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MHCLG, DfE and provision under the Children Act 1989 and Housing Act Protocol for Young People 16-17, which is guidance published by the This leaflet has been developed to accompany the Kent Joint Working

03000 416161

> Outside of Office Hours Duty Social Worker:

> Advocate

> Housing Officer

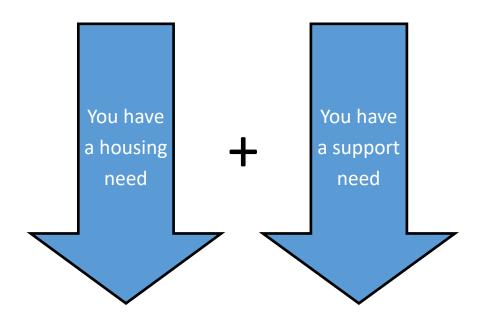
> Social Worker

EMERGENCY NUMBERS:



What are my options and what do they all mean? **VESSESSIVE** TNIOL

Why do I need a joint assessment?



Both Children's Social Services and Local Housing Authorities have responsibilities towards you if you are 16 or 17 and homeless. Guidance requires both organisations to work together to support, safeguard and promote the welfare of young people.

Your social worker will discuss and support you with a 'child in need' plan. Once you are settled in your home, you may not need to be a child in need and the social worker will help you find other support before they end their involvement.

Your housing officer will tell you about your housing options and can support you once you are 18 and ready to move on from your accommodation. You will be able to ask them for advice in the future.

What is a joint assessment?

A joint assessment is a FREE OF CHARGE process that finds out what your individual needs are. The meeting may take a couple of hours and your social worker will make sure you are aware of the date and you are able to attend.

During the meeting, there may be some things which are difficult to talk about. It is really important you give as much information as possible about why you are homeless and why you cannot return home. You will also be asked about things like your education, training, employment, health and support needs.

First Stage: A meeting between Social Services, Local Authority Housing, yourself and, where necessary, an advocate. You also may want to bring a family member or adult friend with you.

Second Stage: Your social worker and housing officer will need to talk to your family, or who you have been living with to find out the reasons why you have been asked to leave and talk through what can be done to help you return home, where it is safe to do so.

If you need supported accommodation, funding of this can be discussed further in the initial meeting. Your social worker will be able to support you with applying for any benefits you may be entitled to. The support you need will remain in place as long as you need it, even once you are no longer homeless.

It is really important to ask questions if you do not understand what is being said, this is about you!

you are unhappy with the outcome of the assessment. Finally, an advocate is also able to help you appeal any decisions if

rights and entitlements.

The advocate will also give you written information about your

you may have.

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and will support you to share your wishes, feelings and worries that will make sure that you fully understand what is available to you options available to you and what they recommend. Your advocate At the assessment Social Services and Housing offer all of the

on your behalf.

whether you will need help in saying this and want them to speak having an assessment and what your situation is. They will also ask the assessment to discuss what an advocate does, why you are the advocate will meet with you for around 15 minutes earlier than If you have not been able to meet beforehand, then at the meeting,

time to chat through your situation and reasons for choices. assigned one before the joint assessment, this will then give you Where possible, if you want an advocate to attend, ask to be

support you in the meeting.

long term. They will help you to make an informed decision and entitlements, your housing and support options both short and An Advocate makes sure that you fully understand your rights and



Why might I need an advocate?

Use this space for questions or notes.

What happens next?

Return Home

We will work with you and your families to identify and help resolve the issues which have led to you becoming homeless. This could involve support such as family mediation or group conferences to rebuild family relationships.

Wider Family or Friends

If it is not safe or appropriate for you to return home, the next best option is to live with responsible adults within your wider family or friends.

We will work with you and your wider family or friends, to find a safe place for you to live with them.

KCC Children's Services

If it is not safe, or appropriate to return home and you do not have any other responsible adult to live with, then it might be considered to be in your best interests to be supported by Kent County Council Children's Services as a 'Looked After Child'.

Kent County Council's Children's Services will support you with any parts of your life that you need help with such as accommodation, education, health, identity, finances and family.

Accommodation could be foster care, supported or shared accommodation. You will also have a social worker who will support you and work with you towards living independently.

When you turn 18, you will be supported by an 18 plus care leaver's team and will have a Personal Adviser and a Pathway Plan to help you work towards living independently

Supported Accommodation

If you do not agree to becoming a 'looked after child', your housing officer will work with you and your social worker to find a suitable housing option, which is likely to be supported housing. You will usually have a set of rules to follow and be responsible for paying your own rent, bills and any service charges. You may be able to claim Universal Credit (UC) to help towards your living costs from either the UC housing element or Housing Benefit to help towards paying your rent.

A social worker will still be involved with you and be offering you support.