



Practice Points

Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard and Childcare

The purpose of this Practice Point is to clarify the appropriate application of the [Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard](#), also called Normalcy, when resource parents need childcare for children placed with them. The Normalcy effort is intended to provide children and youth in care with life experiences as similar as possible to their peers who aren't in care. This includes opportunities to participate in developmentally appropriate activities of their choice, and for their primary caregivers to be empowered to make day-to-day decisions about their lives to enhance the youth's experience of well-being.

Case managers are responsible for supporting the reasonable and prudent parenting choices of resource parents while also upholding the policies set forth by the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Children's Division. When resource providers are arranging childcare, there are specific considerations that must be made by case managers to determine if the childcare can be arranged independently by the resource parent or a DSS licensed and contracted provider is required. Case managers should be aware of childcare needs that exist on their caseload and guide resource parents in the process of making childcare arrangements with the most appropriate provider.

If the childcare is temporary and short term for things such as a parent night out, appointments, or other occasional events, then the resource parent may apply the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard by selecting a childcare provider of their choice, and making arrangements as they normally would for a child not in foster care. The resource parent should select a caregiver based on relevant factors such as the child's age, developmental level and needs, the overall health and safety of the child, and the best interests of the child.

If the childcare is long term or routine such as daily care while resource parent(s) are working, the process described in the [Resource Parent Handbook](#) pages 23-24 must be followed. This includes obtaining pre-authorization from the case manager for childcare and using a provider that is licensed and contracted with DSS. In cases where a licensed childcare provider may not be available due to the lack of availability, accessibility, or appropriateness of care, the child's case manager must enter a waiver request and ensure the provider is registered with DSS.

Please note that convenience and/or personal preference does not justify a waiver from using licensed/contracted childcare. Policy for [Protective Services Child Care](#) can be reviewed for further detail on how to obtain long term or routine childcare services in the case management process.

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