

SCCS Caregiver Agreement for Discipline, Care, Time-Out and Prohibition of Seclusion & Restraint

Foster, adoptive and kinship caregivers ("caregivers"), are members of a helping team, which includes SCCS staff, birth parents, the court, and other community members who want to protect children in the care of the agency and help them grow into healthy adults. Such growth happens best when the agency, community services, and caregivers work together for children under care.

Since discipline is an essential part of helping children grow and develop, it must always be administered thoughtfully, and only for the purpose of teaching, so a child can learn to become a responsible adult and productive member of the community.

In an effort to define approved techniques and provide a consistent guide for foster, adoptive, and kinship caregivers, the following information is offered from the ODJFS Foster Family Rule 5101-2-7-09 regarding care and discipline of children:

- A. A caregiver shall treat each child with kindness, consistency, and respect.
- B. A caregiver shall not discriminate in providing care and supervision to children on the basis of race, sex, religion, color or national origin.
- C. A caregiver shall provide humane, instructive discipline appropriate to the age and functioning level of a child.
 - 1. Disciplinary methods shall stress praise and encouragement for desired behavior rather than punishment.
 - 2. All rules and expectations made by a caregiver shall be explained to a child in a manner appropriate to his/her age and understanding during the child's initial orientation and prior to any disciplinary act for violation of such rules.
 - 3. A child shall not be punished for actions over which he/she has no control.
 - 4. A child shall not be punished for bed-wetting or in the course of toilet training activities.
- D. A caregiver shall not subject a child to verbal abuse or swearing; to derogatory remarks about the children, their families, their race, religion, sex, color or national origin or to threats (direct or implied) of physical violence or removal from the caregiver's home.
- E. A caregiver shall not administer any of the following punishments when interacting with a child:
 - 1. Physical hitting or any type of physical punishment inflicted in any manner upon the body such as spanking, paddling, punching, shaking, biting, hair pulling, pinching, or rough handling.
 - 2. Physically strenuous work or exercises, when used as a means of punishment.
 - 3. Requiring or forcing a child to take an uncomfortable position, such as squatting or bending, or requiring a child to repeat physical movements when used as a means of punishment.

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4. Use of chemical, mechanical or prone restraints are prohibited. A foster caregiver may not use any device to prevent or restrict the child's movement. Physical restraint of a foster child may only be utilized by a treatment provider who has received specific training and annual review in acceptable methods of restraint. A treatment provider must use the least restrictive restraint necessary to control a situation. SCCS does not currently have a treatment foster care program. No SCCS family foster caregiver is trained or approved to administer physical restraint. A foster caregiver from a treatment provider network must notify the recommending agency immediately following the use of restraint. The recommending agency must notify SCCS through an incident report within 24 hours.
 5. Denial of social and recreational activities for excessive or prolonged periods of time. Social or recreational activities shall not be denied for more than a 48-hour maximum period. Foster Caregivers should not be expected to impose appropriately shorter periods with younger children (and for instances of minor behavioral infractions). Discipline should always be handled on an individual basis depending on the child's age and needs. Although not all social or recreational activities may be denied, in some instances it may be deemed appropriate to deny specific social or recreational activities for periods not to exceed one week for children and youth ages 12 through 17.
 6. Denial of social or casework services, medical treatment, or educational services.
 7. Deprivation of meals or drinks.
 8. Denial of visitation or communication rights with the family of the child as a means of punishment.
 9. Denial of sleep.
 10. Denial of shelter, clothing, bedding, or restroom facilities.
- F. Please see the related policies: Prohibition of Isolation and Seclusion. SCCS prohibits the use of isolation and seclusion as behavior management or a therapeutic technique. A child should not be locked in our out as an attempt to isolate them or seclude them.
- G. Caregivers should discuss, with the social worker for each child, the caregiver home coordinator and any therapists involved, proper parenting methods including the use of discipline (reasonable, appropriate consequences) for behavior infractions, throughout each child's placement.
- H. Any act of omission or commission by a caregiver or other member of household which results in the death, injury, illness, abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child shall be grounds for the denial or revocation of a foster or adoptive home certificate. This may be a recommendation of the agency supervising a caregiver home or ODJFS.
- I. A caregiver shall ensure that each child placed in the foster home who is unable to take care of their personal hygiene needs is clean and groomed daily. Foster children capable of meeting their own personal hygiene needs shall be provided with adequate personal toiletry supplies appropriate to the child's age, sex, race and national origin. A child's clothing & footwear shall be clean, well-fitting, and appropriate for the season. A caregiver shall provide each child instruction on good habits of personal care, hygiene and grooming appropriate to the child's age, sex, race and national origin.
- J. A caregiver should notify the child's social worker or the home coordinator and let them know of behavior problems, as this may be an indication of a child's need for special services and support. A caregiver must work with the agency staff and community providers on behalf of the child. Caregivers may consult the parenting manual "Parent Effectiveness Training" for general information about appropriate behavior management methods.

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The above procedure has been developed with the intent of providing caregivers with clear and concise guidelines to follow when disciplining children. Also, since the agency is charged with ensuring the well being of all children, it is required under Ohio law to investigate all instances involving the abuse or mistreatment of children in substitute care.

I have received a copy and agree to follow the rules outlined in the SCCS Caregiver Agreement for Discipline, Care, Time Out and Prohibition of Seclusion & Restraint.

Caregiver's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Caregiver's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Caseworker's Signature: _____ Date: _____

OAC 5101:2-7-09; 5101:2-5-13; 5101:2-9-03; 5101:2-9-21; 5123:2-3-25

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