Media Interviewing or Photographing Children in DCYF Care

Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families
Policy: 300.0005
Effective Date: August 16, 2010 ***Version 1***

On occasion the media may request to interview or photograph a child or youth in the care of the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). To ensure the confidentiality of children, youth and families, photographs or visual representations depicting faces or allowing for recognition of the individuals are not allowed for publicity or any other reason unless the request is approved by the Department. The Department is responsible to ensure that minimal program disruption occurs, that confidentiality is maintained and that the appropriate consents have been secured.

In addition to DCYF approval for a child or youth to be interviewed or photographed, the following consent requirements must be met:

- If the child is under the age of fourteen (14), his/her parent, legal guardian and/or attorney can consent to an interview by signing the consent form.
- If the child is age fourteen (14) or older, he/she and his/her parent, legal guardian and/or attorney can consent by signing the consent form.
- If the youth is age eighteen (18) or older, he/she alone may consent and sign the form. His/her parent, legal guardian or attorney may also sign, but this is not required.

All requests and interviews are coordinated through the divisional administrator or designee or the Superintendent or designee for children and youth under the supervision of Juvenile Correctional Services. This policy does not apply to children and youth listed with adoption recruitment agencies contracted by the Department.

Related Procedure

Media Interviewing or Photographing Children in DCYF Care

Related Policies

Public Relations

Media Interviewing or Photographing Children in DCYF Care

Procedure from Policy 300.0005: Media Interviewing or Photographing Children in DCYF Care

A. Children in foster homes

1. Requests are channeled to the divisional administrator or designee with as much advance notice as possible prior to the time of the interview or photographing.
2. The divisional administrator or designee discusses the request with the Chief of Staff to determine if factors exist that would prohibit the interview or photographing.
    a. If approved, the divisional administrator or designee informs the supervisor.
    b. The supervisor ensures that the child, if of appropriate age, and the parent/legal guardian or attorney sign the Consent/Authorization to be Interviewed/Photographed by the Media (DCYF #006 or DCYF #006A).
    c. The DCYF #006 or DCYF #006A is included in the case record.

B. Children in residential child care facilities

1. Requests are channeled to the Children's Behavioral Health administrator or designee with as much advance notice as possible prior to the time of the interview or photographing.
2. The administrator or designee discusses the request with the regional or divisional staff responsible for providing services to the child and the Chief of Staff to determine if factors exist that would prohibit the interview or photographing.
    a. The administrator or designee informs the provider and the media representative of his/her decision.
    b. If approved, the administrator or designee informs the regional or divisional administrator who in turn informs the supervisor.
    c. The supervisor ensures that the child, if of appropriate age, and the parent/legal guardian or attorney sign the Consent/Authorization to be Interviewed/Photographed by the Media (DCYF #006 or DCYF #006A).
    d. The DCYF #006 or DCYF #006A is included in the case record.

C. Residents of the Rhode Island Training School

1. Requests are channeled to the Superintendent or designee with as much advance notice as possible prior to the time of the interview or photographing.
2. The Superintendent or designee discusses the request with the Chief of Staff to determine if factors exist that would prohibit the interview or photographing.
    a. The Superintendent or designee notifies appropriate division staff of his/her decision.
    b. If approved, the Superintendent or designee ensures that the child, if of appropriate age, and parent/legal guardian or attorney sign the Consent/Authorization to be Interviewed/ Photographed by the Media (DCYF #006 or DCYF #006A).
    c. The DCYF #006 or DCYF #006A is included in the case record.
    d. The Superintendent or designee informs the media representative of the decision and any limitations on the content or dissemination of the interview or photographing.