

HANDOUT ONE: The What and Why of the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard and Telephone Access for Foster Children

What is the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard?

The recent passage of SB 358 amended W&IC Section 362.05 to add the term “reasonable” to the prudent parent standard and requires the caregiver to use a **reasonable and prudent parent standard**, as defined in W&IC Section 362.04, in addition to the other existing provisions of W&IC Section 362.05. The definition is as follows:

“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.

Issues to consider:

Differing definitions between what is “reasonable and prudent”. . .

Between child welfare workers and foster parents/care providers

Between foster parents/care providers and biological parents

Between foster parents/care providers and attorneys representing children or biological parents

Potentially less knowledge of/control of activities of children on child welfare workers’ caseloads

When does the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard apply?

1) For extracurricular and other activities

The W&IC Section 362.05 now empowers a foster parent to approve or disapprove a foster child’s **participation in activities** based on the foster parent’s own assessment using a reasonable and prudent parent standard, without prior approval of the social worker, licensing or approval agency, or the Juvenile Court.”¹ (ACL 05- 39)

2) For short term babysitting

The W&IC Section 362.04 law requires a caregiver to use a reasonable and prudent parent standard in determining and selecting an **appropriate babysitter** for occasional **short-term use**.² (ACL 06-02)

Effective January 1, 2006, the statute allows a caregiver to arrange for occasional short-term babysitting of a foster child without requiring the babysitter to undergo a health screening or cardiopulmonary resuscitation certification (CPR), or training. Additionally, SB 358 amended Health and Safety Code (H&SC) Section 1522(b) to exempt a short-term occasional babysitter from undergoing a criminal record background check.

DEFINITION: “Short-term” means no more than 24 consecutive hours. Provisions of the statute apply only to occasional, short-term (less than 24 consecutive hours) babysitters and should not be interpreted to apply to respite care providers who are allowed to care for foster children for more than 24 consecutive hours.

Confidential telephone calls

Welfare and Institutions Code (W&IC) Section 16001.9(9) states that all children in foster care have the right to make and receive confidential telephone calls, and have a right to privacy during such phone calls, unless prohibited by court order.. A list of authorized people and or personnel can be found in ACIN I-80-05.³

¹ California Department of Social Services. (2005) All-County Letter 05-39. Extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities for foster children.

² California Department of Social Services (2006) All-County Letter 06-02. Use of occasional short-term babysitters by foster caregivers.

³ California Department of Social Services (2005). All-County Information Notice I -80-05. Telephone access rights of children and youth in foster care.

When can calls be limited by care providers? Limitations on telephone calls to other individuals and agencies may be based on:

- reasonable disciplinary measures,
- house rules,
- consideration of the rights of others,
- case service plan requirements,
- documented unpaid reimbursement for long distance telephone calls, or
- court order prohibitions.

What providers may do:

- Develop policies regarding the number of calls and limit the amount of time of each call in order to ensure that all youth have equal access.
- Obtain in writing a "do not call" list from the child welfare worker *based on the court orders*
- Require that foster youth or their representatives to arrange for reimbursement of long distance calls

What providers may not do:

- Require payment for local calls.
- Restrict telephone access with the following: authorized representatives, placement agencies, family members not excluded by court order, social workers, attorneys, CASAs, probation officers, Community Care Licensing, or the Foster Care State Ombudsman.
- Use an "approved call list" rather than a "do not call" list.
- Limit phone access as a privilege based on the time in the program.
- Provide no confidential telephone access.

Issues:

Policies at the child welfare agency, group homes and foster homes may need to be changed to accommodate these new standards.

REMEMBER, the goal of these laws is to:

- Provide the youth with as "normal" life experience in-out-home care.
- Empower the out-of-home caregiver to encourage youth to engage in extracurricular activities that promote child well being.
- Allow for reasonable parenting decisions to be made by the out-of-home caregiver without waiting to obtain the social worker or Juvenile Court approval.
- Remove barriers to recruitment and retention of high quality foster caregivers.
- Reduce the need for social workers to either give permission or to obtain Juvenile Court approval for reasonable care giving activities.
- Respect the rights of youth in out-of-home care.

Activity:

Discuss additional "whys" specific to your agency setting that support the practice of the prudent parent standard, and as a group list two other reasons.

- I. _____

- II. _____

**HANDOUT TWO:
CAREGIVER INFORMATION SHEET**

**EXTRACURRICULAR, ENRICHMENT AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES,
AND THE REASONABLE AND PRUDENT PARENT STANDARD
September 2006**

This Information Sheet is intended to give you information regarding current law which entitles foster children to participate in age-appropriate, extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities.

Current law contained in Section 362.05 of the Welfare and Institutions Code (W&IC) provides that:

- Every child adjudged a dependent child of the juvenile court (a foster child) shall be entitled to participate in age-appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities.
- Caregivers must use a "prudent parent standard" in determining whether to give permission for a foster child to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities.
- Caregivers must take reasonable steps to determine the appropriateness of the activity in consideration of the child's age, maturity, and developmental level.
- Any state or local regulation or policy which prevents or creates barriers to participation in those activities is prohibited.
- Each state and local entity is required to ensure that private agencies providing services to foster children have policies consistent with this section and that those agencies promote and protect the ability of foster children to participate in age-appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities.

New law added the term "reasonable" to expand the meaning of the current prudent parent standard. Effective January 1, 2006, caregivers are required to use the new **reasonable and prudent parent standard**, which is defined as follows:

"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.

Every day, parents make important decisions about their children's activities. Foster parents are faced with making the same decisions for the foster children in their care. However, when foster parents make decisions they also must consider licensing or approval laws and regulations to ensure the health and safety of foster children in care. The California Department of Social Services understands that state law and regulations have previously prohibited youth from participating in extracurricular activities unless certain requirements were met. Now, however, W&IC Section 362.05 empowers foster parents to approve or disapprove activities based on their own assessment using a "reasonable and prudent parent standard" without prior approval of the child's social worker, the licensing or approval agency, or the juvenile court.

In enacting this law, the Legislature recognized the importance of making every effort to normalize the lives of foster children. Typical childhood activities in which foster children have been denied participation in the past include, for example, school-sponsored field trips or sports, sleep-over with friends, scouting, and 4-H activities. Frequently, foster

parents are reluctant to sign permission slips for foster children, when this should not be the case. Participation in these types of activities is important to the child's well-being, not only emotionally, but in developing valuable life-coping skills.

In applying the "reasonable and prudent parent standard," foster parents are required to take "reasonable steps" to determine the appropriateness of the activity in consideration of the child's age, maturity, and developmental level. It is recognized that there are many different ways to determine whether an activity is appropriate for a foster child in your care.

Therefore, the following examples of "reasonable steps" that a foster parent may take in making this determination is provided as a guide to assist you in your decision-making process.

- Have adequate information about the foster child in your care so you can make informed decisions. For example, make an effort to be aware of anything in the foster child's history or case plan, and of any orders issued by the juvenile court that may suggest that a particular activity would not be appropriate for the foster child. If you are not aware of the child's history or if the case plan is silent on whether the proposed activity would be appropriate, you are encouraged to consult with the child's social worker.
- Take into account the type of activity and consider the foster child's mental and physical health, and behavioral propensities.
- Consider where the activity will be held, with whom the foster child will be going, and when they will return.
- Consider all the information you have gathered and ask the question: this an age-appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, or social activity?
- Take into account the reasonably foreseeable risks of an activity and what safety factors and direct supervision may be involved in the activity in order to prevent potential harm to the foster child. (i.e., hunting, paint ball, archery, or similar activities that may pose a higher risk).

This law only applies to participation in age-appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities. This law does not apply, for example, to unsupervised time at home.

Any person having contact with a foster child for purposes other than those associated with a foster child's participation in age-appropriate, extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities must comply with existing criminal background check requirements specified in Health and Safety Code Section 1522 and W&IC Sections 39(d) and 361.4, as applicable.

HANDOUT THREE: CAREGIVER INFORMATION SHEET
September 2006

**USE OF OCCASIONAL SHORT TERM BABYSITTERS
AND THE REASONABLE AND PRUDENT PARENT STANDARD**

This Information Sheet is intended to give you information regarding new law which allows caregivers to arrange for occasional, short-term care of a foster child for periods not to exceed 24 hours using a reasonable and prudent parent standard. **The new law does not apply to child daycare providers.**

Recognizing that current law and regulations regarding the use of temporary caregivers (babysitters) created barriers to finding and keeping high-quality foster parents, the Legislature enacted a new law and amended existing law to eliminate some of those barriers in order to give a more normalizing life experience for the caregiver and foster child.

Effective January 1, 2006, new provisions contained in Section 362.04 of the Welfare and Institutions Code (W&IC) provides that a caregiver can use a short-term babysitter (meaning no more than 24 hours) when a caregiver needs to attend various activities, including, but not limited to:

- *a medical or other health care appointment*
- *grocery or other shopping*
- *personal grooming appointment*
- *a special event for the foster parent*
- *foster parent training classes*
- *school-related meetings (parent-teacher conferences)*
- *business meetings*
- *adult social gatherings*
- *an evening out.*

The new law exempts the babysitter from having to have a health screening, cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification, or training. Current law was also changed to exempt short-term babysitters from having to undergo a criminal record background check.

The new law requires the caregiver to use a specific standard for determining and selecting appropriate babysitters for occasional short-term use. Caregivers must use a **reasonable and prudent parent standard**, which is defined as follows:

“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.

Making careful and sensible parental decisions regarding the use of an occasional, short-term babysitter that maintains the child’s health, safety, and best interest can be difficult. Caregivers should think about these additional considerations:

- *The child’s age, maturity, mental and physical health, developmental level, behavioral propensities and aptitude of the child, and the ability of the babysitter to give the necessary, appropriate care.*
- *Weigh the foreseeable risks in leaving the child with a babysitter.*

- *If unsure about the appropriateness of leaving the child with a babysitter, discuss your concerns with the child's social worker.*

The new law requires that caregivers must make an effort to give the babysitter the following information before leaving the child with a babysitter for short-term care:

- *Information about the child's emotional, behavioral, medical, or physical conditions, if any, necessary to provide care for the child during the time the foster child is being supervised by the babysitter,*
- *Any medication that should be administered to the foster child during the time the foster child is being supervised by the babysitter; and,*
- *Emergency contact information that is valid during the time the foster child is being supervised by the babysitter.*

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



December 30, 2005

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-80-05

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DEPARTMENTS
ALL COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENTS

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
 Federal Law or Regulation Change
 Court Order
 Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
 Initiated by CDSS

SUBJECT: TELEPHONE ACCESS RIGHTS OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN
FOSTER CARE

The purpose of this All County Information Notice (ACIN) is to clarify the issue of telephone access for children and youth in out-of-home care. Foster youth and advocates have reported to the Department of Social Services that inappropriate restrictions have been placed on that access.

Accessibility

Since Welfare and Institutions Code (W&IC) Section 16001.9(9) states that all children in foster care have the right to make and receive confidential telephone calls, out-of-home care providers cannot impose blanket prohibitions on telephone access and usage. In addition, telephone access and usage should not be dependent on a level or point system based on the time spent in a facility.

Foster care providers may not prohibit or restrict telephone calls to the following: authorized representatives, placement agencies, family members not excluded by court order, social workers, attorneys, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), probation officers, the Community Care Licensing Division of the California Department of Social Services, or the State Foster Care Ombudsman.

Limitations on telephone calls to other individuals and agencies may be based on reasonable disciplinary measures, house rules, consideration of the rights of others, case service plan requirements, documented unpaid reimbursement for long distance telephone calls, or court order prohibitions. For example, providers may develop policies regarding the number of calls and limit the amount of time of each call in order to ensure that all youth have equal access.

Confidentiality

Current regulatory and statutory authorities also mandate that foster care youth have the right to make and receive confidential telephone calls from individuals of significance to them, unless otherwise prohibited by court order. To ensure the confidentiality of telephone calls, foster care providers should provide an area away from other youth and staff that will afford privacy.

Call Lists

Since restrictions against making and receiving telephone calls from specific individuals must be based on court orders, it would be reasonable for caregivers to require a "do not call" list for youth as opposed to an "approved call list." While restrictions may be imposed on calls to and from specific individuals, these restrictions cannot be imposed unless the court or social worker has provided this information to the provider in writing.

Reimbursement for Telephone Calls

Foster care youth should not be required to pay for local telephone calls. However, foster care providers may require reimbursement from the youth or his/her authorized representative for the cost of long distance calls. For calls other than those to individuals and agencies to which telephone access may not be restricted, long distance calls may be prohibited upon documentation that requested reimbursement for previous long distance calls has not been received. It is suggested that foster care providers utilize calling plans that provide unlimited telephone calls at a minimal cost to mitigate the financial burden on the youth.

Placement Agency Responsibilities

All County Letter 02-54 dated July 18, 2002, "Rights of Children in Out-of-Home Placement," requires county placement workers to inform children in out-of-home care of their personal rights -- including the right to telephone access -- at least every six months. In addition, the private discussions between placement workers and foster youth required by W&IC sections 16516.5 and 16516.6 represent opportunities to discuss and resolve issues of telephone access and usage.

If you have questions regarding the telephone rights of children and youth in out-of-home care, please contact Vincent Herrera, Manager, Community Care Licensing Division, at (916) 322-5502. If you have questions concerning social worker and probation officer responsibilities for confidential visits, please contact West Irvin, Manager, Child and Youth Permanency Branch, at (916) 651-7465.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

JO FREDRICKS
Deputy Director
Community Care Licensing Division

Original Document Signed By:

MARY L. AULT
Deputy Director
Children and Family Services Division

HANDOUT FOUR:
The Prudent Parent Standard: What are Reasonable Decisions?

Review the caregiver scenarios and rate the following scenarios on what is:

Red – This is not a reasonable decision to be made by out-of-home caregivers.

Yellow – This is a decision that should be discussed with the social worker.

Green – Falls within the reasonable and prudent standard.

1. A foster parent would like to get a babysitter because the foster parent wants to go out to a concert. The foster parent contacts his sister and asks if she would babysit two foster children ages 6 and 4. The foster children have been in the home for six months and have some difficulty getting to sleep in the evenings.
2. A 16-year-old in a group home would like to attend a one-day ski class with his high school. The trip requires a permission slip be signed. The 16-year-old has been in the group home for three months and has been doing well.
3. A relative/kin caregiver would like to take a three-day trip with their niece, age 2, and nephew, 4, who have been placed with them by the court, along with their own child, age 10, to Disneyland.
4. A 15-year-old would like to call her friend that is across town. It is a long distance call and the foster mother won't allow any long distance calls.
5. A child's attorney calls the social worker to complain that a foster family should have gotten the court's permission to allow a 10-year-old to participate in skateboarding tournaments. The foster family has two children, ages 7 and 9, besides the 10-year-old. All of the children ride skateboards.
6. Foster parents go on a getaway weekend and leave two foster children, ages 12 and 15, with the foster aunt and uncle and their children.
7. A relative hires an evening babysitter for two foster children, ages 4 and 9. The relative does not disclose that these children are foster children, in order to avoid stigmatizing them.
8. A report comes into the hotline that a daycare provider has hired a babysitter to watch the children in daycare while the daycare provider attends a medical appointment.
9. A 17-year-old in foster care would like to get a work permit.
10. A foster parent asks her 17-year-old daughter to watch her foster children, ages 4 and 8, for 90 minutes so she can get her hair done. The daughter knows about the children and their behavior and knows how to reach the foster mother in an emergency.

HANDOUT FIVE:
Prudent & Reasonable Parent Standard: Action Plan for Changing Practice

Today's Date: _____

The previous handout *The What and Why of the Prudent Parent Standard* begins the discussion on current practice and identifies some stakeholders in the system that may need information in order to change their practice to reflect the prudent parent standard. This handout may be utilized to assess systemic issues and develop an action plan. Using the matrix below, identify the stakeholders directly impacted by this change in practice, a method for getting the information out, and strategies for handling problems and concerns as the practice of the prudent parent standard is implemented. The first line has been completed as an example.

Who? Who needs this information?	What What information do they need?	How? How will he/she/they get the information and by when?	Barriers/Solutions Once the information is disseminated what potential problems might come up? What are suggested strategies that might help address them?
1) Foster parents	Changes in the law. What they can now do that they couldn't before under the law	The foster parent association meeting Social Worker will hand out the information sheet to them on monthly home visits.	Not all of them attend the association meeting Solution: Mail out the notices to them as well. Foster parents might have questions about specific activities. Solution: Encourage them to call initially if they have questions
2)			

Who? Who needs this information?	What What information do they need?	How? How will he/she/they get the information and by when?	Barriers/Solutions Once the information is disseminated what potential problems might come up? What are suggested strategies that might help address them?
3)			
4)			
5)			

Review Action Plan and revise by _____ (6 weeks from today).

HANDOUT FOUR:
The Prudent Parent Standard: What are Reasonable Decisions?
Trainer/Facilitator Key

Review the caregiver scenarios and rate the following scenarios on what is:

Red – This is not a reasonable decision to be made by out of home caregivers.

Yellow – This is a decision that should be discussed with the child welfare worker.

Green – Falls within the reasonable and prudent standard.

1. A foster parent would like to get a babysitter because the foster parent wants to go out to a concert. The foster parent contacts his sister and asks if she would babysit two foster children, ages 6 and 4. The foster children have been in the home for six months and have some difficulty getting to sleep in the evenings.

Green – If the foster parent works with the babysitter around the sleeping issue.

2. A 16-year-old in a group home would like to attend a one-day ski class with his high school. The trip requires a permission slip be signed. The 16-year-old has been in the group home for three months and has been doing well.

Green- Yellow – Check with your current agency practice about a group home signing permission slips. Consider if the agency child welfare worker can sign. Research and advocate clarification if reasonable and the prudent parent standard is extended to group home settings.

3. A relative/kin caregiver would like to take a three-day trip with his niece, age 2, and nephew, 4, who have been placed with them by the court, along with their own child, age 10, to Disneyland.

Green – Meets the reasonable and prudent parent standard as long as children do not have developmental/physical/behavioral problems that preclude the niece and nephew from going.

4. A 15-year-old would like to call her friend that is across town. It is a long distance call and the foster mother won't allow any long distance calls.

Yellow – The 15-year-old can call her friend unless there is a concern about the friend. The issue is the long distance phone call. There needs to be a plan to address how the foster family will be reimbursed for the phone call.

5. A child's attorney calls the child welfare worker to complain that a foster family should have gotten the court's permission to allow a 10-year-old to participate in skateboarding tournaments. The foster family has two other children ages 7, 9, besides the 10- year-old. All of the children ride skateboards.

Green- Yellow –The activity has its risks, but if developmentally appropriate, falls within the reasonable and prudent parent standard of decisions on extracurricular activities. The child welfare worker may want to work with the attorney around the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

6. Foster parents go on a getaway weekend and leave two foster children, ages 12 and 15, with the foster aunt and uncle and their children.

Red – Currently the standard is for no more than 24 consecutive hours. In order for this to be permissible, the foster aunt and uncle would have to have appropriate clearances.

7. A relative hires an evening babysitter for two foster children, ages 4 and 9. The relative does not disclose that these children are foster children, in order to avoid stigmatizing them.

Red – The foster parent must disclose pertinent information to the babysitter, so that the babysitter is fully informed.

8. A report comes into the hotline that a daycare provider has hired a babysitter to watch the children in daycare while the daycare provider attends a medical appointment.

Red – The reasonable and prudent parent standard does not apply to day care providers.

9. A 17-year-old in foster care would like to get a work permit.

Green- Yellow – If the 17-year-old is capable developmentally the caregiver can sign for a work permit.

10. A foster parent asks her 17-year-old daughter to watch her foster children, ages 4 and 8, for 90 minutes so that she can get her hair done. The daughter knows about the children and their behavior and knows how to reach the foster mother in an emergency.

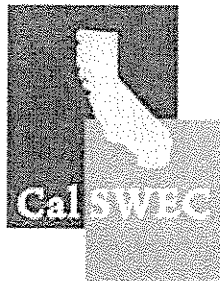
Green- Yellow – The age of the babysitter is not defined in the ACL. This may need clarification from the agency to caregivers. Developmentally, unless otherwise indicated, 17-year-olds are expected to take on care giving tasks in preparation for adulthood.

Training Resource on
Reasonable & Prudent Parent Standard
For Supervisors and Managers

2006

The material in this module was written by
Irene Becker, LCSW, for CalSWEC.

California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC)
University of California, Berkeley
School of Social Welfare
120 Haviland Hall
Berkeley, CA 94720-7400
Phone: 510-642-9272 Fax: 510-642-8573
<http://calswec.berkeley.edu>



REASONABLE AND PRUDENT PARENT STANDARD TRAINING RESOURCE FOR SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS

ABOUT THIS TRAINING RESOURCE

Purpose:

This brief training resource is designed to disseminate the vital information about the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard to everyone affected by the changes in the law. It is designed with some activities that can be conducted by a trainer, or by a manager or facilitator. The activities last about one hour, and could be used during a regularly scheduled meeting. The training resource can be used to orient supervisors and management, and allow them to pass on the information to their staff. (See the separate curriculum resource for child welfare workers, which is reviewed in segment three.)

Format:

The training resource is formatted similarly to other curricula used by the training system in California. It has the following components:

Learning Objectives – These are brief, measurable statements of the knowledge, skills, and values that the trainee should get out of the training. The facilitator/supervisor should read them to be clear on what the specific purposes of the training are.

Title IV-E Competencies – These competencies guide practice and MSW education in California. They are included to show how this training resource applies to larger practice.

Lesson Plan – This is a brief map of the activities included in the training, which maps the Learning Objectives to each segment of the training. It should help the facilitator see how the whole training fits together.

Training Activities – These give specific instructions/suggestions for each segment of the training, and indicate what materials are needed, and how to conduct and process the training activities. Facilitators should read these and be familiar with them. This is not a scripted training, so facilitators may want to modify some of the discussion to fit the needs of their particular county or audience.

Supplemental Handouts – These are part of a separate document, and are intended for the participants or trainees to use. You should have a copy for each person. *It is highly advisable that you also distribute the materials for the group to review prior to the training.* You may want to print the handouts for each segment on different color paper to make it easier to distinguish them during the training. It is vital that the facilitator knows what all of the participants are using. Again, these may be modified for use with a particular group of trainees or a particular county. *All-County Letters (ACLs)* and *All-County Information Notices (ACINs)* are included in separate .pdf-format documents. These are the official information released by the state to the counties, and are not modified.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Knowledge:

- K1.** The trainee will be able to identify current organizational barriers and solutions to the barriers in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard for the youth in out-of-home placements.

Skills:

- S1.** The trainee will be able to articulate the reasonable and prudent parent standard for out-of-home caregivers and provide two examples for training workers on the reasonable and prudent parent standard.
- S2.** The trainee will be able to develop two organizational strategies to implement the reasonable and prudent parent standard for child welfare workers and out-of-home caregivers.

Values:

- V1.** The trainee will value involvement and collaboration with out-of-home caregivers in determining how the reasonable and prudent parent standard will be applied uniquely for each youth in out-of-home care.

TITLE IV-E CURRICULUM COMPETENCIES

The Title IV-E MSW competencies were developed for the M.S.W. specialization in public child welfare in California, a two-year, full-time graduate program. The MSW competencies may overlap with the common core competencies, but are primarily designed for a full MSW program. Learning objectives and competencies in the common core support the MSW Title IV-E competencies, but not all of the IV-E material can be

delivered during an in-service training session. MSW Title IV-E competencies may therefore be linked to multiple topic areas of the common core.

Student works collaboratively with biological families, foster families, and kin networks, involving them in assessment and planning, and supporting them in coping with special stresses and difficulties. (6.6)

Student is able to identify agency and legislative policies and procedures that create barriers to the growth and development of children and families. (7.4)

Student understands how political activities and regulatory, legislative, and judicial processes at local, state, and national levels influence agency policies, procedures, and programs. (8.2)

Student understands how leader/managers use the collaborative process for the purpose of planning, formulating policy, and implementing services. (8.3)

CONTEXT

As part of the reform efforts in child welfare in California, the Legislature and California Department of Social Services (CDSS) have spearheaded legislative and regulatory changes that are designed to enhance one of the Adoptions and Safe Families Act goal, that of child well-being. These changes seek to provide the caregivers with more latitude in decision-making, and align the state through law and regulations with child welfare best practices.

This training resource is designed for managers and supervisors to:

- Define the reasonable and prudent parent standard as defined in All-County Letters;
- Identify current practice and organizational barriers that impact the implementation of the reasonable and prudent parent standard for youth in out-of-home care;
- Develop organizational strategies to implement the reasonable and prudent parent standard with child welfare workers and out-of-home caregivers.

As a statewide training resource, this material was developed by the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC), with the guidance of the County Welfare Directors Association's (CWDA) Children's Committee, the Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC), and the California Department of Social Services (CDSS).

REASONABLE & PRUDENT PARENT STANDARD TRAINING RESOURCE FOR SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS

LESSON PLAN

Topic/Time	Learning Objective	Methodology
<p>Segment 1 20 minutes</p> <p>Defining the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard</p>	<p>S1 The trainee will be able to articulate the reasonable and prudent parent standard for out-of-home caregivers and provide two examples for training workers on the reasonable and prudent parent standard.</p>	<p>Activity 1: Facilitated Discussion - Defining the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard</p> <p>Handouts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The What and Why of the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard 2. Caregiver Information Sheet: Extracurricular, Enrichment And Social Activities 3. Caregiver Information Sheet: Use of Occasional Short-Term Babysitters 4. What Are Reasonable Decisions? <p><i>ACLs and ACINs may also be distributed.</i></p>

Topic/Time	Learning Objective	Methodology
<p>Segment 2 30 minutes</p> <p>Creating action plans for change</p>	<p>K1 The trainee will be able to identify current organizational barriers and solutions to the barriers in implementing the reasonable and prudent parent standard for the youth in out-of-home placements.</p> <p>S2 The trainee will be able to develop two organizational strategies to implement the reasonable and prudent parent standard for child welfare workers and out-of-home caregivers.</p> <p>V1 The trainee will value involvement and collaboration with out-of-home caregivers in determining how the reasonable and prudent parent standard will be applied uniquely for each youth in out-of-home care.</p>	<p>Activity 2: Current Agency Practice and What Needs to be Changed</p> <p>Handout: 5. Action Plan for Changing Practice</p>

Topic/Time	Learning Objective	Methodology
<p>Segment 3 10 minutes</p> <p>Review of Child Welfare Training Resource (NOTE: If you are not using the supervisors to provide the information to the child welfare workers, then you can allocate more time to the other segments of the training, and inform the supervisors about how their workers will be trained.)</p>	<p>S2. The trainee will be able to develop two organizational strategies to implement the reasonable and prudent parent standard for child welfare workers and out-of-home caregivers.</p>	<p>Activity 3: Review of materials for training workers on the reasonable and prudent parent standard</p> <p>Handout: Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard Training Resource for Child Welfare Workers</p> <p><i>NOTE: The same handouts are used for both this resource and the one aimed at Child Welfare Workers.</i></p>

TRAINING ACTIVITY FOR SEGMENT 1 DEFINING THE REASONABLE AND PRUDENT PARENT STANDARD

Approximate time: 20 minutes

Preparation:

- It is recommended that you distribute the handouts prior to the training, so that people can review them and be knowledgeable.
- You should also have copies available, in case people don't bring the copies. You will also be reviewing the material, since some of the people will not have reviewed it.

Materials:

- Easel and chart pad paper, markers, tape (optional)
- Handout One: *The What and Why of the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard*
- Handout Two: *Caregiver Information Sheet: Extracurricular, Enrichment, and Social Activities, and the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard*
- Handout Three: *Caregiver Information Sheet: Use of Occasional Short-Term Babysitters and the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard*
- Handout Four: *The Prudent Parent Standard: What are Reasonable Decisions?*

Training Activity:

- Explain the purpose of the training.
- Provide trainees with *Handout One: The What and Why of the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard*. This handout also includes information on the new regulations on telephone access for foster children. Briefly review the key points of the handout, including the definitions.
- Ask the group how this change in law might change practice, and chart their answers on note paper if it is available.
- Point out that the terms "Reasonable" and "Prudent" are inherently subjective. This will be the challenge in implementing the changes.
- Distribute *Handout Four: The Prudent Parent Standard: What are Reasonable Decisions?* The answer key is provided below with suggested answers.
- Divide the group into several small groups, and have them discuss 2-3 of the scenarios, depending on the size of your group. Have them report out on their answers, as below.
- Handouts Two and Three (*The Caregiver Information Sheets*) can be provided/referred to at the close of the discussion. These are an additional resource for child welfare workers and the agency to use to work with caregivers and provide them with the information.

Processing the Activity:

- Ask them if they disagreed on any of the answers. If someone volunteers that they did, have them explain what they were unsure about. Review the answer key with them as one suggested answer.
- Make sure that the group understands the intent of the legislature to normalize the experience of foster care and empower foster parents to make routine decisions for care.
- The ACL's and ACIN that are cited in this handout should also be available for further clarification.

End of Activity

TRAINING ACTIVITY FOR SEGMENT 2 CHANGING AGENCY PRACTICE

Approximate time: 30 minutes

Materials:

- Handout Five: *Action Plan for Changing Practice*
- Easel, chart pads, markers, tape.

Training Activity:

- Provide copies of the action plan to all participants.
- This activity is nearly identical to the one in the training resource for child welfare workers, but should focus on *agency* stakeholders rather than stakeholders for particular children and families.
- Have the group brainstorm all of stakeholders who need to know the information. Chart their answers on the chart pad if it is available.
- When you finish a list, again divide the group and have them fill out the rest of the action plan for 1 or 2 of the identified stakeholders.
- When the groups have completed this, have them report out briefly. They may not know who should complete particular tasks, so you may have to defer some of the decisions for the management team to sort through later.
- Have the volunteer make one clean copy based on all of the groups' answers, which will serve as the action plan. Again, this may require approval by management.
- When the action plan is complete, put at the bottom of the page a date that is six weeks out from the day of training (or at the next regularly scheduled meeting). An option would be to review the action plan in six weeks and evaluate how the practice of the reasonable and prudent parent standard is going among various stakeholders.
- Additional action planning may be warranted.

Processing This Activity:

- This is an opportunity to discuss with managers and supervisors any of the current conditions with various stakeholders.
- Some potential subjects include:
 - Foster parents and their role as a team member
 - Group homes and their involvement in overall case planning
 - Attorneys and their role with families
- Some potential questions include:
 - Are various stakeholders “on board” with best practices in child welfare?
 - What are some examples of these best practices?

- What are some of the barriers that remain in involving stakeholders in best practices?
- If the supervisors are going to facilitate the training resource for child welfare workers, then you can let them know that there is a similar exercise in that training resource for workers to look at the stakeholders *for their caseloads*.

End of Activity

<p style="text-align: center;">TRAINING ACTIVITY FOR SEGMENT 3 REVIEW OF TRAINING MODULE FOR CHILD WELFARE WORKERS</p>
--

Approximate time: 10 minutes

Materials:

- Training Module: Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard Training Module for Child Welfare Workers

Training Activity:

- The trainer/facilitator should give handouts and module to the participants.
- Briefly review materials and ask supervisors to schedule the training module for workers.
- Assign a review date with supervisors for the completion of the training module for workers and for issues that have arisen during these training sessions.
- Ask them if they have any questions about the materials. Point out that they have just completed all of the activities in the training in some form.

End of Activity



**Regional Training
Academy
Coordination**

FAQs

**Coordinating
Partners**

**Statewide
Training and
Education
Committee
(STEC)**

AB 636/C-CFSR

**Common Core
Curricula in CA**

**Training
Evaluation**

**Fairness & Equity
Issues**

**Other Training
Resources**

Contact Us

Other Training Resources

The Regional Training Academy Coordination Project also offers other training resources. Here are some links to curricula associated with upcoming training initiatives and the Common Core Curricula in California.

California Child Welfare Resource Library

The library serves as the central distribution point for CalSWEC's curriculum development projects as well as a repository for up-to-date, accessible child welfare resource materials for academicians and practitioners alike.

New Training Resource on the Reasonable & Prudent Parent Standard

This brief training resource is designed to disseminate vital information about the reasonable and prudent parent standard to everyone affected by the changes in the law.

Two resources are provided: one for supervisors and managers, the other for child welfare workers. The child welfare worker resource is designed to be conducted by a trainer, or by a supervisor or facilitator. Both are designed to last about one hour, so that they may be provided during a regular meeting, such as a unit meeting.

- Training Resource for Supervisors and Managers
- Training Resource for Child Welfare Workers
- Supplemental Handouts
 - Reasonable & prudent parent handouts 1-5
 - ACIN No. 1-80-05 (Dec. 30, 2005): Telephone Access Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care
 - ACL No. 05-39 (Dec. 30, 2005): Extracurricular, Enrichment, and Social Activities for Foster Children
 - ACL No. 06-02 (March 7, 2006): Use of Occasional Short-Term Babysitters by Foster Caregivers
- Provide Feedback on This Resource

New Training Resource on the SB500 & Shared Responsibility Plans for Whole Family Foster Homes

This brief training resource is designed to disseminate the vital information about Senate Bill 500 to everyone affected by the changes in the law. It is designed with some activities that can be conducted by a trainer, or by a supervisor or manager. The activities last about one hour, and could be used during a regularly scheduled meeting, such as a unit meeting.

- Training Resource
- Supplemental Handouts:
 - What and Why
 - ACIN No. 1-80-05 (Dec. 30, 2005): Telephone Access Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care
 - ACL No. 05-39 (Dec. 30, 2005): Extracurricular, Enrichment, and Social Activities for Foster Children