



Children and Young People who Witness Family Violence

A Guide to the Role of the Child and Young People's Advocate

Information for Providers

THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO WITNESS FAMILY VIOLENCE INITIATIVE HELPS ENSURE THE NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AFFECTED BY FAMILY VIOLENCE ARE APPROPRIATELY ADDRESSED.

The initiative recognises that children and young people are always affected when there is family violence present in the home.

The initiative is managed by Family and Community Services and provides:

- forty-five full-time advocates nationwide who play an essential role in the response to children and young people affected by family violence
- an established infrastructure for advocates and their host agencies through Jigsaw, a national organisation that supports providers who deliver services for children and young people affected by child harm, neglect and family violence
- support and education counselling services for children and young people funded by Child Youth and Family Services.

This document provides information for providers in the family violence sector who are considering hosting an advocate in their agency.

Effect of Family Violence on Children and Young People

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE CAN BE SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTED BY FAMILY VIOLENCE IN THE HOME, EVEN IF THEY ARE NOT PHYSICALLY HURT.

This may include psychological, emotional, physical and cognitive function problems that can result in sleeping disorders, physical pain, regressive, disruptive or violent behaviour, anxiety attacks, truancy or poor educational outcomes. Older children can also develop drug and alcohol problems and there is a strong link to youth suicide.



Role of the Advocates

CHILD ADVOCATES ARE BASED IN COMMUNITY FAMILY VIOLENCE AND CHILD FOCUSED AGENCIES. THEY WORK WITH CHILDREN AS WELL AS PROVIDERS TO ENSURE THAT THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN WHO EXPERIENCE FAMILY VIOLENCE ARE IDENTIFIED, AND ADDRESSED.

Key tasks for the advocate include:

- providing an independent voice for children
- coaching, mentoring and referring
- advice and education

Advocates provide independent consultancy advice, support, coaching and education to individuals, government and NGOs working directly with children and young people.

They need to possess the following attributes:

- ability to voice and maintain a focus on the needs of children and young people living in violent family situations
- in depth knowledge of the dynamics of family violence, child and youth development, community development, government and community structures, services for those affected by family violence and abuse

- ability to assist with developing protocols, referral processes, reviewing and monitoring processes and identifying gaps in services
- knowledge and experience of delivering services that are culturally appropriate
- strong client focus and good relationship and communication skills
- ability to exercise sound judgment and well developed networks with a diverse range of organisations and individuals
- qualification in social work, or a relevant tertiary qualification, or community work experience coupled with a commitment to completing a relevant qualification
- three years experience advocating for children and young people or providing family violence prevention and/or support services
- commitment to attending supervision, professional development and working closely with the National Infrastructure for Child and Youth.

Location of the Advocates

ADVOCATES ARE LOCATED IN COMMUNITY-BASED NON-GOVERNMENT AGENCIES. AGENCIES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR HOSTING AND EMPLOYING THE ADVOCATE AND PROVIDING DAY-TO-DAY SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION

Agencies must be part of the local family violence collaborative network. This enables the advocates to be used as a community-wide resource able to work with all relevant organisations and individuals.



Available Funding for Advocates

THERE ARE 30 HOST AGENCIES CURRENTLY CONTRACTED TO EMPLOY ADVOCATES. A FURTHER 15 POSITIONS WILL BE CONTRACTED IN 2008. THIS WILL BRING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ADVOCATES TO 45.

Funding for each full-time advocate position is \$69,333.33 per annum (exclusive of GST). This covers salary, overheads, such as a cellphone and car lease, monthly clinical supervision, professional development administration and travel.

The salary range for each advocate is either:

- \$40,000 to \$45,000 (senior practitioner with no appropriate qualifications, eg social work)
- \$45,000 to \$50,000 (senior practitioner with appropriate qualifications, eg social work)

Criteria for Advocate Selection

AGENCIES CONSIDERING HOSTING AN ADVOCATE NEED TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Child Youth and Family and/or Ministry of Justice to provide domestic violence programmes for children and young people
- experience working locally with children and young people and an understanding of the needs of those affected by family violence
- ability to work with local government and non-government family violence and child focussed providers and have their support
- how your organisation would use an advocate within the community to raise awareness, and address the needs of, children and young people affected by family violence
- facilitation of debate on family violence issues
- meeting the advocates' support needs, including access to peer group networking, clinical supervision and training
- financial management skills and systems, as well as management and governance capabilities
- attendance at case management meetings held in key violence-related agencies
- experience in developing, arranging and providing publicity, education, training and information on family violence prevention
- experience in responding to the cultural and social beliefs, values and practices of iwi, hapū and other cultural groups
- detailed budget breakdowns, including operational costs, direct (travel, facilities and resources) and indirect (administration, accommodation and overhead) expenses and insurance. All costs to be GST exclusive
- documentation with your application:
 - a) A copy of your Child Youth and Family approval status and/or Ministry of Justice approval status to provide children's programmes.
 - b) Examples of your organisation's involvement in family violence prevention networks.
 - c) Examples of working agreements with other organisations, including information sharing guidelines.
 - d) Child abuse reporting protocols for your agency.

For more information please contact:

National Office
Family and Community Services
Bowen State Building, Bowen Street
PO Box 12136, Wellington
New Zealand

Phone +64 4 913 6601
Fax +64 4 917 2080

Heather Scott – Analyst Service Development
Phone 04 978 4246
Fax 04 917 2080
Mobile 029 650 0042
Email heather.scott006@msd.govt.nz
Level 4, Charles Fergusson Building,
West Block, PO Box 1556, Wellington



family & community services
ratonga ā-whānau, ā-hapori
A service of the Ministry of Social Development

www.familyservices.govt.nz