

ESSENCE SUMMARY 17

# Advocacy for parents with learning disabilities

A small-scale social care intervention: economic evidence

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## **WHAT IS THE INTERVENTION?**

Advocacy services for parents that can be used at the beginning of, or during, child safeguarding processes. The average advocacy intervention lasts nine months. In the absence of this support, parents with learning disabilities often find it difficult to participate successfully. A research team worked with four advocacy services, which together provided information on seventeen case studies.

## **IS THE INTERVENTION EFFECTIVE AND COST-EFFECTIVE?**

On average, an advocacy intervention consisted of 95 hours of client-related work and cost £3,040 (at 2010/11 prices). There were savings especially from reduced safeguarding activities, care proceedings and care provision by advocacy. Over the course of the intervention, advocacy resulted in potential savings of £720 to councils' social services departments. Additionally, increased access to interventions such as parenting programmes, debt advice, counselling, support for alcohol problems and victim support generated potential net benefits of £3,130 in the long-term.

## **HOW IS THE INTERVENTION IMPLEMENTED?**

The House of Commons published a report on policies and services for individuals with disabilities (1).

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## **OTHER INFORMATION.**

Full details on the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of advocacy have been published by Bauer et al (2, 3).

## **REFERENCES**

1. House of Commons (2018) Learning Disability.
2. Bauer A, Wistow G, Dixon J et al (2014) Investing in Advocacy for Parents with Learning Disabilities: What is the economic argument? *British Journal of Learning Disabilities*. 43:66–74.
3. Bauer A, Wistow G, Dixon J et al (2013) Investing in Advocacy for Parents with Learning Disabilities: An Economic Case? *Social Work Matters*.

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