



# Foster Youth Have Rights!

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## YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN A SAFE, COMFORTABLE HOME WITH:

- enough clothes and healthy food
- your own place to store your things
- an allowance (if you are in a group home)
- a phone that you can use to make confidential calls (unless a judge says you cannot)

## YOU HAVE RIGHTS AT COURT TOO. YOU CAN:

- go to court and talk to the judge
- see and get a copy of your court report and your case plan
- keep your court records private, unless the law says otherwise
- be told by your social worker or probation officer and your attorney about any changes in your case plan or placement

## YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO DO SOME THINGS ON YOUR OWN. YOU CAN:

- have your own emancipation bank account (unless your case plan says you cannot)
- learn job skills right for your age
- work, unless the law says you are too young manage the money you earn (if right for your age, developmental level and it's in your case plan)
- go to Independent Living Program classes and activities if you are old enough

## YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- be treated with respect
- go to religious services and activities of your choice send and get unopened mail (unless a judge says someone else can open your mail)
- contact people who are not in the foster care system (like friends, church members, teachers, and others)
- make contact with social workers, attorneys, probation officers, CASAs, foster youth advocates and supporters, or anyone else involved with your case
- be told about your placement by your social worker or probation officer

## YOU HAVE HEALTH RIGHTS. YOU CAN:

- see a doctor, dentist, eye doctor, or talk to a counselor if you need to
- refuse to take medicines, vitamins or herbs (unless a doctor or judge says you must)
- if you are 12 years old or older, you have the right to information about your sexual health in a way that you understand it. This includes learning about the way sexually transmitted infections and diseases (STDs) are spread and how you can prevent them; how you can prevent pregnancy and what to do if you are pregnant

## YOU HAVE FAMILY RIGHTS TOO. YOU CAN:

- visit and contact your brothers and sisters (unless a judge says you cannot)
- contact parents and other family members, too (unless a judge says you cannot)

## YOU HAVE OTHER RIGHTS TOO. YOU CAN:

- tell the judge how you feel about your family, lawyer, and social worker
- tell the judge what you want to happen in your case
- have your own lawyer
- live with a family member if that would be a safe place
- call the Foster Care Ombudsman Office and Community Care Licensing at any time
- get help with school if you need it

## NO ONE CAN:

- lock you in a room or building (unless you are in a community treatment facility)
- abuse you physically, sexually or emotionally for any reason
- punish you by physically hurting you for any reason
- look through your things unless they have a good and legal reason

## YOU HAVE SCHOOL RIGHTS. YOU CAN:

- go to school every day
- go to after-school activities right for your age and developmental level

**Remember your rights.**

## YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN SOCIAL ACTIVITIES:



#### CONNECTION WITH A CARING ADULT:

- You have the right to identify and maintain relationships with appropriate people who are important to you, as long as it's in your best interest. The intent of current law is that no child shall leave foster care without a permanent, caring relationship with an adult. Talk to your social worker or attorney about who is important to you.

**Also remember that the foster parent's or group home's job is to supervise you and keep you safe and healthy.**

#### BEING TREATED DIFFERENTLY.

If you feel you are being harassed or discriminated against because of your sex, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, ethnic group, ancestry, national origin, gender identity, mental or physical disability or HIV status, or for any other reason, you should call the Foster Care Ombudsman Help-line for assistance.

- You have the right to participate in age-appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities such as church, school and community activities, sleep-overs with friends, scouting and 4-H, without requiring criminal background checks of chaperones, friends and friends' parents/supervisors.

**Know your rights! For a complete list of foster youths' rights, call the Office of the Foster Care Ombudsman at 1-877-846-1602. Are your rights not being followed? Call the same number—we can help.**

Call the Foster Care Ombudsman Office and [Community Care Licensing](#) at any time.

You can print a copy of the Foster Youth Rights poster from the "[Publications](#)" link.

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