

**ALPHABET SOUP**

(Common Acronyms and Definitions)

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**ACNJ** – *Advocates for Children of New Jersey*: Non-profit organization advocating for legal rights of children ([www.acnj.org](http://www.acnj.org) OR [www.kidlaw.org](http://www.kidlaw.org))

**AREA OFFICE** – Department of Human Services (DHS) office that coordinates services to families in a geographic area; 15 area offices are aligned with NJ Judiciary vicinages (see below)

**ASFA** – *Adoption and Safe Families Act*: Federal legislation signed into law in 1997 that provides specific time limits for children living in out-of-home care ([www.kidlaw.org/main.asp?uri=1003&di=169.htm&dt=0&chi=1](http://www.kidlaw.org/main.asp?uri=1003&di=169.htm&dt=0&chi=1))

**CASA** – *Court-Appointed Special Advocate*: A volunteer appointed by the court to oversee the progress of a child's case; not yet available in every county ([www.nationalcasa.org](http://www.nationalcasa.org))

**CASE WORKER** – A DYFS staff person who works out of a district office and is responsible for bringing a child to a resource family home and managing the child's case

**CASEWORK SUPERVISOR** – A DYFS staff person who supervises a group of supervisors within a local office

**CCIS** – *Children's Crisis Intervention Services*: Available at different locations in each county, provide immediate care for children experiencing mental health crises

**CHILD WELFARE TRAINING ACADEMY** – Branch of DCF that provides training services to staff and volunteers, including resource families

**CPR BOARD** – *Child Placement Review Board*: A panel of court-appointed volunteers who periodically review the progress of a child's case and make recommendations to the judge ([www.njcpac.org](http://www.njcpac.org))

**CWLA** – *Child Welfare League of America*: Non-profit organization advocating nationally for children involved with the child welfare system; developed the PRIDE training curriculum ([www.cwla.org](http://www.cwla.org))

**DAG** – *Deputy Attorney General*: The attorney who represents the state

**DCBHS** – *Division of Child Behavioral Health Services*: New Jersey agency responsible for providing behavioral health services to children; sister agency to DYFS

**DCF** – The New Jersey *Department of Children and Families*: Department of which DYFS is a division ([www.state.nj.us/DCF](http://www.state.nj.us/DCF))

**DDD** – The New Jersey *Division of Developmental Disabilities*: State agency providing services to developmentally disabled children and adults

**DPCP** – *Division of Protection and Community Partnerships*: New Jersey agency responsible for family preservation services; sister agency to DYFS

**DYFS** – *Division of Youth and Family Services*: New Jersey agency responsible for child welfare services, including foster care ([www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dyfs/index.html](http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dyfs/index.html))

**FACILITATOR** – A DYFS worker responsible for finding homes for children who require out-of-home placement; this is the person who will call you to offer you a child for placement

**FAFS** – *Foster and Adoptive Family Services*: Statewide, non-profit agency dedicated to supporting resource adoptive families (800-222-0047 / [fafsonline.org](http://fafsonline.org))

**FIS** – *Family Intervention Services*: Third-party agency contracted by DYFS to provide support services to resource families including individual and family therapy and 24-hour crisis response; (<http://www.fisnj.org>)

**FPA** – *Foster Parent Association*

**IAIU** – *Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit*: Division of DYFS responsible for investigating reported instances of abuse in resource family homes and residential placement facilities

**IEP** – *Individual Education Plan*: Mandated service plan and record of milestones for children classified in a special education program

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**ICPC** – *Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children*: Statutory law in all 50 states (plus District of Columbia and US Virgin Islands) that establishes uniform legal and administrative procedures governing the interstate placement of children; used by DYFS as part of evaluation of homes in other states (<http://icpc.aphsa.org>)

**LAW GUARDIAN** – The attorney who represents a DYFS child; often sends an investigator to a resource family home to visit with and interview child and resource family

**LO** – *Local Office (formerly DO or District Office)*: local DYFS office that manages cases within a district (usually determined by county); this is where a caseworker's office is located

**LO MANAGER** – *Local Office Manager (formerly DO Manager)*: The highest ranking manager in a DYFS LO

**MICA** – *Mental Illness and Chemical Abuse* treatment programs

**MSW** – *Master of Social Work*: College-level degree achieved by many DYFS staff

**OAL** – *Office of Administrative Law*: NJ state office to which resource homes can appeal when they disagree with a decision made by DYFS (not a judge)

**OOL** – *Office of Licensing*: DCF office responsible for ensuring that resource family homes conform to safety and licensing standards (not part of DYFS)

**SHSP** – *Special Home Service Provider*: A special DYFS resource family home that is trained and equipped to care for children in foster care who have been classified as "medically fragile"; often pronounced "ship" home.

**The SHSP program was discontinued in 2011.**

**SPRU** – *DYFS Special Protective Response Unit*: DYFS staff (a caseworker and a supervisor) on call after normal business hours for emergency contact; resource parents can offer to be on the SPRU list for emergency placements (not mandatory)

**SUPERVISOR** – Supervises caseworkers and is also familiar with every case for every caseworker for whom they are responsible; acts as a backup for a caseworker

**TPR** – *Termination of Parental Rights*: Court-ordered discontinuation of a birth/legal parent's legal rights to a child; can be result of a TPR (guardianship) trial or voluntarily surrendered

**TSVP** – *Therapeutic Supervised Visitation Program*: A visitation program available from various providers in each county that includes therapy and parenting instruction; does not take place in a DYFS Local Office

**VICINAGE** – A geographic area of the New Jersey Judiciary; there are 15 vicinages in the state ([njcourtsonline.com](http://njcourtsonline.com))

**YAP** – *Youth Advocacy Program*: Non-profit organization that frequently provides DYFS with additional enrichment funding for resource families

**YCM** - *Youth Case Management*: component of DCBHS assigned to daily management of childrens' cases

**YCS** - *Youth Consultation Services*: Third-party agency contracted by DYFS to provide support services to resource families including individual and family therapy and 24-hour crisis response

**WIC** – Supplemental Nutrition for *Women Infants and Children*: A program administered by NJ Medicaid providing monthly coupons for staple foods (e.g., milk, formula, cheese) for children through age 5