

mn MINNESOTA
OFFICE OF THE FOSTER
YOUTH OMBUDSPERSON



Introduction to OOFY



Agenda



1

About OOFY

2

Themes & trends

3

Connecting with us





A little bit
about me!

Our Team

	 Jessica <i>(she/her)</i> Foster Youth Outreach Specialist		Tonia <i>(she/her)</i> Investigator		Robin <i>(she/her)</i> Intake Program Specialist
 Misty <i>(she/her)</i> Ombudsperson		 Hannah <i>(she/her)</i> Deputy Ombudsperson		Open Foster Youth Outreach Specialist	



= Personal Experience in
Foster CAre (Foster)



What is an Ombudsperson?

Pronunciation: “om-budz-per-son”

A person who

- investigates
- makes reports
- and helps settle requests

1991

m MINNESOTA
OFFICE OF OMBUDSPERSON
FOR FAMILIES

Ombudsperson for African American Families

Ombudsperson for Spanish Speaking Families

Ombudsperson for Asian Pacific Families

1972/2019

m MINNESOTA
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDS
FOR CORRECTIONS



2021

m MINNESOTA
OFFICE OF OMBUDSPERSON
FOR AMERICAN INDIAN FAMILIES

1987

m MINNESOTA
OFFICE OF OMBUDSMAN
FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES



Foster Advocates on the day of the vote to create OOFY

What is OOFY?

Established in May 2024, OOFY hears concerns from anyone, prioritizing concerns from young people about their rights, care, safety, and placement in Minnesota foster care.



Statutory Authority: 260C.80-83

- Investigate actions of agencies, foster homes, and facilities
- Request and be given access to information necessary to investigate
- Make recommendations to an agency or judicial officer
- Raise issues needing statutory change to the governor or legislature
- Outreach, resources and assistance to foster youth

OOFY Data/Chapter 13: Section 13.876

Our Values

Learn more at mn.gov/oofy.



We Center Fosters First

Our work begins and ends with Fosters—people who have too often felt unheard in systems meant to support them.

We Work with Care

Care is the method we bring to all of our work—with Fosters, colleagues, partners, and ourselves.

We Say What's True

We speak with transparency and integrity. Honesty builds confidence, not harm.

We Fix the Root, Not Just the Branches

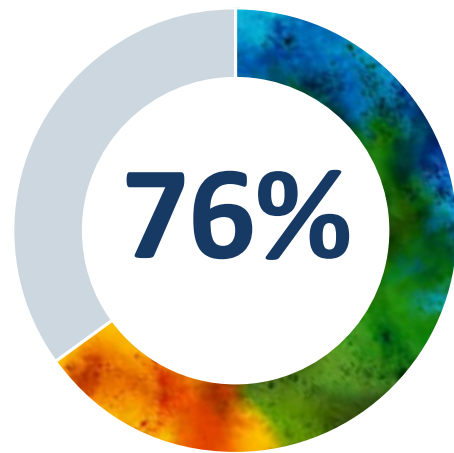
We use what we learn—from Fosters, partners, data, and our own practice—to guide meaningful change.

We See the Whole Person

When people are seen, included, and valued, belonging is felt and fairness becomes possible.

OOFY uses “Foster,” following the example of those with lived experience, to refer to anyone who has experienced foster care, no matter their age or how they left foster care.

OOFY spoke directly with the foster youth in approximately



of cases that involved a specific person in foster care.

The most common concerns we heard were about



1 Placement Decisions



2 Services Offered to or Received by Fosters



3 Caregiver Conduct



Year 2



100

youth received Know Your Rights trainings via outreach presentations



4 public investigative reports



Types of Requests

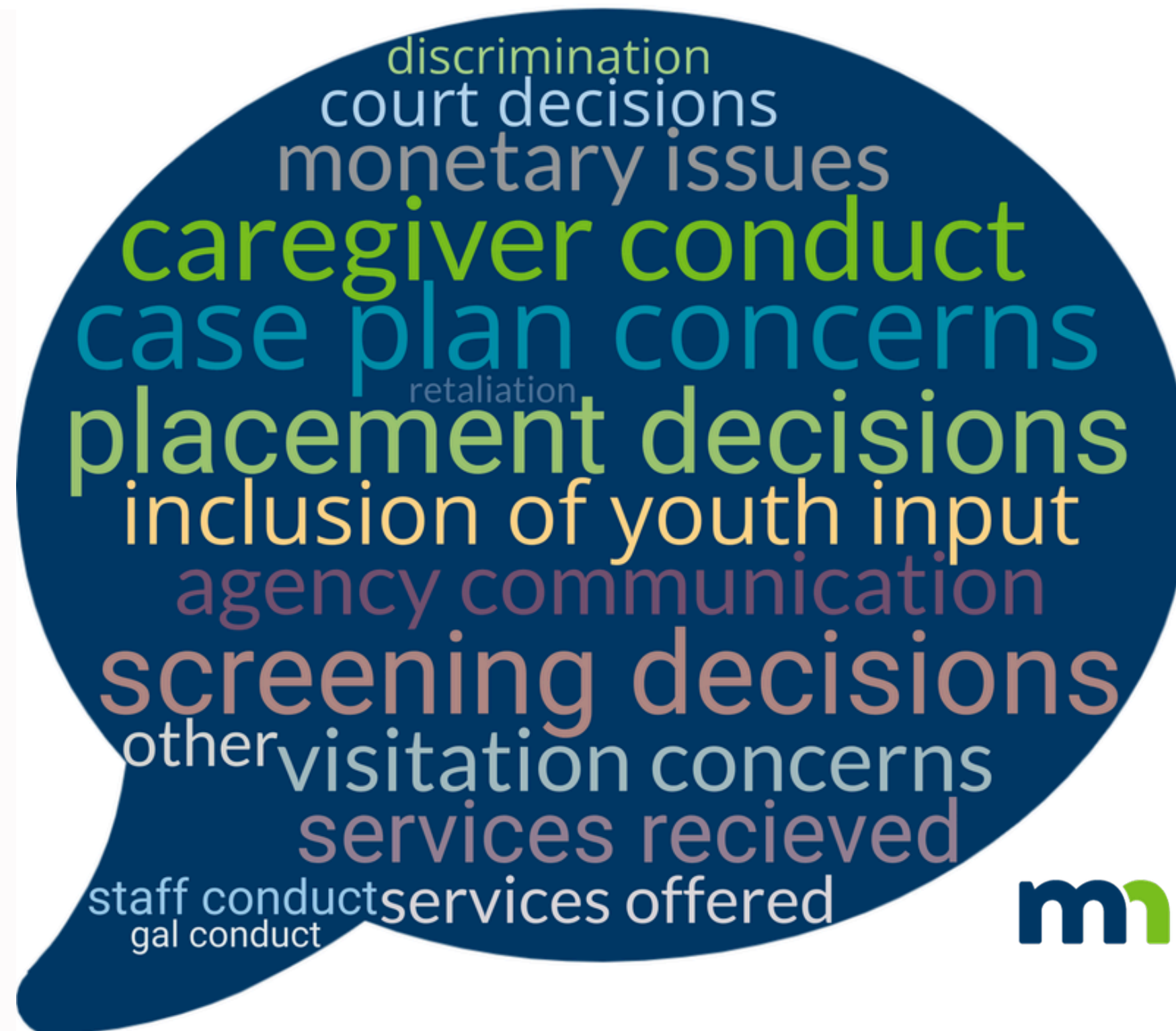
- Services youth may be receiving.
- Rights that are being ignored.
- Concerns about living conditions.

Recommended changes to law, related to foster care.

Sharing about something that happened in the past.

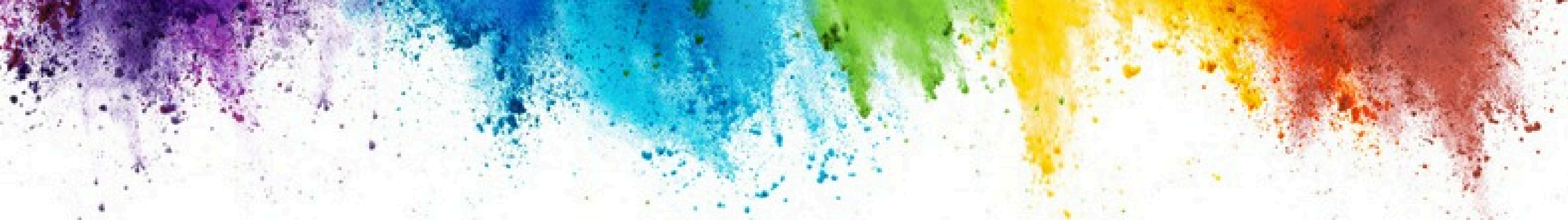
Anonymous complaints*

What have we
been hearing?



MINNESOTA

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Some Trends & Themes

- Lacking support for sibling and relative relationships
- Concerns about crisis respite hotels and hospital boarding
- Challenges with access to Extended Foster Care and effective transition support
- Inconsistent reporting, cross-reporting, assessment, and investigation of maltreatment and injury in licensed settings



OOFY Reports

Share Our Resources



OOFY handout:



Minnesota Office of the Foster Youth Ombudsman



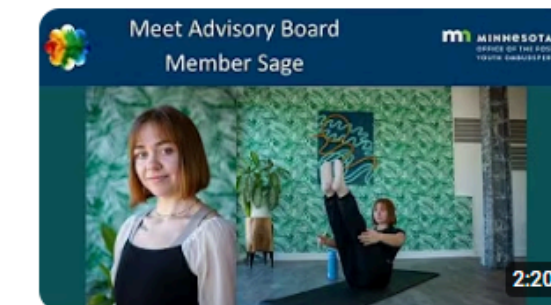
@MinnesotaOOFY • 4 subscribers • 4 videos

Established in May 2024, the Office of the Foster Youth Ombudsman, or OOFY ...more

linktr.ee/oofymn and 2 more links

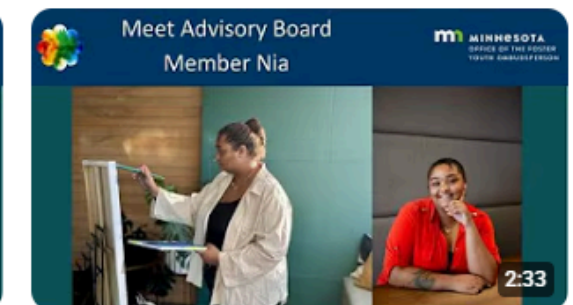
Subscribe

Videos



Meet Sage: We want to listen

34 views • 5 months ago



Meet Nia: Your voice matters!

41 views • 5 months ago



Action Steps

Contact us to consult,
ask us to review a situation,
or submit a concern



Sign up for our newsletter
for updates (once a month)



Please spread the word!



Read our reports



Questions?



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YOUTH OMBUDSPERSON

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