



OFYC Policy Conference Recommendations October 25, 2010

Youth Rights

Problem: Foster youth basic human rights are violated

Recommendations: The legislature should implement the law that allows youth to participate in case planning & view case files so that they have the opportunity to develop social, networking, and leadership skills by participating in extracurricular activities. The legislature should also mandate that a Youth Bill of Rights be posted in all foster homes, group homes, or other facilities.

Problem: Youth need Safe & Healthy Living Environments

Recommendations: Legislature should pass a law that says that every youth's specific needs are met in every placement (dietary, religious, cultural). The law should require social workers to discuss placement options with youth and the youth's appointed advocate to make sure the placement is, and remains, a good fit.

Problem: Youth are not allowed to develop and maintain healthy relationships

Recommendations: DHS should provide mentors or CASA to foster youth ages 14-18 years old so that youth have a positive connection to someone.

Independent Living Program Services

Problem: Youth who participate in ILP from year to year have reported that the curriculum gets repetitive also some training may not be age appropriate.

Recommendations: We recommend that DHS ensures that curriculum be broken down into phases that are age appropriate and based on the youth's age and experience.

Problem: When foster youth age out, get a new caseworker or ILP manager, there are rules/laws that keep them from continuing their relationships. Case workers and ILP managers are not allowed to initiate contact with foster youth after they leave their case load.

Recommendation: DHS should create a contract for foster youth who want to have contact with their caseworkers or ILP managers after they leave care.

Problem: Youth have reported struggling to get into ILP programs because there full. Priority is currently given to youth who are closer to emancipation, but who may not have the most need.

Recommendation: Increased funding for ILP services in order to provide opportunities for eligible youth across Oregon to be served.

Higher Education

Problem: Foster youth lack the necessary funds and financial aid to attend college, even with available scholarships 6% of foster youth graduate with a 2 or 4 year degree

Recommendation: Instate full tuition & fee waivers at all Oregon University systems and Community Colleges

Problem: Many foster youth don't receive adequate support and mentorship from their caseworkers, providers, teachers and other involved in higher education

Recommendations: In addition to senate bills 808 and 1034, DHS should be required to assign a mentor to guide and assist with transition planning for youth currently in/or transitioning out of foster care in efforts to help and support foster youth striving for post-secondary education.

Problem: Youth do not receive emotional support to adjust to college life and crises that occur.

Recommendation: All college campuses need to mandate a specific Foster Youth Advisor/Liaison to be in affect or hired to work on campus to help youth adjust to college life and/or during crises.

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