

## Governor names a DCF critic as child advocate

Jacqueline Rabe Thomas  
Thursday, August 1, 2013

Gov. Dannel P. Malloy named Sarah Healy Eagan on Thursday as the state's next child advocate, the watchdog agency that monitors the state departments responsible for protecting abused and neglected children.

It's a familiar role for Healy Eagan. During her tenure at the Center for Children's Advocacy she was one of the loudest critics of the state's Department of Children and Families.

"The agency often lacks basic data necessary to measure (foster) children's educational progress," she wrote in an opinion piece in the Hartford Courant.

A few weeks later the legislature passed a law that requires the state to better track students and report the educational progress of the 4,000 children in state custody.

Other issues she has been critical of the department include the overreliance of group homes for foster children, the lack of mental health screenings for infants and the services available for children that "age out" of foster care at age 18.

"She's been terrific. I'm really proud of all that she has accomplished," said Martha Stone, the leader of the center and who has also won several class-action lawsuits against the agency. "Our loss is the state's gain. She's a staunch advocate for children."

Healy Eagan was recommended to the Democratic governor by an advisory board after Jamey Bell announced her resignation in May.

"Sarah Eagan has extensive experience advocating for the needs of children, particularly those in our society who are most vulnerable and in need of a vocal proponent on their behalf," Malloy said in a statement.

Healy Eagan attended Trinity College and law school at the University of Connecticut. She will start at the Office of the Child Advocate Sept. 9.



<http://www.ctmirror.org/story/2013/08/01/governor-names-dcf-critic-child-advocate>