

The Foster Parent NETwork

www.sjgov.org/hsa/childrens_services/foster_care

San Joaquin County
Foster Care Licensing

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Questions and Answers

Being a foster or adoptive parent is a complex task that requires one to continually educate themselves about the latest laws and regulations. Working with people is definitely not a fine science, so we thought we would present you with a question and answer section in our newsletter to help you navigate through those gray areas of being a foster/adoptive parent. We are here to help so please feel free to email or call us any time with any questions you may have.

Q: Can I use an online training course to renew my CPR and First Aid Training?

A: No. At this time the State is not allowing us to accept online training for CPR or First Aid Training. IF you completed or renewed your CPR online, you will need to enroll in a regular class to meet the State qualifications.

Q: Can I use an online training course for my annual education requirement?

A: Yes, as long as the website and course has been approved by your licensor. A great website to check out is www.fosterparents.com.

Q: Can a foster child baby sit the foster parents' own children?

A: Yes, using the prudent parent standard they could, but not on a regular basis (more than once per week). (See article on page 2 for more info on the prudent parent standard.)



Foster Parenting is not a Fine Science

Q: If there is an incident with a foster child in my home, who do I report it to?

A: Fill out an incident report and make three copies. Keep one copy for your records. Give a copy to your licensor and a copy to the child's social worker. You will also need to notify the licensor and the child's social worker of the incident by phone. If it is an emergency call the child's social worker and your licensor (Continued on page 3)



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Special points of interest:

- National Adoption Day is November 17th!
- Whole Family Foster Care is a new placement category for Foster Parents interested in working with teens and their infant children.
- SCI Benefits
- Use the Babysitting Safety Checklist to help with directions for care when you're not home.
- The Respite Care List is enclosed! If you are interested in being added to the list, call 465-KIDS and let us know.

Upcoming Trainings

The Child Welfare Team (.5 unit)

Class: FCS 99D **Code:** 34973 **Instructors:** Christine Sullivan
FCS199D 13698 Gwen Wesner

Days & Time: Saturdays, December 1, 8 & 15, From 9:00 a.m. to Noon

Sexual Development and Signs of Sexual Abuse (.5 unit)

Class: FCS 99B **Code:** 86593 **Instructors:** Pam Mekjavich
FCS 199B 95086 Barb Patton

Days & Time: Tuesdays, January 15, 22 & 29, From 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Issues in Foster and Kinship Care Education (.5 unit)

Class: FCS 96 **Code:** 14449 **Instructors:** To Be Announced
FCS 16 13652

Day & Time: Tuesday, January 26, From 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

To register: Go to www.deltacollege.edu or call 209-954-5528





Every Child Deserves a Permanent Home.

“ ‘Reasonable and prudent parent standard’ means the standard characterized by careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the child’s health, safety, and best interests.”

W&IC Section 362.04 & 362.05



Doing What’s Best for the Children.

JAM ... We Be Jammin!

About a month ago we started a new process at Children’s Services to help identify the placement needs of children brought into our care earlier in the process. We call them JAM, which stands for Joint Assessment Meetings.

At the JAM we assess all possible placement options for our foster children from relatives/NREFM caregivers, to foster/adoptive

placements. The JAM meetings take place two times a week and are staffed with the concurrent planning supervisor, a licensing representative, a placement facilitator, a family reunification supervisor, a court supervisor and an adoption supervisor. Also present is the case carrying social worker who is there to find the best possible placement for the child on their case load.

The Prudent Parent Standard

As it has been almost two years since the Prudent Parent Standard was established, we thought it was time to highlight some of the important points of how the program works. For those of you who don’t know what the Prudent Parent Standard is, it began in January of 2006 and gives foster parents discretion to use a short-term babysitter of their choice. The Prudent Parent Standard exempts short-term babysitters from regulatory requirements for criminal background checks, health screening, and CPR training. This means that the Foster Parent may allow their adult friends or family members to act as a short-term babysitter for their foster child.

The Foster Parent may also allow the parent of the foster child’s friends to act as an appropriate short-term babysitter without the child’s friend being present. The use of a short-term babysitter can not exceed 24 consecutive hours.

It is important to note that the foster parent is held liable if a foster child is abused or neglected while in the care

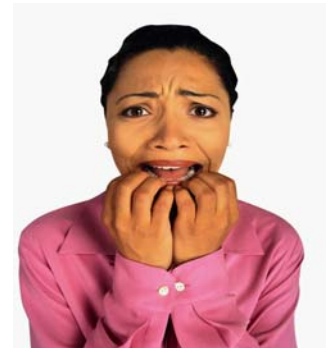
of a short-term babysitter. The Prudent Parent Standard, as it’s name suggests, requires careful and prudent consideration in choosing who will care for your children.

Part of the legislation involved in the prudent parent standard involves AB 408 which empowers foster parents to make important everyday decisions about a foster child’s participation in age-appropriate extracurricular, enrichment and social activities based on their own assessment using the prudent parent standard. Important considerations in determining the appropriateness of an activity would include the child’s age, maturity and developmental level. If you have a question about whether or not to allow your foster child to participate in an activity, please feel free to talk it over with the child’s social worker.

A babysitting safety checklist was shared with us at a community care licensing training and we have enclosed a copy of this checklist for your reference. This is a good tool for foster parents to use when leaving their children with someone other than a licensed care giver.

Need Support? Join the Foster Parent Association

The Foster Parent Association would like to invite you to their monthly meetings. They meet at 6:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of every month in the Conference Building at San Joaquin General Hospital. For more information call Patty Lamar at 209-825-7230.



Whole Family Foster Care

If you have a desire to care for teen mothers and their infant children then Whole Family Foster Care is something for you to consider. A Senate Bill was passed that allows Whole Family Foster Homes to receive additional compensation for working with the teen parents on independent living skills and parenting skills to prepare them for living on their own with their children.

One of the main features of Whole Family Foster Care is the use of the Shared Responsibility Plan (SRP), which is similar to a Needs and Services Plan, but it is geared toward the teen parent and infant child. The foster parent and teen fill out the SRP together and amend it as changes arise. We are just beginning to train our foster parents. . . So if you are a county licensed foster parent and can take placements that include both teens and infants, give us a call and we will train you as a Whole Family Foster Home. For more information contact Karen Christensen, Foster & Adoptive Home Recruiter, at 465-KIDS (5437).



Providing Care and Support to Teen Parents

Questions & Answers (continued)

- A: (continued from page I) immediately. The best number to call is 209-468-1333. This number will transfer to after-hours if your emergency is not during regular business hours (Monday through Friday 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.).
- Q: Can I have foster children placed in my home with an “A” License?**
- A: No. You need to have both your “A” and “B” License to have foster children placed in your home. The “A” part of your license is the paperwork piece and the approval of your home (which is the buildings & grounds component). The “B” license is the PRIDE training, health screen and CPR/First-Aid component of your license. You will need both to care for foster children in your home.
- Q: If I make changes to a foster child’s bedroom, do I need to notify my Licensor?**
- A: Yes. For example, if you move a bed from your son’s to your daughter’s room, than let your licensor know so she can reflect those changes on the vacancy list and your license.
- Q: When should I contact my licensor if I am planning on moving?**
- A: Let your licensor know 30 days prior to moving so they can give you a new application (Lic 283 Form & Emergency Plan Form). You will need to submit these two forms prior to moving. If you move without notifying your licensor, the civil penalties are \$200 per day for operating an unlicensed facility.
- Q: In Title 22, Building and Grounds Section 89387(p) of Emergency Regulations , refers to all windows with security bars needing safety release devices when current policy requires only release mechanisms be installed in sleeping rooms only. Which one is correct?**
- A: The window bar requirement is clarified in the Emergency Regulations Buildings and Grounds Section 89387 (q) which states “Each bedroom or sleeping room shall have at least one operable window or door that ensures safe, direct, emergency exit to the outside. If security window bars are used, the window is considered operable only if the window bars have a safety release device that meets all state and local requirements.”
- Q: Do I need to let my licensor know when my adoption is finalized?**
- A: Yes, when your adoption is finalized you need to report this to your licensor so they can reflect any needed changes on your license.
- Q: When is a criminal clearance to be obtained on someone who is moving into a foster home?**
- A: The criminal background clearance must be obtained on any adult , who is 18 or older **PRIOR** to moving into the foster home. If an adult is living in the foster home and has not obtained a criminal background clearance, the civil penalty is \$100.00 per day. If you need a criminal background clearance packet, call your licensor and they will send it to you.
- Q: What changes have been made to the Special Care Increment process?**
- A: An important point of clarification for Foster Parents to note is that a child is not automatically eligible for SCI. Instead children that enter the foster care system must be fully assessed for special needs and then supporting documentation from physicians and mental health professionals must be provided to support this request. Each case must then be reassessed annually to determine if a child is still eligible for SCI benefits.



**San Joaquin County Foster
Care Licensing**

Human Services Agency
102 S. San Joaquin Street
P.O. Box 201056
Stockton, CA 95201-3006

Phone: 209-465-KIDS
Fax: 209-468-1108
Email: kchristensen@co.san-joaquin.ca.us

*Do Something
Unforgettable . . .
Be a Foster or Adoptive
Parent!*



WE'RE ON THE WEB!

www.sjgov.org/hsa/childrens_services/foster_care

Foster Care Orientation Schedule

If you have a friend who is interested in being a foster parent, let them know about our orientation meetings. We have two foster care orientation meetings per month. Here is the schedule of our next six meetings.

Monday Meetings
9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.
Human Services Agency
Tower Room X
102 S. San Joaquin St.
Stockton, CA 95202

December 10

January 7

February 4

Wednesday Meetings
6:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.
Cesar Chavez Library
Stewart Hazelton Room
605 N. El Dorado St.
Stockton, CA 95202

November 28

December 26

January 23

