

## Section 15 – Advocacy and legal matters

### **Advocacy:**

Advocates can provide support and help a young person explore the options open to them. An advocate may assist by finding the right people to contact and help by writing letters, making phone calls and attending meetings. A advocate can speak on behalf of a young person to ensure their views are heard. The advocate should want to achieve the best possible outcome for the young person by seeking their wishes and working with families/carers.

### **Becoming your own advocate, “Partners in Policymaking”**

The Inclusion Partnership (Eastern Region) runs a course for disabled adults (self-advocates) and parents of disabled children up to school leaving age. For more information email [info@inclusionpartnership.org.uk](mailto:info@inclusionpartnership.org.uk)

- **People First – advocacy service**

People First (Havering) is an independent self-advocacy group that works with and for people with learning disabilities. They support people who are unable to speak for themselves about decisions made about their care or entitlement. The **People First Coordinator** (Lina Tsenova) holds an “advocacy drop-in” at Jacksons Cafe, 47 High Street, Romford. on the first Monday of each month between 1pm-3pm or email: [blossomlina@yahoo.com](mailto:blossomlina@yahoo.com)

- **Young People First**

“Smile” meet at Yew Tree Lodge, 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month, 6.00-8.30pm for young people aged 14-24 Tel: 01708 458376 or email: [ypfsmile@piczo.com](mailto:ypfsmile@piczo.com)

- **Independent Mental Capacity Advocates (IMCA)**

This service represents a person who is assessed as lacking capacity to make a specific decision at a specific time with no one to speak for them. The NHS or local authority may call upon an IMCA, if one is available, when decisions about medical treatment or accommodation are being reviewed. HUBB is the statutory IMCA provider for Havering Tel: 0208 590 2666 or email: [info@hubb.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:info@hubb.eclipse.co.uk)

- The **National Youth Advocacy Service** offers advice, information and support, [www.nyas.net](http://www.nyas.net) . Children in care can contact “**Voice for the child in care**” at [www.vcc-uk.org](http://www.vcc-uk.org)

- **Havering CAB “Income Maximisation Project”**

This project, supported by the London Borough of Havering, provides a free and confidential “benefits check” to ensure that people are claiming all the benefits that they are entitled to claim. For an appointment Tel: 01708 440466 or write to Havering Citizens Advice Bureaux, 59A Billet Lane, Hornchurch, RM11 1AX.

### Legal advice websites:

- **Disability Law Service** provides advice to people with disabilities and their families on housing, care, education, wills and trusts. Tel: 020 7791 9800 or [www.dls.org.uk](http://www.dls.org.uk)
- **Children's Legal Centre** is a national charity focusing on the law, and policies, affecting young people [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)
- **"Adviceguide"** is the on-line service of the **Citizens Advice Bureau** and provides advice on rights [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)