

If you need extra help to do better in school, the school may have to give you:

- Special education services
- Help you learn or improve your English
- A behavior intervention plan or other behavioral supports if you are getting into trouble a lot

If I don't withdraw, my school says I will be expelled. What should I do?

You do not have to withdraw just because the school threatens to expel you.

- Before they can expel you, the school must hold an expulsion hearing.
- You have the right to go to the hearing and fight the expulsion.
- You can bring a lawyer or advocate to help you.
- You can also negotiate with the school to seek a shorter expulsion or a specific alternative school placement that you think will be a good fit for you.
- You and your parent/guardian can decide if it is better to negotiate or to fight the expulsion, based on the facts of your case.

What if I already withdrew?

If you withdrew from school, the law gives you 10 school days to change your mind. After 10 school days, the school can wait up to 90 school days after the date you withdrew to let you back in. Always ask to get back in, because the school can let you come back sooner if they want to.

If you already withdrew and you think it was unfair, call one of the agencies on the back of this brochure. You may have the right to get back into school right away.

What is pushout?

You have the right to stay in school.

Who decides if I withdraw from school?

Who decides if I go to an alternative school? What are the pros and cons?



Where can I get help?

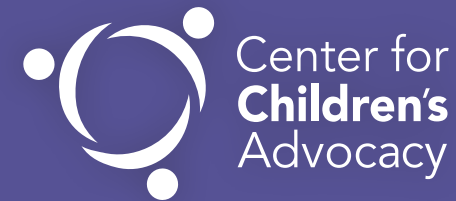
For information about your legal rights:

- Go to **speakupteens.org** and click on **Staying in School**
 - Go to **cca-ct.org** and click on **Legal Resources**
- **Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center** at **860-739-3089**

CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY

Hartford: 860-570-5327

Bridgeport: 203-335-0719



The information in this brochure is intended as reference only and should not be interpreted as legal advice in an individual case. If you need specific information about the law, please call us at 860-570-5327 or 203-335-0719.

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Pushout

Are you considering leaving school?

What is pushout?

Pushout happens when your school tries to make you withdraw. They may not tell you that:

- you have the right to stay in school
- you have the right to get extra help so you can do better in school

You have the right to stay in school if you:

- Are under 21
- Have not been expelled
- Do not have a high school diploma

EXCEPT:

- If you have a disability and need special education, you have the right to stay in school until the end of the school year when you turn 22.
- If you are expelled, you might still have a right to be in school if you:
 - Have a disability and need special education
 - Are under age 16
 - Are 16 or 17 and are expelled for the first or second time

The law says you can decide to withdraw from school if you:

- are 17 and your parent (or the “person having control of you”) agrees to enroll you in adult education
- are 18 or older

Who decides if I go to an alternative school?

Before considering an alternative school, no matter whose idea it is for you to transfer there, your school must review your records and consider if you need an evaluation for special

education. They must provide you with a detailed description of the alternative school program. They must make sure you and your family are fully informed and engaged in the decision. The decision must be made by a team that includes your family, you, someone from the alternative school, your teachers, a school administrator from your current school, the special education administrator (if you have a disability), and your PPT/504 team (if applicable). If you disagree with the decision, you can appeal.

What are the pros and cons of alternative schools?

Alternative schools may offer different things than regular school. Some alternative schools are in a separate building from the regular school. Some are in the same building, but you have to stay in special classrooms or in a specific area. Many offer fewer classes, services, and activities than regular school.

If you are considering requesting an alternative school transfer, visit first. Ask:

- What hours would I go to school?
- How many students are in each class?
- Can I still get extra help or special education if I need it?
- Can I take the same classes I take now?
- Can I join sports or band?
- When can I go back to my regular school?



What should I do if my school tells me that I have to go to Adult Education?

Your school cannot force you to withdraw and go to Adult Education or a GED program. However, if you are enrolling in school at age 19 and do not have enough credits to graduate by the time you turn 21, you may have to go to an alternative school. If you believe you are in this situation, make sure you know how many credits you have and what is needed to graduate.

If you are over 17 and expelled for the second time, the school can place you in Adult Education during your expulsion, but you do not have to withdraw or sign out to do this, and you can go back to your regular school once your expulsion is over.

Otherwise, you have the right to stay in school until you graduate or turn 21. If you have a disability and need special education, you have the right to go to school until you graduate or until the end of the school year when you turn 22.

If you are considering withdrawing to go to Adult Education, first ask for more help at your regular school. Adult Education usually does not offer extra help if you need it. If you miss too many days, you may lose your credits and have to start over the next year.

To find out about Adult Education, call the local office. Ask:

- What days would I have class?
- What hours would I go to school?
- How many students are in a class?
- If I need extra help, how would I get it?
- How many students graduate from your program?
- Can I visit the classroom to see what it's like?

Find the number for Adult Education on your local Board of Education website, the State Department of Education website (<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/services/adult-education/adult-education-programs-and-providers>) or ask at your school.

There are different kinds of Adult Education programs.

Some Adult Education programs are designed to prepare you for the GED test. The GED is a standardized test covering four subjects: Reasoning Through Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. Each subject test is taken separately.

Other Adult Education programs are designed to help you work towards a Credit Diploma or National External Diploma. These are alternative pathways to a diploma based on credits and performance assessments.

What if I'm failing and the school asks me to leave?

What if the school says they're going to withdraw me because I missed too much school?

You have the right to get help in school. Your school cannot force you to withdraw simply because you are failing or have missed a lot of school.

If the school asks you to leave because you are failing or have missed too much school, do this:

- Get your parent/guardian to write a letter to the school to ask for a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meeting to talk about extra help you need. Make sure the letter is dated and keep a copy. You can write this letter yourself if you are 18 or older.
- Get help for the PPT meeting from a lawyer or advocate.
- Go to the PPT meeting with your parent/guardian and tell the school what extra help you need.