

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA)

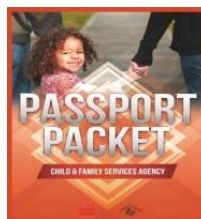


IMPORTANT FACTS FOR RESOURCE PARENTS

Welcome private agency and CFSA resource parents! Here are some important facts to help you on your journey as a caregiver for children in the District's child welfare system. Always feel free to contact your social worker or the support person at your agency.

Information in the child's Placement Passport Packet

- ◆ Age
- ◆ Gender
- ◆ Any behavioral or medical issues (and associated medications)
- ◆ Dietary requirements
- ◆ School or daycare information
- ◆ Transportation plan
- ◆ Visitation schedule with parents and siblings
- ◆ Brief history of placement history (if applicable)



The private agency or CFSA social worker will bring the Placement Passport Pack when the child arrives at your home. Sometimes information is incomplete. Additional information may be provided after placement.

Within the first week of a child being placed in your home

- ◆ Expect a "Welcome Call" from a foster parent support worker within 24 hours.
- ◆ In addition to a court hearing, a medical screening must occur prior to placement. You may be invited to come to the screening, which may be the first opportunity to meet the child.
- ◆ You may be invited to attend a Family Team Meeting (FTM) at which time, you may meet the birth parents as well.

- ◆ As a resource parent, you may also be invited to an “ice breaker” with the birth parent to learn more about the likes and dislikes of the child in the resource home. This meeting is an excellent opportunity for both sets of parents to discuss ways that work best for them to communicate and share information on behalf of the children.
- ◆ Visitation will occur between the child and his or her parents and siblings, unless it is determined not to be in the child’s best interest. Initially, visitation is often supervised by the social worker.

Within the first 30 days and 90 days of placement

- ◆ The child’s case plan must be finalized within the first 30 days. While the birth family, child, or youth should drive the case planning process, the resource parent is also a team member. You should be invited and should make every effort to participate.
- ◆ A comprehensive medical evaluation must take place within 30 days of the child’s initial entry into out-of-home care.
- ◆ After 90 days, a permanency hearing is held by the Family Court. Again, the resource parent should attend this and other court hearings to fully participate in the child’s path towards positive permanency (i.e., reunification with the family of origin, adoption, or legal guardianship). The permanency goal will be outlined in the initial case plan.



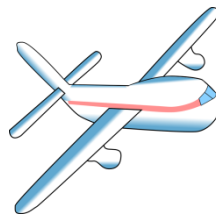
Consent Forms

- ◆ Resource parents should refer to CFSA’s online policy *Right to Sign a Consent or Waiver of Liability* for complete details.
- ◆ In general, appropriate consents include the following activities:
 - School-sponsored field trips
 - Participation in school sports
 - Girl Scout and Boy Scout camping over the weekend

- Faith-based activities that are for part of the day or overnight Local (less than 100 miles) school overnight trips (up to 2 nights)
- Community outings

Travel with Resource Parents

- ◆ Approval is required for trips outside of a 100-mile radius (see CFSA’s policy on *Travel with Resource Parents*).
- ◆ Resource parents are expected to utilize a *reasonable and prudent parenting standard* (i.e., careful but sensible decision-making) when determining travel for a child in foster care.



For more details on the reasonable and prudent parenting standard, please see page 7 of this booklet.

Temporary supervision of children

- ◆ Pursuant to District law, resource parents and social workers should discuss the substitute care of each child in the home when the resource parent is absent on a regular basis (29 DCMR § 6002.1k). Please refer to CFSA’s online policy, [Supervision of Children](#).

Overnights

- ◆ An overnight stay at a friend’s house is generally considered a normal extracurricular activity that is developmentally appropriate for most children based on their cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral capacities.
- ◆ Just as a biological parent gives approval for a child to participate in such an activity, a resource parent is empowered to give a child in out-of-home care approval prior to participating in an overnight stay. For specific guidelines, please refer to CFSA’s online policy, *Overnight Stays*.

Please contact your assigned social worker or the support person at your agency if...

- ◆ You have not received a Placement Passport Packet, or there is insufficient information included, or you have any questions about the information that is included.
- ◆ The child arrives without proper clothing or necessary medications.
- ◆ There are questions regarding shared parenting, meetings, or visitation with the birth parent.
- ◆ More information is needed on court dates and attendance.
- ◆ There are concerns that the placement is not a good match for you or members of your household.
- ◆ You have questions regarding the child's trauma and behavior.
- ◆ You are interested in respite care.



What you should do if...

- ◆ You want information on services for a teenager in your care.
Please contact the Office of Youth Empowerment at 202-727-7500.
- ◆ You need access to a supplemental nutrition program.
Mothers and fathers, legal guardians, and foster parents can enroll children ages 0-5 years into the District's Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program. Please contact your social worker or telephone 202-986-2200
- ◆ You have questions on education or well-being for the child your care.
Please contact CFSA's Office of Well Being at 202-727-2269.
- ◆ You have questions on medical, dental, or other health issues.
Please contact CFSA's Health Services Administration 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 202-498-8456.
- ◆ You are unable to reach the social worker.
CFSA and private staff is required to return phone calls within 24 hours or the next business day. If you have difficulty contacting your assigned social worker, please contact the social worker's supervisor.

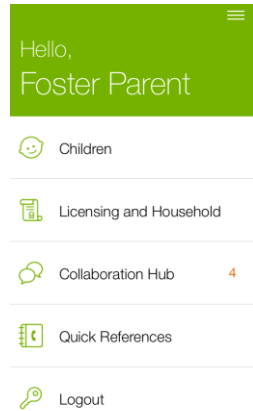
What you should do if...

- ◆ You are unable to reach the social worker (continued).
Information for the chain of command is left on each social worker's voice mail. If you are unable to reach the social worker, then contact the assigned CFSA foster parent support worker, or the private agency equivalent. The contact information for all of these parties should be provided when the social worker first meets with you.
- ◆ The child's behavior is threatening to self or others.
For any behavioral crisis, contact the Children and Adolescent Mobile Crisis Services (ChAMPS) at 202-481-1450. For ongoing concerns, contact your social worker to refer for permanent services.
- ◆ The child misses curfew or runs away.
During business hours, contact police and file a missing persons report, and then contact your social worker or the Hotline at 202-671-7233. After hours, call the Hotline to provide the police report details.
- ◆ You need assistance with day care.
It is best to anticipate day care needs with the placement worker prior to placement but if needs arise after placement, please contact the foster parent support worker.
- ◆ The monthly subsidy check does not arrive.
Immediately contact your foster parent support worker or equivalent.
- ◆ You need assistance to talk through a tough situation after business hours (5 pm – 1 am) or on the weekend/holidays (9 am – 1am).
Contact the Stabilization Support Line at 202-800-3040.



As a resource parent, am I responsible for...

- ◆ Enrolling the child in school?
In general, the social worker completes the school enrollment packet. Contact the social worker if you have questions.
- ◆ Making and keeping medical, dental, or therapy appointments?
Ongoing appointments will initially be made by the social worker. After placement, resource parents are expected to make such appointments and provide transportation for the children living in their resource home.
- ◆ Ensuring visitation between the child and his or her parents and siblings?
Resource parents are expected to do what they can to ensure visitation occurs as best as practical.
- ◆ Informing the social worker about travel or vacation plans?
Please notify the social worker about any travel. Policy requires that travel outside of 100 miles be approved.



Resource Parent APP

Resource parents often need to receive critical information quickly and efficiently. As a result, a “mobile application” was introduced in 2015 to make sure important information is as readily available as the touch of your phone. The “parent app” features the following identifying information on the child:

- ◆ Case information
- ◆ Visitation plans
- ◆ Medical information (with privacy settings)
- ◆ Alerts to court appointment dates
- ◆ Identification proving their foster parent status

(Resource parents can download the application on either Android or iPhone systems.)

Reasonable and Prudent Parenting (RPP)

RPP standards require resource parents and congregate care staff to exercise a careful but sensible decision-making process that incorporates the following considerations:

1. Adequate information about the child so that an informed decision can be made, e.g., the child's case plan or court orders
2. The child's best interest (based on the child, resource parent, and biological parent's mutual understanding of the child's needs)
Note: To the extent appropriate and practicable, the child's biological parent should be included in the decision-making process.
3. The child's age, maturity, and developmental level, including mental and physical health, and any developmental challenges
4. The child's behavioral history and any associated concerns that might impact the child or others while participating in the activity (e.g., risk of abscondence or challenges to behavioral management)
5. Any potential risk to the child when participating in the proposed activity (e.g., safety of the activity's location, timing of the activity, and appropriate supervision)
6. Age-appropriateness of the activity, including whether the activity is extracurricular, enrichment-focused, or social
7. Whether or not the activity promotes normalcy, i.e., the child should experience activities similar to those of his and her peers
8. The resource parent's capacity to provide a nurturing and family-like setting that fosters the child's emotional and developmental growth





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