

## "ALPHABET SOUP"

Here's a list of common acronyms and terminology used on a daily basis by those involved with the child welfare system:

- **ACNJ** - Association for Children of New Jersey: Non-profit organization advocating for legal rights of children (<http://www.acnj.org> or <http://www.kidlaw.org>)
- **ARC** - Adoption Resource Center: Regional DYFS offices (North, Central, South, Metro) responsible for filing a guardianship complaint with the court, which is the first step toward terminating parental rights, and manages the adoption process for children who are available for adoption
- **ASFA** - Adoption and Safe Families Act: Federal legislation signed into law in 1997 that provides specific time limits for children living in out-of-home care (<http://www.kidlaw.org/main.asp?uri=1003&di=169.htm&dt=0&chi=1>)
- **BOL** - Bureau Of Licensing: DYFS office responsible for ensuring that foster homes conform to DYFS safety and licensing standards
- **CART** - Case Assessment Resource Team: A team of professionals and volunteers from DYFS, the courts, and families, who review cases of children in placement with special needs, especially teenagers
- **CASA** - Court-Appointed Special Advocate: A volunteer appointed by the court to oversee the progress of a child's case; not yet available in every county (<http://www.nationalcasa.org>)
- **CASEWORKER** - A DYFS staff person who works out of a district office and is responsible for bringing a child to a foster home and managing the child's case
- **CCIS** - Children's Crisis Intervention Services: Available at different locations in each county, provide immediate care for children experiencing mental health crises
- **CPR BOARD** - Child Placement Review Board: A panel of court-appointed volunteers who periodically review the progress of a child's case and make recommendations to the judge (<http://www.njcourtsonline.com/cpr/index.htm>)
- **DAG** - Deputy Attorney General: The attorney who represents the state
- **DDD** - The New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities: State agency providing services to developmentally disabled children and adults
- **DHS** - The New Jersey Department of Human Services: Department of which DYFS is a division
- **DO** - District Office: local DYFS office that manages cases within a district (usually determined by county); this is where a caseworker's office is located
- **DO MANAGER** - District Office Manager: The highest ranking manager in a DYFS DO
- **DYFS** - Division of Youth and Family Services: New Jersey agency responsible for child welfare services, including foster care (<http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dyfs/index.html>)

- **FACILITATOR** - A DYFS worker who works out of the regional foster care unit and is responsible for finding homes for foster children; this is the person who will call you to offer you a child for placement
- **FAFS** - Foster and Adoptive Family Services: Statewide, non-profit agency dedicated to supporting foster and adoptive families (800-222-0047 or <http://www.fafsonline.org>)
- **FIS** - Family Intervention Services: provide support services to foster families including individual and family therapy and 24-hour crisis response; also conduct most DYFS pre-approval home studies of foster homes (<http://www.fisnj.org>)
- **FPA** - Foster Parent Association
- **IAIU** - Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit: Division of DYFS responsible for investigating reported instances of abuse in foster homes and residential placement facilities
- **IEP** - Individual Education Plan: Mandated service plan and record of milestones for children classified in special a education program
- **ICPC** - Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children: Statutory law in all 50 states (plus District of Columbia and US Virgin Islands) that establishes uniform legal and administrative procedures governing the interstate placement of children; used by DYFS as part of evaluation of homes in other states (<http://icpc.aphsa.org>)
- **JETS** - Juvenile Evaluation and Treatment Services: Team of professionals within each county responsible for providing intervention services to at-risk teenagers
- **LAW GUARDIAN** - The attorney who represents a DYFS child; often sends an investigator to a foster home to visit with and interview child and foster family
- **MICA** - Mental Illness and Chemical Abuse treatment programs
- **MSW** - Masters of Social Work: Graduate-level degree achieved by some DYFS staff and other child welfare professionals
- **OCAC** - Office Of Child Abuse Control: Division of DYFS that is available 24x7 to accept and respond to reports of child abuse and neglect (800-792-8610)
- **REGIONAL FOSTER CARE UNIT** - DYFS office established in each of the four geographical regions that provide support for foster families in that region and facilitate region-wide placement of children in foster homes
- **SHSP** - Special Home Service Provider: A special DYFS foster home that is trained and equipped to care for foster children classified as “medically fragile”; often pronounced “ship” home.
- **SPRU** - DYFS Special Response Unit: DYFS staff (usually a caseworker and a supervisor) on call after normal business hours for emergency contact; foster parents can offer to be on the SPRU list for emergency placements (not mandatory)
- **SUPERVISOR** - Supervises caseworkers and is also familiar with every case for every caseworker for whom they are responsible; acts as a backup for a caseworker (A Casework Supervisor supervises all supervisors in a DO)

- **TPR** - Termination of Parental Rights: Court-ordered discontinuation of a birth/legal parent's legal rights to a child; can be result of a TPR (guardianship) trial or voluntarily surrendered
- **TSVP** - Therapeutic Supervised Visitation Program: A visitation program available from various providers in each county that includes therapy and parenting instruction; does not take place in District Office
- **YAP** - Youth Advocacy Program: Non-profit organization that frequently provides DYFS with additional enrichment funding for foster families
- **YCS** - Youth Consultation Services: provide support services to foster families including individual and family therapy and 24-hour crisis response; also conduct most DYFS pre-approval home studies of foster homes
- **WIC** - Supplemental Nutrition for Women Infants and Children: A program administered by NJ Medicaid providing monthly coupons for staple foods (e.g., milk, formula, cheese) for children through age 5