

# Applying the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard: Caregiver Considerations

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At the core of applying reasonable and prudent parent standard is knowing the child and making decisions on an individual case-by-case basis, with active communication between the caregiver<sup>1</sup>, birth/adoptive parent, guardian or prior caretaker<sup>2</sup>, and the child<sup>3</sup> (if age and developmentally appropriate). Below are questions and considerations a caregiver may want to ask or explore prior to making a determination as to whether or not a child should participate in normative experiences.

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Does this activity promote the child's cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and/or educational development?

How well do I know the child? Has the child only recently been placed in my care, or has he/she been here for several months?

Has the child shown maturity in decision-making and exhibited responsible behavior that is appropriate for their age/ability?

Would I allow my own child to participate in this activity?

Who will be attending the activity?

If appropriate, who will be supervising the activity? Have I met the person? Do I have the person's contact information? Have I shared my contact information with the person supervising the activity and the child?

Does the child understand his/her medical needs and is he/she able to tell others how to help him/her if necessary?

Does the child know who to call and how to respond in case of an emergency?

Have I reviewed any medical or other history in considering whether the activity is in the child's best interests?

Do I have sufficient information about the child's medical/developmental/educational history to make decisions? If I need additional information, do I know where to obtain it?

Does the child have the necessary and appropriate safety equipment, such as bicycle helmet, shin guards, etc.?

Will this activity violate a court order?

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<sup>1</sup> "Caregiver" is defined as the foster parent with whom the child in foster care has been placed; or a designated employee of a child care facility, including the institution, group residence, group home, agency boarding home or supervised independent living program in which the child has been placed.

<sup>2</sup> Whenever we refer to consulting with or engaging a birth/adoptive parent, guardian or prior caretaker, we mean only in those situations where it is appropriate to do so. In cases where parental rights have been surrendered or terminated or there are safety concerns or the parties are not available, such consultation or discussion need not be a part of the decision-making process.

<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of this document, the term "child" refers to children, youth, and young adults.

## Attachment B

Would the activity violate the safety plan? If there is a safety plan, has it been shared with the child?

Will the timing of this activity interfere with a sibling, grandparent, or parental visitation, counseling appointment or doctor's appointment? If so, how will you resolve the conflict?

Does the child understand our parental expectations regarding curfew, seeking and receiving approval for last minute changes in the child's plans, and the consequences for not complying with the expectations?

Does the child understand that his/her participation in this activity is dependent on maintaining all other obligations, such as regular school attendance and completion of school assignments?

If able and appropriate, have I consulted with the child's birth/adoptive parent, guardian or prior caretaker about this/her thoughts/feelings about the child participating in this particular activity?