

Meeting Name:	YAB Statewide Meeting	Date:	September 17, 2026
Type of Meeting:	In Person	Timeframe:	10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Attendees:	Youth and Staff from Allegheny, Armstrong, Bucks, Butler, Cambria, Chester, Crawford, Dauphin, Erie, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Montgomery, Westmoreland, and York Counties, as well as staff from CWRC, OCYF, and SWAN.		
Attendees Not Present:			
Minutes Prepared By:	Julie Hill		

Meeting Minutes	
1	Welcome / Ice Breaker (Carl Butler) - Carl welcomed everyone to the meeting and acknowledged those who were attending for the first time. - The group did an ice breaker led by the SW Region: Would You Rather – The group was asked <i>would you rather</i> questions and they had to walk to one side of the room or the other depending on their choices. Individuals shared why they chose the answer they did. YAB Updates (Carl Butler) - Carl shared that the Code of Conduct & YAB Expectations were provided in the handouts. - There will be a volunteer service project at the November YAB Statewide meeting for youth to support the United Way Literacy Program by decorating bookmarks with uplifting messages for children, ages 3-5. The flyer for the activity was included in the handouts.
2	OCYF Updates (Lindsey Glezen) - Lindsey introduced herself as the IL Coordinator for Pennsylvania and welcomed everyone to a new year with YAB. - OCYF reviewed the CRP projects, which will be discussed later in this meeting. - She shared that the Chafee Education Training Grant (ETG) is available for youth ages 16 and older. It assists with post-secondary schooling. 2026/2027 applications opened on March 31, 2027. If youth are already receiving ETG they do not need to reapply. If youth change schools, they must let PHEAA know. - FosterEd is a tuition waiver program that is automatically evaluated when youth apply for ETG. There is no separate application. FosterEd offers tuition and mandatory fee waivers once all federal, state, and any other scholarships have been applied. It does not cover room and board, meal plans, or books. All institutions are required to have a point of contact on site for FosterEd and ETG. There is a point of contact directory on the YAB website. - National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) is a federal requirement and is attached to Independent Living funding across the state. The 2026 B period for baseline surveys is

	two weeks away. She reminded staff that all surveys are due by October 15. A new reporting period starts immediately after the last, so October 1, 2027, will be the start of period 2027 A for follow-up surveys. The youth surveys help OCYF to know how to better assist youth in care. Counties are encouraged to provide an incentive to youth who complete the survey. All youth must be registered two weeks prior to their 17th birthday, even if they are unwilling to complete the survey.
3	Presenting the NYTD Training (Qasim Abrams) • Qasim led the group through the NYTD Training. • The training provides an overview of what the NYTD survey is, why participation matters, how the survey information is used, and how privacy is protected. Taking the survey is a choice but it's also an opportunity to help shape change. • The group watched the NYTD Presentation Video. • Case Scenario Discussion – Tables were assigned different case scenarios. They took about 5-10 minutes to discuss as a table and then reported out their answers. • The survey data goes to the federal government and is helpful in knowing where to identify focus areas and how to fund specific initiatives in the different counties. • The youth were tasked to share this training at their local and regional meetings.
4	Citizen Review Panel (CRP) Overview (Carrie Coccagna / Lindsey Glezen) • CWRC Review of CRP Projects ○ Carrie shared that CRP projects are a requirement of the federal government for states to receive specific funding. ○ The goal is to review policies, procedures, and practices, and then make recommendations to improve those services. ○ In 2018 the state decided that not only would they have the three regional panels to represent the state, but also the YAB as a review panel. This allows the youth to have a voice in making a change in PA. ○ Each year YAB chooses projects to focus on and then presents at the end of that year. These go in an annual report. The state is required federally to respond to those recommendations. OCYF shares how the state will implement those recommendations from those projects. ○ She provided a handout with a QR code to a report with all the previous CRP projects and how the state responded to each. • OCYF Review of CRP Projects ○ Lindsey shared that OCYF makes recommendations about the CRP projects and how the state can implement them. She reported out on the 2025-2026 projects. Regional CRPs operate on a different schedule than the YAB schedule. ○ Pregnant and Parenting Youth: ▪ OCYF supports the recommendation to distribute the brochure throughout the state that was created. ▪ OCYF will utilize the annual site visit questionnaire that is completed by all PA counties and will ask specific questions about pregnant and parenting youth for additional data. ○ Normalcy for Youth in PA:

	▪ OCYF supports the distribution of the QR code stickers that were created to direct individuals to the normalcy resources on the Know Your Rights section of YAB website. OCYF also supports the distribution of printed handouts to those who may need a hard copy. ▪ During the 2025 Older Youth Retreat, youth were able to give their feedback on the topic of normalcy during the focus groups. Those responses were compiled into a report that provided important insight from the youth outlining how to best support normalcy for older youth. The report was provided statewide. ▪ There was an opening session around normalcy at the Fall Quarterly meetings, which educated the child welfare workforce around the topic and served as a reminder on the roles of educating foster parents of youth normalcy rights. The YAB QR code stickers were distributed at that event. ○ Budgeting Resources: ▪ OCYF supports the distribution of the materials that were created, including the QR code stickers with the link to the budgeting tools and resources on the YAB website, along with printed copies of the material. ▪ OCYF supports life skills classes around financial literacy. ▪ They utilize IL grants to purchase curriculum and other materials to benefit youth around this topic. ● Conference Opportunity ○ Carrie shared that every other year the Citizen Review Panels have an opportunity to attend a national conference, where they can learn how other states operate and to see some of their recommendations and the work that they are doing. They have opened it up for a youth to attend. ○ Vinny shared about her experience from attending the conference in June 2026. She felt it was a fun learning experience to see how other states operate. She talked about YAB and the projects that have been done in the regions and how they have benefited the youth. ○ An IL worker may attend with a youth who signs up. Stipends are provided to cover the cost of the trip.
5	2025-2026 CRP Projects (Carl Butler) • The projects are being finalized and will be posted on the website once they are complete. • SW: Pregnant and Parenting Youth continuation (Fathers) - Created a page of links to county resources. A survey was created and is active on the YAB website. • NE: Family Connection - Created a packet with age-appropriate worksheets & a tip guide for workers. • SE: What to Expect After Adoption - Created a brochure and an adoption story video. • SC: Employment Resources - Created a packet and wristband with the URL to the virtual packet. 2026/2027 CRP Projects (Qasim Abrams)

- A Smart Goals template was provided for each person to use in developing their new projects. Qasim ran through the guide with the group.
- Suggestions/Ideas for the Upcoming Year: (Carl and Qasim)
 - Stop Normalizing What is Not Normal. (NW)
 - SWAN's Units of Service Titles (Child Prep, Child Profile). - Making the Language more appropriate for older youth. Everything currently refers to child, and not older youth.
 - Adding a category that addresses parenting youth to CY 130 & CY 131 Forms – There is nothing that currently speaks to individuals that are pregnant or parenting.
 - Cyberbullying and mental health resources – a form was provided in the handouts.
 - Juvenile Justice (JPO)
 - Support for foster parents supporting older youth.
- **Plans for this year – Region Report Outs:**
 - SW – CY 130 and CY 131 Forms
 - The group noted that the forms haven't been updated since 2014.
 - The group would like to update the forms to help increase successful matching/permanency for youth and families. The group identified the following topics to add to the forms:
 - How will foster families tend to diverse needs and environmental cultures (130)
 - Pregnant/parenting youth (130)
 - Political affiliations
 - Religious non-negotiables (131)
 - Dietary choices
 - Gender/sexual orientation (130)
 - Language/immigration status
 - The group would like to change some of the questions to be more open-ended.
 - SC – Mistreatment of Foster Youth in Holding and Detention Centers
 - The region would like to review current policies in detention centers across PA and then look to implement new rules and regulations in those centers to create a safer environment. They would like a focus on the youth's individual needs and to be able to personalize each youth's experience. Specific suggestions include:
 - Address educational concerns.
 - Separate youth from delinquents – in different wings.
 - Communication with Youth - Explain to the youth in detail the situation at hand and the next steps after separation.
 - Create surveys for youth in detention/holding centers to measure the progress made – before any changes, after implementing new expectations, and follow-up post CRP.

	○ NW – Stop Normalizing What’s Not Normal ▪ The region started working on a letter to placement and county agencies about stopping what people think is normal but isn’t. ▪ They will use a survey to gather data to support the change. ▪ They would like to better understand why youth in placement have been mistreated and create a code of conduct/way to better things so they can live a normal life. They will communicate with the county and the staff to identify the issues. ○ NE – Goal: For all IL Youth to Have Access to Safe and Stable Housing (as well as outside of foster care and kinship). ▪ Steps to accomplish the goal: • Create a checklist to assist youth directly with independent housing. • Research pre-site questionnaires to define needs of the regions. • Advocate to the Housing Authority. • Gather information on group homes and request more regulated check-ins. • Create a panel of youth to communicate with the Housing Authority. • Send out surveys to gather data. ○ SE – Understanding the Adoption Journey ▪ Create a life book that helps youth understand the adoption journey. ▪ Will take out the statistics they had and add in different resources. (Resources: IL, SWAN, YAB)
6	After-Action Review & Closing • What went well? ○ Everything was done on time and spaced out well. Nothing felt rushed. ○ Good participation. ○ Everyone did a good job of following the dress code of business casual. ○ Loved the ice breaker. It allowed everyone to get up and talk with others. It was a good way to help wake everyone up. They liked that different youth shared the reasons for their choices throughout the activity. ○ Appreciated the feedback that everyone gave about the projects. ○ The NYTD videos were helpful in explaining NYTD. ○ There was a lot of good communication and attentive listening without interruptions. Everyone understood what was being said by each other. • What could we do better? ○ The NYTD video was insightful, but it was choppy and skipped some. Someone recommended not making the video have the three information videos within it. ○ Enjoyed the ice breaker but wished it was more interactive between the youth.

Meeting Minutes

	Announcements: • The group acknowledged Xavion and Alfredo as it was their last YAB Statewide meeting. Next Meeting: November 19, 2026
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