TN Department of Children's Services

Discipline Policy

Discipline is a teaching process that is initiated by a trauma informed caregiver who is able to identify the underlying need of a foster child. It is through this process that a child develops the self-control, self-reliance, resiliency, and orderly conduct appropriate life skills necessary to assume responsibilities, make daily living decisions and live according to accepted levels of social behavior. The goals of discipline for foster children are:

- To problem-solve appropriate ways of getting needs met (i.e. needs for attention, ways to express feelings, etc.)
- To feel good about relationships with other adults and other children
- To have a positive self-concept
- To acquire appropriate regulation skills on their own to be able to relate and reason when their needs are not being met
- To have secure attachment and connection with other adults and children
- To be resilient in the face of adversity, causing them to have a foundation of true self-esteem

In order to accomplish these goals, the following guidelines should be followed:

- Encouragement and praise of good behavior is often more effective than punishment and is a must in disciplining a child. The child's acceptance of discipline and ability to profit by it depends largely upon feeling that he/she is liked, accepted and respected.
- Practice regulation methods that were taught in Pre-Service training to help reroute the child in times of dysregulation.
- Approach the child with words and actions that will form secure attachment and connection.
- Discipline must be determined on an individual basis and meet the child at the developmental and cognitive level of the child.
- All discipline shall be limited to the least restrictive appropriate method and administered in an appropriate manner.

The following forms of punishment must **not** be used:

1) Corporal Punishment such as slapping, spanking, or hitting with any object,
2) Excessive exercising (particularly of a military nature), running laps, repetitive sit-ups, etc.
3) Cruel and unusual punishment,
4) Assignment of excessive or inappropriate work,
5) Denial of meals and daily needs,
6) Verbal abuse, ridicule or humiliation,
7) Permitting a child to punish another child,
8) Chemical, physical, or mechanical restraints (ex; use of psychotropic medications as a restraint),
9) Denial of planned visits, telephone calls, or mail contact with birth family, attorney, siblings, Family Service Worker, pre-adoptive family, or attorney,
10) Seclusion as a punishment,
11) Threat of removal from the foster home, or
12) Any discipline that occurs more than 24 hours after the incident.

I have read this discipline policy of physical punishment and do comply with it.

Foster Parent Signature	Date
Foster Parent Signature	Date

Check the "Forms" Webpage for the current version and disregard previous versions. This form may not be altered without prior approval.
Distribution: Foster Home Case File, Foster Parent *RDA 2982*