

Onitsha Thompson's Bio

Hello, my name is Onitsha Thompson and I am your LA County Youth Development Services Ombudsman. I am here to assist you and make sure that you receive the services in which you are eligible.

I was placed in foster care at age 11 due to child neglect and remained in care until my 18th birthday. I know first-hand what it is like to be in foster care. I understand the obstacles that children and youth often face during their foster care experience. Sometimes, it can be a very difficult journey. However, I always remind myself that life is what you make it. Maybe you didn't have a choice about where you were going to be placed or other decisions involving your life when you were a child. But, you do have control of how you are going to respond to those experiences and what you choose to do with your future. You will make mistakes because that is just part of the process. The key question to ask yourself is, will you learn from them?

I began a career with the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services sixteen years ago. I started with the department as a clerk for the Adoption's Division. Currently, I am a Children Social Worker III serving as your YDS Ombudsman with the responsibility of handling complaints from foster and probation foster youth regarding service delivery. I also take the lead in organizing Celebration II, an event honoring the academic achievements of high school graduates of the foster care system. Additionally, I assist with recruiting youth participants for the Board of Supervisor's Resource and Job Fairs. In March of 2006, I was honored by Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich for serving as an important role model for the County's Foster Youth.

During my career with the County of Los Angeles, I earned an Associate of Arts degree in Interdisciplinary Studies from Los Angeles Southwest Community College. I transferred to Cal State Dominguez Hills where I earned a Bachelor's degree in Human Services and a Master's in Public Administration.

I am currently an Adult Supporter for the California Youth Connection (CYC). An organization that is ran by current and former foster youth. Youth who become members of CYC work to help improve the foster care system. I have used my experience to advocate for foster and probation foster youth. In November of 2008, I was honored for my dedication, continued contributions, and inspiration as an adult supporter and former member of CYC.

Although some say I have accomplished a lot in life. I still think the most important thing in life is family. I am married and we have a fifteen year old daughter. Perhaps, the one thing that I am most proud of is that although my husband and I did not have either of our parents growing up, our daughter does.