



YOUR VOICE MATTERS

In Lincolnshire, independent advocacy for parents is provided by an organisation called **VoiceAbility**.

They have been supporting people to **have their say** in decisions about their health, care and wellbeing for **over 40** years.

VoiceAbility are an **independent charity** and one of the UK's largest providers of advocacy and involvement services.

VoiceAbility will start by offering you **telephone support**.

Later on, if you do need support to help you get your view across in meetings, they will either spend time **helping you to prepare for a meeting** or you can ask them to **attend with you**.

How to contact **VoiceAbility**

T 0300 303 1660 **E** helpline@voiceability.org

W voiceability.org/lincolnshire-pathfinder or **scan the code**



the site
looks
like this



You can also go to the main Voiceability website www.voiceability.org and just type the word **Pathfinder** into the search box and you will find the right information.

WHERE ELSE CAN I GET SUPPORT?

An advocate **cannot** provide legal advice. However, there are other organisations you can contact for legal advice and guidance. **We have listed some** of them below.



www.frg.org.uk

Family Rights Group aims to ensure that 'families involved with the child welfare and family justice system are treated fairly, have their rights respected and are able to make informed decisions'.

They have a free legal and child welfare advice line. You can also find information on their website about how child protection investigations work and what to expect. This includes a guide on working with a solicitor and top tips on how to find legal advice.



www.citizensadvice.org.uk

People rely on CAB because they're totally independent. They can give you advice on the child protection process, including: who can attend a child protection conference; what should be in the child protection plan; how to get legal advice; and what happens if you move to a different local authority area. They help millions of people every year.

Making a complaint

If you are unhappy about the service you receive from anyone in children's services, then the best thing is to tell them straight away so that they can find a way to put right anything that is not going well. You can also ask to speak to their manager.



www.coram.org.uk

The Coram Group run a Child Law Advice Service for legal advice and information about child protection issues.

They also give initial legal advice via email, webchat and telephone, and publish resources, fact sheets and 'how to guides' on their child law advice website.

Some of their services require you to pay a fee. You should always start by asking if there is a fee for the service you want when you contact them.



www.lawsociety.org.uk

If you want to ask a solicitor for legal advice, you will need a solicitor who is a specialist in child law.

You can look for a solicitor who specialises in child law by typing in 'how to find a solicitor' on the Law Society website. You can seek your own legal advice at any point during the child protection process. You are permitted to take a solicitor to a **child protection conference**, but they cannot speak on your behalf just offer you advice.

If you need to make a formal complaint, then the easiest way to do this is to visit this website: www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/statutory-complaints You can also call Lincolnshire County Council's customer relations team on 01522 843322.