



**State of Florida
Department of Children and Families**

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Taylor N. Hatch
Secretary

Statewide Youth Advisory Board

Monthly Meeting

April 29th, 2026

5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Minutes Details

I. Welcome | Kyle Johnson – Youth Advisor, OCFW – DCF

- a. Attendance – Youth/Young Adults: 12
 - i. *A. Parmer, S. Degaetano Edwards, M. Funicello, E. Du Ross, Q. Peeples, R. Hurley, A. Herrin, L. Mwangi, J. Amerson, G. Brase, J. Davis, T. Wells, T.D.*
- b. Attendance – Support Staff: 5
 - i. *Kyle Johnson, John Watson, Calvin Martin, Davonte' Smith, Keona O'Neal-Givens*
- c. Attendance – Other: 1
 - i. *Marissa Rios, Esq.*
- d. Introductions & Icebreaker
 - i. *CrowdParty – “Fact or Cap”*

II. Advocacy 101

- a. What are qualities of a leader?
 - i. *Take Initiative; Speaking up for others; Compassionate; Emotional Intelligence; Problem Solver; Innovation; Perseverance; Organized; Decision Making Skills; A Leader Goes First*
- b. Types of Advocacy
 - i. *Self Advocacy; Community Advocacy; State & Federal Advocacy*
- c. Strategic Sharing
 - i. *Boundaries – Green/Yellow/Red Light for sharing*
 - 1. *Q. Peeples – FYS goes to the Capital to meet with Legislators. They may ask personal questions and you can state that you are not comfortable answering*
 - 2. *Unknown – Relating with/to people, share just enough.*
 - ii. *Your story is yours to share. You are in control of what you share and how much.*
- d. Community Advocacy
 - i. *What you do in your local Advisory Boards*
- e. State & Federal Advocacy

III. Local Advocacy Priorities

- a. *S. Degaetano Edwards (FSS NF) – Recruitment; A survey for youth in care to assess the quality of care received.*
- b. *A. Herrin (KCI) – Sharing info about IL and services*

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Mission: Work in Partnership with Local Communities to Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

- c. M. Funicello (ChildNet Broward) – Awareness; Knowledge about opportunities; Interact with younger youth
- d. J. Amerson (ChildNet Broward) – Mental Health Resources; Held Accountable; Housing Resources
- e. R. Hurley (GAL CHAMPIONS) – Mentorship/Supportive Adults

IV. myYouthPortal Redesign Feedback

- a. Add accessibility features to the website, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Text Size toggle
 - ii. Contrast Adjustment
 - iii. Greyscale
- b. Replace stock images with real images
 - i. Recommendation to use images of other local Advisory Boards on website
- c. Educational Resource Recommendations
 - i. Information about 504 and Individualized Educational Plan (IEP);
 - ii. Information about Accommodation services available at colleges and universities
- d. Additional Resources
 - i. FosterPower
 - ii. Young Parent resources
 - iii. Life Skills information
 - iv. Adoption Information
- e. More clarity regarding which services are Post-18 vs which are general community resources
- f. Info on how to understand ESS application

V. Feedback – Youth in Foster Care: Rights, Laws, and Requirements Brochure

- a. How is this document distributed? Can CPIs be involved to ensure a timely delivery of the document?
- b. Is this currently in implementation?
- c. How can we be sure that youth are receiving this document *and* that they understand the document?
- d. The document feels too complex/difficult to understand for individuals with learning difficulties or disabilities.
- e. Suggestion to integrate an interactive website for this document
- f. Suggestion to develop an age appropriate activity book to help learn and practice this document
- g. Suggestion to develop life skills resources for youth and young adults
 - i. Activity book; Checklist; How-To Guide; etc

VI. Closing | Kyle Johnson – Youth Advisor, OCFW – DCF

- a. Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday, May 27th, 2026**, from 5 PM – 7 PM via Zoom.