

Applying the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard: GATHERING INFORMATION FROM PARENTS AND RELATIVES TO SUPPORT NORMALCY

Removal from one's home is a difficult and traumatic experience for a child. Normative experiences may assist with minimizing trauma and supporting the healthy development of the child. Gathering information early will allow for uninterrupted participation in the young person's daily activities and events. Below are questions a social worker or supervisor may ask parents, relatives, and children/youth to support continued, uninterrupted participation in normative experiences. Answers to these questions should be shared with the caregiver and child (if age and developmentally appropriate).

- (1) Is the child currently involved in any school or extracurricular activities? If yes, what are they and at what time (e.g., after school)? Is there a schedule? How does the child get to/from the activity? Does participation in the activity require out of county, state and/or country travel? What is the contact information for the person in charge?
- (2) Is there a cost associated with the activity? If so, what is the cost and how has it been paid?
- (3) What are the child's interests? For example, does the child have an interest in a particular sport, dance, music, etc.? How does the child express those interests?
- (4) What are the child's strengths? For example, does the child diligently complete their homework assignments; is the child willing to help others?
- (5) What are the child's needs? For example, does the child need reassurances when making decisions or need reminders to brush their teeth before bed?
- (6) Does the child attend religious services or is the child involved in any religious or spiritual activities? If so, where and when?
- (7) Are there any dietary restrictions for medical or religious reasons, or for personal preferences?
- (8) If age appropriate, what time would you like the child to go to bed?
- (9) How would you like the child's current hair cut or style be maintained?
- (10) Does the child have any social media accounts? If so, are there any restrictions placed on the child's use of those accounts? Do you require that the child provide their password so that the usage can be monitored?
- (11) Does the child use anyone else's social media accounts?
- (12) Is the child allowed to visit and/or stay overnight at a friend's house? If yes, which friends?
- (13) If age appropriate, is the child allowed to date? Does the child have a significant other? Is the child sexually active?
- (14) If age appropriate, does the child have a curfew? If so, what is it?
- (15) Does the child work a part-time job? If yes, where and at what time does their shift start and end? How does the child get to and from work?
- (16) Has the child's job affected their grades in school, or the ability to complete homework or other school assignments on time? Has working limited the child's ability to participate in after school activities or athletics? Are these activities important to the child?
- (17) If age appropriate, does the child have a driver's license? If yes, do you allow the child to drive?
- (18) If age and developmentally appropriate, is the child allowed to travel in a friend's car to/from school and/or activities?
- (19) If the youth is on probation, are there restrictions from any community locations? If yes, where and why?

Applying the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard: QUESTIONS FOR RESOURCE FAMILIES AND SOCIAL WORKERS TO CONSIDER

At the core of applying the reasonable and prudent parent standard is knowing the child and making decisions on an individual case-by-case basis, with active communication between the social worker, parents, caregivers, and child. Below are questions and considerations a caregiver may want to ask or explore prior to deciding whether a child should participate in certain activities.

- (1) Does this activity promote the child's cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and/or educational development?
- (2) How well do I know the child? Has the child only recently been placed in my care, or has the child been here for several months?
- (3) Has the child shown maturity in decision-making and exhibited responsible behavior that is appropriate for their age/ability?
- (4) Would I allow my own child to participate in this activity?
- (5) Who will be attending the activity?
- (6) If appropriate, who will be supervising the activity? Have I met the person? Do I have the person's contact information? Have I shared my contact information with the person supervising the activity and the child?
- (7) Does the child understand their medical needs and is the child able to tell others how to help or what to do if necessary?
- (8) Does the child know who to call and how to respond in case of an emergency?
- (9) Have I reviewed any medical or other history in considering whether the activity is in the child's best interests?
- (10) Do I have sufficient information about the child's medical / developmental / educational history to make decisions? If I need additional information, do I know where to obtain it?
- (11) Does the child have the necessary and appropriate safety equipment, such as a helmet, shin guards, etc.?
- (12) Will this activity violate a court order?
- (13) Would the activity violate the safety plan? If there is a safety plan, has it been shared with the child?
- (14) Will this activity violate any policy or licensing regulations?
- (15) Will the timing of this activity interfere with family time, a counseling appointment, or doctor's appointment? If so, how will you resolve the conflict?
- (16) Is there anything from this child's history that would indicate they may be triggered by this activity?
- (17) Does this child have any concerns about participating in this activity?
- (18) Does the child understand our parental expectations regarding curfew, seeking and receiving approval for last minute changes in the child's plans, and the consequences for not complying with the expectations?
- (19) Does the child understand that their participation in this activity is dependent on maintaining all other obligations, such as regular school attendance and completion of school assignments?
- (20) If able and appropriate, have I consulted with this child's parents about their thoughts and feelings about their child participating in this activity?