

# Foster Youth Mental Health Bill of Rights

1. I have the right to receive mental health services in California.
2. I have the right to know about my diagnosis and treatment options in a way that I can understand.
3. I have the right to help make all the decisions regarding my mental health, including treatment and services that meet my needs.
4. I have the right to promptly receive mental health services and treatment.
5. I have the right to promptly receive mental health services in a placement that meets my needs.
6. After my 12th birthday, if I am mature enough, I have the right to seek and consent to mental health counseling and treatment on my own (except psychotropic medication).
7. I have the right to only take medication or other chemical substances that are prescribed by a doctor.
8. I have the right to have the risks and benefits of the medication explained to me in a way I can understand. This includes understanding how my medication may interact with other medications or food.
9. I have the right to tell the doctor if I disagree with any medication the doctor recommends for me.
10. I have the right to tell the judge I disagree with psychotropic medication being prescribed to me. To do so, I should ask my lawyer to fill out the JV-222 (Opposition to Application Regarding Psychotropic Medication).
11. I have the right to ask for mental health services, including a reassessment of my diagnosis and my psychotropic medications.
12. I have the right to work with my doctor to safely stop taking my medications.
13. I have the right to contact my doctor and mental health providers.

14. After my 12th birthday, I have the right to confidentiality when talking to my therapist or doctor.
15. I have the right to confidentiality regarding my medical information and diagnoses. This information can only be shared with authorized individuals in order to help me access and obtain treatment.
16. I have the right to see and get a copy of my court records.
17. At the age of 12 and older, I have the right to see and get a copy of my medical and mental health records, unless a doctor or medical professional believes that it would be detrimental to me.
18. I have the right to continue receiving mental health treatment when my placement changes, including when I am moved to a different county.
19. If I am in foster care on my 18th birthday, I have the right to continue to receive health care, including mental health services through Medi-Cal until age 26, regardless of my income level.



This brochure outlines some of the legal rights of California foster youth within the public mental health system. The rights listed are intended to reflect and support the needs expressed by foster youth in their experience as consumers within the public mental health system.

## Talking To Your Social Worker, Probation Officer, Or Public Health Nurse

*Here are some ways that you can start a conversation about your medication.*

1. What other supports or information can you give me to help me with my treatment plan?
2. What can people at home and school do to help me with my treatment plan?
3. I'd like to try some other activities such as sports to help me with my treatment plan. Can you help me sign up for \_\_\_\_\_?
4. The medication is helping me with \_\_\_\_\_. The medication does not help me with \_\_\_\_\_.
5. When I take my medication, my mind feels like \_\_\_\_\_ and my body feels like \_\_\_\_\_.
6. I have been experiencing side effects. I've noticed that \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Is my height and weight being checked often enough? Is any lab work being done to monitor my medication?
8. I currently take the following medications \_\_\_\_\_ and the following vitamins \_\_\_\_\_ and the following over the counter medications \_\_\_\_\_. Do you see any risks in combining these medications?

## Talking To Your Attorney Or Judge

*You can always tell your attorney or judge, I'd like to talk to you about my medication and treatment plan.*

1. What rights do I have? Can you review the Foster Youth Mental Health Bill of Rights with me?
2. Are my rights regarding my medication and treatment plan being upheld? What can I do if my rights are not being upheld?
3. I don't agree with the recommendation to take medication. What choices do I have?

Questions to Ask about Medications adapted from: Psychiatric Medications for Children and Adolescents Part III: Questions to Ask and <http://www.ohiomindsmatter.org/Parents.html>