



*Highlighting the Challenges & Services  
of DCF*

**The Post Secondary Education Experience**

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# *Mission and Mandates*

The mission of the Department of Children and Families is to protect children, improve child and family well-being and support and preserve families. These efforts are accomplished by respecting and working within individual cultures and communities in Connecticut and in Partnership with others.

## **Mandates:**

- **Child Welfare**
- **Behavior Health**
- **Juvenile Justice**
- **Prevention**

# DCF Demographics

- DCF is a large organization with over 4,098 employees, seven different bureaus and 15 area office locations.
- At any given time there are 35,000 children being served by DCF connected to 16,000 families.
- 65% of the youth in care are children of color.

# 5 Track Options for Youth

- **College Bound**
- **Vocational/Technical**
- **Apprenticeship/Entrepreneurship**
- **Job Corps (122 Centers)**
- **CHAP Employment**

# Adolescent Policy

## •Post High School Education

### Policy: 42-20-20

~The Department shall provide financial assistance to youth committed through their eighteenth (18<sup>th</sup>) birthday who demonstrate an interest in pursuing post high school education.

### **\*Cross Reference\***

## •Continuation of Education Beyond the Age of Twenty-One

### Policy: 42-20-21

~The Department shall pay for tuition, fees, room and board, books, tutoring and health care after calculating educational grants and scholarship awards until the young adult's twenty-third (23<sup>rd</sup>) birthday. However, a young adult may complete the full school year if started prior to the twenty-third (23<sup>rd</sup>) birthday.

# College Numbers

## Youth admitted to PSE institutions:

- **2006 = 168**
- **2007 = 238+**
- **2008 = 289+**
- **2009 = 350**

## *Most Recent Tally:*

- In academic year 2007, 151 youths went to 2 year colleges and, 78 youths went to four year colleges while 9 went to trade school.
- Thus far, in 2008 33 youths have dropped from 2 year colleges and 8 youth have dropped from 4 year colleges.

# *Challenges of Youth in Child Welfare*

- **Education Gap**
- **Special Education Needs**
- **Trauma and Loss**
- **Independent Living Skills**
- **Lack of Permanency**

# *DCF Approach*

## **1) Educational Services:**

- a) Pupil Service Specialists (PSE Consultants)**
- b) College & Career Resource Labs**
- c) College Fairs**
- d) College Tours**
- e) Vocational connections**
- f) Job Corp collaboration**

## **2) Conferences & Developmental Programming:**

- a) BGA**
- b) Escuchenos**
- c) True Colors**
- d) Ladies First**
- e) Boyz to Men**
- f) Quinceañera**
- g) Adolescent Conference**

### **3) College Incentives:**

- a) Tuition**
- b) Living Stipend**
- c) Laptop computer w/printer**

### **4) Retention Strategy**

- a) Tutoring**
- b) Case Management Services**
- c) MOU with Job Corp Centers**

# *What You Can do to Help?*

- 1) Create inter-collegiate partnerships and collaborate with outside agencies to develop programming through the student support service centers**
- 2) Track and support student progress**
- 3) Provide periodic data sharing on academic student progress**
- 4) Year round housing**
- 5) Connect incoming foster youth with successful upper classman and other foster youth for support**
- 6) Offer academic mentoring opportunities**
- 7) Establish a MOA with child welfare agencies where there is consistent high foster youth enrollment**