



# Youth Court Questionnaire (Under 19)

This questionnaire was designed as a way for you to inform the judge handling your case of your specific situation. The information you provide is strictly voluntary. The more details you share, the better the judge is able to make the best decision in your case. However, you do not have to answer every question.

To make sure this questionnaire gets to the proper judge:

1. Give it to your Guardian Ad Litem (GAL), Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer, Caseworker, Foster Parent, Foster Care Specialist, or your personal attorney,
2. Bring it to your next hearing, or
3. Mail it to the Clerk of the Court in your city or county.

**Under current law, the judge, your mother and/or father, Guardian Ad Litem, caseworker and the county attorney are allowed to view your answers.**

The judge handling your case may ask questions regarding the information you provide.

**If you have questions or need assistance in completing the questionnaire, please contact the Nebraska Court Improvement Project via email at [nsc.cip@nebraska.gov](mailto:nsc.cip@nebraska.gov).**

## Definitions

**Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard:** The standard characterized by careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain a child's health, safety, and best interests while at the same time encouraging the child's emotional and developmental growth, that a caregiver must use when determining whether to allow a child in foster care under the responsibility of the state to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural and social activities.

**Developmentally Appropriate:** Activities that are generally accepted as suitable for children of the same chronological age or level of maturity or that are determined to be developmentally appropriate for a child, based on the development of cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral capacities that are typical for an age or age group. In the case of a specific child, activities that are suitable for the child based on the developmental stages attained by the child with respect to the cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral capacities of the child.

**Caregiver:** A foster parent (s) or designated child caring agency staff.

**Strengthening Families Act Advisor:** The Strengthening Families Advisor is an individual identified by the youth to be designated as the youth's advisor on the application of Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards (RPPS). RPPS allow foster parents to use their best judgment in making day-to-day decisions about activities foster youth are involved in. This applies to activities and being able to participate in age-appropriate extracurricular, academic, enrichment, and social activities that promote a sense of "normalcy" while in foster care.

# Youth Court Information

## General Information

\_\_\_\_\_  
First Name  
Age

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Today's Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Court Location (City and/or County)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judge's Name (if known)

List the name(s) of anyone who helped you fill out this form and their connection to you:

**Is there something you would prefer to share with someone in private?**     Yes  No

## Current Situation

1. Are you satisfied with your current home?     Yes  No

If no, why not?

2. Where would you want to live and why?

3. Do you feel safe where you are living?     Yes  No

If no, who or what makes you feel unsafe?

4. If you have siblings, are they living with you now? (Skip, if no siblings)     Yes  No

If you're not living together, where and how often do you see your siblings?

5. Are your basic needs being met (getting enough to eat, having enough clothing, etc.)?     Yes  No If no, explain

6. Do you currently have any dental or physical health conditions?     Yes  No

7. If you have any dental or physical health conditions, are you receiving appropriate treatment?  
 Yes  No

If no, why not?

8. Please use the space below if there is anything you want the court to know regarding your **dental or physical health conditions**. You may also request to speak with someone in private.
9. Describe any current **mental health conditions** (depression, anxiety, attention problems, thoughts of hurting yourself, problems sleeping or eating, etc.). You may also request to speak with someone in private.

10. Are you in counseling/therapy?  Yes  No  
If you are attending therapy, is it helpful?  Yes  No  
If no, why not?

11. Do you take medicine?  Yes  No  
If yes, do you know what it's for?  Yes  No  
If yes, what?

12. Are you currently attending school?  Yes  No  
If no, why are you not in school?

If yes, which school?

If yes, how are things going? What are some of the things you like doing?

13. Are you participating in activities at school or elsewhere (sports, band, art club, etc.)?  Yes  No  
If no, why not? Is there something getting in the way?

If yes, what are you doing and how is it going?

14. Are you currently working?  Yes  No

If no, would you like to be? Why or why not?

If yes, where are you working, how often and how is it going?

#### Case Information

15. Which of these people/groups have you seen or talked to in the last month:

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mom            | <input type="checkbox"/> Sibling(s)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Caseworker             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dad            | <input type="checkbox"/> CASA Volunteer | <input type="checkbox"/> Therapist or Counselor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foster Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> GAL            | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher(s)             |

16. Is there someone you're not talking to who you want to be?  Yes  No

If yes, explain

A **Team Meeting** is a gathering of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) or the foster care agency, your family and you to discuss services that will be provided.

17. Do you attend your team meetings?  Yes  No  Sometimes

If no, why not?

18. Do you feel comfortable speaking at team meetings?  Yes  No

If no, what makes you uncomfortable?

19. Do you feel that your concerns are being addressed?  Yes  No  Sometimes

If no, explain

A **Case Plan** is a document that DHHS or foster care agency makes and updates regularly. It includes the services provided to you and your family, and says what needs to happen to reach the goals.

20. Have you received a copy of your most recent case plan?  Yes  No  Sometimes

If yes, who gave you the copy?

If not, when is the last time you got a copy of the case plan?

21. Do you understand the case plan?  Yes  No

22. Do you have questions about your case plan?  Yes  No

If yes, what questions?

A **CASA Report** is a document that a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer completes in order to give a summary and recommendations regarding your best interest. Not every young person has a CASA volunteer, but you can request that a judge appoint a CASA for you.

23. Do you have a CASA assigned to you?  Yes  No

24. Do you receive a copy of the CASA report?  Yes  No  Sometimes  I do not have a CASA

A **GAL Report** is a document written by the Guardian ad Litem, who is an attorney representing you and your best interests, to update the court on your case.

25. Do you receive a copy of the GAL report?  Yes  No  Sometimes

If not or sometimes, when did you last get a GAL report?

26. Do you understand the GAL report?  Yes  No  Sometimes

If not, does your Guardian ad Litem explain it to you?  Yes  No  Sometimes

In a **Court Hearing**, the judge makes the major decisions about you by looking at the progress of you and your parent(s) to make sure you are safe and being provided for.

27. Have you been to a court hearing before?  Yes  No

If not, why not?

28. Do you know when court hearings are happening?  Yes  No

29. Is there someone who explains what will be happening at your court hearing?  Yes  No  Sometimes

If yes or sometimes, who explains the hearing to you?

30. Do you want to attend more court hearings?  Yes  No

A **Court Order** is a written order from the judge after the court hearing.

31. Do you receive copies of your Court Orders?  Yes  No  Sometimes

If not, do you want a copy of your Court Orders?  Yes  No

32. Would you like the opportunity to speak to the judge in court?  Yes  No

What would you like to talk about?

33. Is there anyone you want attending your next court hearing?

34. Are you uncomfortable with certain people attending your hearing?  Yes  No

If yes, who and why?

An **Independent Living Plan** is a written plan to prepare for living on your own once you have left foster care. The plan may include goals for completing education, finding a job, finding affordable housing, managing your money, etc. If you are over 16, you should have a plan. Do you have an Independent Living Transition Plan?

Yes  No  I don't know

35. Have you been part of creating the plan?  Yes  No

36. Do you feel like you are being prepared to become an adult?  Yes  No

37. What could you use help with?

### Personal Concerns/Goals

38. What is your biggest concern with how things are going?

39. What are your plans for your future?

40. How can the judge or other people in your case help you with your goals?

41. What else would you like the court to know?