I have the right for my rights to be explained in an age-appropriate way and to ask questions about the Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care.

I have the right to ask for help if I feel that my rights are not being protected.

If you feel any of your rights are not being protected or you have questions, complaints or concerns, contact your caseworker, GAL/CASA, or attorney. You may also contact:

Children's Administration Constituent Relations
Email: constrelations@dshs.wa.gov
Toll free phone: 1-800-723-4831
Phone: 360-902-8060

Office of the Family and Children's Ombuds
6840 Fort Dent Way, Suite 125
Mail Stop TT-99 • Tukwila, WA 98188
Toll free phone: 1-800-571-7321
Phone: 206-439-3789
TTY: 206-439-3789
Fax: 206-439-3877
http://ofco.wa.gov/

You can find additional information on the website:
www.Independence.wa.gov

Passion to Action
taking the steps

The Mockingbird Society
Improving foster care | Ending youth homelessness

Washington State Department of Social & Health Services
Transforming lives

DSHS 22-1632 (10/15)

Rights
of Children and Youth in Foster Care

Why I am in foster care

How the foster care system works

The expectations of my foster caregiver

The purpose of a case plan and the contents of my case plan

The efforts to reunify me with my family

Safety and Well-Being

I have the right to be protected from abuse and neglect.

I have the right to be treated fairly and equally, whatever my gender, gender identity, race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, disability, medical problems, or sexual orientation and be addressed by the gender pronouns I prefer.

I have the right to have my basic needs met (food, clothing, shelter, health care, and education).

I have the right to participate in "normal" childhood activities (overnights with friends, after-school activities and sports).

I have the right to have space for storing my clothing and belongings.

I have the right for my case file and personal information to be confidential and kept in a secure place. Discussions of my information should only occur with people who are involved in my case.

I have the right to be free from cruel, frightening or unsafe discipline.

I have the right to practice my own religion or not at all.

I have the right to report abuse, neglect, exploitation or violation of my personal rights without fear of punishment, interference, or coercion.

I have the right to be referred for legal services to determine whether an application for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status shall be submitted on my behalf to the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Court Proceedings/Case Planning

I have the right to have someone appointed to represent my best interests in my case, such as a Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) or a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA).

I have the right at any age to request an attorney or have someone request one on my behalf.

I have the right to have my case reviewed in court every six months.

I have the right, if I am 12 or older, to be notified of and participate in my hearings.

I have the right, if I am 12 or older, to be notified that I can request an attorney to represent what I want.

I have the right to be appointed an attorney six months after my parents' parental rights have been terminated.

I have the right to be appointed an attorney if I am in Extended Foster Care.

I have the right to access and review my case records.

I have the right, if I am 14 or older, to be consulted about my permanent plan.

I have the right, if I am 14 or older, to invite two people of my choice to my Permanency Planning meetings.

Education

I have the right to attend school.

I have the right to remain in the same school even when I move to a foster home, when it is possible and in my best interest.

I have the right to enter school within three days of placement into foster care or placement change.

I have the right to have an Educational Liaison at my court hearings under certain circumstances.

Placement and Visitation

I have the right be placed in a residence where I am safe, that can meet my needs, and provide appropriate privacy for my personal needs.

I have the right to be placed in a home with my siblings whenever possible.

I have the right to be placed with a willing and able relative or suitable adult I know and who I am comfortable with, whenever possible and appropriate.

I have the right to have regular and frequent contact or visits with my parents, unless otherwise ordered by the court.

I have the right to visit my parents and siblings. These visits cannot be limited as punishment for my behavior.

I have the right to maintain regular contact or visits with siblings when separated, unless the court orders that contact or visits are not appropriate.

I have the right to initiate and receive private phone calls and letters, unless otherwise determined by the court.

I have the right to ask the court if I can move back home even if my parents' parental rights have been terminated and three years have passed since termination (and to have an attorney appointed to help me with the request).

Healthcare

I have the right to be informed of my health needs, medications, and medical history.

I have the right to have annual well-check exams.

I have the right to have dental exams every six months through age 18 and annually thereafter until age 26.

I have the right to be informed of the benefits and risks of any and all medicines, vitamins, or herbs that are prescribed or recommended to me.

I have the right to agree or disagree taking any or all medicines, vitamins or herbs unless the court says I must take them.

I have the right to obtain or refuse reproductive health care, including birth control and/or counseling regarding birth control, without consent or knowledge of a parent or guardian.

I have the right to receive outpatient mental health treatment without consent or knowledge of a parent or guardian if I am over the age of 13.

I have the right to receive outpatient substance abuse treatment without consent of a parent or guardian if I am over the age of 13.

I have the right to obtain tests and treatment for sexually transmitted infections without consent of a parent or guardian if I am age 14 or older.

I have the right to know Children's Administration's duties and responsibilities if I am pregnant or a parenting foster youth and that my needs will be addressed and services will be provided.

Transitioning Out of Foster Care / Extended Foster Care

I have the right to develop a transition plan for moving out of foster care.

I have the right to obtain my consumer credit report annually starting at age 14.

I have the right to know in advance what my options are on my 18th birthday if I am still in foster care.

I have the right to know and understand all the components of the Extended Foster Care program.

I have the right to be appointed an attorney if I am enrolled in Extended Foster Care.

I have the right to enter/re-enter Extended Foster Care one time prior to my 19th birthday.

I have the right to refuse Extended Foster Care or opt out at any point.

I have the right to be provided my vital documents when needed and upon leaving foster care, including birth certificate, social security card, Washington State ID, medical insurance information and a copy of my health and education records.

I have the right to receive medical coverage through state health insurance (Medicaid) until age 26, if I was a ward of the state on my 18th birthday.

I have the right to know how to request my case records once I turn 18.

I have the right for my rights to be explained in an age-appropriate way and ask questions about the Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care.