

LETTING KIDS BE KIDS

Promoting Normalcy for Youth in Foster Care



- ◆ The **Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (2014)** established a federal commitment to normalcy for youth in the child welfare system.
- ◆ **Connecticut Public Act 15-199 (2015)** established the Reasonable and Prudent Parent standard, under which caregivers can make decisions regarding normalcy activities for youth in their care.

Normalcy refers to a broad range of activities typical of childhood and adolescence:



Spending time with friends and family



Working, learning to drive, and other life skills



Extracurricular activities like sports teams, debate, etc.



School field trips and other school functions

Barriers to full **normalcy implementation** include:



Transportation



Foster parent and caregiver approval



Cost of activities



Restrictive congregate placements

Considerations for Normalcy Implementation in Connecticut:

To fully implement normalcy for all youth in care in Connecticut, DCF should:

- ◆ Train caregivers on how to use the Reasonable and Prudent Parent standard in making decisions.
- ◆ Advise youth, caregivers, and social workers about how to secure transportation to and funding for activities.
- ◆ Offer specific guidance to congregate facilities on how to address the unique challenges of more restrictive placement settings.
- ◆ Establish an accountability system for measuring progress, and report all accountability data publicly for stakeholders.