

What are my rights in mental health care?

Your caseworker and the people involved in your family team meetings can support you as you move through the mental health care system. Talk about your concerns and questions to your caseworker or during your family team meeting.

Here is an excerpt from **Maine's Youth in Care Bill of Rights**, specific to mental health:

- You have the right to have an informed choice in the types of physical, dental and mental health care you receive.
- You have the right to have a choice and options when a treatment provider is being assigned to them.
- You have the right to see and understand your treatment plans, to be informed about and to have a say in treatment decisions being made.
- You have a right to be informed about medications, medication options and to have a voice in decisions about prescription of medication.
- You have a right to not be overmedicated, to not be punished for refusal to take medications, and to be made aware of the possible risks that come from refusing to take medication.
- You should be able to have visitation with people that are important to you while receiving treatment.
- You should be able to receive care and services that are fair, respectful, safe, confidential and free from discrimination.
- You have a right to access to your medical records.



If you feel your rights have been violated, you should speak up to your caseworker and say that your rights have been violated. Tell them which one.

If you are still having trouble, you can speak to your caseworker's supervisor, your Guardian ad litem (GAL) or a trusted adult. Be specific and provide examples.

If you don't have success there, you can contact the Ombudsman's office. The Ombudsman will try to get more information, notify DHHS of problems and work with people to help fix the problems. Call the Ombudsman's Office at 866-621-0758 or visit:

<http://mainechildrensalliance.org/am/publish/ombudsman/shtml>

...Answers for youth in care, by youth in care