatively please visit our website  
[www.nyas.net/services/independent-visitors/](http://www.nyas.net/services/independent-visitors/)  
and complete the online volunteer registration form.

*Thank you for your support!*



**My Independent Visitor helps me have fun  
and forget about being in care which has  
helped boost my self-confidence**

QUOTE FROM A YOUNG PERSON

[www.nyas.net](http://www.nyas.net)

Registered Charity No: 1012485

**nyas**  
national youth  
advocacy service