

## FOSTER, ADOPTIVE AND RESPITE HOME DISCIPLINE POLICY

Discipline is an essential part of caring for children. The goal and purpose of discipline is to teach a child acceptable behaviors and to replace negative behaviors with positive behaviors. Through positive discipline, children should be assisted in developing the awareness and ability to control their own behavior, assume responsibilities, and make daily living decisions. In providing discipline, it is equally important to encourage positive, desirable behaviors, as it is to correct or provide consequences for unacceptable behaviors.

A foster, adoptive, and respite home parent(s) should recognize that most children in out-of-home care have been abused, neglected, emotionally maltreated, or sexually exploited. A foster, adoptive, and respite home parent(s) can expect that some children may anticipate harsh treatment based on previous life experiences and may misbehave to test the boundaries. It is not unusual for challenges to arise in providing discipline for children in out-of-home care. It is important that the foster, adoptive, and respite home parent(s) consult with the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) if they become frustrated in their discipline efforts.

The foster, adoptive, and respite home parent(s) should use the discipline techniques described in the pre-service family preparation process. "Time in" can be a time where being with the caregiver can help the child build trust, provide them one-on-one attention, be close if the behavior is one that needs close supervision, model positive behavior for the child, and a time to talk to help identify the underlying need which is the root of the behavior. "Time in" would include being in the direct line of sight of the child, in the same room, and close to arm's-length of the caregiver.

Appropriate discipline considers the age and developmental needs of the child, as well as the child's history and past experiences. It is important to establish clear guidelines, limits, or house rules, so that the expectations of the child are understood.

A foster, adoptive, and respite home parent(s) **may not**:

- Use any form of punishment or corporal physical discipline as defined in KRS 199.896(18);
- Deny food, shelter, or clothing;
- Interfere with implementation of the child's case plan;
- Deny visits or contact with family members;
- Have the child engage in extremely strenuous work or exercise; or
- Act in bizarre, severe, cruel, or humiliating ways. Examples of unacceptable actions include, but are not limited to verbal abuse, derogatory remarks to the child or about the child's family, threats of removal from the home, placing non-food or painful substances in a child's mouth to placing noxious, irritating or potentially damaging substances in the mouths or lips, whether food, or non-food.

Additionally, a foster, adoptive, and respite home parent(s) should not use inappropriate discipline for bedwetting or actions related to toilet training. The foster, adoptive, and respite home parent(s) should not delegate or permit discipline of a child by another child.

If a foster, adoptive, and respite home parent(s) uses any prohibited form of discipline, designated DCBS staff will complete a review with the family to include recommendations for corrective action. The SRA or designee is responsible for approval of the foster, adoptive, and respite home review, which may include a recommendation for closure of the home.

I have been given an opportunity to review and discuss the agency's policy on discipline of children in out-of-home care. I understand the policy and agree to abide by it.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Foster, adoptive, and respite home parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Foster, adoptive, and respite home parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date