



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY

Chapter 11: Older Youth Services

Section 04: State Youth Advisory Board

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Version: 5

- [Procedure](#)
- [Definitions](#)

- [Forms and Tools](#)
- [Related Policies](#)

- [Legal References](#)
- [Practice Guidance](#)

POLICY OVERVIEW

The Indiana Youth Advisory Board (IYAB) meets quarterly and provides older youth in foster care or previously in foster care the opportunity to acquire leadership skills, advocacy skills, and take an active role in changing the service standards and policies of the Older Youth Services (OYS) programs.

[Back to Top](#)

PROCEDURE

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will fund the IYAB. The IYAB is available for Child in Need of Services (CHINS), Collaborative Care (CC), and Juvenile Delinquent/Juvenile Status (JD/JS) youth 14 to 23 years of age in foster care and former foster youth 18 to 23 years of age who were in foster care for a period of at least six (6) months with a Case Plan/Prevention Plan identifying the need for Older Youth Services (OYS).

The following youth are eligible for membership on the IYAB:

1. Youth 14 to 23 years of age who are in foster care as a CHINS or JD/JS;
2. Youth 14 to 23 years of age who were formerly in foster care as a CHINS or JD/JS between 14 to 18 years of age that were returned to their own homes and remain a CHINS or JD/JS with a Case Plan/Prevention Plan establishing the need for OYS;
3. Youth 18 to 23 years of age who were formerly in foster care on their 18th birthday as a CHINS or JD/JS and had a Case Plan/Prevention Plan establishing the need for OYS;
4. Youth 18 to 23 years of age who would otherwise meet the eligibility criteria above and who were in the custody of another state or were a “ward of another state” through the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) if there is a verification of wardship and all eligibility criteria from the state of jurisdiction are met;
5. Youth 16 to 23 years of age who were adopted or placed in a guardianship at or after age 16 and were wards of DCS prior to adoption or guardianship;
6. Youth 18 to 19 years of age who are participating in CC;
7. Youth 14 to 15 years of age who have received approval from the youth’s parent, guardian, or custodian and Child and Family Team (CFT) members may participate in the IYAB with special consideration/approval from IYAB board members and the Independent Living (IL) Specialist; and
8. Youth receiving Education and Training Voucher (ETV) funds may serve on the IYAB until age 23.

Note: The IYAB is an inclusive environment for all older youth regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, creed, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, sexual identity, or gender identity (see the Youth Advisory Board Service Standards).

The Family Case Manager (FCM) or Older Youth Case Manager (OYCM) will:

1. Assist eligible youth, who demonstrate the desire and willingness to voice their opinion on foster care related matters and participate in public speaking opportunities, in submitting an Indiana Youth Advisory Board Application (see the Indiana Youth Advisory Board website);
2. Complete the recommendation section in the Indiana Youth Advisory Board Application, or assist the youth in obtaining a recommendation from a service provider or current member of the IYAB; and
3. Assist youth in removing any transportation barriers.

The interested youth must submit the completed Indiana Youth Advisory Board Application to the IYAB Adult Facilitator. The IYAB will review the applications and determine if the applicants meet the IYAB eligibility requirements. Applications are subject to the approval of the IYAB and the DCS Local Office Director (LOD) for the county of wardship or the youth's current residence if the youth is no longer a ward.

[Back to Top](#)

RELEVANT INFORMATION

Definitions

Foster Care

Foster care is 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parent, guardian, or custodian and for whom the State agency has placement and care responsibility.

Indiana Youth Advisory Board (IYAB) Adult Facilitator

The IYAB Adult Facilitator is an individual from an outside agency with whom DCS has a contract to facilitate all aspects of the IYAB, which includes collecting the Indiana Youth Advisory Board Application forms and assisting the IYAB members in developing the skills necessary to successfully oversee the activities of the IYAB.

Note: IYAB members will be a part of the selection and interview process for the Adult Facilitator.

Older Youth Services

The purpose of OYS is to:

1. Assist identified youth who are expected to remain in foster care until their 18th birthday or after in making the transition to self-sufficiency;
2. Help identified youth receive the necessary education, training, and services to overcome potential barriers to employment;
3. Help youth prepare for and enter post-secondary education and/or training programs;
4. Provide personal and emotional support for youth aging out of foster care;
5. Assist youth in locating and identifying community resources that will be available to the youth after DCS involvement has ended; and
6. Encourage positive personal growth in older youth through "teachable moments".

Forms and Tools

- Case Plan/Prevention Plan (SF 2956)- available in the case management system
- [Indiana Youth Advisory Board website](#)
- [Indiana Youth Advisory Board Application](#)
- [Youth Advisory Board Service Standards](#)

Related Policies

N/A

[Back to Top](#)

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [42 USC 677 John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood](#)
- [Workforce Investment Act](#)

[Back to Top](#)

PRACTICE GUIDANCE- DCS POLICY 11.04

Practice Guidance is designed to assist DCS staff with thoughtful and practical direction on how to effectively integrate tools and social work practice into daily case management in an effort to achieve positive family and child outcomes. Practice Guidance is separate from Policy.

Benefits of Participation in the Indiana Youth Advisory Board (IYAB)

It is expected that participation in the IYAB will:

1. Balance the youth's need for support and empowerment;
2. Accommodate a broad range (type and intensity) of youth participation;
3. Demonstrate clear, concrete, and sincere appreciation of youth contributions;
4. Assist youth in assuming roles traditionally reserved for adults for which they have no prior experience;
5. Allow for consistent opportunities to give structured feedback regarding the quantity and quality of services and supports provided to youth in care and after they have aged out;
6. Facilitate the development of personal responsibility;
7. Initiate opportunities for youth leadership and service development;
8. Develop coordination with the Workforce Investment Act Youth Councils (for further information, see Chapter 2 sections 126-129 of the Workforce Investment Act);
9. Provide an opportunity to learn from youth what is really important to them;
10. Improve the quality of OYS by obtaining direct input and feedback from youth members receiving services;
11. Assist with the opportunity to develop or change public policy; and
12. Provide an opportunity to gain leadership and advocacy experience (e.g., serve on regionally or state-based boards or committees as needed or requested by local communities).

Youth Development

The IYABs are designed to provide a forum for youth 14 to 23 years of age to develop an agenda related to services and areas of interest the youth believe would be beneficial in assisting foster and former foster youth in reaching their full potential as the youth move into adulthood.

[Back to Top](#)