

Department of Children and Family Services

Normalcy and Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard Handout

- 1) What does "Normalcy" mean?
 - Allowing a child in foster care to experience typical childhood activities.
 - Supporting a child in foster care in pursuing their interests and building dreams for their future.
- 2) What is a "Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard"?
 - Informing foster caretakers that they will have discretion regarding children in foster care for whom they are responsible which will allow children to engage in typical childhood activities to create more normalcy.
 - Advising caretakers that DCFS realizes that caretakers face decisions regarding children's care which require them to make judgments.
 - Recognizing caretakers who are reasonable and prudent will make decisions carefully, weighing the benefits and potential risks to come to a sensible decision that is in the best interests of the child.
 - Determining whether to allow a child to participate in age or developmentally-appropriate activities are have items that are generally accepted as suitable for children of the same chronological age or level of maturity based upon cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral capacities.
- 3) Why is the reasonable and prudent parent standard needed?
 - Informing caretakers that DCFS is attempting to reduce burdensome, policies, guidelines, rules or lengthy approval processes which restrict the activities of children in foster care. Simple activities such as having a sleepover with a friend or engaging in a sport at school may require approvals which make it difficult for these children to engage in otherwise normal activities in which their peers are involved. The fact these children are in foster care negates the possibility they will have a "normal" childhood. However, it is possible to create more "normalcy" for the children while they are in out-of-home care through a "reasonable and prudent parent standard".
- 4) What does this mean for a Caretaker of a child living in Foster Care?
 - More moral support from DCFS in decision making regarding the activities in which the caretaker is allowed to permit the child's involvement.
 - More information and support from DCFS in determining what is age and developmentally-appropriate for the child.
 - Support in working with the child's parents to partner in parenting the child in a way which allows for normalcy for the child while respecting the parent's residual rights.

By signing below, I certify that I have been trained or received training materials with regard to the provisions relative to the reasonable and prudent parent standard and age or developmentally appropriate activities or items.

Signature

Date

Printed or typed Name

Facility Name

License number

Facility Address