



QUESTIONS FOR CHILD ADVOCATE NOMINEE

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CHILD ADVOCATE ([CGS §§ 46A-13K, ET. SEQ.](#))

The Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) is a division within the Office of Government Accountability but has independent decision-making authority.

The child advocate's duties include:

1. evaluating state agency service delivery to children;
2. reviewing agency procedures to protect children's rights;
3. investigating complaints and, when indicated, advocating on behalf of a child's best interests;
4. taking all possible actions to ensure the legal, civil, and special rights of children; and
5. providing technical training to attorneys representing children.

QUESTIONS

1. What do you see as the most pressing needs of Connecticut's children and youth?
2. Many of our child welfare laws are based on the concept of "best interest of the child." What does this phrase mean to you?
3. One of the child advocate's responsibilities is to review state agency procedures for providing services to children with a view toward promoting children's rights. What rights do you believe children have? How do their rights mesh with their parents' or caretakers' rights?
4. By law, the child advocate must recommend changes in state policies concerning children including changes in juvenile justice, child care, and foster care. What policy change or changes do you believe most important at this time?

5. Prior to serving as acting child advocate, you were the Director of the Child Abuse Project at the Center for Children's Advocacy. What did this position entail and how do you feel that it has prepared you for the role of child advocate?
6. Under [PA 13-178](#), the Department of Children and Families must create a plan to meet Connecticut children's mental, emotional, and behavioral health needs. If you were asked to provide input, based on your experience, what would you recommend?
7. Incidences of child sex-trafficking continue to make headlines nationally and here in Connecticut. Last year, the legislature increased the penalty for soliciting a prostitute under age 18 from a class A misdemeanor to a class C felony ([PA 13-166](#)). What additional steps, if any, should the legislature or executive branch take to address this issue?
8. In its most recent annual report, the (OCA) expressed concern "regarding persistent significant gaps in services for girls throughout the state designed to promote their health safety, and well-being despite many years of planning initiatives led by state agencies." What services and supports do Connecticut girls need that they are currently not receiving and what steps would you take as child advocate to address this problem?
9. OCA recently co-hosted a forum on prevention of restraint and seclusion. What changes would you advocate for to the use of these practices by some educators as behavioral intervention techniques?

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