



The goal of the placement advocacy guide is less placements or less time in placements. Section 2 is for a child/youth already in an out of home placement and Section 3 is for a child/youth who is at risk of removal. Section 2 is specifically geared towards residential facilities but can be adopted for placement in a foster home. The sections are outlines with different subject areas to explore and examples of specific questions and actions to take, with the end result being a report to the GAL. The Appendix has more detailed questions to review in addition to the guide. These are not intended to cover all areas of concern for every individual case. It's assumed that there may be some questions which aren't applicable and others that need further investigation. Section 4 is to help address the QRTP process.

SECTION 1: CASE INFORMATION		
Case Number	Youth Name	GAL Name
Is the youth residing in a placement (residential facility or foster home)?		If yes, complete Section 2.
Is the youth at risk of removal?		If yes, complete Section 3.
Is the youth being assessed for a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP)?		If yes, complete Section 4.
<i>Resources are in Appendix A.</i>		

SECTION 2: FACILITY/OUT OF HOME PLACEMENT INFORMATION	
<i>Use the left column to track relevant topics and the right column for notes.</i>	
<p>Funding <i>Funding streams (e.g., RAEs/Medicaid) can provide services before, during, and after discharge which may be helpful in JD cases or when DHS is involved due to a youth being placed. You can coordinate and make referrals.</i></p> <p>Biopsychosocial History and Background <i>Review all reports. Obtain additional biopsychosocial history of youth, family, kin, etc. Determine factors leading to placement and helpful supports that could benefit youth in getting out of placement and avoiding future placement.</i></p> <p>Facility Environment General: <i>Familiarize yourself with facility prior to placement (e.g., population(s) served, services provided, etc.). Review general rules/policies (e.g., food, personal property, privacy, lighting, typical day, school, free time, recreation/other activities provided, outdoor time provided, visitation, grievance procedures, etc. Observe general environment, staff interactions with other youth and families, etc.</i> Discipline and Privileges: <i>Familiarize yourself with facility's disciplinary practices (i.e., isolation/use of restraints), and privilege system (e.g., punitive or, restorative, how are levels/privileges earned?). Discuss with youth, emphasizing importance of maintaining/earning and develop strategies to maintain/earn.</i></p>	



Facility Staff: Obtain staff input regarding youth and compare to your knowledge and observations. If there are differences, note whether differences should inform future communications with staff.

Youth Experience: Obtain information from youth regarding their experiences at the facility (e.g., food, privacy, lighting, a typical day, school quality/performance, free time, weekend activities, recreation/outdoor activities, rules/discipline, visitation policies/experiences, level of comfort/experiences with staff, problems with staff/other youth, positive/negative things that impacted their experience, cultural considerations that are/are not being addressed, etc.

Youth Supports: Determine sources of support for youth (e.g., family, kin, friends, facility staff) and assess how they can support youth while placed. Obtain contact information of resources and discuss with the youth what information can/cannot be shared with the potential supports.

Plan for Discharge

Begin planning immediately. At first staffing, ensure everyone has roles/responsibilities for safe return home or long-term placement. Determine ongoing staffing schedule and accommodations for family if needed. Obtain contact information for relevant staff. Determine whether services can stay in place for continuity. Clarify with the youth their understanding of the discharge process and roles of involved parties. Develop plan to maximize youth success post-placement by identifying family/community resources and evaluating such resources' level of engagement. What if any safety concerns exist and how will they be planned for? Provide plan and timeline, emphasize that timeline is best estimate. Be clear about when you will follow up. Provide your contact information. The greater the buy-in and involvement, the better chance of success.

Backup Plans

Develop 1-2 backup plans if discharge placement falls through or circumstances change. Identify family members, kin, community resources who could be general supports or short-term, long-term, or respite resources. Discuss appropriateness of placement and next steps with GAL.

Court Participation

Ask youth if they would like to attend next court date. Address youth questions and/or concerns about court, transportation. Determine supports for youth in court (i.e., things that would help them feel comfortable to participate).



SECTION 3: RISK OF MORE RESTRICTIVE PLACEMENT INFORMATION

Use the left column to track relevant topics and the right column for notes.

Biopsychosocial History and Background

Review all reports. Obtain any additional biopsychosocial history of youth, family, kin, etc. Determine factors leading to current risk of removal and identify supports that could help to safely prevent placement.

Risk Factors

Identify risk factors for placement and determine what changes might be necessary to alleviate them. If risk factors are not within child/youth's control, consider alternative options to residential placement such as extended family/kin.

Youth Supports

Determine sources of support for youth (i.e., family, kin, friends) to help avoid removal and evaluate level of engagement. Identify potential short-term and long-term resources. Identify individuals who may be involved in legal decision making and/or are influential within family to help generate possible solutions. Determine whether there are cultural considerations that are/are not being addressed.

Planning

General: Develop 1-2 backup plans if the original plan falls through or circumstances change. Provide an explanation of plan(s) and how a transition from one plan to the next might occur to minimize disruption and address any concerns. Be clear about potential timeline. Provide your contact information, best method(s) of contact, and timeframe for correspondence. Collect any necessary information to be part of assessment process if placement appears to be inevitable. Define what "success" will look like and identify individuals and/or supports needed to be successful for short-term and long-term.

Safety: Identify potential short-term and long-term safety concerns and develop plan(s) to address them within the family and community. Be clear on youth and key stakeholder (i.e., CC, GAL, DHS, family) responsibilities to enable the youth to remain at home.

Court Participation

Ask youth if they would like to attend next court date. Address youth questions and/or concerns about court, transportation. Determine supports for youth in court (i.e., things that would help them feel comfortable to participate).



SECTION 4: QUALIFIED RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT PROGRAM (QRTP) INFORMATION

Use the left column to track relevant topics and the right column for notes.

Assessment

Reports: Collect and review reports once you are notified that an assessment will be completed. Ensure that report content is accurate and up to date. Determine whether additional information is necessary (i.e., therapist(s), school) and if so, gather that information. Coordinate with assessment team and/or caseworker to ensure accuracy of information and that it is being reviewed. Review final report and discuss with GAL. Plan next steps.

Preparing Youth: Provide an explanation of the purpose of the assessment to the youth including the importance of it, what it may be like, types of questions the adults may ask, and opportunities they may have to provide input.

If the youth qualify for QRTP no facilities will take the youth:

- Find out why the youth doesn't qualify for each facility.
- If the youth have higher acuity needs preventing the placement determine if they are more appropriate for a PRTF level of care (which requires a finding of medical necessity and is funded by Medicaid).
- Reach out to OCR/CDHS re: some state funded beds that may be an option.

If placed in a QRTP:

- When are the review assessments occurring?
- Advocacy continues.