



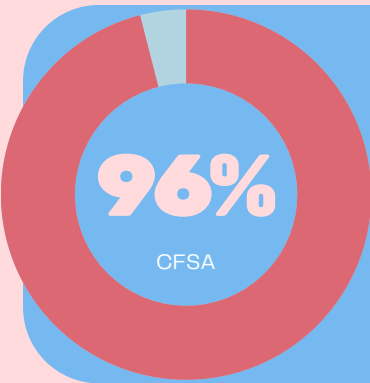
ACCOUNTABILITY FOR CARETAKERS



The Office of the Ombudsman for Children (OFC) is supposed to investigate complaints about the care of children in the custody of the District or receiving supportive home services from the District. OFC does not actually do what they say they're doing for children and families and they do not hold CFSA and other agencies accountable for the abuse children suffer while in care.

Many children involved with various District agencies are sexually and otherwise abused, and the agencies are not held accountable like birth families are. This creates cycles of abusers and traumatized children who become traumatized adults. This makes us all less safe.

THE HARM TO BLACK OR MINORITY CHILDREN PUTS ALL CHILDREN IN DANGER.



In 2023, Black and Hispanic children made up approximately 96% of children in foster care in DC, while Black and hispanic residents make up 57% of the population in DC.

Children who were placed in foster care are more likely to experience **bad life outcomes**, including **arrest and incarceration**.

In FY 2023, OFC received **49 complaints** total, **19 from biological mothers**.

“TO PRETEND THAT SEPARATED CHILDREN DO NOT GROW UP WITH THE SHRAPNEL OF THIS TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE EMBEDDED IN THEIR MINDS IS TO DISREGARD EVERYTHING WE KNOW ABOUT CHILD DEVELOPMENT, THE BRAIN, AND TRAUMA.”

**-DIANA SINOPOLI,
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
FOR MARRIAGE AND
FAMILY THERAPY**

One study found that, nationally, problems with the child welfare system cost taxpayers \$220 million every day due to special education, juvenile and adult crime, chronic health problems, and other costs across the lifespan of the family.

PROPOSAL

OFC should be required to notify all complainants of the D.C. Council's upcoming performance oversight hearings and their opportunity to testify regarding OFC's performance.



Parents deserve an opportunity to be heard to be able to protect their children and to prevent abuse and harm.