

A Coming of Age  
Foster Family Agency  
Discipline Policy and Procedures

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## Disciplinary Policy and Procedures

It is the policy of the Agency to regard disciplinary procedures within the context of a learning process. Children are expected to benefit positively by the use of judiciously applied disciplinary measures. If a pattern of inappropriate or unacceptable behavior continues and it is evident a child has not benefited from measures intended to deal with a specific class of problem behaviors, then it is the procedures and methods employed, which are, suspect and in need of review, not the child. However, there is a limit to which disciplinary measures may be applied. If, after review and evaluation, disciplinary measures prove ineffective and a child continues to exhibit out-of control or dangerous behavior continued misbehavior, or a disregard for the rights or property of others, then, after appropriate review the child may be transferred to another setting.

Certified parents, under the social worker's supervision, are responsible for implementation of on-going disciplinary practices. Every effort is made to reinforce appropriate and acceptable behavior through praise, privileges and rewards. Inappropriate and unacceptable behavior is corrected by teaching alternative behaviors and when necessary, by removing privileges or instituting disciplinary measures. Ridicule or physical violence by any certified parent is unacceptable and, in the case of physical violence, will constitute grounds for de-certification. Similarly, no acts of physical abuse or violence perpetrated by foster children upon certified foster family members or others are permitted.

Instances of disciplinary action should usually be carried out immediately upon observation or upon evidence of occurrence. In every instance of discipline, children will be informed as to the reasons for the disciplinary action. Arbitrary discipline in any form is unacceptable. Corporal punishment is strictly forbidden. All discipline should be fair and relative to the severity of the misbehavior or problem behavior.

Acceptable forms of discipline include, but may not be limited to:

- a. Writing an essay relevant to the misbehavior
- b. Doing extra "chores" for willful or irresponsible property damage, destruction or theft
- c. "Time-out" (exclusion in an unlocked living, sleeping or play area for a specified time period, usually one minute of time-out for each year of age)
- d. Removal of privileges for a specified period of time
- e. Prohibition of use of telephone, except to send/receive calls to/from social workers, placing agency workers, Community Care Licensing, or family members.
- f. The performance of additional duties related to training needs identified in the child's needs and services plan.

These consequences will be used when the child is defiant and willfully breaks the rules. The child(ren) will be given several attempts to change his/her behavior prior to using some form of discipline, however upon the decision to discipline the child for his/her actions, an explanation will be given to the child which describes the reasoning as to why the discipline is being used.

When some form of discipline is used towards the child, the foster parent will document the behaviors that the child was displaying prior to the disciplinary intervention being used, on an incident report form. This

will have been provided to the certified parent as part of the paperwork originally provided at the time of placement. The certified parent will then provide a copy of this documentation to the assigned agency social worker that will in turn provide a copy to the County social worker. The County worker assigned to the case will be requested to sign the report and fax a copy back to the Agency as an acknowledgment of receipt of the report. This will then be maintained in the client's case file.

It is the policy of A Coming of Age Foster Family Agency that upon a child being accepted into the Agency for placement, all parties will meet to review, ask further clarification of and sign the Agency paperwork. The minor is included in this process to insure that he or she understands their rights, prior to signing anything. It is the Agency's policy to inform all minors (if age appropriate) of the discipline policies and request that they sign the discipline policy paperwork only after they understand the policies as it pertains to them. Upon signing such documentation the paperwork is then maintained in their case records. Should anyone need further clarification as to what paperwork is reviewed upon admissions to the Agency, the reader is requested to review Section 23 (Admission/Intake).

I have read and understand and have had explained to me any question I had regarding the above procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_

Child

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Representative

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

I have explained the above policies and have answered any questions asked me regarding these procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_

Intake Worker

\_\_\_\_\_

Date