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Director

*Establishing Normalcy for Children and
Youth and Foster Care*

Reasonable and Prudent
Parenting Standard
and
Youth Rights Training



NORMALCY
in Foster Care

ADD PRESENTER NAME,
TITLE, AGENCY INFO

AGENDA

Federal & State
Laws

Reasonable &
Prudent Parenting
Standards

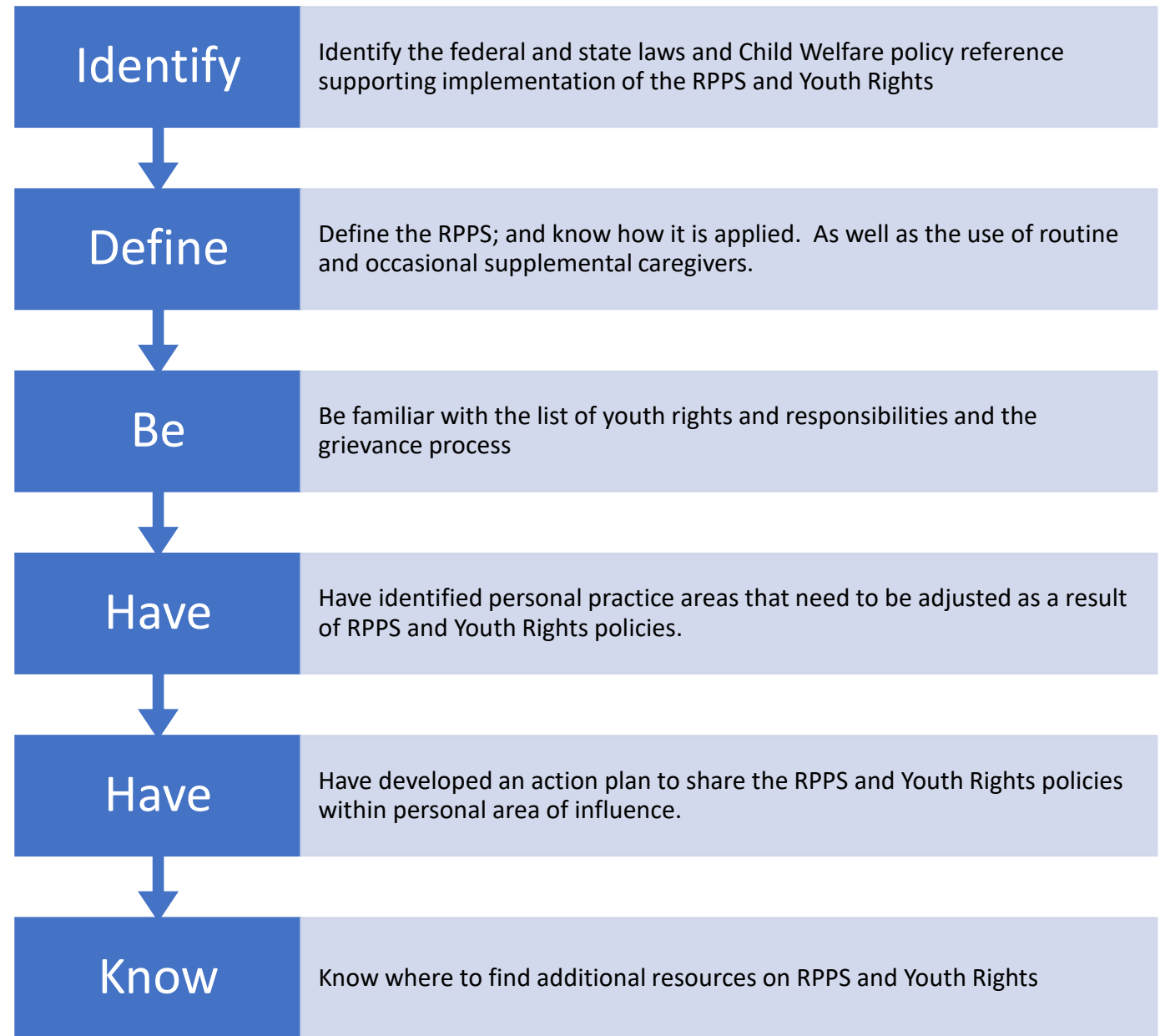
- What It Covers
- Non-Negotiables

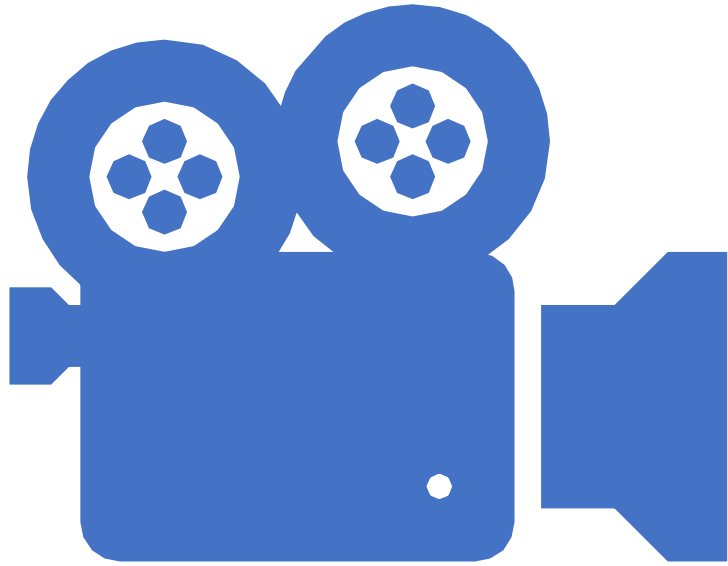
Youth Rights

- Responsibilities
- Grievance Process

Personal Action
Plan

Learning Objectives



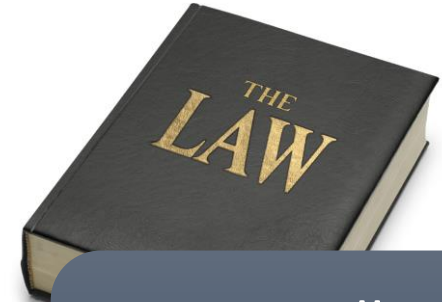


Click [here](#) to
play RPPS video!

Federal & State Laws



Preventing Sex
Trafficking and
Strengthening
Families Act
(2014)



Senate Bill 138
Georgia's Child
Welfare Reform
Bill
(2015)

A large, diverse group of children and youth of various ethnicities and ages are smiling and giving thumbs up. They are densely packed together, creating a sense of a happy, supportive community. The background is white, making the subjects stand out.

The Goal: *Normalcy*

- Participate in routine activities
- Continued focus on permanency
- Applies to all
 - Children and youth in foster care
 - Placement settings

Normalcy:

Why Does It Matter?

The Youth...

- Learns their interests and talents
- Safely experiments
- Practices decision-making
- Develops healthy peer relationships
- Develops a different relationship with adults; views them as “life guides” instead of “wardens”.

The Caregiver...

- Learns the youth’s strengths and needs
- Develops more trust and confidence in the youth as well their own parenting abilities.
- Is relieved of some care pressures as the youth becomes from independent.



1st Priority : Safety



**ONE SIZE
DOES NOT
FIT ALL**

NORMALCY

in Foster Care

- Empowering foster caregiver to make routine, typical parenting decisions without having to go through administrative approvals.
- Eliminating barriers to youth participating in extracurricular, social enrichment, cultural and social activities
- Ensuring that the child welfare system keeps safety paramount while not unnecessarily sacrificing normalcy for children and youth.



Let's discuss...

What are some characteristics
of a Reasonable and Prudent
Person?





Reasonable and Prudent Person

a fictional person who exercises the standard of care that a reasonable prudent person would observe under a given set of circumstances.

Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard—

the standard characterized by **careful and sensible** parental decisions

that **maintain the health, safety, and best interests of a child** while at the

same time **encouraging the emotional and developmental** growth of the

child, that a caregiver shall use when determining whether to allow a

child in foster care under the responsibility of the State to participate in

extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities.



Reasonable and Prudent Parent

The reasonable and prudent parent exercises average care, skill, and judgment in their parenting decisions and conduct.



How to Make a RPP Decision

A reasonable and prudent parenting decision requires that a caregiver consider the factors unique to each child such as age, ability, maturity, history, in-put from case managers and service providers, parenting experience, length of time of placement , past behaviors, known pre-cautions and any other relevant factors that would yield a reasonable and prudent decision.



★ KNOW ★
— YOUR —
RIGHTS

Caregivers' Right to
Be Informed...



Responsibilities of the DFCS/CPA/CCIs

We are responsible for making sure that:

- Child information is shared with caregivers.
- Child-caregivers are well-matched.
- Caregivers are well trained to meet the needs of children placed.
- The agency/Department may not create rules, standards or policies which limit, prevent or create barriers to caregivers making reasonable and prudent parenting decisions within the boundaries discussed.
- Each child in care has ongoing opportunities to engage in age and developmentally appropriate activities.

Result:

- Normalizes children's lives to the extent possible
- Improves the satisfaction and retention of caregivers
- Positive impact on placement stability



Family Foster/Adoptive Caregivers (DFCS/CPA's)



Relative Caregivers



Group Homes (CCI's)



Group Homes (CC/s)

Group homes must have at least one RPP designee but it is recommended that at least two are designated to ensure that decisions are not delayed to due the RPP's absence. The designated RPP must meet the following requirements:

1. Be in the role of Human Services Professional or higher leadership position.
2. Must be at least 25 years of age or 10 years older than the youth.

RPPS applies to:

- Day to Day and routine/typical caregiver decisions
- Permission to participate in age and developmentally appropriate school, extracurricular, sports, social/cultural enrichment, field trips and similar activities





Caregiver's must keep notes to share during regularly scheduled case manager contacts.

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a yellow cardigan, is sitting on the floor and helping a young child with curly brown hair, wearing a purple shirt, draw on a piece of paper. The child is holding a black marker and is focused on their drawing. The woman is holding a pink pencil and is looking at the child's work. In the background, other children are visible, some standing and some sitting on the floor. There are wooden blocks and other toys scattered around. The scene is set in a classroom or playroom with a blue and white striped rug.

Use of Substitute Caregivers and RPPS

How does this apply and what must be done?



Substitute Caregivers must be...

- Prepared and able to meet the needs of child
- Screened and approved by the case manager (routine)
- 18 years old



Types of Substitute Caregivers



Let's stop here for a moment...

Use of Substitute Caregivers should not be confused with overnight paid respite care.

Overnight paid respite may only be provided by an approved foster parent.

In addition, DFCS/CPA Staff are encouraged to assess the frequency of use and need for Substitute Caregivers to determine whether the caregiver is becoming overwhelmed in their role.



What's your responsibility as a Foster/Adoptive or Relative Caregiver?

Choose substitute caregivers who are capable of meeting the parental and special needs of the children in their care

Ensure the substitute caregiver knows and will follow DFCS' supervision guidelines



**Any
Questions?**

o?

How?

WHAT?

WHERE?

WHY?

?

Graduated Independence Plan is recommended but no longer required!

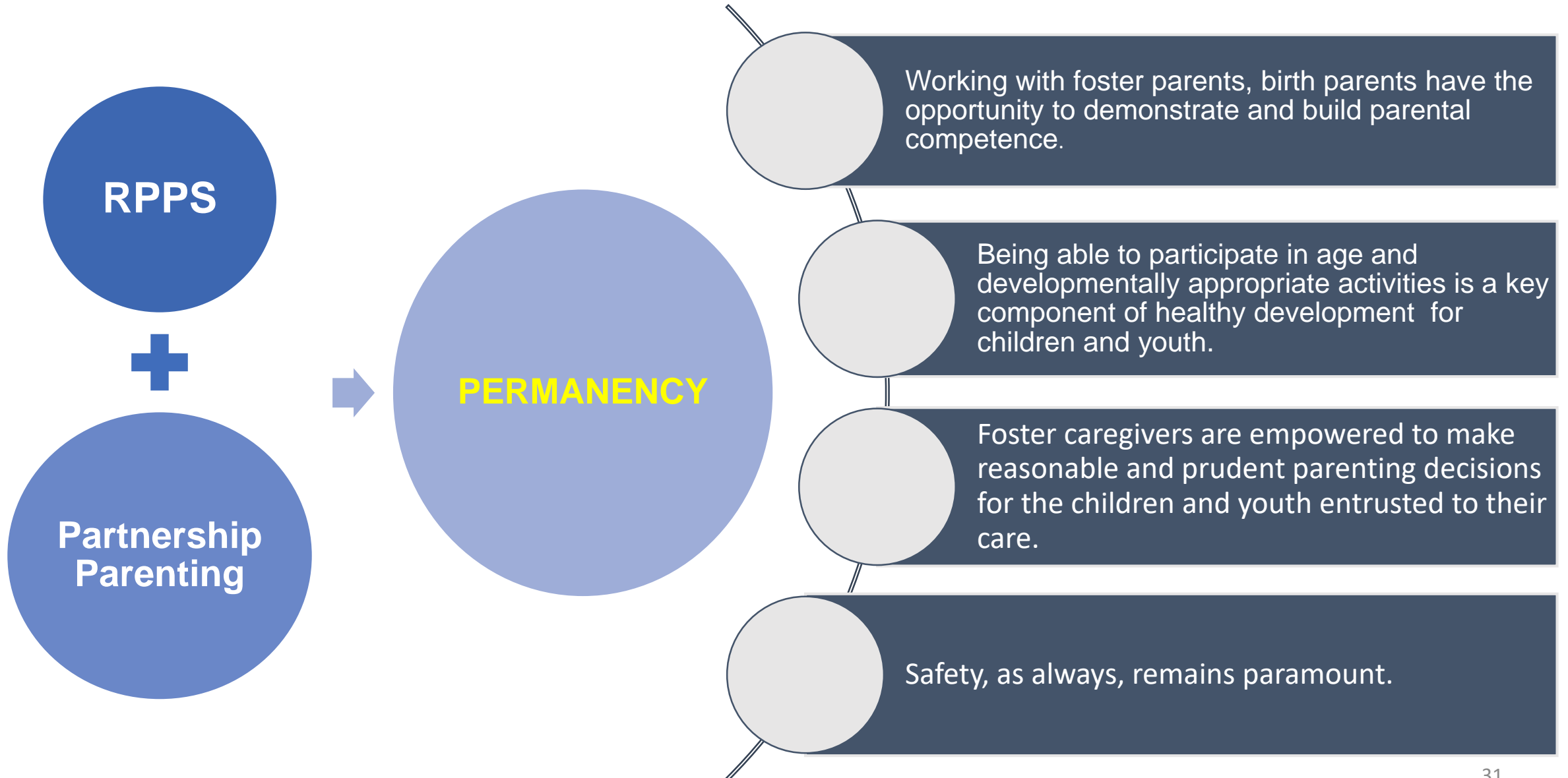
Unsupervised Youth..



Require DFCS approval or both DFCS and Juvenile Court

- Court Order Visitation
- Medical Approvals-other
- Return child without court approval
- Discipline Policy
- Changing Schools
- ILP
- Drastic change of child's appearance
- Medications
- Changing the Religion
- Court order-general
- Sibling Visits





Civil Liability Immunity



LIABILITY





ACCOUNTABILITY

Training Recap

- Implementation of RPPS and YR is required by federal and state law.
- The policies are effective 10/1/2015.
- RPPS applies to all foster caregivers and all placement settings; groups homes are not exempt.
- Each CCI must designate an acceptable staff person to be their RPPS.
- RPPS applies to routine and typical parenting duties but there are areas or non-negotiables where it does not apply.
- RPPS and Partnership Parenting are complementary objectives.
- RPPS supports the healthy growth and development of children and youth.
- Includes civil liability protection; and protection from PVs and CPS substantiations.
- DFCS/CPAs/CCIs are accountable.





Youth Rights and Responsibilities

Law and Policy

- Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (2014)
- Senate Bill 138
- Georgia's Child Welfare Reform Bill (2015)
- Child Welfare Policy 13.17



1. The right to fair and equitable treatment by the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS), foster parents, and other partners in the care of children in foster care;
2. The right to information regarding their heritage and cultural background;
3. The right to be safe from abuse, neglect and exploitation;
4. The right to know why they are in the child welfare system;
5. The right to have their educational needs met;
6. The right to have their health needs met;
7. The right to family and community connections, including visitation, telephone calls, etc. ;



youth
rights

8. The right to have regular, ongoing opportunities to engage in age or developmentally appropriate activities as defined in O.C.G.A. Section 49-5-3;
9. The right to have intensive, ongoing efforts made to reunify them with their birth family (i.e. parents or relatives) or to secure a safe, permanent home;
10. The right to participate in the development of the case plan and to review, sign, and receive a copy of the case plan (see 10.23 Foster Care: Case Planning); One member of the case planning team may be designated to be the youth's advisor/advocate, with respect to the application of the reasonable and prudent parent standard to the youth;
11. The right to choose up to two members of the case planning team who are neither their foster parent nor caseworker ;



youth
rights

12. The right to participate in Juvenile court proceedings regarding their family;
13. The right to receive the services needed to help them transition to adulthood;
14. The right to receive a free copy of their consumer credit report (see 13.6 ILP: Credit Reports for Youth in Foster Care);
15. The right to receive an official or certified United States birth certificate, Social Security card, driver's license or identification card, health insurance information, and medical records upon exiting foster care at age 18 or above ; and
16. The right to receive an age appropriate description of their rights, and a personal copy.
17. The right to have a personal advocate to support them through the grievance process.



youth
rights

A photograph of a person's hands holding a white rectangular sign. The sign has the word "QUESTIONS?" written on it in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font. The person is wearing a dark blue jacket over a light-colored shirt. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

QUESTIONS?

Youth Grievance Process



Step Three

Division Director Final Decision

Division Director will have 15 days to make a decision



Step Two

ILS Provides Resolution

If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved within 10 business days from the date the complaint is received by the ILS, submit a written complaint to the DFCS Division Director along with a copy of the original complaint filed with the ILS, the written response, and any other pertinent documentation to...

NOTE: If the Step Two Grievance is not filed within 10 business days of the response from the Step One Grievance, the grievance is considered closed.



Step One

Youth submit an electronic complaint to ILS (via ILP website)

Submit a written complaint electronically to the Independent Living Specialist (ILS) explaining which of their rights they feel have been violated and how. The ILS, in consultation with the local DFCS County Director and Region Director, will investigate the complaint and issue a written response to the youth within 10 business days. Email address is needed.

ILP has 10 days to send a written response to youth regarding the complaint with input from county/region

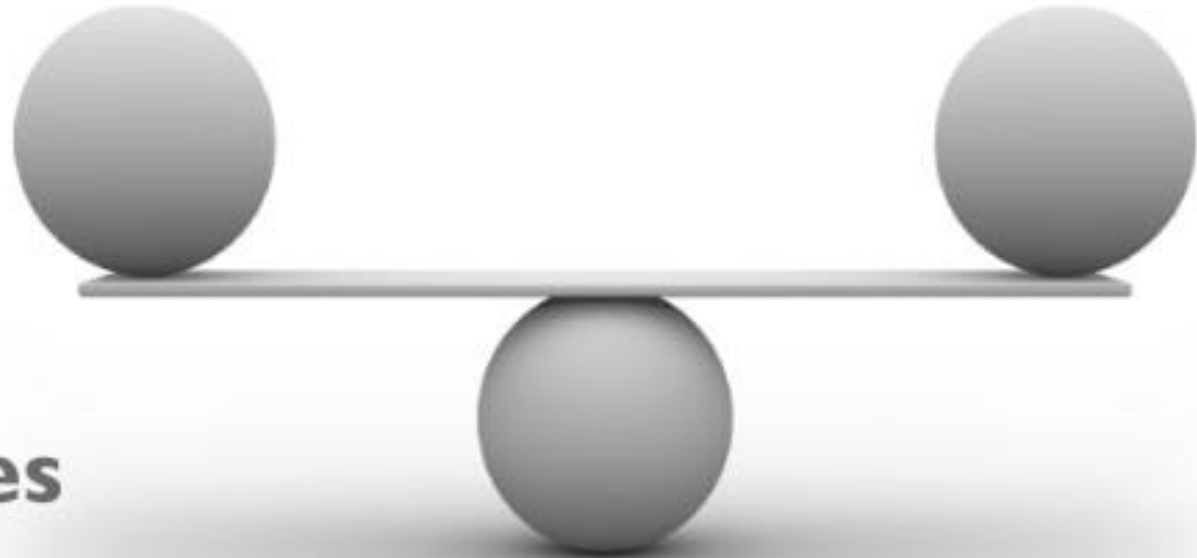
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QUESTIONS?

What is the difference between a Right, a Responsibility and a Privilege?



Rights and Responsibilities



Here's the difference...

- A **right** is a freedom that is protected, such as the right to free speech and religion or in this case Youth in Foster Care Rights.
- A **responsibility** is a duty or something you should do, such as recycling or doing your homework.
- A **privilege** is a special entitlement that is time-limited, not guaranteed and can be taken away. It is generally a reward or condition for good behavior.



Youth Responsibilities

1. The responsibility to treat themselves and others with dignity and respect;
2. The responsibility for their own choices, decisions, actions and behaviors;
3. The responsibility to try to learn from their mistakes so they can make positive choices in their lives;
4. The responsibility to try to the best of their ability in school, to take full advantage of educational opportunities and achieve their educational needs;
5. The responsibility to cooperate with services recommended to meet their health needs;



Youth Responsibilities

6. The responsibility to set and keep safe boundaries with family members, friends, acquaintances, and others with whom they maintain connections;
7. The responsibility to do their best to communicate openly with others when they have a problem;
8. The responsibility to ask for help when they need it, even when they have trouble asking for help; and
9. The responsibility to make amends if their actions harm others.
10. The responsibility to make every effort not to cause harm to themselves or others and to speak up when they feel their rights have been violated.

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QUESTIONS?



PARADIGM SHIFT



Paradigm Shift # 1:

Ensuring safety must remain a priority however it must be considered in an age- and developmentally-appropriate context.

Paradigm Shift # 2:

Caregivers will be empowered to make reasonable and prudent parenting decisions rather than navigating through multiple levels of permission, authorizations to do the things that most parents routinely allow their children to do.

Change Action Plan



Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard Activity

RED - Non-negotiables

YELLOW – this is a gray area; a decision that should be discussed in advance with the agency/Department

GREEN - Falls within the RPPS



Scenarios

RED—RPPS DOES NOT APPLY

GREEN—RPPS APPLIES

YELLOW—CONSULT AGENCY (GRAY AREA)

A foster caregiver would like to get a babysitter so she can attend a local concert. She has two children ages 6 and 4 placed in her care.

A 16-year old in ACME CCI would like to attend a 2-night ski trip with his church group.

A relative caregiver would like to take her kin placement to Disney for 4 nights.

A 15 year old would like to make a long distant phone call to her aunt; the foster parent does not allow long distance calls (no cell phone-land line).

The foster parents go on a getaway weekend and leave their two foster children ages 13 and 9 with the foster parent's parents.

A 17 year old wants to get a job.

A 16 year wants to get on birth control. The foster parent agrees, the birth mom does not.

A foster parent asks her 18 year old foster daughter to babysit two other foster children is very capable of providing the care.

ACME group home requires that youth be closely supervised at all times; they routinely deny requests to do age appropriate activities including going to the mall or school games.

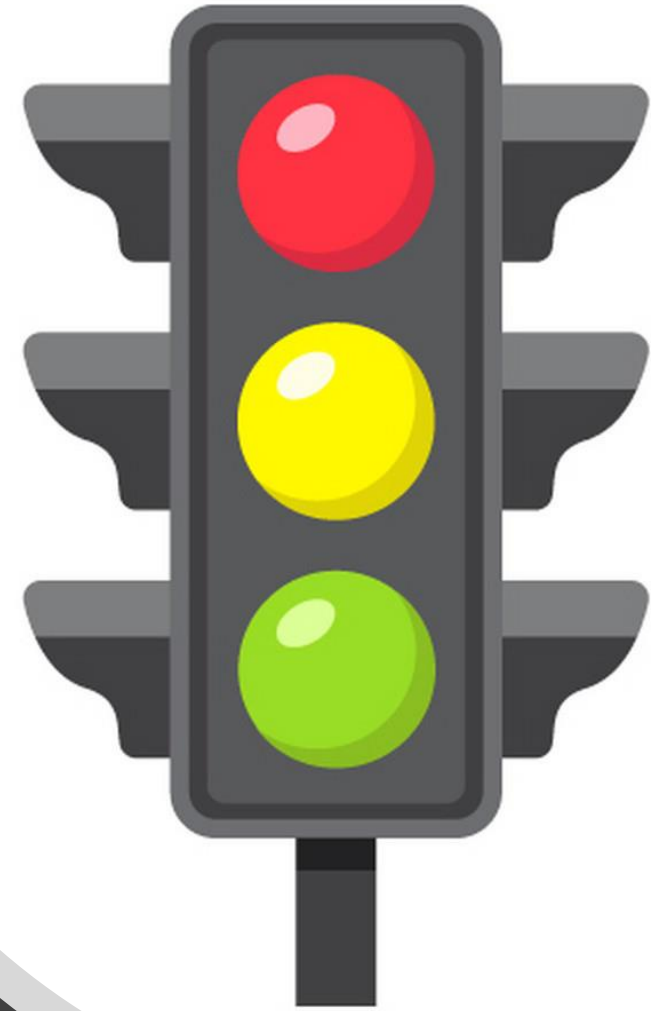
A foster parent is a holistic healer of sorts. She does not believe in western medicine for herself or her children. She decides not to follow a doctor's medical orders for a foster child in her care.

Youth Rights and Responsibilities Activity

RED – Rights Violation

YELLOW - this is a gray area; a decision that should be discussed in advance with the agency/Department

GREEN - Violation



Scenarios

RED—Rights Violation

GREEN—No Violation

YELLOW—CONSULT AGENCY (GRAY AREA)

A 16 year old wants to call his mother daily; he is placed at ACME CCI. ACME only allows calls every other day.

A 9-year Terry wants to know why he is in foster care; no one is comfortable explaining the dire circumstances that he was discovered in.

A 17 year old placed with his grandmother complains that he does not receive an allowance.

A 15 year old is behind in school. He needs tutoring which has been set up for him at least three times and each time, he has failed to follow through. His caseworker has placed this at the bottom of her list—and another year has passed.

A 14 year old is placed in a foster home along with two older youth. He feels bullied by the other youth.

A 15 year old complains of not being allowed to go to the mall to hang out with friends. The foster caregiver will not allow such activities if school work is not done timely.

ACME CCI requires all youth to be in bed by 9pm.

If you have any questions please refer to the Child Welfare Policy on RPPS (14.26); Supplemental Supervision (14.18); and Youth Rights (13.7) as well as reviewing the information posted on www.gascore.com - *(From the home page click on the RPPS/YR button)*

If you would like to add questions to the FAQ, please email the Caregiver Recruitment and Retention Unit at CRRU@dhs.ga.gov.

The updated FAQ is available on www.fostergeorgia.com and www.gascore.com.

