

OFFICE OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE

Statement of Values

The OCA provides independent oversight of state services for children in order to ensure that children receive appropriate, timely, and quality services, with a particular focus on ensuring that the Commonwealth's most vulnerable and at-risk children have the opportunity to thrive. The OCA serves as a resource for families who are receiving, or are eligible to receive, services from the Commonwealth.

We are Child Centered

We put children and their ability to thrive at the center of our work. We seek to uphold the human rights of children in the Commonwealth and ensure that they are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve. We commit to bringing the voices of children and youth into our work. We recognize that helping children to thrive often requires helping their families to thrive as well. We are dedicated to actively addressing policies, protocols, and practices that disenfranchise children and their families.

We are Trauma Informed and Responsive

We are committed to creating environments and systems that promote growth, resilience, and empowerment for children, families, staff, and communities impacted by trauma. While caring for ourselves and each other in the face of secondary traumatic stress, we prioritize self-awareness, wellbeing practices, and foster a culture of compassion, empathy, and support.

We Believe Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging are Central to Our Work

We believe outcomes for children improve when they are supported by diverse, equitable, and inclusive communities and services. The OCA is in a continual process of improvement in ensuring that we prioritize diversity and inclusion, especially lived experience, in our operations and all aspects of our work. We commit to checking our biases and assumptions to foster unique perspectives that create a diverse workplace where everyone can thrive, innovate, and contribute to our shared mission. We strive to ensure a future where all children are safe and valued and have equitable access to the services and support they need. We commit to bringing forward actionable, equitable, and practical solutions to reduce systemic drivers of marginalization and inequity.

We Value Collaboration

We respect our relationships with communities, agencies, and organizations and strive to work honestly and collaboratively with all stakeholders and each other. We are committed to listening to, learning from, and acting on the input of all people invested in our mission, including those internal to the agency. We are dedicated to creating a collaborative culture where everyone feels valued, empowered, and included.

We Strive for Excellence

We believe all organizations serving children and their families—including the OCA—must be accountable for providing timely, effective, and culturally responsive services. We are a research and data-driven organization, committed to continuous quality improvement, and strive to provide high quality public service.