



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES  
CHILD WELFARE POLICY

Chapter 11: Older Youth Services

Effective Date: February 1, 2019

Section 4: State Youth Advisory Board

Version: 4

STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will fund an Indiana Youth Advisory Board (YAB) for Child in Need of Services (CHINS), Collaborative Care (CC), and Juvenile Delinquent/Juvenile Status (JD/JS) youth age 14 up to 23 in foster care<sup>1</sup> and former foster youth age 18 up to 23 who were in foster care for a period of six (6) months with a [Case Plan \(SF 2956\)](#) identifying the need for Older Youth Services (OYS). See [Youth Advisory Board Service Standards](#) for more information.

**Note:** Youth receiving Education and Training Voucher (ETV) funds may serve on the YAB until age 23.

The following youth are eligible for membership on the State YAB:

1. Youth age 14 up to 23 who are in foster care as a CHINS or JD/JS;
2. Youth age 14 up to 23 who were formerly in foster care as a CHINS or JD/JS between the age of 14-18 that were returned to their own homes and remain a CHINS or JD/JS with a [Case Plan \(SF 2956\)](#) establishing the need for OYS;
3. Youth age 18 up to 23 who were formerly in foster care on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday as a CHINS or JD/JS and had a [Case Plan \(SF 2956\)](#) establishing the need for OYS;
4. Youth age 18 up to 23 who would otherwise meet the eligibility criteria above and who were in the custody of another state or were a “ward of another state” will be eligible if through the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) there is a verification of wardship and all eligibility criteria from the state of jurisdiction are met;
5. Youth age 16-23 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 age 18-19 who are participating in Collaborative Care; and

**Note:** The YAB is an inclusive environment for all older youth regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, creed, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, sexual identity, or gender identity.

7. Youth age 14-15 who have received approval from his or her parent, guardian, or custodian and Child and Family Team members, may participate in the YAB with special consideration/approval from YAB board members and the Independent Living (IL) Specialist.

<sup>1</sup> Foster care is defined as 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. Facilities that are outside the scope of foster care include, but are not limited to: detention facilities; psychiatric hospital acute care; forestry camps; or facilities that are primarily for the detention for children who are adjudicated delinquents.

## Code References

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

### **PROCEDURE**

The Family Case Manager (FCM) or Collaborative Care Case Manager (3CM) 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](#);
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 YAB; and
3. Assist youth in removing any transportation barriers.

The interested youth must submit his or her completed [Indiana Youth Advisory Board Application](#) to the YAB Adult Facilitator. The YAB will make a decision about whether to accept any youth who submits an application.

### **PRACTICE GUIDANCE**

#### **YAB Meetings**

YAB meetings are held quarterly across the state (see the [Youth Advisory Board Service Standards](#) for details). The YAB provides older youth in foster care an opportunity to acquire leadership and advocacy skills. YAB members are encouraged to take an active role in changing the service standards and policies of the OYS programs.

#### **Benefits of Participation**

It is expected that participation on the YAB will:

1. Balance the youth's need for support and empowerment;
2. Accommodate a broad range (type, 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 them 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).

## FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Indiana Youth Advisory Board Application](#)
2. [Youth Advisory Board Service Standards](#)
3. [Case Plan \(SF 2956\)](#) - Available in the case management system.

## RELATED INFORMATION

### **Youth Development**

The YABs are designed to provide a forum for youth age 14 up to age 23 (see Policy section) 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 his or her full potential as the youth move into adulthood. The youth will develop topics of interest, develop interpersonal skills, and seek adult guidance in bringing ideas to fruition. This program will prepare youth in transitioning from adolescence to adulthood by recognizing and accepting personal responsibility.

### **YAB Adult Facilitator**

DCS will contract with an outside agency to have an individual serve as the YAB Adult Facilitator. The IL Specialists will act as a liaison between DCS and the YAB Adult Facilitator. The YAB Adult Facilitator must have a degree in social work or a comparable human service field with experience in case work and group work. The YAB Adult Facilitator is responsible for collecting all [Indiana Youth Advisory Board Application](#) forms and facilitating all aspects of the YAB. The YAB Adult Facilitator is not expected to “run” the YAB, rather to assist the membership in developing the skills necessary to successfully oversee the activities of the YAB.

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