

## Caregiver Guidelines: Providing Normalcy for Children/Youth in Foster Care

I.C. § 16-1644 and IDAPA 16.06.02.457 authorizes caregivers to provide or withhold permission without prior approval of the assigned social worker or department to allow a child in their care to participate in normal childhood activities based on a “reasonable and prudent parent standard.” This standard is characterized by careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the health, safety, and best interests of a child while simultaneously encouraging the emotional and developmental growth of the child that a caregiver must use when determining whether to allow a child in foster care under the responsibility of the state to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, or social activities. For the purpose of this standard, caregiver applies to foster parents with whom a child in foster care has been placed or a designated official for a child care institution in which a child in foster care has been placed.

Normalcy is the ability for children/youth to easily participate in age-appropriate, extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities that promotes their well-being. According to Juvenile Law Center, normalcy is “ensuring a child’s range of experiences while in foster care is typical of the range of experiences of any child of the same age.”

Whenever possible, parents or legal guardians should be encouraged to participate in the decision-making process; their preferences for the child should be considered when approving normal routine activities.

Providing caregivers’ with decision making-authority for youth to participate in age-appropriate activities does not mean the decision will always be “yes.” Caregivers may need to further discuss their concerns with the child’s social worker if they are still unsure about the activity or if there are discrepancies between the child/youth’s birth parent/legal guardian and the caregiver. The list below includes examples and is not all-inclusive. If you have questions or when in doubt please consult with the child’s assigned social worker.

Activity Category	GREEN—Examples of normal childhood activities caregivers can approve independently	RED—Examples of childhood activities that must be approved by the assigned social worker/agency
Agency/Court approval is required if an activity is in conflict with a court order or supervision/safety		
Family Recreation (Children should be closely supervised and use appropriate safety equipment for water activities.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movies</li> <li>• Community Events</li> <li>• Family Events (less than 72 hours)</li> <li>• Hiking</li> <li>• Boating wearing a life jacket</li> <li>• Swimming</li> <li>• Biking using a helmet</li> <li>• Other sporting activities using</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any events or activities over 72 hours</li> <li>• Any sporting/recreational activity that involves signing a medical consent</li> <li>• High risk activities:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hunting or handling a gun whether loaded or unloaded</li> <li>○ Archery</li> <li>○ Bungee jumping</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>appropriate protective gear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· River tubing</li> <li>· River rafting (under level 3 rapids)</li> <li>· Horseback riding</li> <li>· Camping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Base jumping</li> <li>○ Kayaking</li> <li>○ Parachuting</li> <li>○ Sky diving</li> <li>○ White-water rafting level 3 rapids or higher</li> </ul> <p>Some participation in high risk activities may be reasonable based on the child's functioning and experience and the caregiver's skill, knowledge and judgment. High risk activities must be approved the program manager.</p>
Social/Extracurricular Activities	<p>Less than 72 hours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Camps</li> <li>· Field Trips</li> <li>· Volunteering</li> <li>· School Related Activities</li> <li>· Church Activities</li> <li>· Youth Organization Activities/Clubs</li> <li>· Sports Activities</li> <li>· Community Activities</li> <li>· Social Activities with Peers</li> <li>· Overnight activities</li> </ul> <p>Reasonable and age-appropriate access to phone and computer usage. Reasonable curfews and rules regarding dating and socializing.</p>	<p>Any activity listed that will exceed 72 hours and/or requires a medical consent.</p>
Motorized Activities	<p>Children and caregivers must comply with all laws and use appropriate protective/safety gear.</p> <p>Children <b>riding in</b> a motorized vehicle with an adult including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Snowmobile</li> <li>· All-terrain vehicle</li> <li>· Motorbike</li> <li>· Jet Ski</li> <li>· Tractor</li> </ul>	<p>Valid driver's license if 16 years old and older.</p>

	<p>Any child operating an OHV must complete a motorbike or ATV safety course approved by Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation <a href="https://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/activities/atv-motorbike">https://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/activities/atv-motorbike</a>.</p> <p>Riders 15 years and younger must be supervised by a licensed adult operator. Please follow supervision requirements out lined by IDPR.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Snowmobile</li> <li>· All-terrain vehicle</li> <li>· Motorbike</li> <li>· Jet Ski</li> <li>· Tractor</li> </ul>	
Driving	<p>*If the youth enters care with a valid drivers' license they may continue to operate vehicles as the child is appropriately insured.</p> <p>Arrangements for transportation for the child to participate in extracurricular activities.</p>	<p>The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may authorize drivers' training, provide payment and sign for drivers' license and permits or Must obtain written authorization from the Regional/Hub Field Program Manager per IDAPA 16.06.451</p>
Travel	<p>All travel within Idaho less than 72 hours. All travel within the United States less than 72 hours must notify the child's assigned social worker and provide contact information.</p> <p>Travel with other youth/adults</p>	<p>All travel <b>exceeding</b> 72 hours. Travel overnight out-of-state travel. Please provide notification and emergency contact information. All out-of-country travel must obtain program manager's approval.</p>
Employment/Babysitting	<p>Youth <b>14 years old or older</b> and following: Interview for employment Continuation of current employment Does not interfere with school</p>	<p>Children in foster care may not babysit other children in foster care. Physically or sexually aggressive youth should not be permitted to babysit other children.</p>
Religious Participation	<p>Attend a religious service of the child's choice.</p>	<p>Notify assigned social worker when the child and biological parent choices conflict.</p>

Caregivers please consider these questions as you apply the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard:

1. How does this activity promote social development?
2. Will this activity violate a court order, a safety plan, a case plan, or a treatment plan?
3. Will this activity violate any policy or agreement of the Department?
4. If appropriate, have I received consultation from my case worker and/or the child's caseworker?
5. If able and appropriate, have I consulted with this child's birth parents about their thoughts and feelings about their child participating in this particulate activity?
6. Will the timing of this activity interfere with a sibling or parental visitation, counseling appointment, or doctor's appointment?
7. Who will be attending this activity?
8. Would I allow my birth or adopted child to participate in this activity?
9. How well do I know this child?
10. Is there anything from this child's history that would indicate he may be triggered by this activity?
11. Does the child have any concerns about participating in this activity?
12. Has the child shown maturity in decision making that is appropriate for his age and ability?
13. Does the child understand parental expectations regarding curfew, approval for last minute changes to the plan and the consequences for not complying with expectations?
14. Does the child know how to call in case of an emergency? Will they have access to a phone?
15. Does this child understand his medical needs and is he able to tell others how to help him if necessary?
16. Can this child protect himself?