

C.R.E.S.T Statement

(Culture of Respect, Empowerment, Support and Trust)

To: CBC of Seminole Partners
From: Glen Casel
Date: 3/31/2009
Re: Crest Statement #2: Teen Normalcy

Teen Normalcy is an important topic for today's teenage foster youth. In the past, caseworkers and other staff have been so worried about liability and old policies and procedures that they have punished and neglected foster youth just because they were involved in the dependency system. Now times have changed, and we have realized with the help of some of these young adults that it is not normal for teenagers to have to wait until they are 18 to experience day to day teenage activities including: dating, driving, working, and being alone at home after school.

CBCS has developed a "Teen Plan" with the input of the Seminole County Youth Advisory Board. This Teen Plan is a working document that is to be developed with the dependency case manager, the caregiver, and the youth. They are required to be completed at least every 90 days, but can be done more frequently as circumstances change. These Teen Plans are to be used as a contract and all parties will have a copy for their own reference.

Normalcy for teens is very important to CBCS, as it represents one of the steps we have taken to make this a better system for the youth that are growing up in foster care. We are committed to showing them the same culture we demonstrate with our staff and community providers, and make sure they feel respected, empowered, supported and that they have an overall trust in us to do the right thing for them.

To find out more about these teen plans or about normalcy in general, Dependency Case Managers can call or email Keri Flynn. Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication to make CBC of Seminole the best child welfare organization in Florida.



Memorandum

To: Seminole County Foster Parents/Group Home Providers
From: Glen Castel, CEO, Community Based Care of Seminole
Date: 3/23/2009
Re: Normalcy for Children in Foster Care

Almost four years ago in June of 2005, the Secretary of the Department of Children and Families sent out a statewide memorandum and draft policy about teens in foster care and how they deserve to live “normal” teenage lives. This memo encouraged all community-based care providers across Florida to “encourage and support foster parents to make decisions regarding foster children’s participation in normal activities and support the decisions made by the foster parents”. This memo also explained that revised child welfare rules will be mandated soon to include normalcy.

The rules mentioned in that memo were developed and accepted into Florida Statutes in the summer of 2007. They can now be found in chapter 409.1451(3) (a) 3 as listed below:

(CBC's are to) Develop procedures to maximize the authority of foster parents or caregivers to approve participation in age-appropriate activities of children in their care. The age-appropriate activities and the authority of the foster parent or caregiver shall be developed into a written plan that the foster parent or caregiver, the child, and the case manager all develop together, sign, and follow. This plan must include specific goals and objectives and be reviewed and updated no less than quarterly. Foster parents or caregivers who have developed a written plan as described in this subparagraph shall not be held responsible under administrative rules or laws pertaining to state licensure or have their licensure status in any manner jeopardized as a result of the actions of a child engaged in the approved age-appropriate activities specified in the written plan.

The aforementioned procedure has been developed and is now in use by case managers. This plan, which CBC of Seminole calls the “Teen Plan”, should be updated every 90 days as stated above. (see attached Teen Plan) Please ask your case manager if you have not seen a Teen Plan for a teenager in your home.

The first page lists typical responsibilities a teenager should be encouraged to do. These can be decided between you and the case manager with the **maturity level of the teenager in your home taken into account**. The second page lists suggestions of activities that a teen in your home may take part in. Please note that this is only a suggested list and only grouped into ages as determined normal to most teens. Some teens will be able to participate in all activities listed on the second page and some will only be able to participate in a couple.



Please note the underlined sentence in the excerpt from chapter 409 above. You will not be held responsible as a result of the actions of a foster child if you have a Teen Plan in place. So please make sure to contact your case manager to develop or update a Teen Plan regularly. CBC of Seminole is highly supportive of you as foster parents and we are proud to stand behind the decisions you make for the youth in your home that you care for as if they are your own.

If you are unsure of anything relating to this matter or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact me or any of the CBC of Seminole staff at (407) 333-8256.



90 Day Teen Plan

(To be completed every March, June, September, and December)

The Teen Plan is a written plan that outlines the responsibilities and age appropriate activities developed for each youth ages 13-17 in licensed foster care. The plan must be developed together with the youth, caregiver, and DCM. Each teen plan is specific to the individual youth and must be reviewed and updated every 90 days.

A copy of this plan must be given to the youth.

Youth: _____ DOB: _____ Age: _____

Responsibilities

Chores

- Clothes and other items should be put away
- Bed will be made each day
- Wash Dishes _____ times per week
- Take out Trash
- Feed Pets
- Vacuum
- Yard Work

Rewards/Consequences/Other:

School

- Complete assigned homework every day
- Attend school every day with no unexcused absences
- Participate in tutoring

Rewards/Consequences/Other:

Personal Care

- Bathe Daily and Brush Teeth Daily
- Wash and Dry Laundry
- Take Medications on own or other Medical Care

Rewards/Consequences/Other:

Independent Living

- Attend Staffings and Court Hearings
- Participate in Life Skills Training
- Communicate with DCM and GAL about career and educational plans

Rewards/Consequences/Other:

Youth Signature

DCM Signature

Foster Parent/Group Home Signature

Date Signed

Activities

If the youth demonstrates responsibility by maintaining compliance with their Teen Plan, then the licensed care provider has the authority to approve the following age appropriate activities. The DCM shall be available to provide consultation and be involved in decision-making when necessary or requested.

Suggestions for Teen Plans According to Age Group

13-14 year olds

- Extracurricular School Activities- After School and on Weekends
- Participate in Activities and Functions with Friends from School under Supervision
- Telephone use within reason; set an amount of time daily and time frames that are ok with the caregiver.
 Weekday timeframe: _____
 Weekend timeframe: _____
- Cell Phone
 Weekday timeframe: _____
 Weekend timeframe: _____
- Curfew time for weekdays: _____ and weekends: _____

Other:

15-16 year olds

- Extracurricular School Activities- After School and on Weekends
- Participate in Activities and Functions with Friends from School without Supervision for up to 3 hours
- Telephone use within reason; set an amount of time daily and time frames that are ok with the caregiver.
 Weekday timeframe: _____
 Weekend timeframe: _____
- Cell Phone
 Weekday timeframe: _____
 Weekend timeframe: _____
- Curfew time for weekdays: _____ and weekends: _____
- Part time employment
- Arriving home after school alone for up to _____ hours.
- Transportation; other than staff and caregiver e.g. public transportation

Other:

16-17 year olds

(16 year olds are included in this category if they have proven themselves in the responsibilities listed above for at least 3 months prior to moving on to this category)

- Extracurricular School Activities- After School and on Weekends
- Participate in Activities and Functions with Friends from School Unsupervised within reason
- Telephone use within reason; set an amount of time daily and time frames that are ok with the caregiver.
Weekday timeframe: _____
Weekend timeframe: _____
- Cell Phone
Weekday timeframe: _____
Weekend timeframe: _____
- Curfew time for weekdays: _____ and weekends: _____
- Transportation; other than staff or caregiver e.g. public transportation or friends cars (include transportation to SAW class and other age-appropriate activities)

- Part Time Employment
- Arriving home after school alone for up to _____ hours.
- Dating
- Prom/Other School Functions Unsupervised
- Spend Night at Friends House without Homestudy or Background Checks
- Take classes that are required for a drivers license

Other:

Allowance for all 13-17 year olds

- Minimum of \$25 monthly, split up however agreed upon.

Evaluation

Evaluate with the teen and with the caregiver how the Teen Plan has been implemented over the past three months.

What went well? _____

What needs to improve or change? _____

What consequences were given and for what behaviors? _____

How was allowance distributed? _____

Were there any specific conflicts that could not be resolved? _____

Other: _____

Copy of Teen Plan provided to youth and caregiver (signature required)

Youth Signature

DCM Signature

Foster Parent/Group Home Signature

Date Copies Provided