



# Advocacy Service

for Children and  
Young People in Care



empowering people in care

# We are EPIC!

EPIC, empowering people in care, is an independent Children's Rights organisation which supports children and young people who are in care or who have care experience. EPIC's Advocacy Service can help you to know your rights and have your voice heard while you are in care.

## Let's Talk About YOUR Rights

Do you know that all children and young people have rights? Ireland is a **member of** the United Nations **and in 1992 Ireland became part of** the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. **Under this Convention, anyone under the age of 18 has the right to:**

- Give their opinions freely on issues that affect them
- Share with others what they learn, think and feel
- Have their privacy respected
- Be protected from violence, abuse and being neglected by anyone who looks after them
- Be looked after properly by people who respect them

## EPIC's Advocacy Service Supports Your Rights By:

- Listening to you
- Respecting your views
- Helping you to speak up so that you are heard
- Informing you of your rights
- Helping you be part of the decisions that are being made about your life
- Finding out answers to any questions you may have
- Helping you understand the reasons decisions are made about your time in care
- Understanding the complaints system if you are not happy with a decision being made

## What is Advocacy?

Advocacy is about having your say, but not necessarily having your way

## Let's Talk About Care

Do you know that, on average each year, there are **6,000** children and young people in the care of TUSLA – The Child & Family Agency?

Therefore, EPIC estimates one child in every primary school and four young people in every secondary school in Ireland are living in care.

Young people in care are cared for by their extended family, by foster carers, in children's residential centres, or special placements.



## How can an Advocate Help? With Your Consent, your Advocate...

Can assist you to write a letter  
describing how you are feeling  
about a certain situation

Can speak to somebody on  
your behalf

Can attend a meeting with  
you, or on your behalf

Can support you to speak up  
about decisions in your life

Can find out information for you

Can help you to understand what  
is being said



## Remember!!

YOU decide who your Advocate will talk to and what information they will share.

## Confidentiality & Advocacy

- Advocates **do not** have access to private information about you
- Advocates **will not** pass on information you give them to other people **without your consent**. However, if you tell us something that concerns **your safety** or that of another person, we may have to speak to someone else. If this is the case, we will let you know
- Advocates **will only** speak to your carers or professionals **with your consent**
- Advocates **will always** let you know what we discuss with other people.

## How do YOU get an Advocate?

It is **your choice** if you would like a referral for advocacy. You can do this yourself or ask somebody to do this for you with **your consent**.

### A referral can be made by:

Completing the under 18's Online Advocacy Referral Forms @ <https://www.epiconline.ie/advocacy-forms/>

Or by phoning 01-8727661

## Follow us on Social Media!



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**Twitter** @epicireland

## Contact EPIC at

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