



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE: Connecticut Voices for Children Hosts 5th Annual Youth at the Capitol Day

Connecticut Voices for Children will host its 5th Annual Youth at the Capitol Day event on Thursday, January 14, 2016 from 9:00am to 12:30pm at the Legislative Office Building, Room 2C, in Hartford, CT.

The event, “Let Kids Be Kids,” is an effort to promote the importance of normalcy for youth in state care. Normalcy means that kids in state care get to do what their friends do. It means they have a chance to pursue their interests, achieve goals, and build dreams for their future, and, most importantly, that they get to have the same experiences and opportunities as other kids do.

The event will also highlight the release of a paper authored by Cyd Oppenheimer and Bianca Rey, Connecticut Voices for Children’s child welfare policy fellows, with recommendations regarding normalcy implementation in Connecticut and best practices for the state going forward.

“A growing body of evidence suggests that youth in State care need access to do the things we normally associate with childhood and adolescence—to take on increased responsibility, develop autonomy and resilience, and learn how to safely take risks—these experiences help to ensure that youth are ready for the transition to adulthood. These opportunities are part of healthy development,” explains Cyd Oppenheimer, senior policy fellow.

“When Connecticut takes responsibility for these children, it does so with the promise of a brighter future, and assumes a unique responsibility for their wellbeing. But without access to the same opportunities as their peers, we cannot ensure a better life for these children when they reach adulthood,” stated Bianca Rey, policy fellow at Connecticut Voices for Children.

Youth and youth caregivers will speak to advocates, peers, state policy makers, and DCF officials and share why it is important for them to pursue their interests, build dreams for the future and have a loving and supportive family, just like their friends.

Speakers include:

Ellen Shemitz, Executive Director, Connecticut Voices for Children
Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman
Comptroller Kevin Lembo
Commissioner Joette Katz, Department of Children and Families
The Honorable Bernadette Conway, Chief Administrative Judge, Juvenile Matters

Senator Beth Bye, Co-Chair, Appropriations Committee
Representative Toni Walker, Co-Chair, Appropriations Committee
Sarah Eagan, Child Advocate, Office of the Child Advocates
Senator Danté Bartolomeo, Co-Chair, Committee on Children
Representative Diana Urban, Co-Chair, Committee on Children
Ashley Chevrette, Youth Advocate
Cyd Oppenheimer and Bianca Rey, Connecticut Voices for Children

Following the event Senator Len Fasano will host a lunch in the LOB cafeteria with the foster youth.

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