

Options for Families with Children In Need of Services (CHINS)

Purpose

The CHINS program is designed to strengthen families in conflict without court involvement. Prior to any petition being filed with the court accordingly the law requires that there must be efforts demonstrating whether appropriate voluntary services have been attempted, the nature of services attempted, and the reason court compulsion is necessary.

CHINS

A Child In Need of Services (CHINS) is a child under the age of 18 who:

- is habitually, willfully, and without good and sufficient cause truant from school;
- habitually runs away from home;
- repeatedly disregards the reasonable and lawful commands of his or her parents, guardian, or custodian;
- places himself or herself or others in unsafe circumstances;
- has a diagnosis of severe emotional, cognitive, or other mental health issues who engages in aggressive, fire setting, or sexualized behaviors that pose a danger to the child or others; and

- is expressly found to be in need of care, guidance, counseling, discipline, supervision, treatment, or rehabilitation.

There are two ways to access CHINS services:

- 1) Voluntary Services
- 2) Court Ordered Services

STEPS TO GET HELP

Who Can Request Services

- The Parents/Guardian,
- Law Enforcement, or
- School staff

can request CHINS Voluntary Services by contacting

DCYF CENTRAL INTAKE

**1-800-894-5533 OR
603-271-6556.**



If a CHINS request for voluntary services is accepted, it will be forwarded to the district office nearest where the youth and family reside.

► Initial Intervention and Determination

A Juvenile Probation and Parole Officer will meet with the youth and family to engage them in a discussion to determine if the youth and family would benefit from, and agree to voluntary services.

DCYF's involvement is intended to assist the youth and family in identifying goals and exploring options to help the youth and family achieve those goals.



► Voluntary Service Plan/ CHINS Agreement

Once it is determined that CHINS voluntary services are appropriate, the parents, youth and DCYF will develop and sign a CHINS Voluntary Service Plan/Agreement.

The youth and his or her parents/guardians will meet with the Juvenile Probation and Parole Officer to determine what temporary services or rules can be put in place to build on the family's strengths and help alleviate the conditions that led to the behaviors.

The agreement will outline the services and expected participation that the youth and family agreed to. It will also outline the length of time services are available.



► Cost of Services

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services on behalf of DCYF is required to seek reimbursement from parents or other people chargeable

by law for the youth's support for the cost of services, placements, and programs provided.

For more information regarding Parental Reimbursement, you may request the *Frequently Asked Questions about Reimbursement* (Form 2138).



CHINS COURT PROCESS

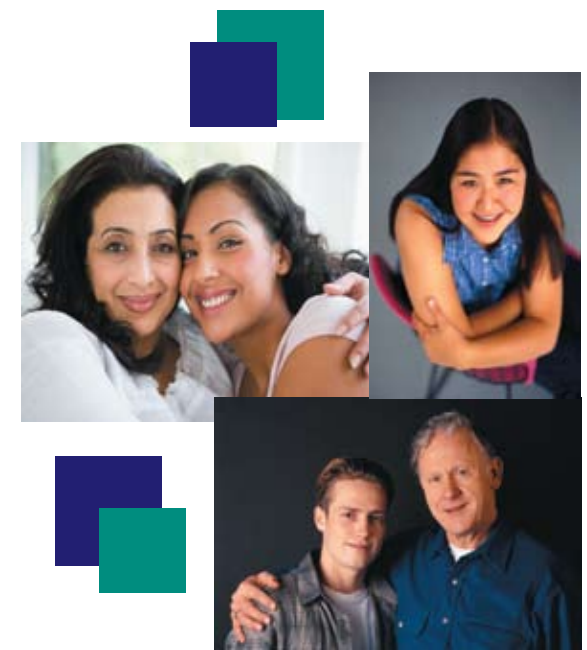
If at any time it is determined by DCYF that voluntary services are not appropriate, a CHINS petition may be filed with the court. A statement from DCYF that identifies why the voluntary services aren't appropriate will be necessary to initiate court action.

Form 2670

February 2014
PD 14-06

Children In Need of Services CHINS

To Preserve and Strengthen Families



**Division for Children,
Youth and Families**

**NH Department of Health
and Human Services**

www.dhhs.state.nh.us/djjs/probation/chins