

What are my rights?

You have the right to:

- Participate in the development of your part of the service plan (one way to help in the decisions concerning you and your future)
- Receive a final copy of your service plan prior to your scheduled ACR (your worker should give you a copy and talk with you about the plan before the review)
- Attend and participate in your ACR (by phone if necessary)
- Appeal (tell someone you do not agree) the services outlined in your service plan including the goal through the Service Appeal Process (you have 45 days after the ACR)

What are my responsibilities?

You are responsible for:

- Taking an active role in developing your portion of the service plan (tell your worker what you want)
- Following the tasks as outlined in your service plan (go to counseling, attend school or other things)
- Making every effort to participate in the review and provide input in your ACR (provide your opinion on how you are doing; how you are being treated in care; how your needs are being met or not met; what services you believe you need to resolve any problems you have)
- Above all, VOICING your opinion

Who can I call if I feel I am not getting the help I need?

- **Youth Hotline**
1-800-232-3798
This is the Advocacy Office who will listen to what you have to say. They will look into what is going on and get back with you.
- **Administrative Hearings Unit**
217-782-6655
If you don't agree with what is in your service plan and you have already discussed your concern with your worker and the Youth Hotline, but the problem was not resolved, you can ask the Administrative Hearings Unit to review the decisions made by your worker. Your caseworker must help you with the appeal if you request help.

What if I don't know when my ACR is scheduled?

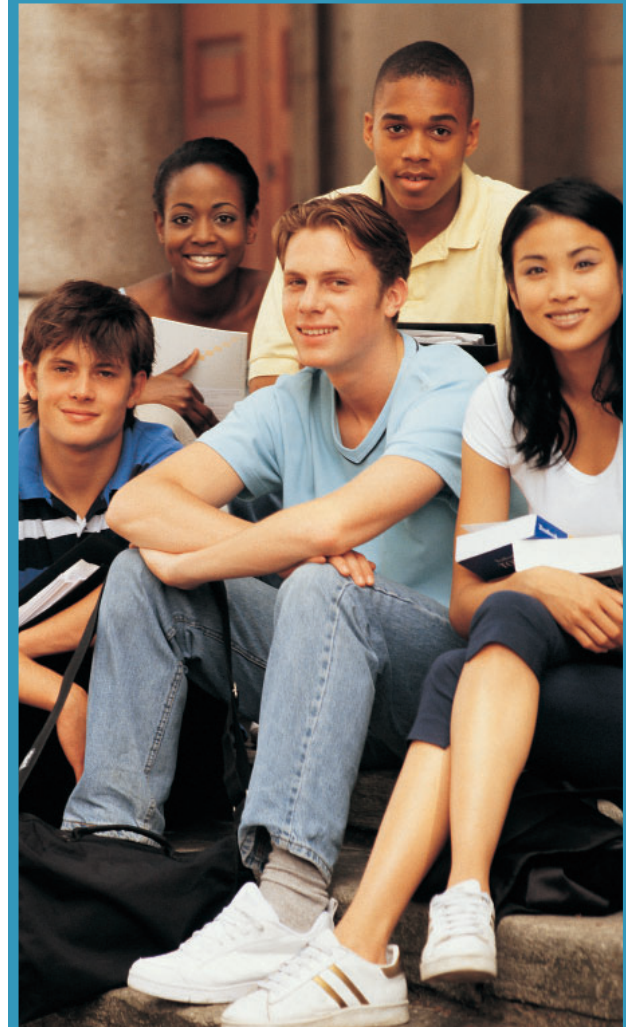
To find out when your ACR is scheduled, call 312-328-2763. The person at this number will be able to help you. Be sure to leave a message if the person is away from their desk and you get voice mail.

The information in this brochure is intended for youth 12 years of age and older.

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Youth, you DO have a say!

Facts about the Administrative Case Review (ACR)



What is an Administrative Case Review?

The Administrative Case Review (ACR) is a process that the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) uses to make sure that everything is going well with you and your case.

A DCFS staff person, called an Administrative Case Reviewer, facilitates the ACR meeting. This is not the same person as your caseworker. The Administrative Case Reviewer is an independent person who looks at the facts (what is going on in your case) without taking sides. You can tell the reviewer about any disagreements or problems that you are having regarding the service plan (a paper that is written by the worker with input from you and others involved with the case which includes what you and/or your family members need to do in order to meet your goal), services, service providers or your caseworker.

How does it work?

- You should receive a letter inviting you to the ACR and/or your caseworker should inform you of the review. If you do not have transportation to the ACR, your caseworker should provide it.
- Your parents, foster parents, CASA representative, GAL, counselor, and caseworker may be invited to attend. Additional people may also be invited.

- The Reviewer should begin by introducing him or herself, as well as others who may be present.
- The reviewer should go over your rights with you and help you to understand them.
- At the meeting, a review of your service plan will occur, which should tell everyone involved how you are doing and what you need to do to obtain your permanency goal.
- During the meeting, the reviewer will ask you several questions to gain knowledge of how you are doing. He or she will be especially interested in the areas of permanency, well being and safety. The reviewer will also give you the opportunity to ask questions and seek information about these areas as well as other areas of interest. Reports on your progress at school, in counseling, behavior in the foster home, medical care and other areas of concern may be presented and reviewed at the meeting.
- At the end of the ACR the Reviewer may ask you if you understand what your goal is (either independence, return home or adoption) and if you know what you need to do to fulfill that goal. Depending upon your goal, others may need to complete tasks in order for your goal to be reached.

Important information about the ACR

The ACR is a process that:

- Is required by the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (a law passed by the U.S. government)
- Provides an independent review of the permanency process (this means that someone not involved in your case will take a look at it)
- Assures that the service plan adequately provides for services/ treatment that is relevant and effective in meeting your needs and your families' needs
- Ensures the service plan provides for your health and safety (if you are sick, need dental work or don't feel safe, the reviewer will make a note of this and ask why this is happening)
- Reviews the agency and family's progress in reaching your permanency goal (to make sure your worker and others are helping you)
- Occurs at least every six months from the time of your initial placement in substitute care (from the time you were taken from your home)
- Provides information on the status of case to the caseworker, supervisor and at times management and administration. (The Reviewer will write a report telling how things are going with your case)