

“Right to Read” Tips no.3 – Advocacy: what can I do?

Some ideas for advocating the role of public libraries in supporting looked-after children and young people [LAC]:

- Talk to neighbouring library authorities about what you have been doing – and see what they have done
- Raise within your Region, eg via the MLA Region, ASCEL, Society of Chief Librarians Regional group, YLG, “Inspire” network
- Develop high-profile activities that may make the local media
- Ensure that all your library colleagues are aware of the work and its importance
- Ensure that your managers are fully briefed – they can feed key information to local Councillors
- Use the chart produced as part of the PHF advocacy work, showing how libraries’ work with LAC contributes to “Every Child Matters”, as part of your wider advocacy
- Ensure that you are involved in other Council-wide initiatives, such as Achievement/Celebration events
- Utilise and extend your partnerships with other local council departments and organisations, eg social services, local schools
- Encourage your partners in LAC work to be library advocates, eg some social workers have very successfully promoted library services to residential workers and foster carers
- Work with LAC and their carers to ensure that they too will help in 'spreading the word' about books, reading, information and the library
- Collect comments from LAC and their carers, which will add to case studies or stories about the work you are doing (an appropriately-placed story in a committee report will mean a lot more than another set of statistics!)
- Add to the “Tips” that we are producing
- Promote as widely as possible any changes to your services, that have been introduced, eg changes to joining procedures, removing charges, etc.

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