

## State of Rhode Island Office of the Child Advocate

### Office of the Child Advocate

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<http://www.child-advocate.ri.gov/index.php>

Mission Statement of the Office of the Child Advocate:

The mission of the Office of the Child Advocate is to protect the legal rights of children in State care and to promote policies and practices which ensure that children are safe; that children have permanent and stable families; and that children in out of home placements have their physical, mental, medical, educational, emotional and behavioral needs met.

### Child Advocacy

#### Litigation

The Office is empowered to initiate litigation on behalf of children in state care, including litigation naming other state agencies as defendants. The Office has brought suit against DCYF and placement facilities for violating the Children's Bill of Rights on such issues as privacy and humane treatment of children in state care.

#### Reviewing Child Fatalities

The Office may convene a formal investigative commission for any child fatality in which the child victim has any connection with DCYF and issue a public report with recommendations for systemic reforms.

#### Monitoring Placement Facilities

The Office monitors public and private residential placement facilities and shelters and conducts periodic on site visits to confirm whether a facility is in compliance with RI child care regulations, which may include health, safety and fire codes. The Office also assesses the quality of programs, interviews children, verifies any report of institutional abuse, and recommends corrective actions to be taken.

#### Legislative Advocacy

The Child Advocate is a member of the RI General Assembly's Children's Code Commission which reviews all legislation affecting children and routinely offers testimony in General Assembly hearings on legislative proposals affecting children.

### **Public Hearings and Documents**

The Office makes presentations at conferences, convenes public hearings and conducts studies which are released as public reports.

### **Child Victims Assistance**

The Office provides assistance to children in DCYF care who may be entitled to crime victim compensation by making them aware of crime victim compensation laws and pursuing legal actions on behalf of certain child victims of sexual and/or severe physical abuse.

### **Training**

The Office conducts training and offers seminars for providers and guardians Ad Litem.

### **Related Links**

- [Childwelfare.gov](http://Childwelfare.gov)
- [Rlkidscount.org](http://Rlkidscount.org)
- [Ojjdp.ncjrs.gov](http://Ojjdp.ncjrs.gov)
- [Childrensdefense.org](http://Childrensdefense.org)
- [RIC.edu](http://RIC.edu)
- [CSE.ri.gov](http://CSE.ri.gov)
- [Rlcorp.net](http://Rlcorp.net)
- [PSNRI.org](http://PSNRI.org)
- [RILS.org](http://RILS.org)
- [RIPD.org](http://RIPD.org)
- [Preventchildabuse-ri.org](http://Preventchildabuse-ri.org)
- [DCYF.ri.gov](http://DCYF.ri.gov)
- [Youthpride-ri.org](http://Youthpride-ri.org)
- [Treasury.state.ri.us](http://Treasury.state.ri.us)
- [Kids Link RI](http://Kids Link RI)
- [AdoptionRI.org](http://AdoptionRI.org)
- [RIFPA.org](http://RIFPA.org)
- [Newrootsprovidence.org](http://Newrootsprovidence.org)
- [Lifespan-Bradley Hospital](http://Lifespan-Bradley Hospital)