**Deprescribing Psychotropic Medication Information for Foster Parents**

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| **What is Deprescribing?**  An opportunity to evaluate each medication your child takes to help you and your provider understand why they take it, and the risks and benefits from taking it. The goal is to take the minimum amount of medication necessary to keep your child healthy. | |
| **Why Deprescribe?**   * Many foster children have difficult traumatic backgrounds, which can lead to behavioral problems and the need to use medications. However, when a foster child(ren) is in a stable environment and receives therapy, many of their behaviors may improve and they may not need to take as many medications * Many children take more medications than is necessary. * The younger the child is, the less is known about how medicines effect their body. * Your child may have side effects from medicines. | |
| **What are psychotropic medications?**  These medications are used to treat mental health conditions such as depression, ADHD, and anxiety, and are used to help manage mood, anger, attention, or insomnia. It is especially important to monitor and consider these medications for deprescribing. | **Some Examples:**  Antipsychotics (risperidone, aripiprazole)  Mood Stabilizers (Depakote, lithium)  Antidepressants/Anti-anxiety (fluoxetine, sertraline)  Stimulants (methylphenidate, amphetamines)  Alpha-agonists (clonidine, guanfacine) |

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| **What Can You Do?** | |
|  | **Talk to your child’s healthcare provider.**   * Ask them about your child’s medications and whether deprescribing might be helpful. * Discuss how your child feels about taking medications and about any good or bad effects they are having. * Obtain as much history as you can with the help of your child’s social worker on past mental health diagnoses and treatment. |
|  | **Keep track of each of your child’s medications.**   * Why is he/she taking this medicine? * What are potential risks or side effects? * How long have they been taking the medication? * Is the medication still needed? |
|  | **Make sure your child takes their medicines as prescribed.**   * Never start, stop, or change your child’s medications without talking to their provider. Making any change could cause other health problems. * Do not allow your child’s medications to be shared with others. |

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|  | **What Steps to Take with Your Child’s Provider** |
| You could consider deprescribing if: | * You feel your child is on too many medications or have taken them for a long time. * Your child is under six years old. * There is less stress in your child’s life now, for example maybe the child is doing better in a safe, secure home. * Things have improved for your child with therapy. * The medications do not seem to help, or make your child feel worse. * There is a change in your child’s health. |
| Medication review: | Talk about each of your child’s medications:   * Who prescribed it? * When was it prescribed? * Why was it prescribed? * What is the expected benefit and what are the risks? * How does it help? * What side effects is your child having? |
| Making a decision: | Decide if there are medications to decrease or discontinue, and if so, which should be stopped first. |
| Follow up: | * You and your child’s provider will have a plan for gradually stopping the medication and what to watch for if there are problems. * Continue therapy to address mood or behavior problems. * Keep your child active with exercise and activities that can help them stay healthy. |