



Youth Self Advocacy

Presented by Deedra Baker

Texas CASA Quality Assurance Manager

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CASA College

Self-Advocacy for Youth in Foster Care

Deedra H. Baker, LCSW
dbaker@texascasa.org

“Prepare the child for the path, not the path for the child.”





**Nothing
About Us
Without
Us!**

Today's Webinar will Cover...

- Stages of Development
- Self-Advocacy:
 - Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care
 - Autonomy through Life Skills
 - Participation in Hearings



Stages of Development

Ages 12 to 15 years—

- **Stage of Psychosocial Development:**
Identity vs. Role Confusion
- **Stage of Cognitive Development:**
beginning of formal operations



Stages of Development

Ages 16 to 18 years—

- **Stage of Psychosocial Development:** Identity vs. Role Confusion
- **Stage of Cognitive Development:** formal thought



Stage of Moral Development: rules allow for intentions and extenuating circumstances

Keep in mind: the need for choices related to sex, drugs, significant relationships and the future



Self-Advocacy: Rights



Almost 47% of kids who grew up in foster care **are unemployed.**



Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 26 (2011)

Know Your Rights!

SAY IT!

Self-Advocacy: Life Skills

LIFE

**is 10% what
happens to you
and 90% how you
respond to it.**

AM I OKAY? AM I REALLY *THAT* DIFFERENT?
SOMETIMES I STRUGGLE. DO OTHERS STRUGGLE?
WEAKNESSES? STRENGTHS?
EVERYONE HAS THEIR
STRENGTHS AND
WEAKNESSES.
WHAT MAKES ME
DIFFERENT? ARE
THERE OTHERS
LIKE ME? I
WANT TO BE
ME, AND FIND
WHAT WORKS
FOR ME. I AM
UNIQUE, AND
THAT IS OKAY. I
MAY HAVE
DIFFERENT NEEDS, BUT I AM NOT A BURDEN.



Self-Advocacy: Hearings



I want you to listen to my needs.

I **want** you to listen to my needs.

I want **you** to listen to my needs.

Other Resources

- Texas Foster Youth Justice Project
 - Free legal help for current and former foster youth! CALL 1-877-313-3688
 - **A Guide for Those “Aging Out” of Foster Care in Texas**, Fourth Edition, <http://texasfosteryouth.org/>
- Permanency Toolkit
<http://texascasa.org/?s=permanency+toolkit>
- Casey Life Skills is a free practice tool and framework for working with youth in foster care. It assesses independent living skills and provides results instantly: <http://lifeskills.casey.org/>



Questions???