
REASONABLE & PRUDENT PARENTING “TAKE-AWAY” PACKET**ANSWER KEY****Circle the Best Answer for Each Question**

1. Providing normalcy for children in foster care means
 - a) Not telling anyone that the child is a foster child
 - b) Providing age and developmentally appropriate activities for children**
 - c) Requesting that children in my care are tested to see if they are developing normally
 - d) None of the above

2. Which of the following is a caregiver’s responsibility under the law related to exercising a “reasonable and prudent parenting” standard:
 - a) To make the same decisions for foster care children as for my biological children
 - b) To pay for music or dance lessons if the child wants to take such lessons
 - c) To use a clear standard of guiding questions when making decisions about activities for the children in my care**
 - d) To get permission from the child’s caseworker before allowing a child to spend the night anywhere outside of my home

3. Providing activities and experiences for youth in out-of-home care applies to children in which of the following settings:
 - a) Children in resource family homes and residential care**
 - b) Children in pre-adoptive homes only
 - c) Children in resource family homes but not in residential care
 - d) Children in hospitals

4. Providing activities and experiences for youth in out-of-home care is important because:
 - a) Because their biological family never provided these activities
 - b) Through activities children grow, develop, and learn many skills
 - c) Both (a) and (b)**
 - d) Neither (a) nor (b)

5. Caregivers have the authority to make decisions about which of the following activities:
 - a) Sports, clubs or other school community activities
 - b) Going out of town or state on vacation
 - c) Getting a driver’s license
 - d) All of the above**

6. Caregivers may not make decisions about which of the following activities:
 - a) Going out of town or out of state on vacation
 - b) Getting a driver's license
 - c) **Getting baptized at your church**
 - d) All of the above

7. A child with developmental disabilities wants to play Little League. A caregiver should:
 - a) Sign her up and hope for the best
 - b) Wait for the next court hearing to get the judge's permission
 - c) She can't do that, but you can take her out for ice cream so she will forget about her disappointment
 - d) **Sign her up after talking with the coach about an accommodation she might need to safely participate**

8. Which of the following may be an appropriate accommodation to ensure that a child with a trauma history can attend a school field trip?
 - a) As a caregiver, you can't give permission for field trips
 - b) He's just a regular kid, he doesn't need any accommodations
 - c) **Work with the child to develop a safety plan for any triggering experiences that may occur during the field trip**
 - d) None of the above

9. An LGBTQ teen in a group home wants to apply for a part time job with a local business. As a staff person you:
 - a) Say no for safety reasons
 - b) **Evaluate whether she is developmentally capable of holding a job and maintaining her grades before you decide**
 - c) Say yes because all teens should have a chance to have a part time job
 - d) You can't make a decision until you get permission from her caseworker

10. Which of the following is NOT a reasonable factor to consider when making a decision related to an activity or experience for a child or youth in my care:
 - a) The child wants to do this activity
 - b) The activity will help the child learn skills needed in life
 - c) **The child might fail at this activity**
 - d) The child's social and emotional maturity

Notice or Consent? Quiz

Instructions: For each of the following scenarios below, mark with an “N” if you, as a caregiver, are allowed to make this decision and simply provide notice to the agency, or a “C” if you would need agency consent before approving this activity.

1. A relative is raising three children ages 9, 11, and 14. The 14-year-old walks to school each day and passes the local mall. One day, she asks if she can please go to the mall after school with some friends (without adult supervision) as long as she is home before dinner. N
2. A youth in a group home has friends at school who are Catholic. Several of them are beginning special Saturday classes to prepare for their Confirmation. The youth in the group home wants to join these classes. C
3. A nine-year-old child comes home from school and tells her resource parents that they had a special presentation from the local animal shelter. He told them that he is looking for volunteers to come in on Saturday mornings and help walk dogs. The nine-year-old wants to sign up to be a volunteer. She shows her resource parents the paperwork, including permission forms. N
4. A sixteen-year-old girl in your care confides in you that she is getting serious with her boyfriend, and she wants you to go with her to a family planning clinic so she can get on the pill. C
5. A pre-adoptive parent is at work when the daycare calls telling her that the 3-year-old is sick and must be picked up right away. The parent can't leave work at this moment, so she calls her mom and asks her to go to the daycare and pick up the child. N
6. The twelve-year-old in your care is excited to learn that her big brother's team made it to the basketball state championships, and she begs you to take her to the game. It is across the state (several hundred miles) and will require an overnight stay at a hotel. N

Case Scenarios for Practice

Read and discuss the scenarios below. Using the Checklist of Questions provided in Handout #10, make one of the following decisions about each scenario:

- ✓ This is an appropriate situation for the caregiver to make a decision, and the decision is YES, the child or youth may participate in this activity
- ✓ This is an appropriate situation for the caregiver to make a decision, and the decision is NO, the child or youth may NOT participate in this activity
- ✓ This is NOT an appropriate situation for the caregiver to make a decision without consulting with the child's caseworker

Case 1: 17-year-old Miguel lives with a resource family in a rural area. He has several friends who have jobs at a mall 23 miles away. He would like to try to get a job there as well, but first wants to get his license so he can drive back and forth to work. The resource parents have a second car that they previously allowed their now 19-year-old biological son to use to drive back and forth to his job. **YOU DECIDE:** Do you approve of Miguel getting a driver's license? Do you approve of Miguel applying for a job at the mall? Do you allow Miguel to drive your car to and from work if he gets the job? Would any of these factors affect or change your decision:

- Miguel is in special education with learning disabilities
- Miguel was released from detention 6 months ago – he was in detention as a result of truancy and curfew violations while at his former placement

ANSWER: It is developmentally appropriate for a 17yo to learn to drive, obtain a license, and get a job so this is the type of decision that is reasonable for a caregiver to make. However, if Miguel's special needs raise safety issues for the driver's license, you may wish to allow the job but find an alternative accommodation for his transportation. As for the detention issue, by itself it should not limit your decision although as it relates to his current maturity & behavior it is reasonable to consider.

Case 2: Emily is 17 and lives with a resource family along with her two younger siblings ages 11 and 9. The resource parents want to celebrate their upcoming anniversary by going out to dinner and spending the night at the bed and breakfast about five miles from their home. They would be gone about 18 hours from 6:00 PM on Friday until noon on Saturday. Emily has volunteered to babysit her

siblings as her anniversary gift to them. **YOU DECIDE:** Do you approve of Emily babysitting for 18 hours? Would any of these factors affect or change your decision?

- Emily is pregnant
- Emily has been in your home for less than 30 days

ANSWER: It is developmentally appropriate for a 17yo to babysit younger siblings and whether she is pregnant or not, this is still a reasonable decision for a caregiver to make. However, if she has only been in your home for 30 days, it is also reasonable to conclude that you do not have enough information about her developmental capacity and readiness for this responsibility, so that would be an appropriate factor to consider.

Case 3: Regina is 14 and lives in a group home. She comes home from school and announces that her science teacher is planning a 3-dy field trip to an environmental studies center located along the New Jersey Shore. Participants must demonstrate perfect attendance for two months with no grades below a “C”. They must also participate in two fundraising activities to raise money for the trip. While on the trip, they will be staying in rustic cabins with teacher chaperones. **YOU DECIDE:** Do you approve of allowing Regina to go on this trip and participating in the fundraising activities? Would any of these factors affect or change your decision:

- Regina was assigned male at birth and is a transgender youth, expressing her gender as female
- Regina has missed several days of school for reasons beyond her control related to court hearings and/or therapy appointments required in her case plan

ANSWER: Attending this field trip is a developmentally appropriate activity for a 14yo, so it is a reasonable decision for a caregiver to make, along with giving consent to participating in fundraising activities. The caregiver may need to advocate for accommodations to be made if Regina does not meet the attendance criteria for reasons beyond her control. Also, if Regina is a transgender youth, it is still reasonable and appropriate for her to attend, although the caregiver may need to work with the school to assure appropriate accommodations related to safety for the overnight sleeping portion of the experience. In other words, since Regina identifies as a girl, she should not be forced to sleep in the boys’ area, nor should she be isolated and kept away from other youth because of her transgender status.

Case 4: Ryan is 11 and lives with a resource family. He comes home from a visit with his biological relatives with a cell phone given to him during a visit. It has been the policy of the resource parents not to allow cell phones in their home. Ryan says that all of his friends at school have cell phones and he makes a case for why he should be allowed to keep the phone. He even proposes some limits – for example, he promises to give the phone to his resource parents every night before he goes to bed. **YOU DECIDE:** Do you approve of allowing Ryan to keep the cell phone? Would any of these factors affect or change your decision?

- Ryan has asthma and feels that he needs the phone for safety reasons so he can call you (resource parents) if he is having an asthma attack
- Ryan is 15 instead of 11
- Ryan is 8 instead of 11

ANSWER: Providing a cell phone to an 11yo is a “gray area” where it may or may not be developmentally appropriate depending on his maturity and whether it will be of benefit to his emotional and social well-being. Either a “no” or “yes” answer here by the caregiver could be reasonable. The asthma aspect may lean the answer towards yes. If Ryan was 15, this becomes more of a developmentally appropriate experience whereas if he is only 8, it is not a developmentally appropriate request. In any event, the caregiver can make the decision without needing consent from the caseworker but may wish to seek guidance before deciding.

Case 5: Ali’yah is eight and lives with her paternal grandparents. She wants to play soccer. It requires a physical, a permission slip, and practices on school nights that end at 8:30 PM. Ali’yah is struggling to make friends at school, but the one friend she has made also plays soccer. **YOU DECIDE:** Do you approve of allowing Ali’yah to play soccer? Would any of these factors affect or change your decision?

- Ali’yah has a trauma history and sometimes has major behavior episodes when frustrated
- Ali’yah has visits with her biological mother two weekends a month and the soccer games are also on weekends

ANSWER: Allowing an 8yo to play soccer is within the range of reasonable and prudent parenting decisions the grandparents may make. It is a developmentally and age-appropriate activity so it would be reasonable to say yes. While her trauma history alone should not prevent her from participating, it may indicate that her grandparents will have to work with her and possibly her therapist and the coach to develop a safety plan to help her to cope with any unexpected trauma-triggering situations that may occur. As for the visits with her biological mother, if they are in her case plan or court order, the grandparents may not make a decision that would cause her to miss these visits. However, it is reasonable for them to communicate with the biological mother, with the caseworker involved, to see if it would be agreeable for Ali'yah to play soccer and if the bio mother could work the soccer schedule into her visits. Alternately, the grandparents could ask the coach for an accommodation which would allow Ali'yah to be present every other game.

Case 6: The McGills are a resource family caring for two children ages 3 and 4 along with their birth son, Tommy, age 6. They have promised Tommy a trip to Disney Land for his birthday this year and they want to take the two foster children as well. **YOU DECIDE:** Can the resource parents make the decision to travel out-of-state for a week with the two foster children to go to Disney Land? Would any of these factors affect or change your decision?

- The trip is to Hershey Park instead of Disney Land, but they will stay for 3 nights in a hotel
- The 3-year-old has Downs Syndrome

ANSWERS: Taking the two children on a family vacation is within the realm of acceptable decisions the foster parents may make; however, if they will be out-of-state, or in this case Hershey Park, out of county, for a week they do need to provide notice to the foster care agency before leaving with the children. The only reason it would be not acceptable is if there was specific language in a court order or case plan which does not allow such travel. The fact that the 3yo has Downs Syndrome should not prevent her from participating, however, it may indicate that the McGills need to be equipped with any accommodation she would need for health and safety reasons.