

Youth Speakers Bureau Protocol



This document outlines Juvenile Law Center’s Youth Advocacy Program’s detailed process for accepting speaking requests and preparing youth advocates to present their project and speak about their experiences as members the Youth Speakers Bureau (YSB).

Accepting Speaking Requests

There are two types of speaking requests that Youth Advocacy Staff often receive: internal and external requests.

Internal requests are invitations made by Juvenile Law Center staff members to have a member of YSB speak or present at an event or collaborate on a project with a staff member or project department. If Juvenile Law Center staff are specifically interested in having a youth speak about their personal experiences and expertise, the staff member must contact the Youth Advocacy Program staff and complete a form that provides details and context about the request, including the name and location of the event. The program managers will use the information provided by staff to determine whether the speaking opportunity is appropriate for a YSB member. An appropriate speaking engagement has the goal of informing decision makers or community members of the unique expertise of youth with experience in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Once a determination has been made regarding the suitability of the event for a YSB member, Youth Advocacy Program staff will be selected to work with the Juvenile Law Center staff members and the YSB members. The assigned program staff will ensure that the content and questions that the YSB member will present are relevant and appropriate.

External requests are invitations made by or received from a partnering organization that seeks to have a member of YSB present or speak at an event hosted by an entity other than Juvenile Law Center. All such requests should be made to the Youth Advocacy Program staff, and Juvenile Law Center Communications staff when opportunities include working with media. The partner organization will be required to provide detailed information about the event. The speaking request form must be completed by the partner organization’s representative. The program manager should also inquire whether the partner organization can compensate the YSB member for their appearance and presentation.

Please Note:

The ability of a partnering organization to compensate a YSB member for their presentation will not influence or guarantee the program managers’ decision about the appropriateness of the event and whether a YSB member should participate in the event. All youth advocates are always compensated for their time either by the partnering organization or by Juvenile Law Center.

Scheduling events

Concerted efforts should be made to schedule presentations and meetings around a youth’s schedule. It should be the responsibility of the staff member to work to ensure youth’s parents or legal guardians, caseworkers, or attorneys – where applicable – and school have received a copy of the letter. Additionally, concerted efforts should be made to schedule the opportunity far enough in advance to give staff and speakers time to prepare and rearrange their personal schedules.

Preparing Youth Speakers

Prior to any speaking event, youth advocates meet with their assigned program staff support (and a Juvenile Law Center Communications staff member when necessary) at least once to prepare questions and speaking points relevant to the event. Assigned program staff can accompany the Youth advocate(s) to the event to provide support to the youth, unless another Juvenile Law Center staff member has been identified to attend. In the instance when a Juvenile Law Center staff member will attend the event, they must communicate with the assigned program manager to obtain any updated information related to the YSB member’s presentation, including details about the YSB member’s preparation as well as logistical information related to the event (e.g.: transportation arrangements, location, etc.).