



## Can the Advocacy Office help pregnant and parenting youth?

Yes, but you may want to first contact the DCFS pregnant and parenting teen coordinator for assistance by calling

Cook: **312-814-5991**

Central: **217-557-5761**

Southern: **618-993-7149**

Northern: **630-801-3446**



Youth who are parents including fathers have specific rights before and after the baby's birth.

For additional information, including the

**Youth Bill of Rights**, please visit the

DCFS website: **www2.illinois.gov/DCFS**

## More ways to get help:

### DCFS Transition Managers: General info:

Northern: 630-801-3446

Cook North: 312-328-2740

Cook Central: 708-338-6657

Cook South: 773-371-6134

Central: 217-557-5761

Southern: 618-993-7149

### Your Attorney/GAL

Cook County Office of the Public Guardian:

312-433-4300

*Outside of Cook: Ask your caseworker*

### DCFS Education Advisors:

For help with school issues: 815-753-4321

### Healthworks: For help finding medical care

800-543-4345

### DCFS medical card Hotline:

To verify medical coverage or if you did not receive a medical card: 1-800-228-6533

### DCFS Child Abuse Hotline:

To report alleged abuse or neglect 24/7:

**800-25-ABUSE** (800-252-2873)

### Human Trafficking Hotline and BeFree Textline:

To report tips or get help Hotline 24/7:

**888-373-7888**

BeFree Textline: 2 PM-10 PM Central Time

**Text Help to 233733** (BeFree)

### National Runaway Safeline:

**1-800-RUNAWAY** (800-786-2929)

Illinois Department of  
**DCFS**  
Children & Family Services

SAFETY  SAFETY  
FIRST ALWAYS

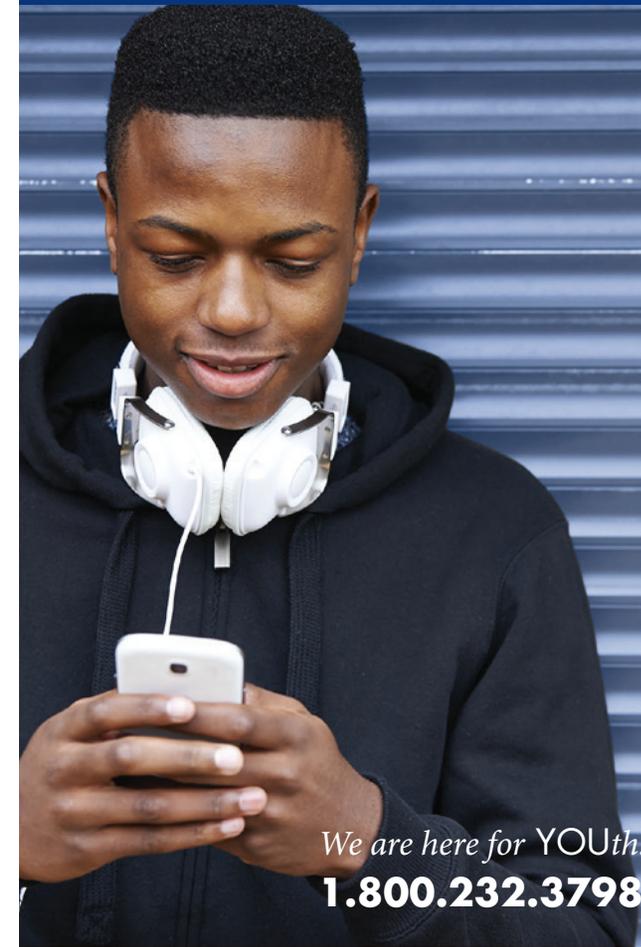
**312.814.6800 • www2.illinois.gov/DCFS**

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# DCFS Advocacy Office for Children & Families



We are here for YOUth.

**1.800.232.3798**

Illinois Department of  
**DCFS**  
Children & Family Services

## What will happen when I call the Advocacy Office?

You will talk with an advocate who will take time to understand and discuss your questions and concerns. When appropriate, the Advocate will follow up further to address your concerns.

If you have ideas for changes to DCFS, the Advocacy Office will note your suggestions. The Advocacy Office makes recommendations to DCFS executive staff for improvements so that DCFS can better serve children, youth, and families.

## What should I do before calling the Advocacy Office?

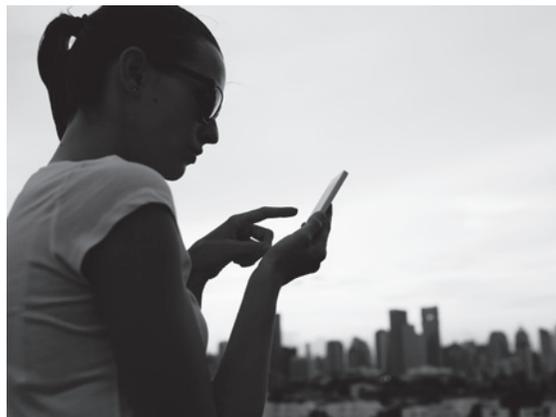
Talk to your DCFS or private agency caseworker. If the worker doesn't address your concern, contact your worker's supervisor. You may also want to talk to your GAL and other trusted adults like your therapist, foster parent, and residential or group home staff then contact the Advocacy Office. If you are living in a residential setting, locked suggestion boxes are provided so that you may send comments directly to DCFS.

## How do I contact the Advocacy Office?

You may call **800-232-3798** and ask to speak to an Advocate from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, except for state holidays. You may also leave a message after hours and an advocate will call you back the next business day.

You may also email the Advocacy Office at **dcfs.youth@illinois.gov**

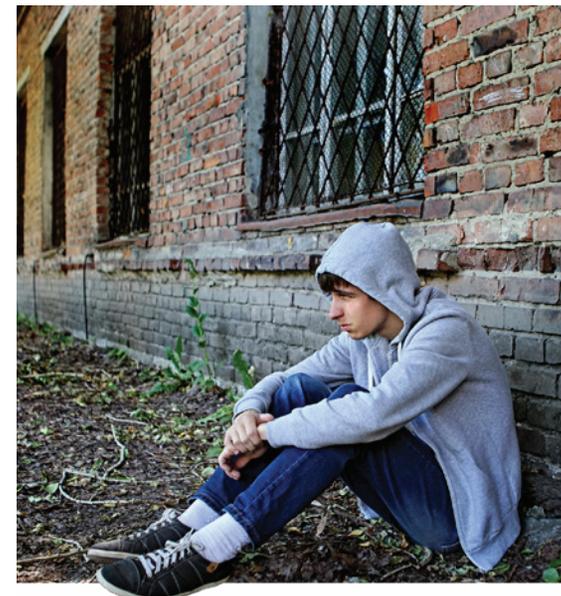
**It is your right to contact the Advocacy Office and no one should prevent you from doing so.**



## What is the Youth Advisory Board? Can I contact the Advocacy Office through the Youth Advisory Board meetings?

Youth between the ages of 14 and 21 who have been adopted, are currently in care or formerly in care are eligible to join the Youth Advisory Board (YAB). Youth come together to discuss ways to make DCFS a better place for all youth in care, create policies and laws, work on individual issues and concerns and receive beneficial resources from DCFS. The YAB is committed to youth empowerment, development, leadership and achievement across the state of Illinois. For more information on YAB's talk to your caseworker or call 312-588-3842 in Cook County, or 217-789-2980 (downstate).

During each YAB meeting, youth have time to discuss their issues and concerns. When issues are not being addressed by the youth's assigned caseworker and caseworker's supervisor, the youth may complete a form requesting that an advocate contact them to discuss their concerns. YAB's are another way to reach the Advocacy Office. You do not have to wait for a YAB meeting to contact us; we are available to talk to youth at any time during business hours.



## I used to be in DCFS care, but I am on my own now. I didn't know it would be so hard. Can I come back into care?

Some youth are eligible to come back into DCFS care after emancipating. Supporting Emancipated Youth Services (SEYS) is a program for youth 18 to 21 who were emancipated from DCFS care to their own responsibility. Children who were returned to one or both parents, adopted, or taken into guardianship by their caregiver are not eligible for this program.

If you are interested in the SEYS program and think you may be eligible, contact the Advocacy Office for discussion. If you meet the eligibility guidelines and want to proceed, the Advocate will complete a referral for casework services and send it to the office closest to you. A caseworker will contact you within 24 hours. Only the Advocacy Office can refer youth to this program.