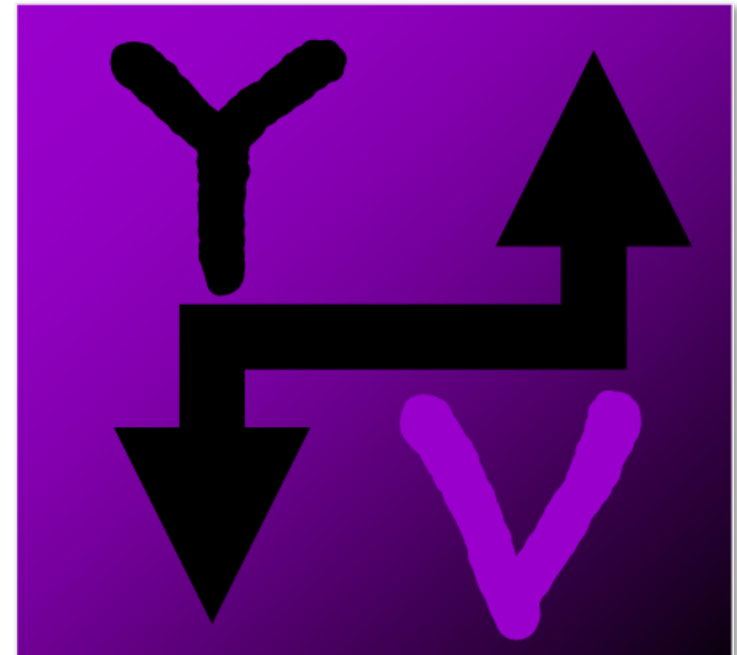


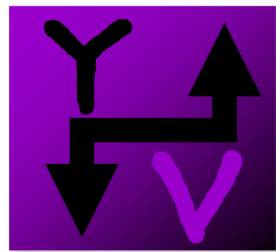
South Dakota
**Young Voices
Handbook**



A complete guide of everything you need to know while in custody of the South Dakota Department of Social Services

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CPS14





In 2011, Young Voices was created as an advocacy group for teens in foster care. Creating this logo was one of their first projects.

The Logo's Meaning: The 'Y' is that we are young. The arrow pointing down represents where we came from. The 'V' is for Voice. The arrow

pointed up stand for endless opportunities and a voice that should be heard.

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Questions You Have

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Information for this booklet was found on the following websites:

- <http://www.childrensrights.org/>
- <http://www.childrensrights.org/newsroom/fact-sheets/foster-care/>
- <http://dss.sd.gov/formsandpubs/docs/CPS/cpsbooklet.pdf>
- <http://dss.sd.gov/formsandpubs/docs/ADOPFOSTER/WhatIShouldKnowAboutFosterCare/pdf>
- <http://dss.sd.gov/formsandpubs/docs/CPS/independentLivingProgramBrochure.pdf>
- "For You Guide Book" www.saysoinc.org North Carolina's foster care booklet.
- <http://www.adopting.org/adoptions/adoption-and-foster-care-glossary.html>

What Can I Do?

- **Be Your Own Advocate**

Talk to your FSS, therapist, foster parent, or CRP if there is something you don't understand or feel is not right. Ask about your court case and anything you would like to know. You have the right to be heard.

- **Ask for support from others**
- **Fill out "What I Want My Worker to Know"**
- **Document events and keep a copy of them**

Join Young Voices

Young Voices' goals are to make positive improvements in the lives of all youth in DSS custody, be a positive support system to youth in DSS custody and make positive and significant improvements for youth in placement.

Eligibility:

- 14 years or older in DSS Custody
- Complete an application
- Have the support of your FSS



My Contact List:

Family Service Specialist (FSS)

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Community Resource Person (CRP):

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Attorney: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA):

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Guardian: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Judge's Name: _____

Relationships in My Life

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

- Respectfully, I ask that you do not judge me by my past, instead get to know me for the person I am today.
- Family connections are very important to me. I know I am responsible for setting and keeping safe boundaries with my family members.
- I am also responsible for making amends for any of my former actions that may have caused someone harm.
- I will try to be courageous and speak up when I feel my rights have been violated.

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Responsibilities of Youth in Care

This list of responsibilities was created by the South Dakota Young Voices Advocacy Group. Young Voices is a youth-driven, statewide group for youth in foster care. Within this group, we gain leadership ability, communication skills, and self-confidence. Our goal is to advocate for youth in foster care and work with the state child protection system to improve the lives of young people in state custody. This document is to be shared with all youth in care and should accompany the South Dakota Rights of Youth in Care. These responsibilities are to be used as encouragement to uplift and support youth in their development and successful transition toward becoming independent young adults.

- I am responsible for my choices, decisions, actions and behaviors.
- I understand that I make the biggest difference in my life.
- I know I will make mistakes but I hope to learn from them and make positive choices for my life to create a bright future.
- I will treat myself and others with respect; I will follow the golden rule and treat others as I wish to be treated.
- I promise to make every effort to take the necessary actions not to cause harm to myself or others.
- I will do my best to communicate openly with people when I have a problem and try to ask for help when I need it...but please remember I may have trouble asking for help.
- I will try to work to the best of my ability in school and achieve the educational goals that I need to be a productive and successful person.
- I have the responsibility to ask for help in learning life skills
- I need for becoming an independent young adult.
- I will make an effort to be involved in and cooperate with suggested mental health treatment.

There are times the court determines you need to be placed outside of your home to ensure your safety. When the court places you in custody, care and responsibility of DSS, the Division of Child Protection Services (CPS) must place you in a temporary or permanent home where you will be well cared for and safe.

Where Will I Be Living?

When you are removed from your home by law enforcement or through a court order to ensure your safety, DSS is granted custody of you and you are placed with a safe and stable placement resource. CPS works with your family to resolve the issues which made you unsafe while providing supervision and support to you and your placement resource until you can safely return home or another permanent placement option is ordered by the court.

Temporary placement resources available to care for children include the following:

Kinship Placement: When children cannot remain with their parents, relatives who can provide a safe and nurturing environment will be considered before any other type of care. South Dakota has a relative preference law, SDCL 26-7A-19, which dictates the need for placement preference to a qualified relative. Children have the right to be with people they know, provided they will be safe and it is in the child's best interest. Relative placements ensure children will have connections to their families and their culture.

Foster Care: Foster care is a protective service provided by CPS for children and families who must be separated from one another because of safety concerns related to abuse or neglect. This service is provided by relative or non-relative foster families on a temporary basis and for a planned period of time. Foster families are licensed by CPS, private child welfare agencies, and tribes.

Group Care: When youth are unable to live in a foster or kinship home because of emotional or behavioral needs, CPS utilizes group homes for placement. Group care centers are licensed facilities with trained staff which provide 24 hour care, ongoing counseling, education, and a structured environment for youth.



Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF): CPS utilizes Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities as a placement resource for youth who, due to behavioral or emotional challenges, are unable to live in a family or group care setting. The youth require intense professional assistance and therapy in a highly structured environment.

Emergency Shelter Care: This type of care provides short-term care — no longer than 60 days during emergency situations until the children can return home or are placed with another placement resource. Shelter care facilities must be licensed.

Situations may occur where children are unable to return home and plans are developed for a family or individual to become the child's adoptive parent or legal guardian. Adoptive parents and legal guardians can be relatives, foster families, or other adults who have a significant relationship of connection with a child and are willing to accept legal responsibility of the child.

Adoption: DSS will match the needs of the child with the strengths of an adoptive family and work with both the child and the selected adoptive family through the adoptive process. Once the adoption and legal processes are complete, the family then becomes the child's legal parent(s).

Guardianship: When a family or individual is granted guardianship of a child who was in the custody of the Department of Social Services, CPS is no longer involved.

9. To have your personal belongings secured.
10. To meet with your attorney before court hearings.
11. To have regular access to your Family Services Specialist.
12. To receive medical, dental, vision and mental health services; to have the ability to discuss choices of medical provider with your Family Services Specialist; and to have private conversations with your medical provider.
13. To be provided life skills information and services and be allowed to practice your skills to help prepare you to become a successful adult.
14. To be given an original Social Security card, birth certificate, photo ID/drivers license, immunization and health records, high school transcript, annual credit report, tribal enrollment/ ID card, and any legal documents (as approved by the courts) regarding custody upon exiting care.
15. To participate in church or your own religion or choose not to participate in spiritual activities.
16. To be allowed the opportunity to obtain employment beginning at age 16 as identified as appropriate in the case plan.
17. To remain in your home school district when possible.
18. To attend school and participate in extracurricular, cultural, personal enrichment activities and age-appropriate social activities when attending school as identified as appropriate in the case plan.
19. To be provided the same education and opportunity as in the public schools. This includes classes required for graduation and college entrance.
20. To be provided your school and medical records that are complete and updated.
21. To have an opportunity for your input to be heard by the court.

Rights of Youth in Care

As a youth in foster care, you have the right:

1. To participate in the development of your case plan.
2. To know your rights in foster care, to receive a list of those rights and know how to file a complaint if your rights are violated.
3. To be treated with fairness, dignity and respect.
4. To be told why you came into care and why you remain in care and also to be given information regarding the status of your case and your parent's case.
5. To be placed in a home with your brothers and sisters, when possible, and to maintain regular and unrestricted contact with siblings as identified as appropriate in the case plan.
6. To maintain regular contact with parents, as identified, as appropriate in the case plan.
7. To send and receive unopened mail and make and receive confidential phone calls as identified as appropriate in the case plan.
8. To live in a safe and healthy environment, where you are provided healthy food, adequate clothing and necessary personal hygiene products.



Foster Care Dictionary

Abused and Neglected Child: A person under age 18 who is determined by the court to be abused and/or neglected as defined in SDCL 26-8A-2, or the specific tribal code when tribal court is involved.

Alternative care: Any placement by CPS for a child which is not in the home of a parent of legal guardian including kinship care, licensed foster home, group care center, residential treatment facility, intensive residential facility, court-ordered placement with a friend or relative, or an independent living setting.

Attorney: Also referred to as a lawyer, an attorney is an individual licensed to practice law to advise and represent the rights of individuals in court proceedings and other legal matters. Attorneys are appointed by the court for the parents in state and tribal court and for children in state court.

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA): CASAs are trained volunteers who are appointed by a judge to gather as much information as possible about the child and provide recommendations to the judge. The CASA volunteer's primary role is to advocate for the best interests and safety of the child. CASA programs are located in some but not all areas of the state.

Child Case Plan: The Child's Case Plan is a written agreement between the child, the parent(s), the placement resource, and CPS and explains how the child will be supported while in placement.

Child Protection Services (CPS): The division within the South Dakota Department of Social Services with the responsibility to assess whether children are unsafe because of abuse and neglect, assure protection to children who are unsafe, and assist parents to change the behaviors that make their children unsafe.

Community Resource Person (CRP): A Community Resource Person is available through DSS to provide services, support, and training for youth ages 15-21 in the areas of employment, education, housing, connections, life skills, and health.

Detention: A secure facility which holds children accused of committing delinquent acts.

Family Service Specialist (FSS): Staff within CPS are assigned to provide services and support to parents and children as required by policy, procedure, and state and federal laws.

Independent Living Services: A range of services provided by CPS to assist youth ages 14-21 who are or were in foster care transition to adulthood.

Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA): In 1978, the United States Congress enacted the Indian Child Welfare Act in response to a national crisis in which an alarmingly high percentage of Indian children were being removed from their families and tribal communities. The Act applies to state court cases involving Indian children in the custody of DSS. ICWA includes a number of provisions intended to protect and preserve the bond between Indian children and their tribe and culture.

Judge: A public official appointed to decide cases in a court of law, including cases in abuse and neglect proceedings related to child custody and placement decisions.

Juvenile Court: Cases involving children who are removed from the custody of their parents are handled by a judge in juvenile court, temporary custody hearings, adjudicatory hearings, dispositional hearings, and permanency hearings.

Permanency Planning Review Team (PPRT): A team of people who meet every six months to review a child's case plan and progress toward achieving the child's permanent plan in a timely manner. Parents, youth and the child's placement resource are invited to attend the meetings.

Protective Capacity Assessment Case Plan: A written agreement between the parents and CPS used to explain what needs to change for children to be reunited with the parents, what services will be provided to assist the parents in making the changes, and evaluation of the progress being made by the parent.



Services Provided

- Independent Living Assessment
- Starter Kit
- Housing Assistance
- Conferences and Workshops
- Youth Organizer
- Medical Assistance for Youth Formerly in Foster Care
- Preparing for Post-Secondary Education
- Post-Secondary Education and Training (ETV Funds)
- Work Incentive Program

For more information or additional forms visit:

- <https://dss.sd.gov/formsandpubs/>
- <https://dss.sd.gov/formsandpubs/docs/CPS/independentlivingprogrambrochure.pdf>

Independent Living Skills

If you are age 14 to 21 and have been or are currently in placement, the Independent Living Program can help you make plans for your future. The program provides services to assist teens and young adults with the transition from placement into independent living.

Independent living services are provided through a Community Resource Person who can provide services and training for teens in the areas of employment, education, housing, connections, life skills, and health.



Placement of Indian Children Indian Child Welfare Act—ICWA

When an Indian child is placed in foster care, preference shall be given to placing the child with:

- A member of the Indian child's extended family
- A foster home licensed, approved, or specified by the Indian child's tribe.
- An Indian foster home licensed or approved by an authorized non-Indian licensing authority.
- An institution for children approved by an Indian tribe or operated by an Indian organization which has a program suitable to meet an Indian child's needs.

The above placement preference shall be given unless there is good cause not to do so.

Community Resources

Aberdeen Office:

Aberdeen, Chamberlain, Mobridge, Sisseton, Sisseton-Wahpeton, Huron, Pierre, and Watertown

Sioux Falls Office:

Sioux Falls, Vermillion, Yankton, Lake Andes, Mitchell, and Winner

Rapid City Office:

Belle Fourche, Custer, Deadwood, Hot Springs, Martin, Pine Ridge, Rapid City, Sturgis, Mission, and Eagle Butte



Placements in South Dakota

Intensive Residential Treatment Centers:

Aurora Plains Academy, Plankinton

Psychiatric Residential Treatment Centers:

Abbott House, Mitchell
Human Services Center, Yankton
Black Hills Children's Home, Rapid City
Canyon Hills Center, Spearfish
Our Home – ASAP, Huron
Our Home – Parkston
Our Home – Rediscovery, Huron
Children's Home Society
Summit Oaks, Sioux Falls
Wellfully, Rapid City
Southeastern Behavioral Healthcare, Sioux Falls
Volunteers of America, Dakotas – Heisler Residential
Chemical Dependency Treatment Program, Sioux Falls

Group Care Centers for Minors:

McCrossan Boys Ranch , Sioux Falls
Falls Academy, Sioux Falls
Sacred Heart Center, Eagle Butte
New Beginnings Center– LSS, Aberdeen
Wellfully, Rapid City

Emergency Shelter Care Facilities

Arise Youth Center / West—LSS, Rapid City
Arise Youth Center / East—LSS, Sioux Falls
Children's Inn, Sioux Falls
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe– Shelter Home, Eagle Butte
Oglala Sioux Tribe Emergency Youth Shelter, Pine Ridge
Spotted Tail Crisis Center, Rosebud

and enhances your strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for you by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on your leadership strengths. Extracurriculars provide opportunities for you to engage with your peers, schools, and communities. Events or activities (sports, school-related activities, camps, band, summer school, dance, etc.) should be encouraged and a scholarship should be looked at first to help pay for them. Gear or supplies for these types of events are submitted for consideration. Ask your worker ahead of time to ensure time to process the request.

Can I participate in credit recovery in public school or in a facility? How do we do that?

Credit recovery programs that are available for you vary in each school district; however, the process to utilize supportive services is the same. You have education in your case plan to enhance the strengths and focus on your needs. Your support team (FSS, placement provider, CRP, school, and additional supports) will discuss your education on an ongoing basis through Age Meetings, Case Planning, and Home Visits. You are encouraged to take an active part in your education and understand your credit status. If you feel that you are missing credits or need support, your FSS would be a good contact to set up a meeting with the school to address these concerns.

Can I utilize South Dakota Virtual School to get a diploma before 18 if I wanted to?

South Dakota Virtual School offers a variety of courses that you can take on your own time, all taught by qualified professionals and aligned to the state's content standards. Because the South Dakota Department of Education approves all courses, you can be assured that course offerings meet the state's high academic standards. Any middle or high school student in South Dakota is eligible to take courses via the South Dakota Virtual School. But you must register through your home school district.

there should be a plan developed to earn it back. You, the worker, and the school/facility must work together on the educational plan including how to appropriately incorporate technology.

How do I make sure my credits transfer when I move?

You are encouraged to be diligent in knowing where you stand with credits. This is also the expectation of the FSS. You, your worker, the CRP, and school work together to ensure that all information and available credits are transferred between schools. The School Districts have the ultimate say on which credit will be accepted; however, with additional attention and thought, there is less of chance that credits will be missed. This continues to be an area of opportunity that CPS believes needs improved. You are encouraged to share your input on ways to improve this process.

Is there support/funding for extracurricular activities if it is safe to participate?

Yes. CPS believes in Positive Youth Development (PYD). PYD is an intentional, prosocial approach that engages you within your communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes,



Independent Living Preparation Programs:

McCrossan Boys Ranch - Sioux Falls
Volunteers of America, Transitional Living Program, Sioux Falls
Abbott House, Mitchell and Rapid City
New Alternatives—Lutheran Social Services, Rapid City
Job Corp, Black Hills

Treatment Foster Care Programs:

Abbott House—Mitchell & Rapid City
Black Hills Special Services Cooperative
Capital Area Counseling Service
Children’s Home Society
Lutheran Social Services
Our Home



Court Process

The following information describes the court process. The stages in the tribal courts may be different in some ways, but the state and tribal court stages are in many ways similar.

1. **INTAKE HEARING:** SDCL 26-7A-13.1 requires a law enforcement officer who has taken a child into emergency protective custody to immediately contact an intake officer (a judge, magistrate or other designated individual) who shall determine whether or not temporary custody of the child may continue with DSS.

In other words, the purpose of an intake hearing is to decide whether a child should be held in temporary custody following an initial placement by law enforcement.

2. **TEMPORARY CUSTODY HEARING:** If the child remains in the custody after the intake hearing, a hearing must be held within 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) after the child has been taken into custody. The purpose of the hearing is for the court to determine whether continued temporary custody outside of the home is necessary to protect the child.

This is also called the 48 hour hearing. The purpose is to determine whether custody outside the home is necessary or if the child may be safely returned home.

The Initial Family Assessment takes place and the court has 14 days to make a decision. CPS works with parents and a support system to create a safety plan to make a safe home.

3. **ADVISORY HEARING:** The court should, as soon as possible, conduct an advisory hearing for whomever is present. During the hearing, the court will explain:
 - The rights of the parties to counsel

encouraged to speak to your FSS, CRP, and placement.

What if I call my worker and I still don't hear from them or I don't see them each month for a visit - meaning over a month with no contact with their FSS?

It is CPS policy that the FSS assigned to you needs to be the one who consistently visits you and your placement resource. Consistent contact by the same FSS contributes to a relationship that helps you develop trust and feel more secure. If you are not receiving returned communication from your worker in a reasonable time, you are encouraged to speak to your worker about it, your worker's supervisor, or your CRP.

What is the process for me to update or edit the case plan?

The initial Case Plan is completed within 60 days of entering care and updated every six Months. An addendum to your Case Plan can be made after a placement change or permanent plan change. It is important to note that this is your Case Plan. You are encouraged to be an active leader in developing and updating this plan. Additional information will be provided by the FSS, placement, CRP, and additional supports. You are encouraged to take time to read your case plans. There is a portion at the end of the case plan that is for participant comments regarding agreement with this plan. If you do not agree with your case plan or would like something added onto it, you can add it in this section. You can also request that the worker incorporates it into the case plan prior to your signature.

Education Focused FAQ's

Am I able to use the computer/internet for my education if it has been taken away for negative behavior?

Yes. Participation in an accredited or approved school assures you are receiving all required course work, socialization skills, required testing, and all other requirements of the initiative of No Child Left Behind. You should have access to technology for educational purposes. If it is taken away due to safety reasons,

pictures and family history, or respite or other temporary care by your sibling's provider.

Can I participate in Young Voices or ILS activities by video/ Zoom if I am on computer restrictions at my placement?

Participating in Young Voices is an important connection for you and participation is encouraged. Young Voices developed the Rights of Youth in Care and Responsibilities for South Dakota Youth in Care. One of which states, "Youth have the right to be provided life skills information and services and be allowed to practice your skills to help prepare you to become a successful adult." Not only do you learn valuable skills by participating in the groups, you earn money



towards your Starter Kit by attending. If you are restricted from participating in Young Voices or ILS activities, you are encouraged to notify your worker and/or CRP.

What if I ask to call my worker and the placement agency doesn't allow me to?

Contact with your worker should not be restricted. Understand that there may be circumstances where you are not immediately able to call your worker; however, a request to contact your worker should be allowed in a reasonable time frame. If you believe that contact with your worker is being withheld, you are

- The right to confront the witnesses and to cross-examine them
- If a crime is suspected, the right to remain silent
- The nature of the proceedings
- The allegations of the petition
- The possible outcomes of the court case

This is the hearing where the Judge advises the parents of their rights and appoints attorneys to all parties.

Outcomes could include placed with a relative (CPS tries hard to find a relative and needs to have a home study), foster home, or group care.

4. **ADJUDICATION HEARING:** Adjudication is the process by which the court determines whether or not a child is an abused or neglected child as defined by SDCL 26-8A-2, or the specific tribal code when tribal court is involved. If the child is determined to be an abused or neglected child, the court can continue to exercise jurisdiction over the child and the parents. If not, the case is dismissed.

This is the hearing where the judge determines if the children were abused and/or neglected and if there is enough evidence to keep the children in care. The parents can admit to the petition and agree that the children were abused/neglected and sign stipulations which means the state would not have to call witnesses. If the parents do not agree, the state has to call witnesses to testify and a hearing will take place.



5. **REVIEW/STATUS HEARING:** Following adjudication, a review hearing shall be held no less than every six months so long as the child remains in the legal custody of DSS.

What happens: This hearing takes place 90 days after the Adjudication Hearing, and around nine months since intake. This hearing is for the judge to review the status of the case.

6. **DISPOSTIONAL HEARING:** Disposition is the phase of the proceedings where the court determines what will happen to a child in terms of the child's placement and care. Once a child is adjudicated abused and neglected, the court will hold an initial dispositional hearing to determine the care of the child and will implement a plan to resolve the problems necessitating removal from the home. Depending on the case, permanency plan options recommended at the final dispositional hearing include the following:

What to expect: Around 1 year after intake, this is the final hearing is where the state needs to make a recommendation as to the permanent placement for the child(ren). There are several different options that the state can recommend.

If the parent(s) cannot be a permanent home, the parent(s) can help Child Protection Services make plans for the child to live with relatives or to be adopted. In some circumstances, foster parents agree to care for a child until they are 18.

What can I do if my placement doesn't let me contact people important to me even though it's safe?

If you are not allowed to contact your connections, you should notify your FSS. Connections are developed/maintained to ensure you stay connected to family, friends, community, and culture. Lifelong connections are critical and are incorporated into your case plan. Relatives not chosen as the placement resource for you (for reasons other than safety) may still be able to have an active role in your life. It is critical that the FSS help you maintain and/or establish safe and nurturing connections with your family.

What can be done to help with family and sibling visits? I am able to visit with them but have been told that transportation is not available.

CPS believes that contact with parents and siblings of a child in the custody of DSS is vital in your life. Visitation is a key indicator of family functioning and is essential to keep family connections, support, and culture. A plan must be developed to ensure contact. Weekly contact between you, your birth family, and your siblings via telephone calls, cards, letters, or visits should be made when possible. If weekly visits are not possible, a minimum of one monthly visit between you, your birth parent, and your siblings is required if the plan is to return home. If the plan is not to return you to the birth family, the importance of continued contact should be evaluated. Placement with siblings is a priority. If placement with siblings cannot be achieved, the FSS needs to establish regular visits and contacts between the siblings. Transportation difficulties should not prohibit the connection of families. You are encouraged to speak with your workers to develop alternative methods to remain connected. These may include writing letters, telephone contact, webcam communication, attending meetings, attending school, church, community activities, exchanging

Frequently Asked Questions

CPS believes every child deserves a permanent family. The division will work with your parent(s) to develop a permanent plan for you. CPS also believes no child should be in placement for more than 12 months and a permanent plan should be in place within six months of leaving home.

In order for you to return home, your parent(s) must work with CPS to change behaviors which are preventing you from living with them. If you cannot be returned to your parent(s) after 12 months or within a period of time otherwise set by the judge, CPS will request the court consider terminating the parental rights or another permanent plan option for you.

Can I visit my parents?

Your FSS will meet with you to discuss ways you can have contact with your parents(s), which may include letters, telephone calls and face-to-face visits. Visits may take place at the office, where you are living, or at another place.

When can I go home?

CPS will work with your parents to help them change the behaviors and conditions which caused you to be unsafe. The FSS and your parent will work together to develop a plan to determine what needs to change, and what services will help in making the changes so you will be safe at home. The court makes the final decision as to whether the parent has made the changes needed for you to be able to return home.

What happens if I cannot go home?

*The **Adoption and Safe Families Act**, Public Law 150-89, is a federal law that states the court must have a hearing no later than 12 months from when a child enters foster care. During this hearing, the court must decide on a permanent plan for the child. Child Protection Services may request termination of parental rights prior to 12 months if the parent(s) are not making significant efforts for the child to be able to return home.*

- **Continued Custody:** CPS recommends the child remain in custody to allow the parents opportunity to continue to progress in making necessary changes in their behavior for the child to be returned safely to the parents.

We can recommend that the case be continued for additional time.

- **Dismissal:** The court case is ended and the custody of the child returns to the parent or guardian.

You go back to your parents or legal guardian.

- **Guardianship:** Guardians are relatives, foster parents, or other adults who have a connection to a child and want to assume legal responsibility for them.

Guardians are relatives, foster care providers, or other adults who have a connection to a child and want to have legal responsibility for them.

- **Another Permanent Planned Living Arrangement:** Recommended for youth over the age of 16 whose plan is to remain in foster care until 18 or 21, if they have not completed high school.

This is usually recommended for older kids that don't have an adoption plan. The child will remain in foster care until 18 and they will have a review hearing every year.

- **Termination of Parental Rights:** Recommended when parents are not able to make the necessary behavior changes to have their children returned to them, and is the least restrictive alternative available to the court.

When parents' rights are taken away and they have no legal rights to you.



7. **PERMANENCY HEARING:** A hearing held every 12 months from the time a child enters custody to review the child's permanent plan and determine whether reasonable efforts are being made to achieve the permanent plan. Permanency hearings are required until the court case is closed.



What this is — A court hearing that happens yearly to make sure that every effort is being made to achieve a permanent plan.

