



FY22 End of Year Report Regional & Statewide Youth Advisory Boards

In FY22, Be Strong Families (BSF) partnered with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services in ensuring compliance with the Youth Advisory Board Act (20 ILCS 527/) by:

- Supporting the convening and maintenance of:
 - a Statewide Youth Advisory Board; and
 - regional youth advisory boards in the Cook and Northern regions of the state.
- Supporting each regional youth advisory board in working with the Department or its designee to determine how to best provide services to current and former youth in foster care living within their regions.
- Supporting the Statewide Youth Advisory Board in advising the Department and the General Assembly with respect to all matters involving or affecting current and former youth in foster care.

Through this program BSF partnered directly with the Statewide Youth Advisory Board members and DCFS to ensure the board met the responsibilities of the Youth Advisory Board act by:

1. Providing the Department and the General Assembly with the perspective of youth under the care of the Department:
2. Identifying, analyzing, and recommending solutions to any issues concerning adoption and guardianship and youth in foster care.
3. Reviewing and advising the Department on proposed or pending legislation, primarily as it concerns current and former youth in foster care; and

Reviewing and making recommendations on Department foster care and child welfare service delivery policies, guidelines, procedures, and training.

Northern Regional Youth Advisory Board (RYAB) meetings:

- RYAB meetings: July – June
- ILM Meetings: July – June

Cook Regional Youth Advisory Board (RYAB) meetings:

- RYAB Meetings: July – June
- ILM Meetings: July – June

Central Regional Youth Advisory Board (RYAB) meetings:

- RYAB Meetings: July – June
- ILM Meetings: July – June

Southern Regional Youth Advisory Board (RYAB) meetings:

- RYAB Meetings: July – June
- ILM Meetings: July – June



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Statewide Youth Advisory Board (SYAB) meetings:

- o SYAB Meetings – August, September, November, February, May

Youth Advisory Affinity Group (YAAG) meetings:

YAAG Meetings - January, February, March

Table A. Meeting Summary

Date	Meeting	Time	Objective
7/8/21	ICFSAC	3pm-5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juvenile sex registry recommendations • Barriers and solutions for gaining YAB members • SPIDER website training
7/8/21	Central and Southern ILM	2-3pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Leadership Module Prep
7/9/21	Adoption Advisory Council	9-11:15am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council overview • Regional updates • Committee appointments • Janet Ahern updates: Covid vaccines for 12-17yrs AND Passport barriers
7/9/21	Cook / Northern ILM	12pm-1pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YLD prep • Election prep
7/20/21	SOGIE	10:30am-12pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCFS database within SACWIS with youth who identify. • Concerns surrounding having identifying information in LGBTQ database
7/27/21	Central and Southern ILM	11-12pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SYAB Prep • Bylaws • Officer Election Prep
7/29/21	SYAB Retreat prep call	12pm-1pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SYAB Prep • Agenda planning
8/6/21 – 8/7/21	SYAB RETREAT	Weekend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation • Roles and Responsibilities • DEI



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8/9/21	LGBTQI+ YAAG	4pm-5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Convening of the LGBTQI+ YAAG
8/11/21	Cook / Northern ILM	11am-12pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YLD prep Recap Retreat "Taking it Back"
8/17/21	SOGIE	10:30-12:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee updates LGBTQI YAAG update
8/26/21	September SYAB weekend prep call	5pm-6pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SYAB Prep Agenda planning
9/3/21 – 9/4/21	SYAB MEETING	Weekend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACLU FY22 Priorities Public Speaking
9/7/21	Directors Meeting prep	4:30pm-6pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss youth initiatives they want to present to director
9/8/21	Central and Southern ILM	1-2pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Leadership Module Prep
9/9/21	Cook / Northern ILM	5pm-6pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YLD prep Election prep
9/10/21	Directors Meeting prep	4:30pm-6pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and practice PowerPoint/presentation responsibilities
9/15/21	Directors Meeting prep	4:30pm-5:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and practice PowerPoint/presentation responsibilities
9/17/21	Adoption Advisory Council	9am-11:45am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council goals, strategies, vacancies, and regional updates Nat'l Adoption Month planning
9/20/21	Director's Meeting prep	4:30pm-5:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and practice PowerPoint/presentation responsibilities



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9/21/21	SOGIE	10:30 – 12:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities/Timelines • ACLU-Feedback • LGBTQI+ YAAG update
9/27	SYAB:Loyola	4:30 – 6:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY22 Priorities
9/28/21	LGBTQI+YAAG	4pm-5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8/9 recap • Draft group vision and charter
10/4/21	CWAC	10am-11:30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering Youth to Independence program • Youth Housing Assistance program • Foster Progress - Mentor program • YAB update
10/6/21	Central/Southern ILM	2pm-3pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional meeting preparation • Keys to facilitating a meeting
10/15/21	Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council	9am-11:45am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional updates • Committee appointments • YAB updates
10/18/21	Loyola meeting	4pm-5:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the assistance of Loyola, the youth are creating a one-pager priority list
10/19/21	SOGIE	10:30am – 12:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Group Updates • Survey Group Updates • LGBTQI+ Affinity Groups
10/25/21	SYAB planning call	4:30pm-5:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November SYAB planning
10/28/21	LGBTQI+ YAAG	5:00pm – 6:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGBTQI+ YAAG Charter review • Presentation – Creating Inclusive and Affirming Spaces • Discuss how speech can create inclusive and affirming environments • How advocacy can help to create safe and supportive school environments



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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define homophobia and transphobia
11/3/21	Central/Southern ILM	3:30pm-4:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional meeting preparation SYAB material readthrough
11/5/21-11/6/21	SYAB	Weekend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GAL Discussion Day2Day Toolkit update Loyola – priority list Equity training Final bylaws reading
11/5/2021	SWFCAC/AAC joint meeting	9am-11:45am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional updates Adoption support specialist program starting soon Director's letter sent to adopted youth
11/10/21	Director's Prep Meeting	4pm-4:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss youth initiatives they want to present to director
11/15/21	Director's Prep Meeting	4:30pm-5:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss youth initiatives they want to present to director
11/19/21	SOGIE	10:00am – 12:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Group Updates Survey Group Updates LGBTQI+ Affinity Groups
11/19/21	Loyola meeting	4:30pm-5:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the assistance of Loyola, the youth are creating a one-pager priority list
11/30/21	Loyola meeting	4:30pm-5:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with Loyola on creating a priority list.
12/2/21	LGBTQI+ YAAG	5:00pm – 6:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation: What It Means to Create an Affirming Environment for LGBTQ Youth – Heidi Dalenberg
12/6/21	CWAC	10am-11:45am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life Set updates Teen parenting - infant risk reduction training Rental assistance program



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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YAB update- DEI YAAG's
12/6/21	Director's Prep Meeting	4:30pm-5:15pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on presentation slides for the directors meeting
12/7/21	Latino YAAG	5:00pm – 6:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial convening meeting • Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) update • Why youth voice is important • Exploring education/coaching, support, and advocacy in breakout rooms
12/8/21	Central/Southern ILM	2pm-3pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional meeting preparation • Keys to college success
12/10/21	African American YAAG	5:00pm – 6:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Convening Meeting • Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Update • Why Youth Voice is Important • Exploring education/coaching, support, and advocacy in breakout rooms
1/6/22	Central/Southern ILM	2pm-3pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional updates • Panel confirmation
1/14/22	Director's prep	4:30pm-5:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss youth initiatives to present to Director Smith



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1/14/22	Adoption Advisory Council	9am-12:15pm	Regional updates Overview of adoption conversion training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family First program update
1/19/22	Director's meeting	4:30pm-5:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous priorities review Current priorities overview DEI update
1/25	Latino	5-6pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop mission and vision.
1/26	African American	5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note: Only one youth attended thus, the meeting did not take place.
1/27	LGBTQI+	5-6:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presenter: Center on Halsted: presentation on Queeros and talked about resources.
1/28/22	SYAB prep	4pm-5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> February SYAB planning
2/4-2/5	SYAB	Weekend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual youth survey Public speaking Kane County CASA panel Ethics training Director's meeting prep
2/7/22	Child Welfare Advisory Council- Emerging Adults Committee	10am-12pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapin Hall data on educational attainment and outcome of youth in care
2/7/22	Central/Southern ILM	3pm-4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RYAB planning Panel confirmation
2/17/22	DCFS Monitoring Panel	3pm-4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offices shared their experiences in congregate care settings



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2/18/22	Adoption Advisory Council	9am-11:15am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional updates Stakeholder meeting updates Family First program update
2/22	Latino	5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note: Only one youth attended thus, the meeting did not take place.
2/23	African American	5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note: Only one youth attended, thus, the meeting did not take place.
2/24	LGBTQI+	5-6:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation: Utopia Building- creating a space and imagining a better world for LGBTQI. Acceptance, Love, No Judgement, Respect, and Loyalty.
2/25/22	SWFCAC	9am-12pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional updates Julie Barbosa overview of Annual Progress Report Safety in Child Welfare Training overview
2/28	Asian American	5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note: No youth attended thus, the meeting did not take place.
3/1/22	Intern meeting	11:30am-12:15pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intern responsibilities review Discuss intern project
3/3/22	Central/Southern ILM	4pm-5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RYAB planning Experiences in care In person planning
3/11/22	Adoption Advisory Council	9am-12pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional updates Stakeholder meeting updates
3/18/22	SWFCAC	9am-12pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional updates YAB updated during committee reports Lack of permanency, lack of respect to fosters, and lack of foster homes are major concerns
2/28	Asian American	5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note: No youth attended thus, the meeting did not take place.



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3/22	Latino	5-6pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explored area of interest and focus. I.E., more bilingual resources and cultural competencies.
3/23	African American	5-6pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explored area of interest and focus. I.E., to have a stronger support system for staff and resources available to them.
3/24	LGBTQI+	5-6:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation: Peer Support - How to support each other and develop a deeper sense of community.
3/28	Asian American	5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note: No youth attended thus, the meeting did not take place.

4/4/22	CWAC	10:00 - 12:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LifeSet data Caseload trends
4/14/22	Equity Meeting Planning Call	1:00 – 2:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April SYAB Equity planning
4/20/22	SYAB Planning Call	2:15 - 3:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May SYAB planning
4/22/22	Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council	9:00 – 11:00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional updates & committee reports Lack of daycare across the state New debit card pilot program for vouchers
4/22/22-4/24/22	Equity Conference	Weekend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DEI Overview Navigating Challenging situations Equitable society
4/26/22	Latino	5:00 - 6:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language and communication. How things would run with a translator and why this was important
4/27/22	African American	5:00 - 6:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Health - Resilience and Black Joy Discussed ideas to help mental health and shared resources
4/28/22	2 nd May SYAB Planning Call	12:30 - 1:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May SYAB planning Role assignments
4/28/22	LGBTQI+	5:00 - 6:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer Support and Recovery - Speaker Ahmad Abojaradeh
5/2/22	CWAC	10:45 - 12:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life Set overview
5/3/22	Latino Ambassador	4:30 - 5:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Latino ambassador meetings Brainstorm project ideas
5/4/22	May SYAB Planning Call	3:30 – 4:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May SYAB planning
5/4/22	African American Ambassador	4:30 - 5:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First African American ambassador meetings. Brainstorm project ideas.
5/5/22	LGBTQI+ Ambassador	4:30 - 5:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First LGBTQI+ ambassador meetings. Brainstorm project ideas.
5/10/22	Final May SYAB Planning Call	12:00 - 12:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May SYAB planning
5/12/22	Power of Your Voice	4:30 - 5:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Webinar by author Angela Quijada-Banks
5/13/22-5/15/22	May SYAB weekend	Weekend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let it Be Us overview Public speaking Permanency updates by Chief Deputy Snowden Policy work Intern presentations



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5/24/22	Latino	5:00 - 6:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic: Education – Group discussed the history of Latinx education in this country. Laura Gutierrez, DCFS Post-Secondary Education Specialist, shared DCFS educational resources.
5/25/22	African American	5:00 - 6:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic: Education – Laura Gutierrez, DCFS Post-Secondary Education Specialist, shared DCFS educational resources, education options, and led a Q and A session.
5/26/22	LGBTQI+	5:00 - 6:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ariel Rodriguez from Trans Lifeline, a peer support and crisis hotline organization, attended this session to talk about the organization, how youth can get involved, and to share resources.
5/31/22	Latino Ambassador	4:30 - 5:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project discussion: youth will be researching current resources to potentially develop a “welcome packet”.
6/1/22	African American Ambassador	4:30 - 5:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This meeting did not convene due to lack of youth attendance.
6/2/22	LGBTQI+ Ambassador	4:30 - 5:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth shared interest in creating and facilitating presentation on LGBTQ+ info and resources. Develop presentation outline.
6/10/22	Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council	9:00 - 11:00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional updates Committee reports
6/17/22	Adoption Advisory Council	9:00 - 11:00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional updates AAC wants to have continued correspondence with YAB (Crystal's term is up soon)
6/22/22	Q4 Director’s Meeting:	4:30 - 5:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q3 meeting recap SYAB updates Permanency and contract with caseworkers' discussion
6/22/22	African American	5:00 - 6:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This meeting did not convene due to lack of youth attendance.
6/23/22	LGBTQI+	5:00 - 6:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic: Pride Celebration: Ashley Donea from Black Infinity Collective presented on the history of LGBTQI+, shared her lived experience being a queer black woman, and facilitated a Q&A session.
6/28/22	Latino	5:00 - 6:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic: Mental Health - Resilience and Joy. Discussed ideas to help mental health and shared resources.

Table B. July - June RYAB Meeting Details

Date	Meeting	Time	# of Attendees	DCFS Updates	Youth Leadership Development Curriculum (YLD)
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7/13/21	Southern RYAB	5pm-6:30pm	12	- DCFS plans for new DEI committee	<p>YLD Module 1: Being an Effective Change Agent-</p> <p>Purpose: Teach participants how to positively impact change as individuals and as part of groups.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand the opportunity and power of youth voice to affect change in the child welfare system. ● Understand the energy of complaining about problems and injustice vs identifying and mobilizing for solutions. ● Learn and understand the process and the dynamics of change. ● Develop a basic understanding of the skills necessary to be a change agent.
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7/14/21	Central RYAB	5pm-6:30pm	0	N/A	N/A
7/15/21	Cook RYAB	5pm-6:30pm	28	- DCFS plans for new DEI committee	<p>YLD Module 1: Being an Effective Change Agent-</p> <p>Purpose: Teach participants how to positively impact change as individuals and as part of groups.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the opportunity and power of youth voice to affect change in the child welfare system. • Understand the energy of complaining about problems and injustice vs identifying and mobilizing for solutions. • Learn and understand the process and the dynamics of change. • Develop a basic understanding of the skills necessary to be a change agent.
7/20/21	Northern RYAB	5pm-6:30pm	17		
8/10/21	Southern RYAB	5pm-6:30pm	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of Action Transmittals: 2021.04 - Older youth re-entry program 	<p>YLD Module 2: Everyone is a Leader. Leadership style-</p> <p>Purpose: Assist youth participants with discovering and understanding their leadership style and how to work with others with different leadership styles to become a strong team.</p> <p>Objectives:</p>
8/11/21	Central RYAB	5pm-6:30pm	5		
8/17/21	Northern RYAB	5pm-6:30pm	14		



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8/19/21	Cook RYAB	5pm-6:30pm	27		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define the concepts of leadership and leadership style Differentiate influence, power, authority vis a vis leadership Identify and understand your leadership style and its strengths Gain an understanding of how different leadership styles collaborate in solidarity.
9/8/21	Central RYAB	5pm-6:30pm	5	- FAFSA taking applications starting 10/1/21	<p>YLD Module 3: What and How are You Representing-</p> <p>Purpose: This workshop is designed to assist youth participants with understanding and developing a sense of themselves as leaders representing something larger than themselves and using their personal qualities to do so.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand what it means to represent or to be a representative Be inspired by current examples of youth leadership Get in touch with how personal qualities and choices can contribute to leadership Understand how personal qualities move the collective work forward.
10/12/21	South ern	5pm- 6:30p M	29	Information transmittal – Resume in person schooling.	<p>YLD Module 4: Using Your Story to Advocate for Change</p> <p>Purpose: Through this workshop youth will gain an understanding of how to strategically and purposefully share their story in a way that is safe and effective.</p> <p>Objectives:</p>
10/3/21	Central	5pm- 6:30p M	5		



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10/19/21	Northern	5pm- 6:30p M	11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect personal stories to advocacy roles • Identify details that may be appropriate and impactful for specific situations • Gain experience keeping personal boundaries while self-disclosing • Develop an issue related elevator speech including their personal story
10/21/21	Cook	5pm- 6:30p M	29		
11/9/21	South ern	5pm- 6:30p M	19	No updates	<p>YLD Module 5: Turning Challenges into Opportunities</p> <p>Purpose: Youth will gain skills and a framework to understand themselves and how to turn challenges into strategic opportunities.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how to positively reframe difficult/negative situations • Identify ways to manage emotional triggers to remain effective as an advocate • Understand how challenges and problems are actually opportunities to affect positive change. • Learn how to find strategic opportunities or levers in challenging situations
11/10/21	Centra l	5pm- 6:30p M	3		
11/16/21	North ern	5pm- 6:30p M	10		
11/18/21	Cook	5pm- 6:30p M	20		



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12/8/21	Central	5pm- 6:30p M	5	No updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children’s Mental Health Feedback (Public Act 102-0116) LGBTQI+ curricula update and feedback Holiday Celebration
12/14/21	Southern	5pm- 6:30p M	8		
12/16/21	Cook	5pm- 6:30p M	7		
12/21/21	Northern	5pm- 6:30p M	6		

1/11/22	Southern	5pm- 6:30 Pm		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> DCFS scholarship Covid vaccine available for youth in care Kaleidoscope scholarship application 	<p>Module 6: Facilitation 101 Part 1</p> <p>Purpose: In this module, participants learn basic facilitation skills for effectively guiding conversations that surface youth voice and develop strategic advocacy plans.</p> <p>Learning</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather an overall understand of basic facilitation skills such as:
1/12/22	Central	5pm- 6:30 Pm			
1/18/22	Northern	5pm- 6:30 Pm	14		



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1/20/22	Cook	5pm- 6:30 Pm	8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Communication -Building rapport -Reading your audience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identifying and building synergy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing materials in advance
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how to use questions to ensure your audience is understanding the information being presented. • Understand the basics of facilitating for diversity, equity, and inclusion - including drawing out quiet participants and encouraging the more talkative ones to share conversation space.
2/8/22	Southern	5pm- 6:30 Pm		1. Scholarship Reminder	<p>Module 7 – Facilitation 101 part 2</p> <p>Purpose: In this module, participants learn basic facilitation skills for effectively guiding conversations that surface youth voice and develop strategic advocacy plans.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice facilitation skills learned in Part 1. • Review and reinforce content from Part 1, as necessary.
2/9/22	Central	5pm- 6:30 Pm			
2/15/22	Northern	5pm- 6:30 Pm	7		



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2/17/ 22	Cook	5pm- 6:30 Pm	13		
3/8/2 2	Southern	5pm- 6:30 Pm		2. Scholarship Reminder	Module 8: Strategic Goal Setting Purpose: This module will teach youth a technique for setting and



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3/9/22	Central	5pm-6:30 pm		implementing goals in an advocacy-oriented change plan. Learning Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn the differences between long-, mid-, and short-term goals • Learn and practice the process of making SMART goals • Together develop 3 SMART goals for YAB child welfare recommendations
3/15/22	Northern	5pm-6:30 pm	12	
3/17/22	Cook	5pm-6:30 pm	15	

4/12/22	Southern	6:00 - 8:00 pm	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships being scored. If you don't receive the scholarship, you are eligible for youth in college or ETV. • Employment incentive program overview. 	YLD Mod 9: Youth Choice Herbert Burnett from Not on My Watch presented <i>It's Not Your Ability, it's Your Availability</i> . Overview: Everyone has the capability to make an impact as a leader.
4/13/22	Central	6:00 - 8:00 pm	5		
4/19/22	Northern	6:00 - 8:00 pm	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships being scored. If you don't receive the scholarship, you are eligible for youth in college or ETV. • Employment incentive program overview. 	YLD Mod 9: Youth Choice Jess Vann from Creative Spaces Overview: Promote leadership development, enhance public speaking skills, and understand bias to become an equitable leader.
4/21/22	Cook	6:00 - 8:00 pm	11		
5/10/22	Southern	6:00 - 8:00 pm	9	None	YLD Mod 10: Youth Choice Dion McGill from Strengthening Chicago's Youth <u>How to advocate for oneself and issues we find important:</u> The session consisted of a mix of discussion and role play to explore various facets of advocacy and being advocates in our lives and communities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing as an advocate • Engaging with community for advocacy • Engaging with elected officials for advocacy
5/11/22	Central	6:00 - 8:00 pm	5		
5/17/22	Northern	6:00 - 8:00 pm	12		
5/19/22	Cook	6:00 - 8:00 pm	7		



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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging with social media and legacy media for advocacy Being Professional: Adjusting to one's audience when advocating
6/8/22	Central	6:00 - 8:00 pm	4	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach Event - VR games
6/14/22	Southern	6:00 - 8:00 pm	29		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach Event - Bowling
6/16/22	Cook	6:00 - 8:00 pm	7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach Event - Roller Skating
6/21/22	Northern	6:00 - 8:00 pm	6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach Event - Trampoline Park

Officer Slates in FY22:

In Q1, there were 4 of the 5 officer positions filled in Cook County, with the vacancy being President. Northern region had 3 of the 5 officer positions filled, with the vacancies being Vice President and Executive Team Leader. A potential youth has been identified in the Northern region to fill one of these positions in October. Central RYAB had the Vice President officer position filled. Notably, 3 different YAB members from the central region express interest in becoming YAB officers. Two youth from Cunningham Children's Home informed the Program Manager at September's RYAB they were interested. The Program Manager reached out to their caseworkers, and both believed they could potentially be a good fit. The youth need to attend 5 YAB events before becoming eligible for an officer role. Currently, the records indicate they have attended 2 events each. There was also an addition young person from Kemmerer Village who expressed interest. The Program Manager believed she was a very strong candidate. However, agency staff informed Program Manager that due to both staffing concerns and lack of technology access, her presence as an officer was untenable. Accordingly, the Program Manager connected with Kemmerer Village's Monitor- Katerra Brown, to see what can be done regarding the situation. Mrs. Brown ensured she would discuss the matter with her supervisor at their upcoming meeting. All positions in Southern were vacant. There had been one youth who expressed interest in becoming a YAB officer. There were plans to attend her 5th YAB meeting in October, officially becoming eligible for an officer role. Program Manager had reached out to Rebecca Spann, head of residential services at her group home. Mrs. Spann had been unresponsive to calls. Program Manager continued to contact Mrs. Spann in hopes of discussing possibility for the youth to become an officer.

In Q2, officer slates remained consistent. 4 of the 5 officer positions were filled in Cook County, with the vacancy being President. Northern region had 3 of the 5 officer positions filled, with the vacancies being Vice President and Executive Team Leader. Central RYAB currently had 3 of the 5 positions filled, with the vacancies being Secretary and Vice President. In the Southern region, all positions were vacant. Program Manager continued to recruit in RYABs and with agency staff to identify potential officers in the Southern region.

In Q3, Cook County currently has 3 of the 5 positions filled, with the current vacancy being President and



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Secretary. Northern region has 3 of the 5 officer positions filled, with the current vacancies being Vice President and Executive Team Leader. The Central region currently has 3 of the 5 officer positions filled, with Secretary and Executive Team leader vacant. The Southern region currently has no officers; however, one youth has indicated interest and Program Manager is awaiting submission of application. The Program Manager will continue to publicize all RYAB officer positions and encourage youth to take advantage of the many opportunities offered by YAB.

Q4 ended with the Central region having 4 of the 5 officer positions filled. The only vacancy was Executive Team Leader. The Southern region elected two new officers at June's RYAB who will start serving in their leadership roles next month. Now that Vice President and Executive Team Leader are filled, there are 3 remaining vacancies. Cook County currently had 3 of the 5 positions filled, with the current vacancy being President and Vice President. Northern region lost 2 officers to other regions in Q4 and only had 1 of the 5 officer positions filled, with the current vacancies being President, Vice President, Secretary, and Executive Team Leader. Two (possibly 4) youth who want to run for an officer position in Northern and 2 youth in Cook were identified. Neither Cook or Northern held officer elections due to a lack of quorum, thus elections will be held in July.

Interns:

Central and Cook regional boards each had one identified youth serving in the Intern capacity in Q1. The Cook Intern was welcomed into this position in July and the Central Intern was welcomed in September. We look forward to filling the other Intern positions in the coming months with the help of Laura Gutierrez, who has assisted with promoting this opportunity to recipients of the DCFS scholarship and Education and Training Voucher. In second quarter, Cook, Central, and Southern regional boards each identified youth serving in the Intern capacities. The Southern Intern was approved in November. Additional effort was made to identify an Intern for the Northern region. Due to personal reasons, Southern's Intern decided not to continue serving in the Intern role. The following quarter, Cook and Central regional boards each had identified youth serving in the Intern capacity. Efforts were being made to identify Interns for the Northern and Southern regions, to no avail. Through the end of fourth quarter, the Cook and Central regions both have successfully maintained young people serving in the role of interns. The slated interns completed and presented end of year projects during May's SYAB meeting. Both interns will be transitioning from care but plan to stay involved in some capacity as time allows.

Ambassadors:

The Youth Advisory Affinity Groups started to make headway in quarter 3. Ambassador applications were created and sent out. African American YAAG received 15 applications, in which 3 applicants attended a session. LGBTQI+ YAAG received 15 applications, in which 8 applicants attended a session. Latino YAAG received 5 applications, in which 3 applicants attended a session. Native American YAAG received 2 applications, however, this group had not officially begun meetings. In Q4, the Latino YAAG had 7 ambassadors, African American had 4 ambassadors, and LGBTQI+ had 9 ambassadors. The DEI manager reached out to the other applicants who had not participated to ask if they would like to continue as an



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ambassador or inquired about reasons as to why they could not participate. Some youth stated they were unable to participate due to work schedules and personal issues. All were encouraged to still participate in the YAAG meetings even if they are unable to meet the ambassador requirements. There was ambassador only meetings established at the beginning of each month for Latino (1st Tuesday), African American (1st Wednesday), and LGBTQI+ (1st Thursday) for the ambassadors to develop and work on their projects. Youth Advisory Affinity Groups are still actively recruiting ambassadors. Recruitment material was also created to share with youth and for ambassadors to share with their peers.

Director's Meeting:

The Q1 Director's meeting was convened on September 20th via WebEx video conferencing with four youth representatives, BSF staff, Director Smith, and DCFS designees all in attendance. The focus of this meeting was to discuss the issues and concerns impacting the youth in care. Board leaders provided a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) update, discussed work that has been done around the guardian ad litem (GAL) Bill, and next steps regarding the implementation of the GAL Law. Youth proactively created and shared flyer designs/ ideas with Director Smith as the GAL law requires the "Department shall provide a flyer to all youth entering care describing the responsibilities of the Advocacy Office, telephone number and electronic mailing address for the Advocacy Office, and a description of the role of guardian ad litem".

The Quarter 2 Director's Meeting was postponed and convened on January 19th, via WebEx video conferencing with three youth representatives (1 intern, 2 officers), BSF staff, Director Smith, and DCFS designees all in attendance. Board leaders reviewed the SYAB's previous FY21 priorities one-pager and accomplishments, which was followed by an introduction of the FY22 top priorities - presenting a general overview of the one-pager draft.

The scheduled Quarter 3 Director's Meeting took place on March 16th via WebEx video conferencing with three youth representatives (2 interns, 1 officer), BSF staff, Director Smith, and DCFS designees all in attendance. Board leaders gave a summary of the Statewide YAB meeting and then presented the finalized FY22 priorities one-pager. The top 3 priorities presented were: achieving permanency, strengthening youth contact with caseworkers, and strengthening sibling contact. Other priorities mentioned were family contact post permanency, healthier food options, and implementation of the GAL law. No official recommendations were presented at either meeting. We ended both meetings with DEI and YAAG updates and held a Q & A for the director and his team.

The fourth quarter Director's meeting convened on June 22nd via Webex video conferencing with three youth representatives, BSF staff, Director Smith, and DCFS designees all in attendance. Board leaders provided the Director and his team with an update from the Q4 SYAB meeting. Next, youth participants presented findings from their research on permanency as well as contact with caseworkers. Three key areas were addressed: is currently policy around area of concern, how are youth affected, and proposed recommendations. During this meeting, two recommendations were provided: *1) more effective resources and incentives to ensure the duration of time youth spend in congregate care placements are reasonable. Leaders advocated for youth to have the support for a smooth transition either out of DCFS*



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care, into foster placements, or step-down facilities such as group homes. 2) formed a policy that ensures youth are informed of and given the opportunity to attend court dates, and protocol that monitors the frequency of contact between case workers and youth. Next, board leaders shared permanency statements that were collected from their peers, reviewed their FY22 list of accomplishments, and discussed the Board's FY23 plans to continue working on their identified initiatives, incorporate additional youth voice into their work, and to continue to partner with specific divisions of DCFS to assist with moving the Board's agenda forward.

Internal Advisory Councils:

Child Welfare Advisory Council (CWAC): Did not meet Q1.

This council typically meets monthly; however, the Q2 November meeting was canceled. One youth representative attends this council's meetings. During the October meeting the council gave updates about the Fostering Youth to Independence program, the Youth Housing Assistance program, and the Foster Progress Mentor program. The council also gave our youth representative time on the agenda to give an update about the YAB. In December, the council gave updates on the Life Set program, and talked about the importance of teen parents receiving risk reduction training.

Although this council is scheduled to meet monthly, it only met one time in Q3 quarter, in February. The meeting primarily consisted of research being presented by Dr. Judy Havlicek and Dr. Amy Dworsky. Together, they presented on programs that assist youth in care with post-secondary education, how successful youth are in post-secondary programs, and where improvements can be made. One youth representative continues to participate in this council meeting ongoingly.

In fourth quarter, this council met once a month on the first Monday. April's meeting had no formal agenda. Program updates were provided by the LifeSet team. Data related to caseload trends were presented by Jason House. John Egan provided insight into housing vouchers and they're availability for youth in care. In May, a more detailed overview of the LifeSet program was presented. June's meeting was canceled.

Illinois Children and Family Service Advisory Council (ICFSAC):

This council typically meets quarterly. In Q1, the council met in July and there was one youth representative present. This council continues to discuss the juvenile sex registry. A training on how to utilize the SPIDER website was also held during this meeting.

Quarter two meeting was scheduled on a holiday and therefore BSF staff did not attend the meeting. Youth and staff also did not participate in Q3 or Q4 meeting as There are no current youth identified to attend these meetings.



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Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Expression (SOGIE):

This workgroup meets monthly. In Q1 there was not a YAB representative in attendance during the July meeting. In August and September, this group discussed their work priorities, timelines, and discussed the LGBTQI+ YAAG meetings. In September specifically, this workgroup reviewed feedback from the ACLU regarding the SOGIE Questions. Additionally, conversations included the development of a survey to identify the number of youths that identify within each category (LGBTQIA). A small group of individuals will begin working to develop such a survey. During the September meeting, a youth representative was identified - this young person will be participating in monthly SOGIE meetings starting in October.

This workgroup met monthly in Q2 (except for December due to the holiday). The SOGIE workgroup continued to discuss work priorities and timelines. Discussions regarding the SOGIE data collection survey also took place. The YAB adult partner provided updates regarding the LGBTQI+ YAAG meetings and next steps for the affinity groups. One youth representative was identified to participate in this meeting ongoingly, however, due to personal issues has not been able to participate thus far.

Quarter 3 meeting consisted of discussion around collecting SOGIE data, and survey questions were discussed. There still needs to be further discussion on what the exact questions should be and how to distribute the survey. Also, updates on how many YAAG ambassadors and updates on SACWIS were provided. No youth representative has been identified to participate in this meeting.

In Q4 we received an update that this group will start to meet every three weeks after the June 21st meeting. There was a break from the last quarter and the group did not meet. The results (as of 6/21/22) of the SOGIE survey for youth were discussed. Moving forward, this group will discuss different events that can be attended (Pride Parade, Market Days, etc.). The updates on Appendix K and other policies were and will be discussed. BSF provided updates on the YAAG ambassadors. No youth representative has been identified to participate in this meeting.

Foster Parent Advisory Council:

During the first quarter, this council did not meet on a consistent basis. A youth representative has yet to be identified to attend this council's meetings. In Q2, this council is now meeting monthly on irregularly scheduled Fridays. There are currently no youth available to represent the YAB during these meetings since they take place during school hours. This quarter, the council spoke about potential areas where they can collaborate with the YAB.

Q3 meeting had one youth identified to participate, who attended two meetings thus far. This quarter, the council spoke about potential areas where they can collaborate with the YAB including permanency within foster care and other general adolescence issues. The adolescence committee is now including the YAB in their meetings as well.

Q4 No youth were available to represent the YAB this quarter. The council attempted their first hybrid



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meeting, and it was difficult to hear much of the meeting while online. Regional and committee updates were reviewed. Transportation and childcare issues remain on the reports as an on-going concern. The YAB continues to join the adolescence committee as well.

Adoption Advisory Council:

This council has scheduled their meetings monthly for FY22. A youth representative has yet to be identified to attend these meetings ongoingly. During first quarter, this group discussed the council overview, updates, and committee appointments. Janet Ahern also gave updates about Covid vaccines for 12-17yrs, and passport barriers.

In Q2, there were still currently no youth available to represent the YAB during these meetings, as they take place during school hours. This quarter the council talked about their recommendations to mitigate concerns brought forth from the letter sent to adopted youth. There was also an update on the new adoption support specialist roles that will be starting soon and in Q3, the council held an info session on the Family First program and the DCFS annual progress report process. There were also updates on the new adoption support specialist roles.

At the end of fourth quarter, this council discussed plans for adoption month, getting a meeting with the director, and the search for more council representatives. Although the YAB Coordinator's 2nd term on the council is ending, the AAC hopes to have continued correspondence with the YAB to collaborate on similar projects and YAB plans to maintain an ongoing relationship.

SYAB Meeting Summary:

The SYAB Retreat was held on August 6th and 7th. The weekend began with orientation that detailed the SYAB's mission and previous legislation, the board history, and the highlights of last year. Next, the board moved into reading and approval of the bylaws. Although a lengthy process, this ensures officers understand the way in which the Youth Advisory Board operates. Suggested edits and revisions were proposed - which will be voted on later to ensure the effectiveness of the bylaws and board. The following day, specific officer responsibilities and key to effectively facilitate meetings were discussed. In addition, there was a presentation on consensus building, as it is a focal point of making change within a varied and complex system. The concept of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and how it will be a lens in which SYAB will use to approach their work moving forward was also discussed. Finally, the retreat wrapped up with an opportunity for youth to practicing public speaking by using elevator speeches.

The September SYAB meeting was also held during this quarter from September 3rd – 4th. The weekend began with a review of Appendix K, presented by Heidi Dalenberg with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). This presentation made for a better understand of the legal nature of DCFS' commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, specifically around LGBTQI issues for youth in care. Next, youth read through the suggested revisions of the bylaws and voted whether to uphold or dismiss the proposed revisions. A final vote will take place once youth have completed their 2nd reading full reading of the



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bylaws. Saturday began by hosting the Loyola University Legislation and Policy Clinic. SYAB and Loyola discussed the role of a GAL and worked on reviewing the boards policy priorities for FY22. Next, Youth Leadership Development Module 3: What and How are You Representing was presented. Officers were prepared to return to their regional meeting ready to co-present this very same module with an adult partner. Board leaders had another opportunity to practice their public speaking training skills. Youth practiced elevator speeches and received feedback from adult partners and peers. Saturday closed out by beginning to prepare for the upcoming director's meeting which will take place on September 22nd.

The second quarter Statewide Youth Advisory Board Meeting was held on November 5th and 6th, with a total of 7 youth participants in attendance. As a standard agenda item, Friday began with welcome/introductions, meeting agreements, and an overview of the weekend expectations. As a follow-up to the Q1 Director's meeting, DCFS Advocacy Office and Communications department were invited to speak with SYAB concerning the guardian ad litem (GAL) law. Youth participants had the opportunity to learn more about the law, DCFS plans for implementing the law before the year ends and discussed GAL flyer design ideas. Next, Chapin Hall presented findings from the Youth in Care surveys that were delivered over the last year. SYAB reviewed findings, recommendations, and provided additional input. SYAB recommendations emphasized the following are needed:

- Additional life skills training
- Caseworker training on resources for youth
- Foster parent training (ensure foster parents are equipping youth for success in education, employment, and housing/independent living)
- More individual follow-up with foster care alumni
- Economic resources to help youth experiencing homelessness/shelter living
- Guidance/referrals to college support programs (like TRIO to provide coaching/mentoring)

Saturday began with a presentation from Loyola University. This segment focused on updates from the youth work group regarding the board's initiatives, a continued discussion around priorities for the year, and next steps to moving this work forward. Next, Illinois Collaboration on Youth (ICOY) discussed the Day-to-day toolkit and plans to keep YAB engaged and involved to ensure the toolkit remains youth led and youth friendly.

Dr. Shantá Robinson with University of Chicago led a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion workshop for the board members and staff. Learning objectives were as follows:

- Gain knowledge of fairness
- Learn how fairness differs from other justice-centered issues
- Discuss how to confidently engage in discussions around equity in policy and practice
- Increase diversity and inclusion within groups
- Saturday concluded with a final review of the FY22 bylaws. Due to a lack of quorum, formal votes will be collected via google forms.

The Q3 Statewide Youth Advisory Board meeting was held remotely on February 4th and 5th, with a total of 9 youth participants in attendance. DCFS Quality Enhancement (QE) Division participated in Friday's



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meeting to discuss the Annual Youth Survey. Youth leaders provided feedback that will allow QE to better understand the quality and effectiveness of services provided to youth. Following this section and in preparation for the next day, youth leaders had a chance to practice their public speaking skills.

Saturday began with a panel discussion with Kane County Casa representatives. More than 60 Casa Volunteers participated in this meeting. Youth discussed the importance of YAB, shared concerns that are impacting youth in care, and identified and recommended solutions to all issues concerning youth in care. Building off the momentum, youth engaged in a peer co-led training on ethical leadership. This training reviewed key definitions, reviewed ethical leadership principles, and youth learned how to respond to ethical dilemmas to enhance their ethical decision-making abilities. The Q3 meeting concluded with the board addressing work progress, pending business, debriefing work done with Loyola and next steps, and a review of the Q2 Bylaw votes (which all participants voted in favor of approving proposed changes).

In Q4, there was an equity conference and SYAB meeting. The weekend long conference took place April 22 - 24th and welcomed Youth Advisory Board and Youth Advisory Affinity Group leaders from across the state of Illinois to take part in this event. Alyssa Del Angel, BSF EDI Manager, kicked off the conference by familiarizing the youth leaders with key definitions and allowed youth participants to engage in a discussion and activity around identity. This segment provided an opportunity for self-reflection and encouraged youth to love all parts of themselves while also touching on how one's identity can be perceived by others – whether it is negative or positive. Micro-aggressions were another topic of discussion which provided a basic understanding of the term, allowed youth to provide examples based on their understanding, while also teaching participants how to manage and respond to micro-aggressions.

Dr. Robinson, assistant professor at the University of Chicago and freelance EDI consultant led a workshop on Navigating Challenging Conversations. Dr. Robinson provided youth participants with tools and techniques to positively engage in tough conversations around EDI, inequity, justice, and more. Additionally, Dr. Robinson facilitated a discussion and activity called “The Equitable Society”. This activity centered around creating situations in which everyone can successfully prosper and make effective use of the resources provided while keeping in mind that not everyone is given access to the same resources. As a result of this conference and the information shared, the youth now have a deeper understanding of EDI and have the necessary tools to support their growth as youth leaders.

May's SYAB meeting took place from May 4th – 6th and welcomed 10 youth participants. Friday began with an overview of post-secondary education services and transitional services offered by DCFS. Before closing out the day, youth participants engaged in a getting to know one another team building exercise.

With permanency being one of SYAB's top priorities for the year, the Deputy of Permanency was invited to participate in Saturday's meeting. Deputy Snowden shared his plans to address the youth's concerns around permanency. Snowden has developed a quality indicator tool to track policies, measure frequency, direction, pending questions, and training opportunities for each policy. The Quality Indicator Review Tool will be used to indicate the quality of services that are provided to the youth. When developing this tool, Deputy Snowden and his team used SYAB's priority agenda as a reference. SYAB then had the opportunity



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to review the quality indicator tool, ask clarifying questions, and provide feedback. Next, the leaders of Let It Be Us (a foster care and adoption organization) met with SYAB to discuss the goals of their organization. Like SYAB, Let It Be Us is also focused on issues around permanency which led to great conversations about potential opportunities to collaborate soon. Finally, time was carved out for public speaking practice and feedback. The remainder of Saturday was used as a “working” meeting which allowed time for youth to prepare for the Q4 Director’s meeting, start their Q4 PowerPoint, and draft permanency statements.

Barriers:

As the pandemic continues with the delta wave, in Q1 the YAB BSF staff seen our services continue to be delivered online. Previously cited barriers that are still applicable include lack of connection through zoom, difficulty hearing/sharing due to lack of technological access/support and difficulty recruiting. Each regional board lacked full officer slates which reduces the effectiveness of YAB advocacy presence at advisory councils and other child welfare stakeholder meetings. Other barriers surrounding getting youth to join meetings include communication difficulties with agency contacts, and youth not wanting to participate if they are not receiving food. There have been multiple instances where food deliveries were cancelled by the restaurants and therefore youth were receiving food very late or not at all. This concern has been addressed by moving delivery time to before the meeting so that we have more of the evening to do any necessary dinner corrections or reorders. As for the communication barriers with agency staff, YAB BSF staff are in communication with the contract monitors of the agencies and hope they will assist in getting those agency contacts and staff to get the youth registered and joining the YAB meetings.

In second quarter, the RYAB continued to experience barriers due to the necessity to provide services and convene meetings remotely. Those barriers manifest themselves in the form of connection issues through zoom, difficulty hearing/sharing due to lack of technological access/support and difficulty recruiting. The team worked to grow the officer base within each region. Adult partners are challenged in maintaining actively engaged and reliable youth over the course of this extended period, which in part might be a direct impact of zoom fatigue.

Throughout the 3rd quarter, meetings and service delivery remained online. Previously cited barriers remained applicable in this quarter. Additionally, reduced staffing at many POS agencies makes it difficult to facilitate the presence of young people at RYABs and especially officer’s meetings.

In Q4, RYAB meetings moved to a hybrid model; however, technological barriers were still applicable. These barriers include lack of connection through zoom, difficulty hearing/sharing due to lack of technological access/support and difficulty recruiting. Barriers for in-person presence include lack of staffing at POS agencies, since youth need staff to drive and be present at meetings. Although adult partners have encountered several barriers, there is a great commitment to ensuring all youth have access to YAB. Adult partners plan to continue promoting YAB, working with agencies to identify specific challenges, and to do our best to assist where we can.

Accomplishments/ Highlights:



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The YAB had a range of accomplishments achieved during Q1. In July, a bill that SYAB had advocated for and contributed language to were signed into law by Governor Pritzker- SB 755 (GAL Bill). Contributing to legislative change is a hallmark of what SYAB does, and the team is pleased to continue that trend in this quarter. SYAB also met with Anita Weinberg and students from Loyola's ChildLaw center to begin finalizing the Fy22 priorities. SYAB proudly convened the first meeting for the LGBTQI+ Youth Advisory Affinity Group in August. This group will allow youth and allies of the LGBTQI+ community to come together to discuss ways to improve services for this community.

During Q2, The Youth Advisory Board adult partners have successfully launched two additional initial convening meetings for the newly formed Youth Advisory Affinity groups (Latino and African American YAAG). This is in addition to last quarter's LGBTQI+ initial convening. Additionally, in pursuit of a more dynamic diversity, equity, and inclusion lens for our young people, we expanded our relationship with Dr. Shantá Robinson- Assistant Professor in the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago. Dr. Robinson presented at November's SYAB, exploring equity on both a societal and individual level. This quarter the central region brought on a new Intern and 2 new officers. These additions should give the YAB a broader presence at committee meetings.

In Q3, the Statewide Youth Advisory Board (SYAB) made five noteworthy strides. Highlights for this quarter include the following: Youth board leaders met with DCFS Quality Enhancement Division to review and discuss the annual youth survey and provide recommendations on enhancing the survey in a way that will allow the department to better understand the quality and effectiveness of services provided to the youth. SYAB participated in a CASA panel (with more than 60 Casa volunteers) to discuss the importance of YAB and share concerns that impact youth in care and recommended solutions to the identified concerns. The regional youth boards partnered with Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership to identify specific concerns and solutions to address youth mental wellness. Concerns and solutions provided will go to the Governor's office for consideration. With in-person meetings reconvening, the YAB team has successfully identified meeting locations for all four regional boards.

During the final quarter of the year, the Youth Advisory Board is extremely proud of the nimble transition to hybrid services. With less than a month's notice, the YAB team was able to identify 4 different RYAB locations throughout the state. Notably, in the Central and Southern regions, where DCFS did not have staffing to accommodate meetings at their offices. Additionally, YAB adult partners planned and had ready all necessary equipment to make hybrid meetings a success, including but not limited to microphones, projectors, video cameras, hand sanitizer, air purifiers, and speakers. This quarter also included YAB's first ever equity conference. Intended to be a weekend meeting to note and appreciate the work of the YAB's young people, this became the first conference for both YAB officers/interns and YAAG ambassadors to work together.

Recruitment Update:

The first quarter of the year, BSF staff continued to conduct recruitment efforts through phone calls, emails, and social media to youth, caseworkers, contracted agencies, agency monitors, foster parents and more. Some of the specific efforts by populations are:



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Congregate Care:

Identify and connect with agency monitors throughout Illinois.

Request and share Director's letter requesting support for youth to participate in YAB.

Youth in College, Vocational or Employed:

Pinpoint recipients of YIC, YIS, Tuition and fee waiver, and youth receiving ETV

Share info about YAB and encourage participation and develop relationships with agency contacts.

Traditional Foster Care:

Monthly flyers shared with agencies, FPSS, FP Facebook groups, etc. encouraging them to send youth.

The data demonstrates our recruitment and retention strategies are working and paying dividends.

Most notably, we've seen a dramatic 27% increase in clients with in the last 6 months.

The following quarter, recruitment efforts continued through phone calls, emails, and social media to youth, caseworkers, contracted agencies, agency monitors, foster parents and more. The YAB team presented to the division of Quality Enhancement this quarter to ensure the various DCFS departments are aware of the benefit of the YAB. Total clients served in FY22 Q2 shows a 15% increase over the year from FY21 Q2.

We are happy to announce that Quarter 3 has allowed us to add in-person contact to conduct our recruitment efforts. The Program Manager had the opportunity to meet with young people from Chicago Youth Center on two separate occasions and had the chance to connect with youth involved in the MYTIME employment program. Both events allowed staff to engage with participants, give an overview of YAB, and share the benefits of being involved with the board. Additionally, the Program Manager and Regional Coordinator were invited to speak at a foster parent support group in the Northern region. Due to unforeseen events, participants did not show thus, this meeting did not move forward. The YAB coordinator was able to meet with youth at the following facilities: Norman C. Sleezer Home, Nexus Indian Oaks (NIO) Onarga, NIO Manteno Program 3, NIO Manteno Lighthouse Cottage, and one traditional foster home in the Northern Region. During this outreach, the coordinator was able to review the benefits of YAB and discuss the roles and responsibilities of members and officers (especially what this will look like now that in-person meetings will resume), as well as review the new affinity groups and ambassador program.

The Central and Southern Regions Program Manager made a recruitment trip during the end of February. Over the course of 4 days and more than 1300 miles, the Program Manager contacted 8 different programs across 7 agencies. One of the goals of this trip was to target Agencies that have not been recently involved with the Youth Advisory Board. These agencies include Rutledge Youth Foundation, Children's Home and Aid of Illinois, and Hoyleton. The Program Manager also contacted agencies currently participating in YAB - Spero Family Services (ILO/TLP and Residential), Cunningham Children's Home, One Hope United, and Kemmerer Village. This allowed the Program Manager to further develop and grow the relationship between the YAB and youth and agency staff. The YAB team continues to conduct recruitment



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efforts via phone calls, emails, and other virtual routes as well.

In the final quarter, staff continued to conduct recruitment efforts through phone calls, emails, and social media to youth, caseworkers, contracted agencies, agency monitors, foster parents and more. Quarter 4 included June's outreach event for all 4 regions. For the southern region, this event matched the largest number of participants at an RYAB in FY22. Going into FY23, a greater focus will be on in-person outreach.

Metrics

1) Convene 48 Regional Youth Advisory Boards

Through May, 48 Regional Youth Advisory Board Meetings in Cook, Northern, Central, Southern were convened

(48/48) = 92%

2) Convene 5 Statewide Youth Advisory Meetings / Retreats (4 SYAB, 1 Retreat)

BSF convened 1 retreat and 4 SYAB Meetings: August 2021 September 2021, November 2021, February 2022, and May 2022.

July – June: (5/5) – 100%

3) Convene a quarterly meeting between the Director's office and the Executive Board.

SYAB members met with Director Smith the following:

Q1 - September 15, 2021

Q2 - Original meeting was reschedule for January 19, 2022

Q3 - Mar 16, 2022

Q4 - June 22, 2022

(4/4) = 100%

Outcomes:

1) 100% of youth issues and concerns identified during Cook, Southern, Central, and Northern regional meetings and SYAB meetings will be submitted to DCFS Advocacy staff within 24 hours of the meetings adjournment.



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Youth issues and concerns were received from the following regions:

Cook - 1

Northern - 2

Southern - 5

Central - 0

(8/8) 100%

2) 100% of active DCFS policy transmittals that directly impact youth from the Office of Child and Family Policy will be shared and reviewed by RYAB members at regional meetings. Regional boards will suggest revisions or make recommendations when pertinent.

Through June, 100% of Active DCFS policy transmittals relevant to youth were shared with youth; however, no formal recommendations were made.

- Procedure 302 Appendix N, Transition Planning for Adolescents in Care with Developmental Disabilities and CFS 418-L, Pre-Screen for DCFS Youth in Care with Intellectual Disabilities – August
- Administrative Procedures #32, Using Microsoft Teams and Ally-IL with Youth and Families in Intact Family and Permanency Cases – September
- Procedures 428, Department Advisory Groups – April

3) The Statewide Youth Advisory Board demonstrates capacity to advocate for the needs of youth in care measured by reports, testimony, representation at meetings and events.

SYAB have advocated for youth at the following events:

- Residential/ILO/TLP Monitoring panel – 2/22
- Casa Panel – 2/22
- Conveyed the importance of a GAL flyer to Director Smith thus, SYAB took the initiative to draft a flyer that outlines the responsibilities of the Advocacy Office and the role of a Guardian Ad-Litem (GAL) as required by public act 102-0208. SYAB successfully partnered with the DCFS Communications Office to finalize GAL flyer. This flyer will be made available to youth in care at every administrative case review. 2/22
- Youth board leaders met with DCFS Quality Enhancement Division to review and discuss the annual youth survey and provide recommendations on enhancing the survey in a way that will allow the department to better understand the quality and effectiveness of services provided to the youth. 2/22



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- The regional youth boards partnered with Illinois Children’s Mental Health Partnership to identify specific concerns and solutions to address youth mental wellness. Concerns and solutions provided will go to the Governor’s office for consideration. 1/22

SYAB members are represented and are participating in the following councils:

- IL Children and Family Services Advisory Council (July)
- Statewide Foster Parent Advisory Council (February, March)
- Child Welfare Advisory Council (CWAC) Emerging Adults Sub-Committee (October, November)

SYAB members also met with Director Marc Smith to provide perspective of youth in care during the meetings below:

Q1- September 15, 2021

Q2- Original meeting was cancelled and reschedule for January 19, 2022

Q3- Mar 16, 2022

Q4- June 22, 2022

4) The Cook, Central, Southern and Northern Regional Youth Advisory Boards demonstrates capacity to advocate for the needs of youth in care measured by reports, testimony, representation at meetings and events.

See question 3 response.

5) The Statewide Youth Advisory Board will have substantial links to divisions of DCFS and advisory councils associated with DCFS and advocates for youth in care as measured through a report on representation, meetings, reports, communications, and workshops that occur.

Divisions of DCFS actively linked with SYAB activities include:

- Office of Education and Transition Services: monthly
- Director’s Office (Deputy Chief of Staff) – February
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion – August
- Communications – November
- Advocacy Office – November
- Quality Enhancement – February
- Permanency – May



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6) The Cook, Central, Southern and Northern Regional Youth Advisory Boards will have substantial links to divisions of DCFS and advisory councils associated with DCFS and advocates for youth in care as measured through a report on representation, meetings, reports, communications, and workshops that occur.

Divisions of DCFS actively linked with Cook YAB activities include

- Office of Education and Transition Services (Monthly)
- Advocacy (Monthly)
- NIU Education Advisors (August)
- Therapeutic Residential Performance Management Initiative (October, February, March, April)
- Quality Enhancement (Monthly)
- Division of Diversity (April)

Divisions of DCFS actively linked with Northern YAB activities include

- Office of Education and Transition Services (Monthly)
- Advocacy (Monthly)
- Therapeutic Residential Performance Management Initiative (August)
- Quality Enhancement (October, November)

Divisions of DCFS actively linked with Central YAB activities include

- Office of Education and Transitional Services (July, August, September, November, December, January, February, March,)
- Advocacy Office (August, October, November, December, January, February, March, April, May)
- Office of Quality Enhancement (August, October, November, December, January, February, March, May)

Divisions of DCFS actively linked with Southern YAB activities include

- Office of Education and Transitional Services (July, August, September, October, November, December, January, February, March)
- Advocacy Office (monthly except May)
- Office of Quality Enhancement (September, October, January, February, March, May)
- Office of Residential Monitoring (January)

7) BSF will prepare evaluation summary reports on Leadership Development workshops at Cook, Central, Southern, and Northern RYAB meetings and submit them on a quarterly basis.

YLD Overview



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Module 1: [Intro] Being an Effective Change Agent Purpose

Module 2: Everyone is a Leader: Leadership Style Purpose

Module 3: What and How Are You Representing?

Module 4: Using Your Story to Advocate for Change Purpose

Module 5: Turning Challenges into Opportunities Purpose

Module 6: Facilitation Skills 101 (Part 1)

Module 7: Facilitation Skills 101 (Part 2)

Module 8: Strategic Goal Setting Purpose

Modules 9-11: Youth Choice Presentations Purpose

See evaluations folder

8) SYAB Youth trained in public speaking will demonstrate an increase in public speaking skills and confidence presenting in front of an audience as measured by retrospective analysis.

Retro analysis completed during May SYAB. See eval folder

9) BSF will prepare a year-end report on the FY22 Active Membership stipend / incentive program

- Northern: 22 youth have reached tier 1; 5 youth who moved on to tier 2.
- Cook: 29 youth have reached tier 1; 5 youth who moved on to tier 2.
- Central: 5 youth have reached tier 1
- Southern: 28 youth have reached tier 1, 5 youth who moved on to tier 2, and 3 youth who moved on to tier 3.

10) Youth Advisory Board officers will have attended at least two of the following internal advisory councils / sub-committees:

- IL Children and Family Services Advisory Council (July)
- Statewide Foster Parent Advisory Council (February, March)
- Child Welfare Advisory Council (CWAC) Emerging Adults Sub-Committee (October, November)



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RYAB Demographics

Table 1 – Age Demographics

	14-15	16-18	19-21	Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	54	88	21	0	163
Quarter 2	55	82	15	0	152
Quarter 3	50	56	18	0	124
Quarter 4	22	77	11	0	110
Total	181	303	65	0	549

Table 2 – Race

	White	Black	Hispanic	Biracial/Other	Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	64	80	4	15	0	163
Quarter 2	62	74	5	11	0	152
Quarter 3	56	56	8	4	0	124
Quarter 4	47	40	6	17	0	110
Total	229	250	23	47	0	549

Table 3 – Gender

	Female	Male	Transgender	Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	82	73	8	0	163
Quarter 2	78	61	13	0	152
Quarter 3	61	50	13	0	124
Quarter 4	59	33	18	0	110
Total	280	217	52	0	549

Table 4 – Placement Type

	FH	ILO/TLP	I/GH	Other/Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	5	2	145	11	163
Quarter 2	12	1	130	9	152
Quarter 3	13	0	101	10	124
Quarter 4	9	9	85	7	110
Total	39	12	461	37	549

Table 5 – Adult Participants

	Not Including Coord/Manager	Coordinator/Manager	Total
Quarter 1	45	12	57
Quarter 2	35	24	59
Quarter 3	50	24	74



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Quarter 4	43	19	62
Total	173	79	252

SYAB Demographics

Table 1 – Age Demographics

	14-15	16-18	19-21	Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	2	10	5	0	17
Quarter 2	1	4	2	0	7
Quarter 3	1	6	2	0	9
Quarter 4	0	13	6	0	19
Total	4	33	15	0	52

Table 2 – Race

	White	Black	Hispanic	Biracial/Other	Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	1	10	2	4	0	17
Quarter 2	0	4	1	2	0	7
Quarter 3	3	3	1	2	0	9
Quarter 4	4	9	2	4	0	19
Total	8	26	6	12	0	52

Table 3 – Gender

	Female	Male	Transgender	Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	5	12	0	0	17
Quarter 2	3	4	0	0	7
Quarter 3	4	5	0	0	9
Quarter 4	7	9	3	0	19
Total	19	30	3	0	52

Table 4 – Placement Type

	FH	ILO/TLP	I/GH	Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	4	0	8	5	17
Quarter 2	2	0	3	2	7
Quarter 3	3	0	4	2	9
Quarter 4	6	0	9	4	19
Total	15	0	24	13	52

Table 5 – Adult Participants



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	Not Including Coord/Manager	Coordinator/Manager	Total
Quarter 1	16	8	24
Quarter 2	2	3	5
Quarter 3	0	8	8
Quarter 4	11	8	19
Total	29	27	56

ILM Demographics

Table 1 – Age Demographics

	14-15	16-18	19-21	Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	0	11	2	0	13
Quarter 2	0	1	4	0	5
Quarter 3	0	4	6	0	10
Quarter 4	0	8	5	0	13
Total	0	24	17	0	41

Table 2 – Race

	White	Black	Hispanic	Biracial/Other	Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	3	8	0	2	0	13
Quarter 2	1	3	0	1	0	5
Quarter 3	5	3	0	2	0	10
Quarter 4	6	4	1	2	0	13
Total	15	18	1	7	0	41

Table 3 – Gender

	Female	Male	Transgender	Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	3	10	0	0	13
Quarter 2	3	2	0	0	5
Quarter 3	5	5	0	0	10
Quarter 4	6	7	0	0	13
Total	17	24	0	0	41

Table 4 – Placement Type

	FH	ILO/TLP	I/GH	Other/Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	4	0	7	2	13
Quarter 2	0	0	1	4	5



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Quarter 3	2	0	2	6	10
Quarter 4	2	0	6	5	13
Total	8	0	16	17	41

Table 5 – Adult Participants

	Not Including Coord/Manager	Coordinator/Manager	Total
Quarter 1	3	7	10
Quarter 2	0	7	7
Quarter 3	0	10	10
Quarter 4	0	7	7
Total	3	31	34

YAAG Demographics

Table 1 – Age Demographics

	14-15	16-18	19-21	Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	3	17	5		25
Quarter 2	3	10	1		14
Quarter 3	3	22	6		31
Quarter 4	3	19	9		31
Total	12	68	21		101

Table 2 – Race

	White	Black	Hispanic	Biracial/Other	Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	2	0	1	0	22	25
Quarter 2	4	4	6	0	0	14
Quarter 3	8	15	7	1	0	31
Quarter 4	7	16	4	4	0	31
Total	21	35	18	5	22	101

Table 3 – Gender

	Female	Male	Transgender	Other/Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	2	1	0	22	25
Quarter 2	10	2	1	1	14
Quarter 3	16	12	3	0	31
Quarter 4	14	11	4	2	31
Total	42	26	8	25	101



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Table 4 – Placement Type

	FH	ILO/TLP	I/GH	Other/Unknown	Total
Quarter 1	0	0	3	22	25
Quarter 2	1	1	12	0	14
Quarter 3	5	2	22	2	31
Quarter 4	3	5	20	3	31
Total	9	8	57	27	101

Table 5 – Adult Participants

	Not Including Coord/Manager	Coordinator/Manager	Total
Quarter 1	25	6	31
Quarter 2	21	11	32
Quarter 3	25	12	37
Quarter 4	19	9	28
Total	90	38	128