

STANDARDS FOR FOSTER HOMES

Key points to be reviewed with Substitute Caregivers

Whenever you are transferring responsibility for a child or youth to an alternate caregiver, make sure they are aware of:

➤ **Unacceptable Discipline**

MCFD does not permit the use of physical, emotional or psychological punishment for any child in care.

Unacceptable Discipline includes the deliberate use of physical acts (e.g. hitting, shaking, pinching, spanking, inappropriate containing or restraining), psychological acts (e.g. belittlement, rejection, emotional cruelty), or physical and emotional deprivation (e.g. withholding of food, isolation, ignoring for hours or days). Punishment, pain or humiliation will NOT stop a child's unacceptable behaviour. These methods of unacceptable discipline may seem effective at the time, but they do not help children internalize positive behaviours, and they damage the relationship between the child and their caregiver.

➤ **Who to contact in case of emergency, and how**

➤ **Responsibilities for documenting**

➤ **Standards for Foster Homes:**

A. Relating to Children and their Families

- Children and youth are assisted to understand their rights under the Child, Family and Community Service Act and the procedures for enforcing them.
- Children and their families are consulted and encouraged to express their views, according to their abilities, about significant decisions affecting them.
- Children are encouraged to express their concerns and any complaint is addressed seriously and without delay.

B. Safeguarding Children

- Children are protected from harm or the threat of harm from self or others.
- All information of significance to the safety and well-being of children is promptly reported to a social worker.
- Children live in a home where physical restraint is used only in order to protect the child or others from immediate physical harm.

C. Planning

- Each child or youth is entitled to have a written, individual comprehensive plan of care which has been developed in consultation with the caregiver, the child, and where possible, their parents.
- Children are encouraged and supported to maintain relationships with their families and others of significance to them in accordance with their comprehensive plan of care.
- Children receive assistance in making successful transitions to new living circumstances as identified in the caregiver's responsibilities under the comprehensive plan of care.

D. Caring for Children

- Children receive positive parenting.
- Children receive guidance and encouragement to maintain their cultural heritage and to participate in the religious activities of their choice.
- Children of aboriginal heritage have their unique cultural identity preserved.
- Children are encouraged to participate in appropriate and available leisure activities according to their abilities and interests.
- The education of children is actively promoted.
- The health of children is actively promoted.
- Children are provided with nutritious food.
- Children are assisted with making their own choices regarding their personal care.
- Children have reasonable privacy and possession of their personal belongings.

E. Environment of Care

- Children are provided with a safe and healthy home environment that meets their individual needs.
- Children receive care that promotes their safety and well-being.

F. Foster Home Administration

- Children receive appropriate child minding, overnight and relief care from individuals who have the maturity, knowledge, skills, and abilities to fulfill the responsibilities of looking after children.
- Children have accurate, individual, secure and confidential records of their relevant history and progress in the home.

Note: this list is only a summary. For more information: ***Standards for Foster Homes*** is available from your Resources Social Worker or on the *Forms and Publications* page at www.okfosterparents.ca , where you will also find:

- *FAQ on Assessing Relief*
- *Foster Family Handbook*
- *Foster Family Handbook p72-78 Relief Assessment*
- *Environment of Care Checklist*
- *MCFD Consent for Criminal Record Information*
- *MCFD Consent for Prior Contact Check*
- *CIC Info for Relief Caregiver*
- *FAQ on Relief*