




LEAF: Advocacy

FOCUS AREA	ONE LEAF	TWO LEAVES	THREE LEAVES
YOUTH SELF-ADVOCACY Q1. How are young people supported to advocate for themselves at your agency/organization?	 <i>Young people:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are helped to understand the importance of self-advocacy. • Are provided with opportunities to practice advocating for themselves and asking for what they need (e.g., when and how to talk to a judge, effective approaches for communicating with their case planner, how to lead teaming meetings). • If not already created, help develop a Youth Bill of Rights. • Are provided with their rights and these are discussed with their worker as early as possible during the intake process. • Are given opportunities to learn about the protective and promotive factors and consider these concepts with their own lived experiences when expressing their needs and goals. (Youth Thrive for Youth—YT4Y) is a training developed by and for young people on the Protective and Promotive Factors—for more information go to the resources section below). • Are encouraged to join the agency/organization's youth council. 	 <i>Young people:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have scheduled opportunities to speak with leadership to share highlights and successes, and to discuss their concerns/challenges (e.g., leadership attends monthly youth council meeting or opens up leadership meetings to young people). • Regularly provide feedback on how they are engaged by staff and their access to needed supports. Youth feedback is used to improve programs, training, supervision, and identify types of community resources and services needed. • Receive updates on the information they share and how that information is being used to improve services and supports. 	 <i>Young people:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are consistently encouraged by all levels of staff to join the agency's/organization's leadership/executive teams, such as board, governance team, committees, and project teams. • Have a youth-only designated space to convene and discuss matters that are important to them. • Are encouraged and supported to participate in civic activities (e.g., speaking at town halls, using social media to bring attention to new bills, laws, and policies, participate in rallies to support new programs, write and call legislators). • Are provided with opportunities to actualize change in the community, agency/organization and see the impact of their efforts. If this is not possible, adults are transparent and communicate about the barriers.

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AGENCY ADVOCATING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES			
Q1. How is staff supported to advocate for young people and families at your agency/organization?	<p><i>Staff at all levels:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are asking young people and families about their needs and share that feedback with leadership. This can occur during supervision, staff meetings, and via agency/organization surveys or comment boxes. • Have tools and guidance that help them to gather feedback from young people and families about the supports provided, reflect on those supports to determine if there are gaps in services, and how to seek additional support if it is needed. 	<p><i>Staff at all levels:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are asked by agency/organization leadership to provide feedback from young people and families on federal, state, and local bills, laws and policies to ensure the development of agency/organizational policies and procedures that support young people and families to thrive. • Are encouraged to identify policies and procedures that negatively impact young people and families and impact their ability to provide the unique and tailored supports young people and families need. 	<p><i>Staff at all levels:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are invited by leadership to brainstorming and strategy meetings with young people and families to discuss opportunities for better supporting young people and family voice/ input/ opinion. • Are encouraged and supported to participate in civic activities with young people and families (e.g., speaking at town halls, using social media to bring attention to new laws that support young people's well-being, participate in community block parties to enroll young people in new programs, write and call legislators).
Q2. How does your agency/organization advocate at the local, state, and federal levels for young people and families?	<p><i>In collaboration with young people and families:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with other agencies and organizations to endorse federal, state, and local bills, laws, and policies that support young people and families to thrive. • Share on social media, agency/organization website, and write articles and/or blogs about practices and policies that support young people and families to thrive and oppose practice and policies that are harmful. 	<p><i>In collaboration with young people and families:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write letters to and/or meet with local and state officials and legislators to share information about, discuss, and/or ask for the supports young people and families need. • Participate in civic activities with staff, young people, and families (e.g., speaking at City Council hearing, participate in rallies to support new programs, write and call legislators). 	<p><i>In collaboration with young people and families:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an advocacy board or committee that consists of agency/organizational leadership, staff, young people, and parents to strategically identify advocacy opportunities and external partners, develop action plans, share the plan internally and externally, and to move ahead collaborative advocacy efforts. • Create communication loops (agency and organization to the committee and the committee to the community) to transparently share information with community members about the status of action efforts and any barriers that may slow down or prohibit change.

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<p>Q3. How are families supported to advocate for themselves at your agency/ organization?</p>	<p><i>Families:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are provided with tools, strategies, and opportunities to voice their needs and opinions (e.g., preparing for court, communicating with agency staff). • Help develop a Parent/ Caregiver Bill of Rights • Are provided with their rights and these are discussed during early interactions with the agency/ organization. • Collaborate with agency staff on a working agreement (e.g., when to take a break during meetings, the best time to schedule visits and meetings, etc.). • Participate in the agency/ organization's family council/ support group. • Are encouraged to speak up for themselves and lead teaming meetings. 	<p><i>Families:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have regular access to leadership to share highlights and successes, and to discuss any concerns/challenges (e.g., leadership attends monthly family council meeting, town hall). • Regularly provide feedback, both quantitative and qualitative, on their experience with staff and access to supports. The feedback obtained is used to improve programs, identify types of resources needed, improve training, and to inform supervision with staff. • Receive updates on the information they share and how that information is being used to improve services and supports. 	<p><i>Families:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are consistently encouraged by all levels of staff to join the agency's/ organization's leadership/ executive board, committees, and project teams (e.g., new project team managers reach out to parent advocacy groups to identify a parent to serve as a member of the project team). • Are encouraged and supported to participate in civic activities (e.g., speaking at town halls, using social media to bring attention to new bills and laws, participate in rallies to support new programs, write and call legislators) • Have power on parent councils and advocacy boards to make decisions regarding policy and practice. • Are encouraged by the agency's leadership to join committees and project teams.
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Resources to Strengthen Practice: ADVOCACY

Youth Thrive Protective and Promotive Factors One Pagers:

- [Youth Resilience](#)
- [Social Connections](#)
- [Knowledge of Adolescent Development](#)
- [Concrete Support in Times of Need](#)
- [Cognitive and Social-Emotional Competence](#)

- Youth Thrive Guiding Premises One Pager
- [Transformational Relationships for Youth Success](#)
- [Building the Youth Thrive Framework in Jurisdictions](#)
- [Youth Thrive trainings and modules](#)
- [Youth Thrive for Youth \(YT4Y\) training](#) (to register or learn more, email YouthThrive@cssp.org)
- [CSSP Anti-Racist Intersectional Frame](#)
- [CSSP Key Equity Terms and Concepts: A Glossary for Shared Understanding](#)
- [Strategies for Authentic Integration of Family and Youth Voice in Child Welfare](#) (Capacity Building Center for States)
- TIPs Center [Child Welfare Trauma Training Toolkit](#)