

Who is eligible for the program?

Any child or youth who is placed in out-of-home care is eligible.

Who can make a referral for EAC advocacy?

All referrals need to be initiated by the student's social worker.

For more information on the Education Advocacy program please contact the Treehouse Education Program Manager at (206) 767-7000 or visit the Children's Administration's web site at <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/general/index.asp>



Education Advocacy Program

Improving Education Outcomes for Children and Youth in Foster Care



CA Children's Administration

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Education Advocacy Program

It is never too early to instill in students the long-term benefits of their education. Economic stability, better employment opportunities, and tools to resolve problems and issues are a few of the many rewards that come with a good education.

But foster youth, youth living with relatives and those in other out-of-home placements sometimes face barriers and challenges unique to them that prevent some of these students from being successful in school.

The state Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Children's Administration launched a groundbreaking Education Advocacy Program in collaboration with Treehouse, a King County non-profit organization leading the way in providing educational advocacy and support for youth in foster care. This statewide initiative will guide foster youth, their caregivers, school staff, and social workers in the advocacy process.

DSHS Children's Administration and Treehouse operate the Education Advocacy Program as a public-private partnership with funding from the state and private funding raised by Treehouse. The two agencies are committed to partnering to provide effective, collaborative advocacy services to eliminate the barriers to the educational success of children and youth in foster care. Education Advocates are in each of the six CA regions across the state.

By supporting the educational needs of foster youth, this statewide effort will help ensure that more youth in foster care graduate from high school.

The Education Advocacy program is for all school-aged children and youth placed in out-of-home care. It is a simple and straight forward model that requires the collaboration and sharing of resources among social workers, caregivers, youth, and school personnel.



Role of the EACs

Education Advocacy Coordinators will intervene on behalf of children and youth who are faced with challenging obstacles to being successful in school. Coordinators will train social workers, caregivers and community partners on specific topics such as special education, federal and state educational legislation, and school discipline, as well as guide students in becoming better self advocates.

How can EACs help students be successful in school?

EACs can directly intervene and negotiate issues between the school staff and a particular student. Examples include:

- Keeping a student in the same, familiar school when a foster or relative care placement is disrupted
- Resolving school discipline issues
- Accessing services, such as special education

EACs can provide consultation so social workers, caregivers, and students have the steps, strategies, and tools to successfully problem-solve challenging situations. Examples include:

- Navigating the enrollment process or transfer of school records
- Seeking services, such as specialized transportation
- Solving school attendance issues

EACs can provide referrals to appropriate agencies or services. Examples include:

- Linking to alternative education programs and community tutoring services
- Referrals to local experts on special education laws
- Connecting with local school districts for pre-K evaluations