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## Memorandum

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

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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.

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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.



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