



C.R.E.S.T Statement

(Building a Culture of Communication, Respect, Empowerment, Support and Trust)

TO: Community Based Care (CBC) of Central Florida Partners
FROM: Glen Case, CEO/President
DATE: January 25, 2012
RE: Normalcy

At CBC of Central Florida our focus begins and ends with our children. Our efforts to provide a safe and permanent place for them to grow up is our most important task. While our children are with us, however, we must focus on their well being and development and do all we can to minimize the impacts of abuse and neglect on their lives. Normal childhood activities are a key part of that care.

On January 20, 2012 Department of Children and Families (DCF) Secretary David Wilkins issued a memorandum on Normalcy. (see attached). In this memo, Secretary Wilkins encourages the practice of normalcy with our children who have the unfortunate circumstance of being placed in a licensed out-of-home placement (i.e. foster home or group care placement).

I want to take this opportunity to elaborate on that memo and continue to empower and support you, our foster parents, group care staff, case managers, Guardian Ad Litem's and all our partners who support our children in having normal childhood experiences. Normalcy takes shape in many forms and we want to help clarify what normalcy in our system of care looks like. We want our children to experience activities and opportunities just like our own children do. Birthday parties (both day and sleep-over), dating, after school jobs, shopping at the mall with friends, play dates, field trips, slumber parties, playing next door at the neighbor's house, car-pooling to activities, being home alone after school for a limited time, riding their bike to a friend's house who lives a short distance away, etc. These are just a few examples, but we hope it gives you some scope in being able to recognize what normalcy is and can be. All of these examples would fall under the guise of normalcy and would not require background screenings or driver's license checks. Good judgment and common sense are the determining factors and expectations in approving these activities as caregivers for our children. Meet your foster children's friends and families, visit their homes, exchange phone numbers. Without breaching confidentiality of our children in care you can develop relations with other people that allow you to make sound decisions as caregivers and in doing so give our children a chance to experience normalcy.



Admin Support Center: 4001 Pelee St., Ste. 200 • Orlando, FL 32817 • (321) 441-2060
Orange County Office: 4001 Pelee St., Ste. 100 • Orlando, FL 32817 • (321) 441-2361
Osceola County Office: 111 E. Monument Ave, Ste 501 • Kissimmee, FL 34741 • (321) 442-8494
Seminole County Office: 117 East Lake Mary Blvd. • Sanford, FL 32773 • (407) 333-8256
Seminole Service Center: 2921 South Orlando Ave, Ste 150 • Sanford, FL 32773 • (407) 688-9650



As your lead agency we not only promote normalcy for our children but support and have confidence that you, our caregivers, case managers and other partners, are able to decipher what are appropriate activities for the child in your care based on their history of trauma and the developmental age and needs of the child.

For children ages 13-17 we have Teen Plans that are developed between the caregiver, case manager and the youth and outlines normalcy responsibilities and activities the youth would enjoy with the maturity level of the youth always taken into account. Please see attached, prior memos and C.R.E.S.T. statements we have issued that discuss these teen plans. You may also contact your CBC Independent Living Manager in your county for further guidance. Normalcy activities for children under the age of 13 do not require a formal "plan" and would apply to children usually starting at the age of five. Continuous and effective communications between caregivers and case managers is vital in ensuring that each party is on the same page in regards to acceptable activities so that conflicts do not arise to hinder and/or prevent the child from experiencing these activities. If you are not sure, please ask before assuming the answer is no. Assume the answer is yes, and then verify. If it is good for the child, it will be good for CBC of Central Florida.

CBC of Central Florida staff are here to support you in this endeavor. If you should have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

Lastly, please review our previous C.R.E.S.T. statement on luggage for children dated 11/14/2008. We believe that putting children's belongings in trash bags is never acceptable. We have luggage and duffle bags available for our children's belongings that have been donated from our partners in the community. Please contact our office in your county if you are in need of luggage.

Thank you for your work with our children and with us in our system of care together we will "protect and inspire, every child every day".

Sincerely,



Glen Casel
President / CEO



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